

# Campaign heats up for library ballot issue

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

Farmington Community Library representatives continue seeking support for a Nov. 7 ballot issue to raise money to build a main library, renovate another in downtown Farmington and win approval for a separate operating tax.

But officials cannot yet say where the proposed new \$14.5 million library will be built — and that's the key question most people have, said Charlotte Yaverski, library board president.

"We'll release that as soon as possible," she said, assuring the announcement will be before the election.

"It's important we stress it's a district-wide library — we're all part of the same thing," she added. "It's a benefit to all of us."

Library representatives are lining up speaking engagements with community groups to give information about the ballot issue, which is divided into two questions.

THE FIRST asks for 0.5 mill to build an

80,000-square-foot building, move the 12 Mile main branch to that building and to renovate the branch in downtown Farmington. The issue would be repaid in 20 years, based on current rates.

The second question asks for 1.5 mills for 20 years to operate the two-branch library system, which has always used general fund money from Farmington and Farmington Hills. Library director Beverly Papal spoke to the Council of Homeowners of Farmington Hills at a September membership meeting. Support there seems likely, although they cannot officially endorse the issue, Papal said.

"I suspect we'll discuss it at length and see what support we can get," said Jack Rajkovich, council spokesman. "I'm sure we'll get some support for the millage."

THE BOND issue and operating tax questions have been supported by the Farmington Downtown Development Authority, the Farmington-Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce, the Farmington Historical Society Board of Directors and

the League of Women Voters-West Bloomfield/Farmington Area.

Also supporting the proposals are the Farmington and Farmington Hills city councils, which have agreed to cut their operating tax by .75 mill if the measure passes. According to Yaverski, that should keep operating tax rates even in the immediate future; the library does not intend to levy the entire 1.5 mills until the library is built and operating, probably in 1992.

In discussing the measure with area taxpayers, Library Board trustee Mary Kay Zolton said some have questioned why the system does not simply find another building to renovate. Another trustee, Ernest Sauter, explained: "The load-bearing strengths (of a library and another building) are a little different. We just can't do it."

The new library will cost the owner of a house with a market value of \$150,000, and an assessed value of \$75,000, about \$37.50 per year. Eventually, the operating tax could cost the same taxpayer an extra \$112.50 per year if all the millage were levied.

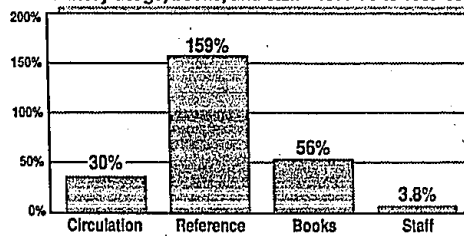
Yaverski said informational materials are just being printed and distributed and that speaking engagements are being stepped up to get the word out.

Library employees are also knowledgeable about answering questions, but "we have to be very careful," Yaverski said. "Employees cannot campaign for it. We can educate, which is part of the library's function."

She said much of the work will come in October, in weeks just before the election.

SOME OF the information being distributed includes:

Library usage, books, and staff - 1977-78 to 1987-88



- A fall library booklet, which lists programs and workshops and has two pages of information about the ballot issue. One page lists questions and answers about the issue.

- Letters to each of the area homeowner associations.

- A mailing to people who vote absentee, to ensure they have proper information before submitting their ballots.

- A special edition of the Information Exchange newsletter.

Yaverski said board members and library administrators welcome questions about the ballot issue and want to give out all the information possible.

"We're really trying to do that," she said. "It's important for people to know we're not trying to sneak something through. We think we have a lot of support in the community."

The library system, which began in 1972, has seen a 177-percent increase in reference usage and a 27-percent increase in materials checked out. Between 1,000 and 1,400 people visit the Hills branch daily, according to library statistics.

The current Farmington Hills library on 12 Mile would be closed if money for the new building is approved. That building has been offered to the two cities for community use. If they choose not to use it, the building will be sold, with money going to pay down the bonds.

City managers in Farmington and Farmington Hills have asked Minoru Yamasaki Associates to perform a brief feasibility study on whether the building could be used as a senior citizen center, and possibly as a general community center or teen center at varying hours. The study is expected to be done before the end of September.

## Ballot proposals' wording

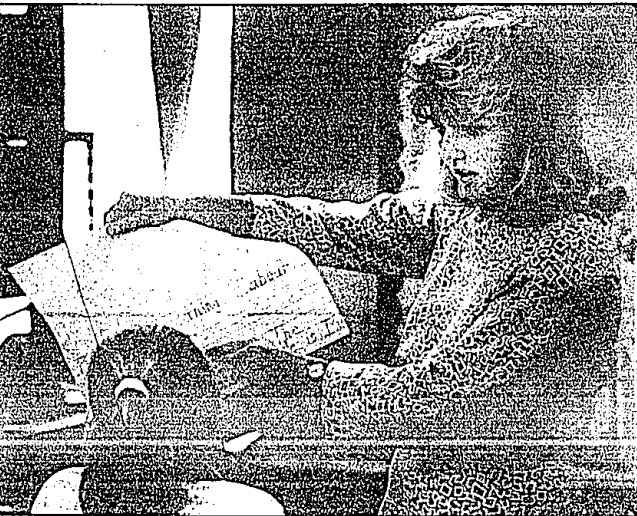
### • BONDING

Shall the Farmington Community Library borrow the sum of not to exceed Fourteen Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$14,500,000) and issue its general obligation unlimited tax bonds in one or more series for all or a portion of that amount for the purpose of erecting, furnishing and equipping a new Main Library building; purchasing, developing and improving the site for the new building; and making necessary repairs and

capital improvements at the branch library in the City of Farmington.

