

Honor Roll Causes Comment

Farmington ENTERPRISE & OBSERVER

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During the past six weeks our phones have been busy with calls inquiring why we have ceased printing the lengthy honors of Farmington's junior and senior high schools. An answer for all is in order.

The primary reasons can be boiled down to three. They are:

First and foremost, the standard for being on the "honor roll" is a B grade (3.0 average where an A equals 4.0). College dean's lists require a 3.5 average; honor society requirements also are higher than the 3.0 standards. Thus it is an open question whether the local lists are true honor rolls.

Second, a comparison of the number of names on some of the lists to the total enrollment of the school revealed that fully a third of the entire school was on the honor roll. To print the entire list each report card marking would require, over the course of a school year, printing a list equal to double the entire enrollment.

Names make news, but lists of names aren't news. If they were the telephone directory would qualify for page one and people would read it rather than the newspaper or the most recent best-seller.

Next reason is the fact that there was some misuse of the "honor rolls." The classic case was the mother who said unashamed-

ly that, when a couple of the neighborhood kids acted up, she would cut 'em down by reminding them that their names weren't on the "honor roll." This newspaper does not intend to be a party to that type of neighborhood social pressure.

The custom of a weekly newspaper's printing "honor roll" lists stems from the paper's need for material to fill its columns and the days when everyone knew everyone else in the community and in the school district.

The lists required no creativity or no production on the part of the news staff. For a hum-drum country weekly, it was OK.

Farmington is growing pretty rapidly, though, and its residents have a pretty high level of intelligence and high tastes. We think that it needs and deserves a good, polished newspaper reflecting the community and the world today.

That's why the boss is willing to spend a great deal of money on staff and photos. He is, and we are, making a conscious effort to

gather more professional, more creative stories.

Some of our more recent efforts along this line have been: How do the schools measure up to Dr. Conant's standards for the comprehensive high school? How has the Board of Education handled the phenomenon of the student driver? And why are Farmington art students such standouts in the entire three-county metropolitan area?

One other complaint which we heard after our decision on the "honor rolls" became known was that we were failing to emphasize the "positive" side of today's teenagers. One mother in particular termed a story on the cafeteria boycott at the Junior High as "incitement" to other students.

Stories answering the how and the why certainly emphasize the positive.

The student's action at the junior high was news. It also reflects today's teenager who is no more lily-white nor completely evil than his parents. He is simply normal and in reporting on the community this paper will continue to report on both the good and the not-so-good activities of today's teenagers in Farmington.

SUE SHAUGHNESSY



GUESTS AT KENBROOK SCHOOL April 28 were entertained with presentations by the three sixth grade classes of three plays by Shakespeare and a program of madrigal singing. Re-enacting their roles in "Twelfth Night" are (left to right) Brian Kay as Fleste the Jester, Peggy McCort as Olivia and Chuck DeClarke as Orsino.



SIXTH GRADE PUPILS at Kenbrook School presented three plays by Shakespeare at a program April 28. Those who helped enact "The Taming of the Shrew" included (left to right) Paula Nielson as Bianca, Linda Girolani as Katherine the shrew and Jim Laugh as Baptista.

Vocational Vote Set

EDITOR'S NOTE: On June 12, Farmington school district voters, along with voters in other Oakland County districts, will decide whether to levy up to a half-mill for an area vocational-technical education program.

This is the third in a series of question and answer articles provided by the Oakland County Board of Education on the proposal.

Q. What is the construction time table for these centers?

A. If the June 12 vote is favorable, approximately 12 months should be allowed for the architects to plan and design the facilities and an additional 18 months for construction.

Q. How will the existing districts profit from the establishments of these centers?

A. Approximately 10 per cent of the 11th and 12th graders in Oakland County are expected to take advantage of the opportunities offered. The local high school would be operating a truly comprehensive program and giving each student equal opportunity commensurate with his abilities and desires.

