

Back to school in the good 'ol days

As summer vacation for Farmington school children comes to an end, it is fun to reflect on how education has come a long way in the 178 years since Farmington was founded.



Ruth Moehman

Back in 1826, two years after the first settlers came to the township, education for their children was important. The first school was a log cabin near a creek. The school was not free but was paid for by "subscription."

The teacher was the school "master," as reported in the 1877 *History of Oakland County*. Nathan Power, Arthur Power's oldest son, was the first teacher. Arthur Power, founder of Farmington, set up Power settlement in 1824.

Nathan Power taught school more than three years and supervised the construction of a "little red schoolhouse." This frame building would have been more comfortable than a log schoolhouse.

Nathan Power, like all early male teachers, taught the winter term. Polly Ann Mead taught the summer term. The school season was short.

By 1877, there were 10 schools in Farmington Township. They were one-room schools, accommodating grades one to eight.

The school in the village was more developed. It had two departments. The male teacher taught the older children and school was in session for 40 weeks. The upper school developed into a high school.

The male teacher received \$1,000 and the female teacher \$400.

As the eight grades were taught in the one-room schools, a youngster could observe what was taught the previous year and what would be taught the next year. If a youngster graduated from the eighth grade and passed a county exam, he or she could teach in the rural schools.

Each of the ten districts had its own school board and controlled the individual school. The schools were usually built on land donated by a local farmer and often named for that person. The local board arranged for taxes in the district and hired the teachers. They often arranged for housing for the teacher in the homes in the district.

The county supplied a course of study and often sent a supervisor to the schools to offer suggestions. Some of the districts crossed township boundaries and were called fractional districts. The school taxes that supported the school could be paid by those farmers to the school of choice.

This is how some children in West Bloomfield Township attended Fractional District Number One or the German School, the only one-room school still standing that is recognizable as an early one-room school.

The selection of a school to suit the person's needs is also how the children in the Green School District, in the western part of Farmington joined the Walled Lake District. An agricultural high school program was established in Walled Lake about 1900 which was very attractive to children who wanted to farm.

In the one room schools boys came in on one side of the door and the girls on the other. School lasted from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. with an hour for lunch and a break for recess. There was no physical education and often the children organized their own games and activities at recess. Sometimes they just played.

The schools were heated by a wood burning stove, usually placed in the center of the room and the teacher often taught from a raised platform. The plumbing was outside.

The children brought their lunches in metal pails and drinking fountain was often a bucket with one dipper used by all. Sometimes there was a well and sometimes the drinking water had to be brought in.

The children wrote their lessons on a slate. Spelling bees were popular. Sometimes the schools had small libraries.

Children walked to school or were transported by their families.

In the early agricultural communities an eighth grade education was considered adequate.

While some very young teachers were in some classrooms, sometimes outstanding individuals came to teach. Some may have earned money for their education others had university degrees. Many of the teachers attended normal or teaching college while working in the one room school houses.

The West Farmington School was used by some students at the forerunner of Eastern Michigan University to train as student teachers.

The students who attended high school had their tuition paid by the local districts. They had to supply their own transportation and sometimes housing.

By the turn of the century Farmington students attended high school in Pontiac, Detroit and Northville as tuition students.

Many farming students who had their early education in a one room school went on to attend universities.

The Farmington Schools consolidated in 1944 and the whole community worked toward the outstanding school system Farmington enjoys today.

The German School is on Middlebelt Road between Northwestern Highway and 14 Mile on the east side of the road.

Ruth Moehman is a local historian. This article is based on many sources including the Walled Lake Heritage Homes of Farmington, a book she authored which contains information on many area schools.)

WEDDINGS & ENGAGEMENTS

McKelley-Green
Danielle Faye Green and Brandon Paul McKelley were married June 26, 2002 at Hyde Park Community United Methodist Church in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The bride is the daughter of Rebecca and Eric Bommer of Hamilton, Ohio and Diane and Steven Green of Baltimore, Md. She attends Miami University in Oxford, Ohio and is an art education major.

The groom is the son of Dennis and Sandra McKelley of Farmington Hills. He earned a bachelor's degree in business information management systems from Miami University in Ohio and is currently employed by Johnson Investment Company in Cincinnati.

Campbell-Matthews
James and Linda Campbell of Farmington Hills announce the engagement of their daughter Julie to Paul Matthews, son of Ronald and Gail Matthews of Royal Oak.

The bride-to-be is a graduate of Michigan State University and is currently employed at Perry Johnson, Inc. Her fiancé attends Walsh College of Business and is employed by the City of Birmingham. He will graduate this December.

A September wedding is planned in Northville and the couple will make their home in Royal Oak.



by Johnson Investment Company in Cincinnati. The newlyweds honeymooned in St. Thomas and make their home in Mt. Look, a suburb of Cincinnati.



planned in Northville and the couple will make their home in Royal Oak.

