

Farmington Observer

OPINION

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33411 GRAND RIVER, FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN 48335

THURSDAY, JUNE 29, 2000



Boplin: Leslie Reinhold, Miss Farmington 1999, is flanked by contestants for the 2000 title in the opening number of the Miss Farmington pageant, "American Bandstand."

Miss Farmington Civic Theatre is perfect venue

It looks like the Miss Farmington/Oakland County pageant has found a new home in the Civic Theatre downtown.

While Vladimires Banquet Hall served as a wonderful venue for a quarter of a century, it seems only fitting that the year 2000 finds the scholarship pageant moving to the city-owned, centrally located movie theater. It's the beginning of a new era.

Sure, opening night wasn't without its technical glitches. Sound and lighting equipment had to be brought in to accommodate a totally different type of show. Timing was off occasionally throughout the two-and-a-half hour program. But considering it was a new experience for all parties involved, the production went off quite well. And there is ample time to tweak the technical aspects before next year's contestants hit the stage.

The one obvious advantage to the new location is being in the center of all the action. As Dennis Page and Roger Ratkowski, owners of Pages and The Pasta Stop respectively, readied a 1950s-themed parking lot dance across the street, keeping the "Cruising the Grand 2000" pageant theme going, vendors prepared their booths for Farmington Family Fest and swarms of people walked the downtown streets. The air was charged with positive energy.

Salon Legato deserves a pat on the back for

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its community spirit. The upscale salon adjacent to the Civic allowed contestants to change their outfits there, and owners Mike and Kelley Nowak closed their business early on Wednesday afternoon to accommodate the pageant. Contestants had their make-up, nails and hair done at Legato.

One suggestion: perhaps next year pageant planners can consider having contestants walk down the aisles of the Civic at some point in the program. Watching each contestant stroll to the stage at Vladimires provided an intimate feeling not necessarily achieved by simply watching the contestants perform on stage, then disappear behind the curtains.

The Miss Farmington/Oakland County Scholarship Pageant Program has grown over the years into a very popular local institution. It's a solid part of community life now housed in a city-owned jewel.

How about nursing as a career?

High school grads and college students unsure of a major might want to consider a career in nursing. It's a rewarding field that offers jobs and opportunities for advancement.

The demand is great. Industry experts predict things could reach a crisis point by the year 2005. Nurses are getting older with the average age ranging from 42 to 45, and there simply aren't enough young people entering the field to satisfy the demand. Canada, England, Ireland, the Philippines, Australia and Western Europe also are reporting significant nursing shortages.

While the demand is great, there is industry pressure to downsize and cut costs, which often results in workload increases for nurses. Restructuring in the health care industry has also had a negative impact on nursing. Some community hospitals, most recently Beyer Center in Ypsilanti, which is owned by Oakwood Healthcare System, have closed.

Stays are shorter and more procedures are being done outpatient, but hospitals are increasingly becoming large intensive care units whose patients require cardiac monitoring, respiratory assistance and intense treatment. Heavy patient loads and pressure to treat more people, quickly for less money have made nursing a less attractive career choice.

Nurses complain about long hours, being bogged down with tasks that could be done by less skilled workers, and not having enough time to spend with patients.

But despite the challenges, there are lots of good reasons to consider nursing as a career. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that

jobs for registered nurses will grow 23 percent by 2008 - faster than the average for all occupations. Working in a hospital isn't the only option for nurses. There are many areas to specialize in, such as administration, clinical care, emergency and medical surgical care. Nursing has always been ripe with opportunity, and that will continue.

Salaries are an issue, too. Nursing salaries start out well, \$35,000 to \$38,000, but don't increase significantly. More career enhancement incentives are needed for nurses to explore advanced positions within the profession. There's also a need for mentoring, experienced nurses helping younger nurses.

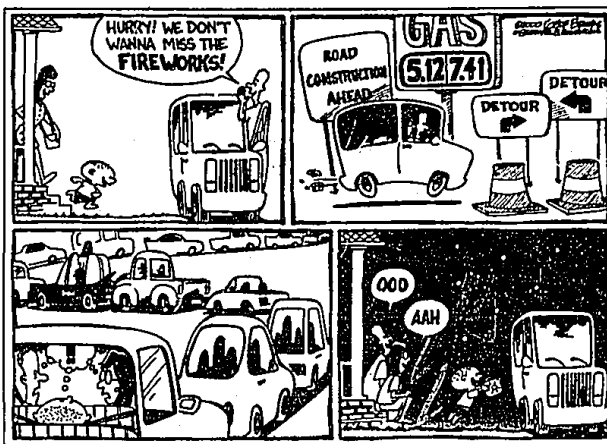
Better communication between schools that prepare nurses and hospitals, clinics and other care facilities that hire them will help ensure that nurses are properly trained to do the work that must be done.

