



HANDY DORST/Staff photographer

Focus on reading

Students at East Middle School decorated their classroom doors this month — one of many activities at Farmington-area schools designed to recognize National Reading Month. Here, students Brandon Priemer (front), Lynn Otwell and Andrew Dzyngel judge doors to select the best ones. There was a tie for first place: Nova Swearingin's students with a "Reading is a Universal Thing" theme and Ellen Wallis' students with a "Fly High With Reading" theme. Also during March, East students will visit nearby nursery schools to read, write book reports and participate in a reading contest.

County panel snubs housing center

By Pat Murphy
staff writer

It was a good-news, bad-news week for the Open Housing Center of Oakland County, the non-profit agency helping to promote integrated housing.

The center successfully opened its doors in Farmington Hills Tuesday and garnered endorsements from the South Oakland County Board of Realtors and cities like Birmingham, Southfield and Farmington Hills.

But the center failed to win an endorsement from a committee of

Oakland County Board of Commissioners — something organizers wanted as a symbolic vote of support for the center's amphitheater. The misdemeanor offense carries a maximum penalty of 90 days in jail and \$500 fine.

Within the next month, a city council-appointed, four-member committee is expected to meet again with neighbors and center officials. Committee members are council members Aldo Vagozzi and Nancy Bates, city manager William Costick and assistant city manager David

Call, a former center board member.

"No. We really don't have a deadline. But a goal of the city council that we discussed in an executive session Monday (March 12) was to have the court put it (the trial) off for 45 days. We thought that would be adequate time to meet again," Call said.

"We asked the council committee to frankly not discuss what they come up with," Shortt said. "If they talk with us, we don't want that discussed with the Farmington Community Center."

Center president Lawrence Freed-

man said he is pleased with how the committee is trying to reach a compromise. "We want to resolve the problem. We are willing to hear and work with the recommendations they can come up with."

The center is operating under a one-year ban on the use of amplification for the center's outdoor performances and activities, issued by the Farmington Hills Planning Commission Sept. 16, 1989.

With the spring season approaching, center officials still have not lined up entertainers for outdoor concerts. "It (the ban) is limiting our ability to do certain things," attorney Brukoff said.

... but in Birmingham, approval is unanimous

By Ralph R. Echlinaw
staff writer

The Birmingham City Commission put its stamp of approval on the Oakland County Center For Open Housing last Monday.

The commission unanimously passed a resolution supporting the center's mission.

The center, which opened Tuesday in Farmington Hills, aims to encourage blacks to move into white neighborhoods and vice versa. The plan is to provide clients, free of charge, information on all communities in Oakland County.

Center co-managers Barbara Talley of Southfield and Ann Wettlaufer of Birmingham say they want to serve people who want to move to areas of Oakland County where their race is underrepresented.

Birmingham joined Beverly Hills, Lathrup Village, Farmington Hills and Southfield in supporting the center's mission.

"WE NEED the communities, particularly the white communities, to show their support," Wettlaufer told Birmingham's commissioners.

Commissioner Dante Lanzetta told Wettlaufer he's concerned about counter-steering. Steering is when realtors supposedly aim prospective home buyers to certain neighborhoods. "I don't think steering is any better when done in one direction than in the other direction," Lanzetta said.

Commissioner Gary Kain, thinking back to other resolutions the city has passed supporting integration and racial harmony, asked, "How many times does the city of Birmingham have to say the same thing over and over?"

Wettlaufer answered, saying "until integration is successful. Maybe we can't make a difference. I don't know. But we're going to try."

After the vote was taken, Kain asked Wettlaufer, "Now you're not going to come back and ask us for some money?" She replied, "Who knows?" To which Kain responded, "That's the problem."

Deadline set for noise accord

Continued from Page 1

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DESPITE THE ban, planning commissioners approved a special use for outdoor concerts in a residen-

tial zoning district. Commissioners also issued a list of restrictions, based on residents' complaints, such as the lack of a theater license, shielded parking lot light and fencing around the center's southern property boundary.

"We're hopeful of being able to take a report to the council and approach the planning commission on a compromise that's agreeable to the community center and agreeable to the neighbors," Call said.

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Legislation to help police

Legislation to help police agencies track down stolen gems or precious metals is now awaiting the governor's signature, said state Rep. Jan Dolan, R-Farmington Hills, sponsor of the bill.

House Bill 4105 will require gem dealers to hold the items nine days before selling, instead of the current seven days. Dolan said the legislation also requires that a fourth copy of the transaction be sent to the po-

lice agency where the seller lives. This ensures that potentially useful information will be sent to both the local agencies likely to be investigating thefts or fencing activities.

"The bill will give law enforcement agencies a significant amount of extra time to receive and respond to theft reports and dealer information," Dolan said. "We anticipate Gov. Blanchard's support and are hopeful the bill will be signed soon."

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