

Memorial Day 2001



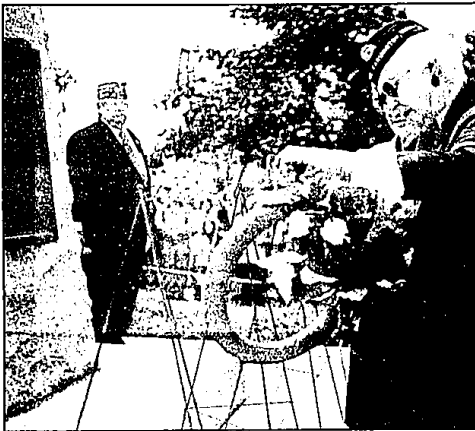
STAFF PHOTO BY SHARON LEMIEUX

Grand old flag: WWII veteran Ira Wing salutes the flag during Monday's Memorial Day service, held in downtown Farmington. Wing is a member of the Farmington Hills VFW Post that recently closed its doors and merged with a Wixom post.



STAFF PHOTO BY SHARON LEMIEUX

Strike up the band: Trumpeter Aaron Ceresnie marches down Grand River with the North Farmington High School Marching Band. Harrison and Farmington High bands also marched; the Farmington band played during the ceremony at Memorial Park.



STAFF PHOTO BY SHARON LEMIEUX

Remembering: With event organizer Wally Christensen looking on, Mary Goller-Kilts and Helen Currie present a wreath honoring World War I veterans at the war memorial. Along with individual wreaths, Mayor Nancy Bates placed one in honor of fallen veterans from all wars.



STAFF PHOTO BY SHARON LEMIEUX

Floating along: Members of the American Legion Unit #346 Women's Auxiliary waved their flags as they rode on their poppy-decorated float through downtown Farmington on Monday morning. Parade-goers enjoyed mild temperatures, even though clouds filled the sky.

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MEAP test given in the 11th grade, because the number of students taking the test has dramatically increased.

There was a "major high school rebellion" against MEAP then, not only in the Farmington school district but in others, he said. Under 20 percent took the test at North Farmington High, for example. Participation has increased to 80-95 percent, he said.

Maxfield believes parents became convinced MEAP was a bad idea, based on skepticism with the testing in other districts and stories parents passed down. "It became an urban legend," he said.

The Michigan Merit Award of \$2,500 each for students who scored well generated renewed interest in the test, he said.

"The curriculum around which MEAP is based has become our core curriculum," Maxfield said.

No surprises

The S&P analysis looks at six core categories related to student success. It is based on information collected from S&P's own data bases and those of the state, municipalities and colleges.

Maxfield said district officials weren't surprised by the report. "There's nothing here that we

aren't already working on," he said. "This isn't new data."

While the report isn't designed to be used for "snapshot" comparisons, several charts list district, county, peer, and state averages.

"They arbitrarily chose districts similar in geographical location and called them our 'peer' group," Maxfield said. "It's an attempt to compare us with like districts, community background and aspirations."

Districts also were invited to submit a "perspective" detailing what makes each unique and what it would specifically want people to know about it.

Some results

■ The dropout rate in the district is 2.7 percent, which is moderately below the state average of 3.9 percent, but higher than the peer group average. Maxfield questions that data, because it doesn't include kids who may take a little extra time to finish.

"We have this marvelous alternative academy program," he said. "For some kids it just takes a fifth year to go to college. In a community like this one, even a 1 or 2 percent dropout rate should be a source of concern."

■ Operation and maintenance expenditure of \$1,337 per stu-

dent are exceptionally above the state average of \$864 and higher than the peer group average. Statewide, only 1.1 percent of Michigan's school systems spend more per student on transportation than the district.

The former statistic is due to the School Board's decision to spend down equity in the general fund to pay for one-time expenses in bond projects, and reduce the cost of the bond to taxpayers over four years.

"People wanted choices," Maxfield said. "They were worried about technology having a short shelf life and they said if there was some money in the general fund, it should be used. In 1999, expenditures were at an all-time high."

■ The district has higher-than-state-average teacher salaries. "We are proud of that," Maxfield said. "Like it or not, it is a quality measure. We are able to attract the best teachers. There's probably three or four districts in the county that are higher than us."

Of the more than 900 teachers, more than half have been hired since Maxfield became superintendent seven years ago.

Highlights of the S&P report may be presented at the June 19 board meeting, he said.

Mort Crim Bill Bonds & Neil Shine personal appearance

Saturday, June 2
Mort Crim, 1 to 2 pm
Bill Bonds, 1:30 to 2:30 pm
Neil Shine, 2 to 3 pm
In Stationery
Livonia

Celebrated broadcast journalists Mort Crim and Bill Bonds and retired *Detroit Free Press* Editor Neil Shine are well-known personalities in the Detroit Metro area. They are featured in *Motor City Memoirs*, a new book about 65 famous people whose roots are in Detroit. Meet them here, and have them autograph a copy of the book for you.



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Community musical slates auditions for 'Bye Bye Birdie'

An informational meeting for the Farmington School District/Community musical, *Bye Bye Birdie*, will be held at 7 p.m. Monday, June 4 in the auditorium of North Farmington High School. Auditions will be held June 11

with call-backs on Tuesday, June 12. To be eligible to audition you must be a resident of Farmington/Farmington Hills, or be an employee of the Farmington Public Schools or an immediate family member of an employee of Farmington Public

Schools. Also, auditions are open to any freshman through senior in high school beginning the 2001-02 school year or an adult meeting the resident criteria.

Call Sue Cobb at (248) 489-3539 for more information.