

# Historical

## Committee wrestles to pump new life into Warner mansion

BY TIM SMITH  
STAFF WRITER  
tsmith00c@homecomm.net

Whether the Warner mansion in downtown Farmington becomes a genuine, "must-see" testament to the past or remains virtually anonymous is an issue being wrestled with by the city's museum development committee.

The committee met last week and is moving forward with plans to conduct a feasibility study, membership drive and fund-raising efforts for the Grand River site, the one-time residence of former Michigan Gov. Fred Warner. Residents interested in helping shape the museum's future are invited to attend the committee's next session, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 20, at Farmington City Hall.

"The biggest thing we're trying to get together is this expanded group (of boosters)," said Dick Carvell, longtime museum curator and member of the Farmington Historical Commission. "We want to see what kinds of comments and commitments are out there."

Building awareness to revive the museum is essential because, noted Carvell, "A lot of people have driven by it for years and don't know what it is."

"We think that the potential is there to develop this museum into a very viable building within the city and make it an attraction that people are interested in going to," said JoAnne McShane, Farmington city councilwoman and part of the committee.

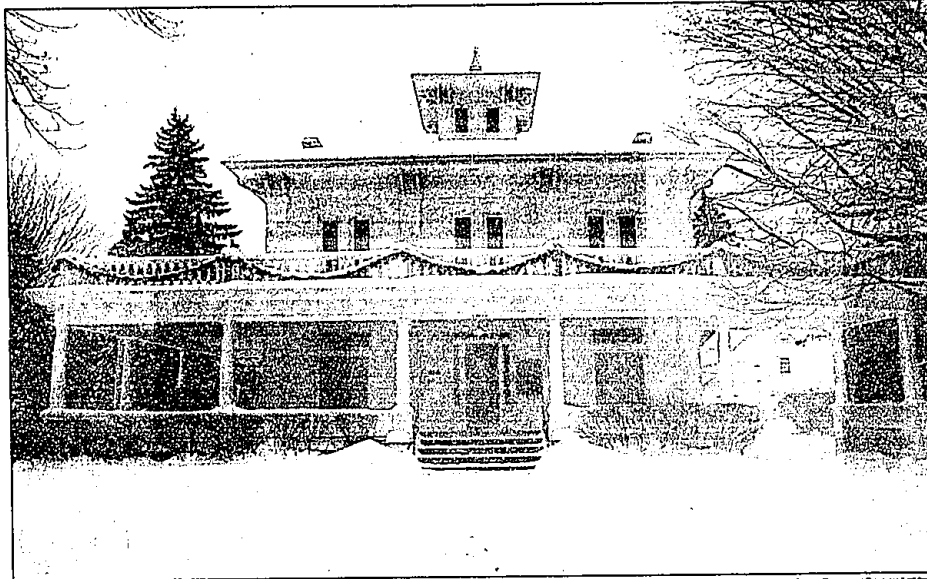
**'We think that the potential is there to develop this museum into a very viable building within the city and make it an attraction that people are interested in going to.'**

**JoAnne McShane**  
—Councilwoman and committee member

Getting more people interested, and active, in the efforts is the top priority for now, said McShane. From there, generating additional revenue and increasing museum activities and uses go hand-in-hand.

"We need to develop (a sense of) where the interest lies and what direction we'd like to see the museum go," McShane said. "Public awareness is extremely important."

She listed several fund-raising suggestions for the mansion, including holding a gala with a historical theme or selling inscribed brick pavers to patrons for a walkway.



STAFF PHOTO BY SARAH LEBON

**Awareness:** A Farmington museum development committee will meet again at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday Jan. 20, at Farmington City Hall to talk about a feasibility study, membership drive and fund-raising efforts for the Gov. Warner Mansion.

The committee is also talking about setting up an annual membership drive encompassing Farmington and Farmington Hills, in step with the desired goal of making the Warner mansion a "home of history" for both cities.

## Flanders students bring Farmington history to life



**Designing:** Students at Flanders Elementary School are studying Farmington history by designing small replicas of historic landmarks.

BY TIM SMITH  
STAFF WRITER  
tsmith00c@homecomm.net

Memo to Farmington's museum development committee: Look no further than a "Winter in Farmington Village" display at Flanders Elementary School for evidence the community values city history.

The school's media center would be a good place to visit for members of the committee, now in the midst of determining the level of interest in efforts to revive the Warner Mansion,

home of the former Michigan governor.

That's because third-graders who are learning about Farmington history in the classrooms of teachers Connie Dickey and Anne Hommes designed small replicas of everything from Botsford Inn to the old Nichols School, which burned down in 1979. Students selected their projects after looking at photos from a book written by Farmington historian Ruth Mochlman.