Q. What happens when more students apply for a program than there are openings?

A. It is expected that the district administering the Area Center would anticipate the interest of the student and provide programs in sufficient numbers which will accommodate the students. The decision as to which programs would be admitted to which programs is a cooperative one arrived at by both the Area Center Principal and the home high school Principal. If the problem cannot be resolved at the local level it is then resolved at the intermediate district level.

Q. What uses can these centers serve after the regular school hours?

A. The availability of the Area Center will be determined by the local operating board of education.

Q. What happens to our co-op programs?

A. It is expected that co-op programs will continue to be administered in the home high schools.

Q. What provisions are there for parochial students?

A. The availability of programs at the Area Centers for parochial students will be the same

as for public school students from the constituent districts.

Q. How many years must a school district enter into a contract with the intermediate district for?

A. The minimum amount of time as specified in the statutes is 15 years.

Q. Who will provide transportation between the home high school and the Area Centers?

A. Each district will be responsible for the transportation of its students.

Q. What courses will be offered in the centers?

A. Seven criteria, selected on the basis of the understood purpose of vocational education, were applied by the Superintendents Task Force on Curriculum to the occupations identified in a survey of firms in Oakland County.

The following occupational areas meet the criteria established by the task force and were considered suitable for inclusion in the Area Center: health occupation, clerical and sales, computing and account recording, food and beverage preparation, metal working, mechanics, welding, apparel and furnishing occupation, machine repair (business machines, air conditioning, refrigerator and hearing) and electrical equipment repair (larger appliances, radio, and television).

Q. What would be the cost per student?

A. The operational cost per student is estimated to be at \$750 per full-time student. Are there other monies available for instruction, construction, equipment, and administration?

A. According to the Michigan State Plan for Vocational Education area programs are eligible for 50 per cent of the administrative salaries, 50 per cent of equipment cost, 50 per cent of construction cost, and 25 per cent of instructional salaries.

Q. What question will appear on the ballot?

A. "Shall Oakland Schools Intermediate District of School Administration, State of Michigan, come under the provisions of Sections 207A to 224A of the School Code of 1955, as amended, which are designed to encourage the establishment and contracting for the operation of Area Vocational-Technical Education Programs if any annual property tax levied for this purpose is limited to one-half (1/2) mill?"

YES ()
NO ()

Teacher Speaks Up On Negotiations

EDITOR: Farmington school district residents who are interested in the future of their schools are urged to give attention to the School Board's lack of action regarding negotiations with the Farmington Education Association. While a major part of the laborer sits in silence, the Board's negotiation team continues to pussy-foot around and skirt issues about which the teachers are in dead earnest.

Now, all of this is undercutting the very school system that in the past was carefully built and preserved to give Farmington one of the better school districts in the state. However, the past is so long with us and, among other things, we are losing good teachers at an alarming rate as those of us with youngsters in our schools can attest.

FARMINGTON has been reasonably effective in attracting many new and experienced teachers (132 hired last year both new and replacement). But why should we need so many inexperienced teachers? Of the large number who left the district last year, many were very good and highly competent, experienced teachers.

This is because little attention has been given to the needs of teachers who have served our boys and girls? As parents we all realize that our children profit more from the instruction of good experienced teachers than from too many of those fresh out of school.

Those of us who have been around for any length of time know that far too many teachers leave this district year after year because of poor working conditions salary structure,

and lack of equitable fringe benefits. I understand that many more will leave this year for these reasons as well as for the poor negotiations climate this spring.

Many teachers are uncertain about their futures in Farmington with no contract in sight. They would rather go where working conditions are better to begin with and where salary and fringe benefits show much more promise for the future.

In our junior high last year 22 teachers left, in another 13. Many high school and elementary teachers left as well. Granted that not all left for the reasons given, but too many did. I prefer to have my own youngsters taught by effective continuing teachers for as many years as possible. Wouldn't you?

OTHER districts benefit by our errors. Shall their boys and girls enjoy the instruction of the teachers who have learned on our children and have here because they cannot afford to stay? Remember that most of these teachers, like you and me, are parents who have gravenational responsibilities and they too, pay taxes in the district.

