

# Library takes ramp to info superhighway

By BILL COLTAN  
STAFF WRITER

While the Farmington Community Library will always provide reading programs and books, as a reference source and information system it has to keep up with the times.

Its new Metro Net system will help it do just that.

Metro Net, a consortium that also includes libraries in West Bloomfield, Birmingham, Bloomfield Township, Canton, Independence Township, Rochester Hills and Southfield, provides access to computer data bases worldwide for the cost of a local call from a home computer with a modem, and free from one of the library's terminals, said assistant library director Gerald Fun.

Fun, library director Bev Papai and other staff showed off the system to business people at an early morning demonstration May 17. About 25 attended the session on getting onto the information superhighway.

A library survey showed 49 percent of Farmington Farmington Hills residents had a personal computer, 25 percent had a computer with a modem and with newer computers being sold with internal modems, the need for computer-generated information

will only increase, Papai said.

"We're the first library in the state to bring Internet to the public," Papai said.

Not only can people access full-text periodicals, but now they can get to data bases such as the Library of Congress, State Department travel advisories, federal government jobs lists and information from universities throughout the world to name a few.

"Our business is local," said Bill Lutz III, president of SignGraphix Inc. "But personally I'm interested in a lot of the applications."

Pat Short, who also attended the session, said he could see immediate benefits for his business, Benefit Services Group Inc. of Farmington Hills.

"We deal with government funding," he said. "This is a good source of government data."

The program will likely expand as other libraries in Metro Net contribute financially, Papai said.

The system is just one of the library's responses to a residential survey. Among other findings of the survey, residents wanted more books on tape. The Friends of the Library have raised \$10,000 to buy more of the cassette books, Papai said.

## Children's note



STAFF PHOTOS BY SHARON LEBLANC

**Highmeadow visit:** Children from Highmeadow Common Campus make their visit to Baptist Manor in Farmington Hills one of the highlight's of the school year. It's a highlight for senior residents as well, as Agnes Galbraith, 97, (right) listens as students perform a story about Bach. Above, Christy Stockton (left), Ali Grossi (who is performing the role of Bach) and Adrienne Odmark sing selections by the German composer. Loretta Ackroyd organized the event by rehearsing with the third-graders and making all their hairpieces. This is Highmeadow's 34th visit to Baptist Manor in six years.



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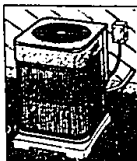
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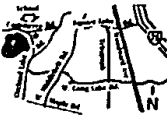
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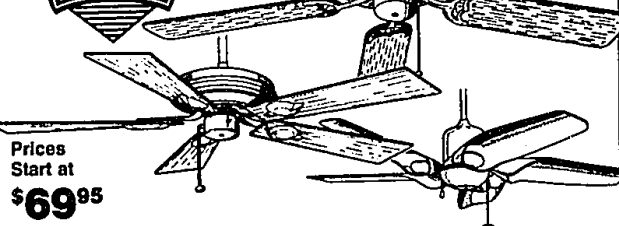
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