

# Shadowing

## Teacher, student learn journalism at Farmington Observer

One's a high school student, the other teaches at Power Middle School.

But both the student, Erin Kaufman, and the teacher, Jeff Houston, had something very much in common recently. They spent time at the Farmington Observer learning about journalism and newspapers.

"One thing for sure is, you never know from day to day what story you'll be covering," said the 16-year-old Erin, summarizing what she learned from her one-day job shadowing, Thursday, July 30. "And that you can find stories anywhere."

Houston, 33, who teaches special education at Power, worked two weeks at several Observer & Eccentric offices, including about one week at the Farmington office.

"It's been rewarding because this gave me experiences and memories I can pass on to my kids," said Houston, a Plymouth resident who is entering his fifth year at Power. "I can give them concrete examples that will excite them."

Houston's visit was part of an annual Farmington school district summer program in which teachers are placed in various businesses to gain hands-on experiences they can bring to classrooms.

Erin's stay was shorter. On Thursday, July 30, the North Farmington High School yearbook student, entering her sophomore year, spent several hours in the newsroom. She shadowed reporter Tim Smith and photographer Liz Carnegie.

The daughter of Jack and Julie Kaufman saw a page being designed on the computer screen, experienced an impromptu meeting where reporters and photographers planned coverage for a particular story and went over to the Farmington Public Safety Department with Smith to look at police reports.

While at city hall, Erin sat in on Smith's interview with Public Safety Director Gary Goss about a reported racial slur. Three teens left posters containing hateful words against African Americans on the front porch of Rainbow Rehabilitation Sunday, July 26.

That evening, both Erin and Houston attended the Farmington Community Chorus concert at Heritage Park, an event highlighted by the return of Melissa Garr, a teen critically injured in July 1997. The two guests worked next to Smith and Carnegie as the reporter and photographer captured the event.

Throughout his week at the Farmington Observer, Houston spent time going on assignments and talking about aspects of the job with Smith, Carnegie, reporter Larry O'Connor, Community Life Editor Mary Rodriguez and receptionist Katie McManus.

Although Houston already has his career going, the experience might help Erin decide what direction she might take after high school and college.

"It seems to be a very exciting profession," said Erin, noting that her former yearbook

instructor at O.E. Dunkel Middle School (Steve Koponen) inspired her to pursue a possible journalism career. "It's fast-paced, something I think I'd enjoy getting into if I had a chance."

Both of the interns said important contributions to society can be made by working at a community newspaper.

"To sit at a computer and write about what's going on all around me," said Erin, "I'd love that."

Meanwhile, Houston, who holds a master's degree in special education from Eastern Michigan University, said "being a reporter at a place like the Observer is almost like doing community service."

He said he was impressed with the staff's commitment to sensitive, accurate news coverage. "People here try to report the news in an unbiased, factual manner because they realize it's important" to Farmington and Farmington Hills.



On the job: Farmington Public Schools teacher Jeff Houston (right) and student intern Erin Kaufman learn how reporting is done from Farmington Observer reporter Tim Smith during the Farmington Community Chorus concert in Heritage Park, was highlighted by the return of Melissa Garr, a teen who was injured in 1996.

### M-5 from page A1

reconstruction of the M-5/I-696/I-275 split.

Phase two is the most comprehensive part of the project and is expected to last from early September through early November.

It includes the relocation of water mains; lane restrictions on the bridge carrying 10 Mile/Grand River traffic over M-5 while the bridge is being widened and resurfaced; construction of a new ramp from eastbound 10 Mile/Grand River to westbound M-5 resulting in the closure of the existing access to M-5; closure and reconstruction of the westbound M-5 exit ramp to 10 Mile/Grand River; closure and reconstruction of Freedom west of Drake; and reconstruction of westbound M-5.

During this phase traffic will be shifted from westbound M-5 to the newly resurfaced eastbound pavement. Traffic will be reduced to one lane eastbound and one lane westbound.

At the end of phase two, Freedom and all ramps will be opened. Eastbound M-5 will be restored to two lanes, and westbound M-5 traffic will be placed

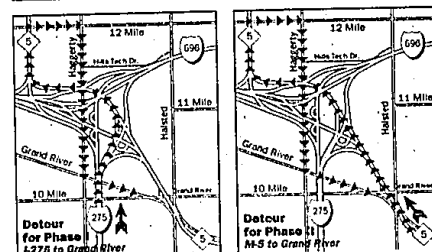
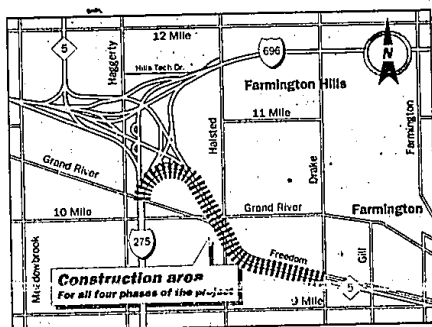
on the new pavement as one lane of traffic until phase three is completed.

Phase three is scheduled to begin and be completed in spring of 1999. Work includes the closure and reconstruction of the entrance ramp from westbound 10 Mile/Grand River to westbound M-5. Weather permitting, this phase may be moved ahead to be started and open to traffic in fall 1998.

Finally, phase four will begin in late April 1999 and will include the widening of the exit ramp from eastbound M-5 to 10 Mile/Grand River; resurfacing of 10 Mile/Grand River from Halsted to east of Sincola Court and planting of roadside vegetation and other clean-up work.

The Michigan Department of Transportation is using money from federal, state and city sources for the 1.76-mile changes. The entire project is expected to be completed by early summer 1999.

For construction updates call the 24-hour hot line at 1-800-641-MDOT or Mike Eustice at the project construction office at 350-3428 or visit MDOT's Web site at [www.mdot.state.mi.us](http://www.mdot.state.mi.us)



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