

Last year's access highlights at SWOCC feature big changes

Change! That's the best word to describe 2001 ... from transforming our identity to "SWOCC Studios" to drafting plans for a new state-of-the-art facility to be ready this summer. The numbers are finally in and it's been the busiest year ever.

After years of negotiations, the new 15-year franchise agreement with Time Warner went into effect on Jan. 1, 2001. One of the biggest changes was Public Access moving from Time Warner to SWOCC Studios. Now, all access production for four channels (Farmington Hills Channel 8, Farmington Hills 13 and INFO TV-12) is under one roof with a new look, a new logo and more efficient management.

What's more, our cable access operations expanded. We had three times more production at SWOCC, installed a new sophisticated playback system, which improved on-air scheduling, and increased staffing to meet the growing need, our three cities and access users.

Here's a look at some of the 2001 highlights:

The SWOCC commission held seven public meetings at Farmington and Farmington Hill's city halls. The Cable Access Committee held eight public meetings at SWOCC Studios and welcomed one new member.

In its regulatory role, SWOCC acts as an ombudsman for residents who have problems with the cable operator, Time Warner. The number of complaints in 2001 was 100 less than those

received in 2000, but most of the callers took issue with the high cost of cable.

Production

In order to accommodate increased access TV production, SWOCC was open 900 hours more than in 2000. This contributed to 13 more Community productions, and 79 more Public Access programs. The SWOCC staff conducted 21 workshops to train residents in TV production and that led to 50 certified access users putting out programming throughout the year.

Since Time Warner closed its studio, we've been working in cramped quarters. SWOCC purchased a new building in March 2001 and began renovation in the fall. Soon we'll be able to move into this new facility that is three times the size of our current facility.

SWOCC is able to execute its regulatory and TV production functions through franchise fees. Those are fees provided to SWOCC and the cities by Time Warner in exchange for its use of the rights-of-way in our cities. Additionally, since Time Warner no longer provides a staff and studio for public access, they pay an additional grant to SWOCC as a condition of the 2000 franchise agreement.

This had to be the most exciting and perhaps rewarding year for me since taking the position of Executive Director. We are

meeting our resident's information needs by fast becoming one of the premier Cable Access Centers in the country.

Caren Collins is the Executive Director of the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission (SWOCC). The next SWOCC meeting is 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 4 at Farmington City Hall. The next SWOCC study session is 4:30 p.m. Thursday, June 27 at Farmington City Hall.

CABLE CONNECTION

SINGLES MINGLE

Send items for consideration in singles calendar to *Hometown Life*, Observer Newspapers, 33411 Grand River, Farmington, MI 48335, fax (248) 477-9722.

QUICK DATE
Meet 10-15 new people for 5 minutes each, at 7:15 Tuesday July 9 at the 5th Avenue Ballroom, 25760 Novi Rd., in Novi. Registration is required. Call (517) 552-0673 or www.quickdateinfo.com.

SINGLE MINGLES

Metropolitan Single Professionals host Single Mingle dances every Friday. For times and location call (248) 651-9909.

PARK VOLLEYBALL
Play volleyball in the park 6:30 p.m.-dusk every Tuesday at Heritage Park in Farmington Hills.

BOOK DISCUSSION
Metropolitan Single Professionals book discussion group meets at 7:30 p.m. the second Monday of the month at Borders Books in Farmington Hills.

RELIGION CALENDAR

If you want to submit an item for the religion calendar, fax it to (248) 477-9722 or write: Religion Calendar, Farmington Observer, 33411 Grand River, Farmington, MI 48323. The deadline for an announcement to appear in the Thursday edition is noon Monday.

Road, corner of Farmington Road, (248) 626-7906.

ONGOING

WIDOW/WIDOWER SUPPORT
New Hope Center for Grief Support, a Christian-based bereavement outreach center, offers support for widows and widowers with children on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. The group meets at 7 p.m. at St. Kenneth's Parish offices, 14951 Haggerty, Plymouth. New Hope for Kids meets at the same time and place and is aimed at ages 4-11. (248) 348-0115.

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER
Weekend experience for married couples to improve their communication skills and renew their love. Friday-Sunday, June 28-30 and Sept. 20-22 at St. John's Family Life Center, 44011 Five Mile Road, Plymouth. Registration \$50, call Bill & Carol, (248) 528-2512 or Dan & Debbie (810) 256-5524 or visit www.rel.net/detroit/wwwme

PRESCHOOL

ANTIOCH LUTHERAN CHURCH
Offers Christian based preschool for children age 3 and 4. Now accepting registration. Credentialed staff, small class size, at the church on the corner of 13 Mile Road at Farmington Road in Farmington Hills, (248) 626-7906.

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SPECIAL EVENTS

SPIRITUAL CLASSES
Campus Ministries will host two classes at St. Fabian Church in Farmington Hills. What does it mean to be in love? will be held 7:30-9 p.m. Wednesday, July 10 and Where does God fit into all this? will take place 7:30-9 p.m. Thursday, July 11. St. Fabian Church is located at 12 Mile and Orchard Lake Roads. For more information call (248) 622-3748.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

ORCHARD UNITED BIBLE SCHOOL
Orchard United Methodist Church in Farmington Hills will offer Vacation Bible School 9 a.m.-noon, July 22-25. Kids ages four through fifth grade will enjoy a "Bug Safari," a sing-a-long and more. For registration information call (248) 626-3620.

CHURCH SERVICES

ANTIOCH LUTHERAN CHURCH
Summer Sunday service 9:30 a.m. through Labor Day weekend. Contemporary Praise service 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Aug. 28, preceded by 6:30 p.m. Bible study. The church is at 33390 W. 13 Mile

OUR MAPLE STREET STORE WILL CLOSE ITS DOORS FOREVER ON SATURDAY AT SIX P.M.!

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LOOK WHAT WE FOUND! SPECIAL ODDS AND ENDS LIQUIDATION LOT: INCLUDES Dozens and dozens of miscellaneous items found while clearing our warehouse. (We've been accumulating odds and ends for 15 years!) Odd lot mirrors, accessories, chairs, lamps, tables and much, much more. **YOUR CHOICE: As Low As 29¢ ON THE DOLLAR!**

LIQUIDATION LOT BL-044: Special Selection of Windsor Dining Chairs - black distressed finish. Also in this lot: popular Sheafback Dining Chairs - black distressed finish and Lodge dining chairs, black distressed finish. **YOUR CHOICE: 50% to 71% OFF UNTIL SOLD OUT!**

FURTHER & FINAL REDUCTIONS ON ALL DINING TABLES ... Most of our tables have an old world look, but we can fit your needs for custom dimension, style and color (even at these historic reductions!)

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