



A cheery scene: Harrison High's varsity cheerleading squad was on hand for the girls varsity basketball game between the Hawks and North Farmington.

ANN HEALEY/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## Good cheer: It's not just for boys teams any more

By LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

The girls still march to a sharp cadence.

Cheerleading hasn't changed much, but who the cheerleaders root for has.

Farmington Public Schools is in the second year of a program which has cheerleaders perform at girls sporting events as well as at boys. Most have come to accept the added dimension.

"Now it's like part of the job," said Harrison senior Terra Stenerson, who is co-captain of the Hawks cheer team. "We cheer for football. We cheer for girls basketball.

"If you're cheerleading, you enjoy it no matter where it's at."

Added Andrea Salyer, Farmington High girls varsity basketball captain: "The girls really like it."

The change hasn't been without growing pains, though.

The move was designed to bring gender equity. Since Title IX in the 1970s, girls athletics have flourished.

Proponents feel girls who compete should be accorded all the amenities that boys' events receive, including cheerleaders.

The Farmington Board of Education approved the restructur-

ing of the district's cheerleading program last year.

The plan called for cheerleaders to perform at girls basketball and as well as football, boys basketball. The cheer season was also divided into two segments, freeing up time for cheerleaders who might want to participate in other activities.

"Whether you're a girl or a boy, you deserve that support," said Farmington Board of Education trustee Susan Lightner, who backed the change.

Cheerleading coaches express mixed feelings, though.

Some have had to split up

into smaller squads in order to accommodate both football and girls' basketball teams. That makes practicing difficult.

They cite smaller crowds, particularly at junior varsity games, and comments from spectators and players.

"It's still a little uncomfortable because it's still new," said Harrison cheerleading coach Wendy Poelke. "They have never cheered for girls basketball until last year."

Added North coach Jackie Sturtz: "It's not the greatest thing in the world, and it's not the worst."

Part of the struggle has been acceptance. A majority of the North Farmington girls basketball team was behind cheerleaders performing at games "only if the girls wanted to be there," Sturtz said.

Farmington High coach Christine Guinan said cheerleaders heard comments from spectators and team members at first.

People have been more receptive this year, though, she added. "I know other teams make fun of them," Guinan said. "That's a given."

Another issue is noise, or lack

thereof. Girls basketball games are not always well attended.

"One of the concerns of theirs is, 'What if you don't have spectators?'" Poelke said. "You have girls cheering their heads off. Who will they connect with?"

Added sound effects have caused a different problem. Farmington High junior varsity players said they can't hear, especially during timeouts.

Atmosphere has generally improved, they add. Same thing at the varsity level.

"We do get more people at the games," Salyer said.

## Saturday's happening with shopping, women's history

The inaugural "Holiday Happenings" will take place Saturday, Nov. 18, in downtown Farmington. A day of women's history and holiday shopping will be featured.

Sponsored by the Farmington Downtown Development Authority, the day will offer a sampling of women's presentations in history, social issues and the cultural arts through exhibits and performances.

"Holiday Happenings" will also officially open the holiday shopping season in the downtown district, which is comprised of an assortment of specialty shops and national chain stores.

Many merchants will be holding drawings for gift certificates, while the DDA is offering complimentary lunch to any shopper spending a minimum of \$50 throughout the day.

Michigan women throughout the past 100 years will be highlighted by international kiosks provided by the Michigan Center for Women's Studies of Lansing. Included in their Women's Hall of Fame and Women of Science and Math exhibits is turn-of-the-century architect Emily Butterfield.

Butterfield lived in Farmington and, along with her father, was the designer of the First United Methodist Church on Grand River and Glen Oaks Country Club in Farmington

Hills among other prominent buildings throughout the area.

The exhibit depicting her life and career will be located at the Methodist Church from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on event day.

In addition to the artists on display in many of the stores, "Holiday Happenings" includes the works of choreographer Barb Selinger, filmmaker Kathy Vander, dramatist Sandra Hansen, and philharmonic conductor Karen Nixon-Lane. All of their performances will be presented a number of times during the day and specifics will be available at the City Hall check-in table throughout the event.

All of the exhibits and performances will be held indoors at various locations including downtown stores, the First United Methodist Church, the library, and the Civic Theater.

Specific times and locations are listed on an event flier available at civic buildings, libraries and businesses throughout Farmington and Farmington Hills. Those attending the event should check in at City Hall on their arrival to receive a detailed listing of exhibitors.

To ease parking and getting around the downtown district, a classic trolley will be running from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. with stops at all activity locations and shopping areas.

Parents attending the event will be accommodated by Small World Day Care, which is for the first time offering Saturday drop-in service. The rates of \$4.25 per hour for children in diapers and \$9.75 per hour for children out of diapers and is comparable to the fees charged by most teen-age sitters. Many special activities are planned for those children attending.

Parents are asked to provide food or formula needs and reservations are highly recommended as space is very limited. Call the executive director, Jane Andrews, at 810-477-1900 for reservations.

Event creators Gelman & Grant Management found during the research process that the subject of women's history and their cultural contributions has been largely overlooked by programmers.

While much media attention has been focused on the issues of spousal abuse, discrimination and health issues, "Holiday Happenings" intends to highlight the more uplifting dimensions of women in today's world.

All "Holiday Happenings" exhibits and performances are free to the public. Those needing more information should pick up a flier from Farmington/Farmington Hills merchants, public buildings and libraries.

## Band boosters craft arts show

The North Farmington High School Band and Orchestra Boosters will present their fourth annual Winter Arts & Crafts Show Saturday, Nov. 19.

The show will take place from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at North Farmington High School, 32900 W. 13 Mile Road, just east of Farmington Road. Proceeds from the art show go to benefit the instrumental music

program at the high school.

The school's music groups, under the direction of Carl Gippert, have won numerous awards at national and international music festivals. In recent years the groups have performed in Germany, Boston, Toronto, and Washington D.C.

Proceeds from this show help support these competitions. They also allow the boosters to provide money to

supplement the music program by providing scholarships, musical instruments, instruction and supplies.

This year's show includes 100 artists and craftsmen from the Midwest. Works for sale include: painting, pottery, leather, glass, jewelry, photography, dolls and calligraphy.

Admission to the show is \$1.50. Lunch will be available. For information, call 853-6699.

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