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, 3341 Grand River, Farmington, MI 48335. The deadline for an announcement to appear in the Thursday edition is noon Monday.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Rummage Sale

St. Alexander's Church in Farmington Hills will hold a garage sale 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 28 and 29 and 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Friday, Aug. 30. The church is located at 27835 Silwassee.

Fall Festival

First Presbyterian Church of Farmington will host a Fall Festival beginning at noon on Sunday, Sept. 15. The day will include lawn games, a barbecue picnic, face painting for kids, and more. For more information call the church at (248) 474-6170. The church is located at 11 Mile and Farmington Road. All are welcome.

SEPT. 11

Hardin 9/11 Remembrance

Hardin Park United Methodist Church in Farmington Hills will observe Sept. 11 with a service of remembrance 12:15-12:45 p.m. and a community candlelight vigil at 7:30 p.m. at Farmington High School. The church sanctuary will also be open all day for prayer. The church is located at 29887 W. 11 Mile.

Jewish Community Center

The Jewish Community Center in West Bloomfield will begin observance of Sept. 11 at 8:30 a.m. with a variety of special presentations including a special presentation to the West Bloomfield Police and Fire Departments. The JCC Kahn Building is located at 6600 W. Maple Road.

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 33360 W. 13 Mile Road, corner of Farmington Road, (248) 626-1906.

St. John Lutheran Church

Construction of St. John's new worship and fellowship center at 23225 Gill Road has begun. Summer Sunday services will be offered 8:30 a.m. and 10 a.m. through Sept. 1. The early service features traditional liturgy, communion and hymns. The late service alternates weekly between traditional and contemporary praise worship. The next contemporary service is July 28. Call (248) 474-0584.

PRESCHOOL

Antioch Lutheran Church

Offers Christian-based preschool for children age 3 and 4 and is now accepting registrations. Credentialed staff, small class sizes are offered at the church on the corner of 13 Mile Road at Farmington Road in Farmington Hills, (248) 626-1906.

Observer Classifieds really work! Call 800-579-SELL today!!

CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
31555 ELEVEN MILE ROAD
FARMINGTON HILLS
MICHIGAN 48336-1165

CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARINGS

DATES: September 9, 2002 and September 23, 2002

PLACE: Farmington Hills City Hall
31555 West Eleven Mile Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48336

Please take notice that the Farmington Hills City Council will conduct two public hearings for the purpose of considering a tax abatement for a proposed expansion to the Akabona Corporation facility located at 34385 West Twelve Mile Road.

September 9, 2002 - Consideration of establishment of an Industrial Development District to be located at 34385 West Twelve Mile Road.

September 23, 2002 - Consideration of approval of application for a tax exemption certificate (tax abatement) for property located at 34385 West Twelve Mile Road.

Parcel Identification # 22 23-16-126-003

Any person interested is invited to participate in the discussion of this issue. Comments may be submitted in writing to Kathryn A. Dornan, City Clerk, 31555 W. 11 Mile Road, Farmington Hills, MI 48336.

For additional information: Chuck Holmea, City Manager's Office (248) 473-9200.

Published: August 29 and September 1, 2002

5.1130-0000

New Dance Studio Opening In Farmington! Classes Begin Monday, Sept. 9th



**Miss Laurie's
Positive Attitude
Dance Academy**

23317 Orchard Lake • Farmington
(Just N. Of Grand River)

Ballet, Tap, Jazz, Lyrical, Hip Hop, Musical Theatre, Modern, Competition Program & Fencing

- Ages 3 To Adult And Boys Classes
- Nationally Famous Guest Teacher Workshops
- Audition For The Nutcracker Suite Will Be Held In September

For Information Call Laurie Smalis At: **248-476-2099**



Always A Step Above!
Dance Educators of America

Any hospital can say their doctors are the best.

At Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital, our patients say it for us.

When you're seen by a Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital doctor, you'll see why they're among the nation's highest-rated in customer satisfaction surveys. Thousands of patients have given our doctors high marks for their expertise, responsiveness and compassionate patient care.

Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital doctors cover the spectrum of specialties. And, you'll be pleased to find that many Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital physicians have offices conveniently located in your neighborhood.

Our doctors care about you—and providing the skills and services patients care about most when selecting a doctor.

To schedule an appointment with a Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital physician in your area, call 1-888-DMC-2500.



Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital
Detroit Medical Center/Wayne State University

248-937-3300
www.hvsh.org

Millan Aboud, Minutes Away

Our doctors rate highest in the things
customers care about most:

- ✓ Time physician spent with you
- ✓ Physician kept you informed
- ✓ Friendliness of physician
- ✓ Physician concern with questions/worries
- ✓ Skill of physician