

Law to hamper teacher strikes suffers a delay

BY TIM RICHARD
STAFF WRITER

The state Court of Appeals has delayed implementation of the Republicans' tough new law punishing teachers' strikes.

Public Act 112 was due to take effect April 1.

It gives school districts and Michigan Education Association locals time to negotiate new contracts under the old law, under which unions have more power to bargain over health insurers and school working rules.

"We requested a stay and an expedited hearing," said Theodore Sacha, attorney for the AFL-CIO, which challenged the constitutionality of the act.

MEA also appealed and asked for an expedited hearing, said spokesman Dawn Cooper.

An "expedited hearing" means the appeals court will act promptly and not take its usual two years to process the case.

The Court of Appeals decided the request on a 2-1 vote. Voting to take the case were Chief Judge Martin Doctoroff of Birmingham and Judge Kathleen Jansen of Macomb County. Opposed was Henry W. Saxe.

In Wayne Circuit Court, the AFL-CIO and MEA cases were consolidated and heard together before Judge Lewis Simmons. In his ruling last month, Simmons gave labor a partial victory, ruling two sections unconstitutional:

■ Requiring a circuit judge to issue an injunction against a union if it "finds that a strike or lockout has occurred, without regard to the existence of other remedies, demonstration of irreparable harm, or other factors." Simmons said the sweeping legislative decree violated the separation of powers by allowing judges no discretion.

■ Requiring the Michigan Employment Relations Commission

to fine unions an automatic \$5,000 a day for a strike by "one or more public school employees." The unions argued they would be punished regardless of their possible non-involvement in a walkout.

But Simmons upheld the rest of the law.

It forbids school unions from bargaining over the insurance benefits administrator; the starting date of classes; pupil contact time; the composition of school improvement committees; the existence of charter academics; the existence of "schools of choice" programs; use of volunteers in school services; decisions on experimental or pilot programs; and the granting of additional paid work days to make up for lost strike time.

Republicans in both chambers of the Legislature rushed through the bill in April of 1994.

The GOP had a temporary majority in the House and disregarded the usual committee procedure in bringing the bill to a vote. Gov. John Engler signed it into law May 2, calling it a "cost containment" measure.

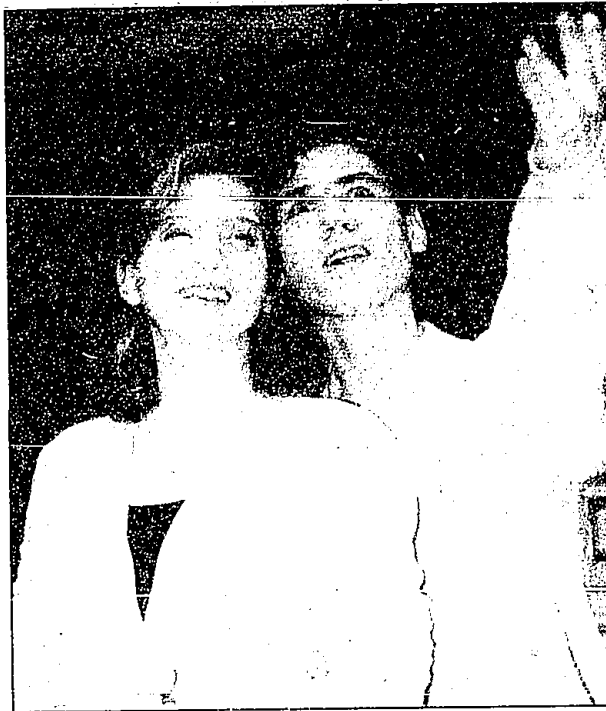
Sacha wanted the court to find other flaws in PA 112. His suit argued the law:

■ Denies judicial review of MERC decisions.

■ Prohibits a parent union from vetoing a local union's collective bargaining agreement, thus "unconstitutionally interfering with and intruding upon internal" union matters.

■ Denies "equal protection of the laws" by treating school employees more harshly than other striking workers. The law requires that striking school employees be docked a day's pay for each day of a strike with no chance of making up the lost time.

'You're doin' fine Oklahoma'



SHARON LEMLEY/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

At rehearsal: Mercy student Rebecca Fried gets ready to play Laurie in "Oklahoma!" with Bloomfield Hills Andover High School student Joshua Simon, who plays Curley. Students involved come from 15 area schools. "Oklahoma!" will be staged at Mercy, 11 Mile and Middlebelt roads, at 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, April 7-8; and at 3 p.m. Sunday, April 9. Tickets are \$8 for adults and \$6 for senior citizens and students. Call 476-3270 for information or reservations.

