

Ribbon cutting



Kroger opening: Kroger Food and Drugs on 11 Mile and Middlebelt in Farmington Hills officially opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony Oct. 9. Participating were: Don McGeorge (left), president of the Kroger Co. Michigan Marketing Area; Hills city council member Aldo Vagnozzi; store manager Dave Berg and co-manager Daryl Williams.

OBITUARIES

HAZEL C. (BARBER) MILLER

Mrs. Miller, 76, of Florence, Ore., formerly of Farmington, died Sept. 23 from leukemia. Survivors include her husband, Arthur; daughters, Patricia Madry, Virginia Strong and Donna Busha; brother, Ransom Dull; eight grandchildren and six great-grandchildren; family friend, George Weber.

Cremation was arranged by The Neptune Society of Santa Barbara, Calif. with ashes spread at sea.



in San Pedro, Calif. Memorials may be made to The American Cancer Society or the National Arbor Day Foundation, 211 N. 12th St., Ste 501, Lincoln, Neb. 68508. Envelopes may be obtained at Heene-Sundquist Funeral Home in Farmington.

ANN M. HEITJAN

Mrs. Heitjan, 78, of Farmington Hills died Oct. 13 in Angela Hospice, Livonia. Born in Jacksonville, Ill., Mrs. Heitjan was a bookkeeper for National Bank of Detroit for 30

years. She was a member of Fr. Solennus Casey Guild and a member of St. Gerald Catholic Church in Farmington.

Survivors include her son, Bob; daughters, Marianne Kure and Peggy Heitjan; brother, Francis Davison; six grandchildren. Mass was celebrated today in St. Gerald Catholic Church, Farmington. Burial will be in St. Hedwig Cemetery, Dearborn Heights.

Memorials may be made to Angela Hospice, 14100 Newburgh Road, Livonia 48154-7810. Arrangements were made by the Heene-Sundquist Funeral Home, Farmington.

MILITARY NEWS

If you have military news with a Farmington-area connection, send it to: Military News, Farmington Observer, 34411 Grand River, Farmington 48335.

COMPLETES TRAINING
Army Reserve Pvt. Ryan E. Holmes has completed basic training at Fort Leonard E. Wood, Wayneville, Mo. During the training, students received instruction in drill and

ceremonies, weapons, map reading, tactics, military courtesy, military justice, first aid and Army history and traditions. Holmes is the son of Patricia and Ralph Holmes of Farmington Hills.

Hills AARP presents Medicare discussion

Wayne State University professor Edward Tintzok will discuss the topic, "Medicare, Medicaid, Health

Care Reform," 1 p.m. Friday, Oct. 20, in Westford Hall in the Farmington Hills Activities Center, 28600 11 Mile.

The program is being presented by the Farmington Hills AARP.

The voice of public education

It's a Matter of the Children

In my last column I related some good news about public education—our steady progress toward positive education reforms. I also reported rising test scores and graduation rates.

The foundation of these successes has been the development of collaborative teams working in their neighborhood schools; parents, teachers, support staff, school board members, community business leaders and administrators, making educational decisions with a shared commitment to education. This is the process, outlined in Public Acts 25 and 335, called "site-based decisionmaking."

What makes this process successful is the commitment of people who have a stake in the future of our students and who understand that new skills and attitudes are absolutely necessary for the workplace of the future.

Let's look at just one example. In Battle Creek Lakeview, using the building-level decisionmaking process, the district has successfully made the transition from the traditional junior high to a middle school—a process that can be long and difficult when not all of those affected by the change are involved in the planning. In this case, however, both the decision and the plans to change took place in a fully collaborative arena.

To further strengthen community involvement in educational decisionmaking, the Battle Creek Lakeview district is sponsoring a community retreat. Participants—including parents, staff, students, business leaders, community representatives and others—will address the question: "What does it mean to prepare all students for the 21st century?" This community outreach grows directly from the education reform laws, which encourage the collaborative problem-solving process.

Battle Creek Lakeview is just one of many districts working under our current school reform legislation to bring together all the right people to help make educational decisions. Education reform is truly beginning to take hold and show results. And, as recent polls show, many believe that the current school reform legislation is steering the right course for positive change, showing steady progress and increasing success rates among our students.

However, this school reform is in jeopardy.

I am deeply concerned that the current legislative actions of the Michigan House and Senate will result in some unreasonable amendments to the School Code and will undo much of the education reform

progress this state has made in the past few years. These bills, supported by the majority party, are on the fast track for passage.

Proposed changes to the education reform laws include:

House Bill 4240 seeks to repeal the requisite site-based decisionmaking process, which, as Battle Creek Lakeview has clearly demonstrated, is operating with great success. If HB 4240 passes, the call for involvement by all education stakeholders will disappear from the law.

House Bill 4241 seeks to repeal the requirements for a mandatory core curriculum, even though nine out of 10 parents say they support setting and enforcing strong academic standards in the basic subjects of reading, math, writing, science and social studies for all children in every school district.

There are other bills pending that will not improve education for our children but will, instead, obstruct the progress toward quality education reform. For instance, **Senate Bill 679** weakens quality instruction and quality education by instituting fast track teacher certification for people who think they would like to teach high school. The bill requires no knowledge of how to teach a subject—to make it come to life, take on meaning and utility for a child—or how to reach a student—to know that every child learns differently and understand how your child learns best. All that's required is occupational experience, a B.A. degree and enough background information to pass a skills exam.

What it all comes down to is the children. What our lawmakers—indeed, what all of us—ought to be guided by, talking about and acting upon is what's good for children, for teaching and for learning. Ultimately, that's what it's all about.

I urge you to contact your legislators today and ask: Will these proposed changes and repeals of education reform benefit every student in every neighborhood, regardless of income or opportunity? Will they improve the way children are taught? Will this new legislation change for the better the way they learn?

Let the answers to these questions be the litmus test for change in education reform laws.

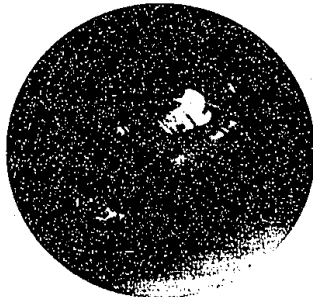


Julius A. Maddox
MEA president

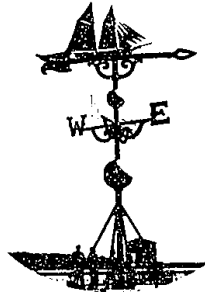


Michigan Education Association

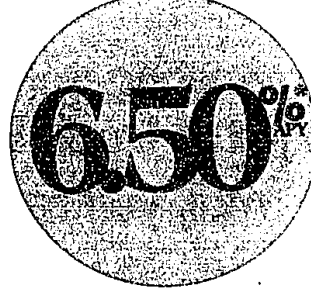
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