Thus, we must not only keep the effective experienced teachers, but also strive to encourage as many of our good new teachers to stay and thereby pass on their valuable experience to our youngsters. We certainly do not want Farmington to become a training center for teachers to gain a year or two of experience only to move on to a better paying job affording greater financial independence and professional integrity. (In 1965-1966 22.5 per cent of those teachers employed left)

We lose good teachers through inattention and apathy on the part of the School Board and the administration in the areas of working conditions, hours, wages, and the genuine needs of the staff as fellow human beings. This has long since ceased to be an issue on which the School Board dare delay.

Consider the fate of our schools if there continues to be a large turnover of experienced teachers going to other districts in business and industry. Other districts realize it is worth the dollars it costs to keep good teachers. Why doesn't Farmington?

It is a paradox that Farmington, which ranks third in Michigan in effective buying income, should rank near the bottom in effectively negotiated contracts in terms of making the teachers economically self-subsistent for this area.

Most of the above I have said as a parent with youngsters of my own in our schools. Now, I would like to speak as the chief negotiator for the Farmington Education Association and as a master teacher here for the past fourteen years.

It is not bargaining in good faith nor encouraging good teachers to stay for the Board's negotiating team to offend the teaching staff by repugnant articles in a stifling and repressive nature designed to further erode an already poor morale.

Further, these articles, proffered by the Board's team, exacerbate the staff in a most unpalatable way.

Taking giant and bizarre steps backward is hardly the manner in which you build a forward-looking contract that

will retain good teachers and attract others as we grow. It is stringing negotiations by watering down old proposals with 19th century provisions and totally unacceptable "stuffed" regarding working conditions. This has long since ceased to be an issue on which the School Board dare delay.

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Miss Mossamer Gives Recital

Susan Mossamer, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edgar L. Mossamer, of 24032 Moore Drive, Farmington will present her senior vocal recital today at 4 p.m. in the auditorium of the Michigan State University music building. Miss Mossamer, a mezzo-soprano, will graduate in June with a bachelor of music degree from Michigan State.

Included in the recital will be three early Italian opera numbers with flute and oboe accompaniment written by Agostino Steffani. Also, two dramatic French arias, one from the opera "L'Enfant Prodiges," the other from "Mignon" by Ambroise Thomas, will be sung along with a group of German lieder. The program will close with four contemporary American art songs. The performance is open to the public.

Receives Honors Aboard USS Guam

Claire Belleau, of Farmington, is among the 27 students at Lake Superior State College in Sault Ste. Marie, who have been placed on the dean's list for academic excellence.

Miss Belleau, a junior in business administration, has a 3.50 grade point average out of a possible 4.0.

Electrician's Mate 3/C Michael E. Kutischek, USN, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry W. Kutischek, 28146 David Road, is in the Caribbean where he took part in a joint service amphibious training exercise named "Clove Hitch III." As a crewmember aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Guam,

Why Not Print The Honor Rolls?

EDITOR: As a public service, you are to meet the needs of your readers and not just your own. I am referring to your policy of just printing the names of students who received all A's on their report cards.

Long before the Observer took over, the Enterprise had the policy of printing the names of all students who received all A's and it's that were placed on the Honor Roll.

It seems to me if a student worked hard to receive this recognition, that he should be recognized for this effort. Parents, friends and former teachers all appreciate this effort also.

Would it be possible for you to reconsider your policy so that the full honor roll can again be printed?

MAYNARD HARRIS
16818 WHITCOMB
DETROIT

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Harris taught fifth grade at Farmington's Longacre School during the 1964-1965 school year. For an answer to his question and an explanation of our feelings on this matter, please the editorial column on this page.

At Convention

Mrs. Rosemary Montgomery, administrator, and Mrs. Louise Nunley, office manager of Farmington Medical Center, attended the Osteopathic Medical Association Convention. May 9 and 10 in Grand Rapids.