Resources must be allocated to allow nurses to spend more time balancing wellness care with monitoring illness. Nurses can teach patients how to take better care of themselves - preventative medicine is the best medicine - but they often don't have the time.

High school might be too late to talk about careers in nursing. High-paying, high-tech jobs have the competitive edge. Work must be done at the junior high level to attract a new generation.

The women and men who make nursing their life work are committed, caring professionals, dedicated to helping people heal and stay well. They deserve our admiration, respect and support.

GEORGE BROOKS



LETTERS

Opinions are to be shared. We welcome your ideas, that's why we offer this space for your opinions. We will help by editing for clarity. To assure authenticity we ask that you provide a contact telephone number and if mailing or faxing a letter, please sign it. Letters can be mailed to: Joanne Maliszewski, 33411 Grand River, Farmington, MI 48335, faxed to Joanne at (734) 459-2700 or emailed to jmaliszewski@oe.homecomm.net

Didn't sound right

Parents beware! Many of you have no doubt followed the lively discussions regarding the sexual harassment curriculum for the elementary level, particularly the fifth-grade video. If you have listened closely enough you would have heard the school board's position that this is a state-mandated curriculum. This has been quoted no less than four times in this paper.

That statement didn't sound right to me so I did some checking. I first searched the Internet for any legislation requiring it. When I came up dry, I called my state Rep's office and they checked with the Department of Education and could only come up with the following:

Michigan Compiled Law 380.1300a. Sexual harassment policy: minimum contents. Section 1300a. Not later than January 1, 1995, the board of each school district shall adopt and implement a written sexual harassment policy.

After reading this I assumed both my state Rep's office and I had missed something, so I wrote to the board to ask which legislation they were referring to. The response included the above referenced law as well reference to the Office for Civil Rights (OCR). The OCR enforces among other things, Title IX, which prohibits discrimination in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. I also received an OCR pamphlet entitled Sexual Harassment: It's Not Academic (which you should look at online at www.ed.gov/offices/OCR/ocrshpam.html if you want to see your tax dollars being misspent). The OCR has no legislative power to require any sexual harassment curriculum.

What's the bottom line? We have seven board members who voted for this curriculum, vigorously defended it from concerned parents and then hid behind a fictitious law to deflect their responsibility. I have requested our current president to include an agenda item on upcoming board meetings to correct the record publicly and have asked her to contact the Observer to set them straight also. Only time will tell if either is accomplished.

You'll also notice that the district takes credit for the parent notification of the curriculum put into place. For the record, no such

notice was part of the original plan and was only implemented after several concerned parents requested it. You should also know that you can withdraw your kids from any curriculum.

It is outrageous that our elected officials would blatantly tell untruths to push through an agenda. Unfortunately we just re-elected two members who played a major part in this subterfuge.

Tom Glossop
Farmington

Thank You

Thanks to Power Middle School parents and local businesses, eighth graders were treated to "Beach Party 2000" on Friday, June 2. This event was held to commemorate the end of middle school and send the future Class of 2004 off to high school in the most fun and age-appropriate way possible. Students enjoyed more than a dozen games, volleyball, photo booth, and of course, food and prizes!

In addition to parent contributions, many local businesses stepped up to show their support. These businesses include:

Focal Point Photography, Meijer, Papa Romano's (8 & Gill), Fresh Approach, Sam's Club, Busch's Market, Costco, Novi Town Center Theatre, Panera Bread, Border's Books, Harmony House and Tubby's (Grand River and Lakeway).

Local businesses are frequently asked to support events held throughout the Farmington Public Schools. They deserve our business and our thanks for showing support for our students.

In addition, thanks go to the following "Beach Party 2000" committee chair people for months of hard work prior to and including June 2. They are: Robbie Berndt, Joleen Duprey, Rhonda Joseph, Wendy Cliff, Judy Glass, Linda Smith, Karen Matthys, Olive Awad and Anne Marie Fallon.

Cindi Helisek & Karen Kopicko
Farmington area parents

Farmington Observer

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— Philip Power