Works of art contest winners go on display

Winning entries in the 10th Annual High School Art Competition will be displayed during the month of April in the main lobby of the downtown branch of the Farmington Community Library.

The competition sponsored by the Farmington Area Arts Commission took place at East Middle School March 15. Farmington Hills artist Edee Joppich judged the competition. Awards will be presented during a reception at the Farmington Hills Activities Center on April 30.

Peter Wang of Farmington High School won the first place award with his entry in the two-dimensional art category. Quentin Wright of Farmington High took second place and Joanna Zamoyaki of Mercy High was third.

Honorable mentions included: Inge Bassler, Farmington High; Suzanne Blum, North Farmington; Meghan Erickson, Mercy High; Sean Hassell, Farmington High; Annie Jud, Harrison High; Scott Kinville, Harrison; Maria Pinsky, Harrison; Jeremiah Stone, Harrison; and Claire Weigand, Mercy.

Robert Crip of Harrison High received first place honors in the three-dimensional category. Blake Began of North Farmington won second place and Liv Rainey of North Farmington received third place honors.

Honorable mentions included: Amy Kilner, Farmington High; Melissa Osman, North Farmington; and Naarah Finegold, North Farmington.

Art commission members Ellen Wallis and Fern Barber coordinated this year's event. Bev Ellis, Eve Samra, Nan Reid, Janice Samony and Chris Cogar.

FOX from page 1A

serving as Hills Mayor in 1990, education, volunteerism, regional and local planning, and even in international affairs beginning in 1960 with the Michigan Partners of the Alliance.

A well-traveled woman

A woman for all seasons, Fox has traveled extensively, including on an expedition by sailing ship with the Smithsonian Institute that took her to far off Easter Island.

"You just do the best you can with life as it comes at you," she says in explaining her successes, and those few disappointments. "You don't win 'em all."

From the "battle for Woodland Hills Park" to furthering the designations of Natural Beauty Roads, Jean Fox has made her mark, one that is truly historic.

But her effort to keep the Twelve Oaks shopping center out of Farmington Hills (it was built in Novi) is probably her crowning achievement, she says.

"It was marvelous to see the public come out," she said of that development fight of the early 70s. "This was the only place in the U.S. where he (Al Taubman) did not get what he wanted."

Maybe because he tackled Jean Fox.

As she packs up and moves antiques and heirlooms, some of which pre-date this country's founding, Fox can accept that you can't take it with you — to



JOHN STORRELAND/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Getting involved: Says Farmington Hills' Jean Fox, "If you don't get involved in public life, you can't get your thing through."

Washington, that is.

Detroit comeback essential

Many of those items of historical significance will stay at museums and with friends. And though she'll be happy to move in with her son John, his wife Martyna and their two children, leaving so much and so many won't be easy.

Fox said the deterioration of Detroit over the years has "broken my heart," and believes that it's comeback is essential to the long-term future of Farmington Hills and its neighbors.

"I used to say that Detroit won World War II," she said, adding

that she uttered that sentiment at a function in Washington only to hear from the man next to her that it was Pittsburgh's steel that went into those tanks.

Fox believes that America, as well as the motor city, will return to greatness. But to do so, the best people will have to become involved in public life.

"It's a noble calling," she said.

"The best people aren't going into government service."

So Fox, whose daughter JoAnne teaches in Waterford, will join her son in the coming weeks and live behind a many years of achievements, and a legacy to achieve.

focus on

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Eggstravaganza

The Farmington Area Jaycees will sponsor an Easter egg hunt — called an "Eggstravaganza" — at 10 a.m. Saturday, April 8, at Heritage Park, on Farmington Road between 10 Mile and 11 Mile roads. Of course, the Easter Bunny will be on hand. The free event will be held rain or shine. For more information, call 477-JCCS.

Longacre plant sale

Think spring! Order flowering plants to brighten your home or give as gifts for the holidays. The Longacre House Volunteer Guild is planning a spring plant sale to raise money for the non-profit Longacre House, formerly The Community Center, in Farmington Hills. The Longacre House is at 24705 Farmington Road.

Potted lilies, tulips, daffodils and azaleas may be bought through the volunteers, or at the

FARMINGTON FOCUS

Longacre House from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday, and 9 a.m. to noon Saturday. Plants may also be charged by calling the center at (810) 477-8404.

Order deadline is Wednesday, April 5. All orders must be prepaid by that date. Plants must be picked up at the center from 3-7 p.m. Wednesday-Thursday, April 12-13.

Veterans Affairs

representative from the Department of Veterans Affairs will be at the Farmington Hills Senior Center, 11 Mile Road east of Middlebelt, at 11 a.m. Wednesday, April 12, with materials and information explaining benefits available to all veterans and widows of veterans. Call 473-1830 with questions.