

Smile pretty, please



AON HEALEY/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Photographer at work: Kelly Merk, a photographer shown in silhouette in the photo above, zooms in on Farmington High senior Jessica Carveth in the studio at Focal Point in downtown Farmington. June through October are the busiest months for senior pictures, Focal Point personnel say.

For the books: Man marks 30 years on library board

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

For 30 years, Ernest Sauter has been on the Farmington Library Board. It's the one thing he's not about to check out on.

The Farmington City Council is honoring Sauter with a reception at 7:30 p.m. prior to its regular meeting, Farmington Hills council, which has a meeting scheduled Monday, has sent a congratulatory letter acknowledging Sauter's service.

"It's been my pleasure," said Sauter, 74, who was appointed to the board in 1964 by the City of Farmington, replacing architect John Allen. "You don't do something for 30 years and not enjoy it. I've enjoyed it."

Sauter's three decades of influence can be seen in many ways.

He worked tirelessly on successful millage elections in 1964 and 1967, and was there behind the scenes when things didn't work out in 1989 and 1993.

Sauter was involved in approving the architect and design for both the Farmington Hills branch and Farmington branch libraries, which were built in 1972 and 1975 respectively.

He also arranged for Oakland County to house the County



Ernest Sauter

Library for the Blind and the Handicapped at the Farmington Hills branch.

There's more, of course. Those who work with him are likely to carry more personal anecdotes.

Farmington Library Board member Barbara Walker recalls working as a library page at the former branch on Farmington Road as a high school student.

"We used to be open on Friday and the staff was a little more relaxed back then," Walker said.

"We'd see him coming across the street and we'd say, 'Here comes

Mr. Sauter.' "We'd always act like we were really busy, and he'd come in and sign the checks."

Walker is a little less intimidated by his presence. In fact, she added with a laugh: "I even disagree with him once in awhile."

Papal, who is one of four library directors Sauter has worked with, remembers the first time she met him. She had just started as a librarian in 1973, and was quickly put in charge of starting a program for senior citizens.

"I had to make a couple of presentations to the library board," Papal said. "I remember him being interested, kind and sympathetic to a new employee. That perception of him hasn't changed in over 21 years."

"It doesn't matter what I need, he's always there."

A simple love of reading brought Sauter into library affairs. Former councilman Howard Thayer encouraged Sauter to seek a spot on the library board.

It's an affinity he passed to his son, Eric, who's gone on to write several novels.

"I just can't imagine life without books," Sauter said.

School retirements listed

The following Farmington Public Schools employees have announced their retirements:

Charles Autry, assistant principal at North Farmington High, nine years service with the district; Marion Brewer, teacher at Kenbrook Elementary, 14 years; William Brinker, social studies teacher at North Farmington High, 29 years; Bette Buckler, teacher at Warner Middle School, 22 years; Ron Freudenburg, teacher at William Grace Elementary, 28 years; Marcelle Hornyak, business teacher at Farmington High, 24 years; Santosh Kapil, special ed-

ucation teacher at Visions Unlimited, 18 years; Thomas McConaghie, assistant principal at O.E. Dunckel, 28 years; Robert McLean, teacher at Flanders Elementary, 31 years; Shirley Michelotti, teacher at Flanders Elementary, 24 years; Yvonne Moyley, teacher at Kenbrook Elementary, 33 years; Barry Muscato, counselor at North Farmington High, 27 years; Julia Nichols, teacher at Longacre Elementary, 28 years; Carolyn Plsek, principal at Kenbrook Elementary, 28 years; Wallace Prince, principal at Beechview Elementary, 38 years; Neil Radford, physical ed-

ucation teacher at Larkshire Elementary, 24 years; Edith Roper, teacher at Eagle Elementary, 32 years; Lady Satterfield, teacher at Gill Elementary, 21 years; Norma Slaughter, teacher paraprofessional at Larkshire Elementary, 25 years; Mario Thompson, teacher paraprofessional at East Middle School, 9 years; Mary Ellen Tolwin, learning center teacher at Wood Creek Elementary, 25 years; Eleanor Twardy, teacher at Flanders Elementary, 36 years; and Gerald Young, social studies teacher at Farmington High, 28 years.

Schools seek instruction from community, business

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Public Schools will be tapping the collective minds of the community and business in the coming months. Farmington, along with 10 other districts, received a \$50,000 state of Michigan educational grant to launch a pilot program where business and community members will be interviewed by teachers.

Interviews will take place in a modified focus group setting. The purpose is to find out what skills high school graduates need to succeed in college and the workplace. It's part of an overall call for "relevant and vigorous" instruction in public schools, said Frederica Frost, director of Assessment, Evaluation and Special Projects.

Farmington school officials believe the district already has this, judging by the 89 percent

■ "What . . . the Michigan Legislature says is they don't believe preparing kids for four years of college is enough in today's competitive world."

Frederica Frost
director, Assessment, Evaluation and Special Projects

of high school graduates who go on to colleges.

"What . . . the Michigan Legislature says is they don't believe preparing kids for four years of college is enough in today's competitive world," Frost said.

Some 30 letters have been sent to Farmington area businesses, Frost said. The district hopes to interview up to 80 people.

District officials will glean information and then make any nec-

essary adjustments to curriculum.

Already, Farmington schools have developed several partnerships with area businesses and recently joined Eastern Michigan University in a cooperative school agreement. The district has also modified instruction methods to include interdisciplinary programs, team teaching and modified schedules such as zero hour.

Frost expects similar programs to evolve in the future.

AAA hits premium in Hills with branch of the future

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER

For Michigan AAA, the future is presently in Farmington Hills.

Michigan's largest AAA insurance office will open Wednesday, July 20, at 38761 W. 12 Mile, between Halsted and Haggerty roads. Grand opening activities are planned July 20-23 at the new office.

Company officials - who call the facility "the branch of the future" - say it is nearly 50 percent larger than the traditional AAA office.

The pilot location contains a number of innovations designed to improve service to members, including longer daily hours from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday hours from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

There also will be two drive-through claims inspection bays. "It features multi-media calling for sophisticated technology," said Joan Peor.

The nearly half-acre site, designed in the Williamsburg Colonial style, is a full-service AAA Michigan facility, providing travel, touring, membership and insurance services.

The office will serve 39,000 members from Farmington, Farmington Hills, Novi, Northville, South Lyon, Milford and Walled Lake.

"This serves people where they are concentrated," Peor said. The next closest branch is in the Laurel Park shopping center at Six Mile and Newburgh in Livonia, she added.

During the grand opening, some lucky AAA members will win two United Airlines tickets valid for travel anywhere in the continental United States and Canada.

Entry blanks are available at the Farmington Hills branch. The winner will be announced

July 20. Entrants must be AAA Michigan members.

Here's the calendar of events for the grand opening ceremonies July 20-23:

■ Wednesday, July 20 - Coffee and cake for members, ceremonial tree planting, grand opening getaway winner announcement and daily member prize drawing.

■ Thursday, July 21 - Daily member prize drawing and refreshments in the afternoon, and in the evening a Dearborn Community Band concert 7-8 p.m., antique car display, refreshments and free ice cream.

■ Friday, July 22 - Daily member prize drawing, refreshments.

■ Saturday, July 23 - Children's Day 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., bike inspections/skills test, chalk paintings, clowns and balloons and refreshments.

For more information, call the branch at 653-3700.



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