



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRIDGLES

Greetings: Farmington Hills council member JoAnne McShane speaks with Michigan Attorney General Jennifer Granholm before the meeting of the Farmington Exchange Club. Farmington Mayor Bill Hartsock and Farmington City Manager Frank Lauhoff stand in background.

## Inspiration

### Jennifer Granholm urges involvement

BY JONI HUNTER  
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Michigan Attorney General Jennifer Granholm may have been preaching to the choir, but she didn't spare the passion in a speech given at Tuesday's Farmington Exchange Club meeting.

Delivered during the club's celebration of Administrative Professionals' Week, Granholm's message was simple. Anyone can motivate and inspire people to better the world around them.

"You don't have to have a fancy title, you don't have to have a fancy degree," she said. "You can do that from any position on the totem pole."

Granholm likened her work to what the Exchange Club and other service organizations do in their communities.

"My job is to protect and to keep people from falling through the cracks of society," she said.

Unfortunately, Granholm feels the ranks of people willing to do the work seem to be diminishing. Though it's not necessarily true in Farmington and Farmington Hills, she said the sense of community and involvement has been lost in many cities.

She recalled how a neighbor at the end of her block kept an eye out and stopped her when she rode her bicycle too far down the street.

"Today people don't want to get involved," she said. "We lose a lot of those ties that bring us together. There's all of a sudden not enough time to reach out beyond the cocoons of our homes."

But what happens to those people who don't have "cocoons" to go home to? Elderly citizens who are so lonely they succumb to the advances of aggressive telemarketers and others who are vulnerable end up turning to Granholm's office and community organizations like the Exchange Club, she said.

Despite a multi-million dollar state budget surplus, Granholm said, 143 children are born into poverty each day, 167 children drop out of school and 760,000 Michiganans spend the night homeless.

"We are so numbed by so much of what we see, we think someone else will take care of it," she

said. "There are so many people who just watch."

When Granholm speaks at high school graduations, she urges teens to stop watching and start participating.

"We have to get these kids shaken up," she charged, repeating what she's said to hundreds of them. "This is the alarm clock on the rest of your life. It is time for you to dance with destiny. You cannot sit at the end of the dance floor in a metal folding chair waiting for someone to ask you to dance."

Adults can't simply tell children what to do, which is one of the reasons Granholm made her first-ever bid for public office when she ran for attorney general. It's the only elected position she's ever held, although she has received a number of awards and accolades during her career.

People who make their mark, she said, are those who reach out for something beyond themselves. But they are also those who are willing to be called fools by the world's cynics.

Raising a water glass in an impromptu toast, Granholm said, "Here's to the fools every-where, those of us who are foolish enough to believe our involvement makes a difference."

She urged club members and their guests, many of whom were administrative assistants, secretaries and receptionists, to consider the legacy they would leave for their grandchildren.

"It's not those with the most stuff you read about in history books," she said. "It's those with the most soul. No matter what the profession is, every profession is great and noble when it is nobly pursued. Sometimes the most noble work is that which goes unnoticed or is unheralded."

Farmington resident Glenn Grace, whose family has been in the insurance business in the community for three generations, agreed with Granholm's assertion that the "old days" of small neighborhoods where everyone knew everyone else are disappearing.

In his community, though, Grace sees Farmington's downtown area, where people gather to shop or for special events and festivals as a ray of hope. When groups like the Exchange Club participate, members broaden their contacts and build the connections that keep community spirit alive.



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Talk: Michigan Attorney General Jennifer Granholm chats with Farmington Mayor Bill Hartsock's mother, Annette Hartsock, at the Farmington Exchange Club.

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Jennifer Granholm  
—Michigan attorney general

"There are small cores of people, but you bump into other little cores and the more you do that, the more they come together," he said. "That's what's different in Farmington. You don't get those types of things in large cities."

## OBITUARIES

### APRIL M. SULLIVAN

Services for April Michelle Sullivan, 3, of Farmington Hills, were held April 24 at R.G. & G.R. Harris Funeral Home in Livonia with the Rev. Robert Woodbeck officiating.

April was born May 1, 1996 and died April 21.

She is survived by parents, Michelle and James; brother, Gavin; and grandparents, Ernest Sullivan, Robert Bliss and Grandma Rose; and great-grandparents, Earl and

Dorothy Bliss and Nancy Wilbur.

### ALBERT J. O'CONNOR

Services for Albert Joseph O'Connor, 105, of Farmington Hills, were held April 29 at St. Claire of Assisi Church in Farmington Hills with the Rev. Frederick Klotner officiating. Burial took place at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Southfield.

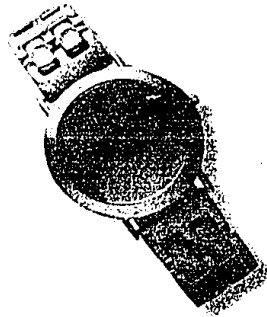
Mr. O'Connor was born April 16, 1895 in South Dakota and died April 27 at Charter House of Farmington Hills.

He is survived by son, Albert Jr.; daughters, Elizabeth Granger, Lucille Entwistle, Patricia Chipman, M. Geraldine (Lawrence) Gazdecki and Mary Louise (Richard) Dinon; son-in-law, Robert Boss; 17 grandchildren; and 23 great-grandchildren. He is preceded in death by his daughter, Marguerite Boss.

Memorial contributions may be made to the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

Arrangements made by Heeneey-Sundquist Funeral Home in Farmington.

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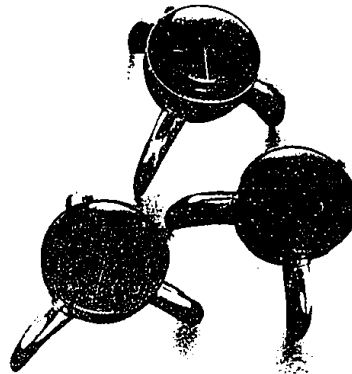
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