Flanders media specialist Anne Marie Kurzyniec talked about some of the models—including a 19th century log

cabin by Amanda Clunis—during a recent tour of the center, where they will be displayed until February.

"She was bound and determined to do a log cabin," said Kurzyniec, glancing at Amanda's replica of the area's first school. "It's circa 1840, the one on Sherman Street. She researched it at the (Farmington Public) library in the historical collection."

For some students, the models carry personal significance. Ryan Grainer duplicated a historical home at 11 Mile-Orchard Lake, where his grandmother lives. And Jonathan Lindblad's family lives in the Cook Building on Nine Mile, built in 1845, Kurzyniec explained.

Julie Tashjian used macaroni to shingle the roof of her model, that of a home lived in by the parents of Gov. Fred Warner, during the 1850s.

Bogdan Ursi fashioned an intricate peak at the Nichols School, the so-called "little red schoolhouse" at 13 Mile-Farmington that burned down in 1979. The Popside-stick roof can be pulled off, giving viewers a chance to glimpse inside at the miniature furniture.

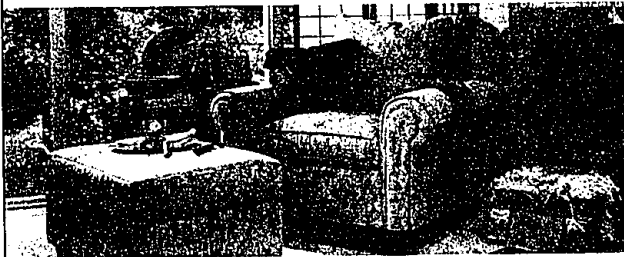
According to Hommes, the photographs from Mochlman's book proved invaluable to guide students in their projects. Students and parents went around the area, photos in hand, getting actual looks at the vintage sites.

"We said, 'Use anything you want to make it out of, such as cardboard or construction paper,'" Hommes said.

The models will be put on display at the downtown branch of the Farmington Public Library in February, Kurzyniec said.

**■ Ryan Grainer duplicated a historical home at 11 Mile-Orchard Lake, where his grandmother lives. And Jonathan Lindblad's family lives in the Cook Building on Nine Mile, built in 1845.**

## Fresh Start Sale!



### It's 1999. Throw A Party. Invite Some New Furniture.

Here's a chance to give every room in your home a fresh start for the new year! Begin with our beautiful upholstery, with more custom options than ever before. Then choose from our exclusive armories, entertainment centers, tables, and chairs. Finally, weave in some extra excitement with one-of-a-kind accessories from around the world. So start the new year in style. Come in now for the freshest furnishings for your home!

**40% OFF**

all custom upholstery with 90 days same as cash. \*Similar savings throughout the store. Hurry, Sale Ends 1-24-99

**Register to Win a \$10,000 Shopping Spree. See store for details!**

880 S. Old Woodward  
Birmingham • 248-647-8882

Hours: Mon., Tue., Wed. & Fri. 10-6  
Thurs. 10-8 • Sat. 10-5 • Sun. 1-5

\*Not to be combined with any other sales or promotions

**EXPRESSIONS**  
CUSTOM FURNITURE

www.expressions-furniture.com

## Salute

### Schools to celebrate King

There are programs and activities galore throughout Farmington Public Schools Monday to observe the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Following is a sampling of what's planned:

**Power Middle School:** a seventh grade class will be performing a dramatic "Theatre in the Round," reading a King speech. Each student has a part.

Other classes are also doing a variety of activities to celebrate King's life.

**Beechview Elementary School:** students will join helping "hands" around the school by putting their best "foot" forward to promote and provide random acts of kindness.

The student council will provide each classroom with feet and hands on which to write these acts of kindness. These

will be posted outside each classroom.

There will also be a tribute musical performance at 7 p.m., for parents to attend.

**Kenbrook Elementary School:** the upper elementary students will perform skits, dealing with King's life and beliefs, for younger students.

Students also will perform biographical raps on the life of the civil rights leader.

**Farmington High School:** the "REACH" multicultural club will participate in the annual United We Walk marathon walk, hosted by West Bloomfield High School.

Government classes will have a two-week assignment which will include a letter to King. They will also be offered a SMART session on comparing Martin Luther King, Jr. to

Farmington Public Schools' student profile.

**Wood Creek Elementary School:** fourth-graders are doing a play on King at 1:30 p.m.

**East Middle School:** students will perform "Bridges: Cultures Coming Together." The 8:30 a.m. program will feature musical performances by: the eighth-grade choir, directed by Preston Brown; eighth-grade concert orchestra, directed by Tracey Riggs and the Junior Theatrical Troupe 88331.

A highlight will be a Rosa Parks skit by storyteller "Miz Rosie," a Detroit native who draws from her heritage to bring to life African folktales and African-American historical figures that educate and uplift her audience.

There are various other activities throughout the district.