### • MILLAGE

Shall the Farmington Community Library levy taxes against property in the Farmington Community Library District in an amount not to exceed 1.5 mills (\$1.50 on each \$1,000) of state equalized valuation for a period of 20 years in order to provide funds for the purpose of operating the Farmington Community Library.



Jeanie Godwin Brown shows Wendy Severin, 8, with a class book project.

## Hills resident makes best new teachers list

By Darrell Clem  
staff writer

Jeanie Godwin Brown was planning her mother's 50th birthday celebration when she took time out to go to the post office.

A certified letter the Farmington Hills resident received in the mail gave cause for a double celebration. Brown learned that she had just been chosen as one of the best new teachers in the nation.

"I started crying in the post office," said Brown, 23, a third-grade teacher at Keith Elementary School. "And my mother said it was the best birthday present she could have ever received."

Brown's award, based on her performance last school year, was one of only 100 given nationwide to teachers in the first year of their profession. It included a \$1,000 cash prize.

The honor marked the second consecutive year that a teacher in the Walled Lake Consolidated School District won the prestigious Sallie Mae First-Year Teacher Award, bestowed by the Student Loan Marketing Association. Last year, Krista Bentley of Smart Junior High School won the award.

IT WAS Andy Dale, Keith School principal, who nominated Brown for the award. Dale said Brown is representative of the top-notch teachers the school district has hired in the last few years.

"The bottom line is that Jeanie cares about children not only as a teacher, but she cares about them personally, too," Dale said. "She's firm, yet fair. She's sensitive to their needs. And she really tries to model for kids the kind of behavior that we would expect of children."

Maybe so. But a visit to Brown's classroom this week revealed that her students had differing views on what makes her a good teacher.

"She's pretty," said Wendy Severin, 8. "She's nice too, and she's smart."

"We get candy," Erik Aldrich said.

"And we get to play games at the end of the day," chimed in David Paskala.

Perhaps 9-year-old Barbara Harrison was more on target as to why Brown won the Sallie Mae honor.

"Mrs. Brown's sweet, kind and she likes kids," Harrison said. "I'm learning a lot in her class."

### people

BROWN SAID she first considered a teaching career when she attended North Farmington High School. She later prepared for her profession at Central Michigan University and is now working on a master's degree in language arts at Oakland University.

"I just really love what I'm doing," Brown said. "It's fun."

Brown said she believes one of the most important responsibilities she has is to help children achieve positive self-esteem.

"I try to set a good atmosphere. Kids really look up to you. It's like your every move is watched," Brown said. "If you really believe in what you're doing, it's going to rub off on them."

To help her students feel good about themselves, she often smiles, pats them on the back or compliments what they're wearing. If a child is lagging behind in math but is ahead of the class in reading, Brown will emphasize the good and work harder to help the student improve in other areas.

PRIOR TO becoming a full-time teacher last year, Brown was a substitute teacher at schools in Walled Lake and Farmington. She knows the profession is demanding and that some teachers burn out.

"If that ever happens, I'll just get out," she said. "My parents (Tom and Carolyn Godwin of Farmington Hills) have always taught me to do what's going to make me happy."

For now, Brown appears quite happy. And so do others at Keith Elementary.

After all, not many schools can proudly display a banner inside the front entrance that reads, "Congratulations Mrs. Brown. One of America's Top 100 First-Year Teachers."

## Seminar is Wednesday

Tuesday is the absolute latest you can sign up for the Farmington Observer's public relations seminar Wednesday night.

If you're in charge of publicizing club, sports, business, civic, municipal, entertainment or other types of community news, you should find the seminar helpful.

The Farmington Observer is an efficient way to reach 19,000 households in Farmington and Farmington Hills twice a week.

HOW DO you submit information

to the news staff in a way that's suitable for publication in the newspaper?

That's the precise question the Observer staff will try to answer as simply as possible at the public relations seminar 7:30-9 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 27, in the council chambers of Farmington City Hall, 23800 Liberty.

Come meet our staff and learn how to write and submit one of your group's most important tools: a

press release.

We'll provide an overview, answer questions and present a handout for future reference. Refreshments will be served.

If you're responsible for publicizing news about your community group, call Observer receptionist Rose Butler at 477-8450. Leave your name and your group's name.

I hope to see you there!

— Bob Sklar, editor

Z-Z-Z-Z!  
WARM FLANNEL AND  
WINTER NIGHTS MAKE  
MEMORIES

Remember how it was? Cold nights and mornings...you, snug and toasty warm in your pj's and Roba. That's how it is with Tom and Jerry sleepwear for toddlers. Polyester flannel, 2T-4T. Red pajamas, \$22. Royal wrap robe, \$26.

Jacobson's