

the farmington enterprise & observer

YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

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Thursday, September 6, 1973

800 Teachers Walk Out In First FEA Strike

Farmington teachers refused to go to work Tuesday morning in the first strike in history for the Farmington school system.

The school administration asked parents to keep their children home "until further notice," after teachers voted "overwhelmingly" to strike at an early morning meeting at Our Lady of Sorrows school across from the administration building.

Negotiations continued until 5 a.m. Tuesday, but teachers and administration bargainers were still apart on the issues of salaries and class size ceilings.

About 14,000 Farmington students and 800 teachers are affected by the strike. Further negotiations with a state mediator are doubtful until Thursday, according to administration sources, although they may be scheduled earlier.

Following the early morning meeting, nearly the entire teaching staff of the district picketed the administration building in a line which stretched nearly around the building.

Later in the day, about 12 pickets remained at administration building and pickets also were at the three high schools.

Farmington Supt. Marinus Van Ameyde called the walk-out "illegal," and said "re-hiring the teachers who left their jobs" would become a part of the negotiations.

He also charged "bad faith bargaining," citing a report from the Michigan Education Assn. "crisis team," which was presented to the teachers on Tuesday, although dated Aug. 30.

He said the all-night bargaining session was therefore held with the FEA and MEA already intending to strike.

Teachers on the picket line refused any idea the walkout didn't have the full support of the teachers.

"I have to feed my family," one teacher said. He felt the administration's last salary offer—a five per cent increase—was below the cost of living.

Several picket signs referred to a "pay cut" being asked by the administration.

Asked what prompted the walkout this year, when in the past the teachers had often begun the school year with a contract still in negotiations, another teacher replied:

"It's the militancy of the administration this year—they just haven't moved much on their original position."

At the bargaining table are basically two issues:

- The FEA wants a "cap," or maximum class size in the contract. The administration says this would both be expensive and difficult to manage, involving complicated adjustments if the class size is exceeded.

- Salaries are currently being negotiated with the FEA demanding a "cost of living"—estimated at about 6.5 per cent, and the administration's last offer at about five per cent.

"Cost of living is a misleading figure," LeRoy Bartman, director of personnel, said.

The computed cost of living actually includes some factors like medical care that are automatically adjusted outside of the salaries, he said.



PICKET LINES stretched around the school administration building as teachers

walked out for the first time in the Farmington School District. (Evert photo)

Today's hot line

Volume 84 Number 94 • Four News Sections

what's inside

Board Reacts

Negotiations were continuing on Wednesday, but the Farmington school board made it clear it was unhappy with the teachers' strike. Comments from the board were heard at Monday's meeting.

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A Pattern?

Three Observerland teachers' unions went on strike, a fourth settled just before Labor Day, a fifth is in arbitration, and others have temporarily extended their contracts. Is there a pattern? Here's a suburban roundup.

Page 16B

Poster Girl

The symbol of the 1973 drive to raise funds for United Way in Michigan is a pretty Farmington girl who has leukemia. You'll want to meet her in Observing Life.

Page 5C

Best Buy

It's powdered milk, say many nutritionists. Today we have an assortment of recipes that use this thrifty, wholesome product.

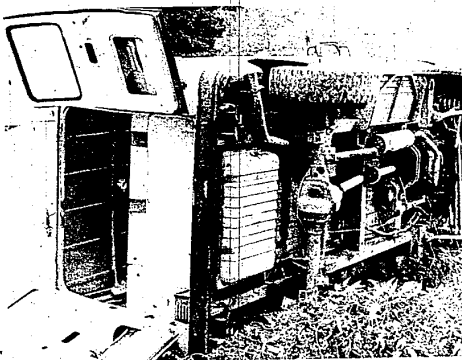
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Great Books

A program of serious reading for fun opens soon in the Carl Sandburg Library in Livonia, and several area libraries are participating. You can get the details in today's Observing Life.

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BALD TIRES were blamed in this accident when a privately-owned school bus driven by Dorris Hawley, Royal Oak, skidded and overturned on Middle Belt south of 11 Mile last week in Farmington Hills. A citation for defective equipment was issued to Kenneth Coppock, owner of Servair Inc., Royal Oak, by Farmington Hills police. Mrs. Hawley was injured in the accident; she was alone in the bus. The mini-busses are injured to transport special education children under contract. (Photo by Ralph Evert)

Enterprise & Observer Is Changing Delivery

Beginning Friday, Oct. 5, the weekend edition of the Farmington Enterprise & Observer will be delivered on Friday afternoon instead of Saturday.

Observer Publisher Philip H. Power explained that the changed publication date has important advantages for Observer newspaper readers, advertisers and carriers.

"A Friday paper will give our readers up-to-date news and information on weekend local entertainment and leisure time events in time for them to plan their weekend activities. In addition, a Friday afternoon paper brings news of special sales and promotions by local merchants in time for Friday night and weekend shopping," Power explained.

"Our newspaper carriers will benefit, because it is possible for them to be with their families throughout the entire weekend, instead of having to deliver on Saturday. This should further improve our delivery to our readers," Power added. Power explained that the shift in publication day was

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Hills Council Picks Out-Of-State Manager

Farmington Hills has tentatively selected the present city manager of Webster Groves, Mo., to fill the post of the first city manager of the new city.

The appointment of George L. Majors, 41, has been informally agreed on by the city council, and is expected

to be confirmed by official action next Monday, according to Mayor Robert McConnell.

Majors holds degrees in both civil engineering and public administration from the University of Michigan. His background in road maintenance and construction was cited as one of the main criteria for his selection from the 60 applicants.

Webster Groves is a suburban community of 28,000, where Majors currently supervises 170 full time employees.

Majors is credited with developing several major programs in his term in Missouri.

These include:

- Federally funded urban renewal.
- Open space acquisition.

- Historical preservation.
- Establishment of an environmental services program to reduce residential decay by strict code enforcement.

He is expected to visit Farmington this weekend to look for a home for his wife and four children.

The city manager is the main administrative official under the new city structure. With a salary tentatively set at \$28,000, the manager is a full time professional with the responsibility of the management of all city departments.

Currently Clerk Floyd Cairns is working as a temporary appointee to the job.

The selection of a manager was done with the assistance of a management recruitment firm which released



GEORGE L. MAJORS

the names of 12 men to the city council, according to McConnell.

The council then interviewed six candidates before making the selection, he added.

Schools OK Budget; Include Tax Hike

Salaries, reading specialists reduction, and increases for student activities were among items questioned by the audience during a public hearing on the 1973-74 Farmington School District Budget.

The budget will increase this year by more than \$2.4 million, said William G. Prisk, business manager for the district.

The budget totaled \$19.2 million, up from \$17.1 million last year. Some \$225,000 of the increase was "delayed spending" from last year-budgeted expenditures which weren't included in the last fiscal year, according to Prisk.

He said this has the effect of adding an apparent \$452,000 increase to the figures, which actually is a bookkeeping method.

Income for the budget comes from anticipated increases from all sources, local taxes and state aid.

The estimated state aid figure is \$6.1 million, up from \$5.8 million last year.

Local taxes are expected to yield \$11.8 million, compared to \$10.2 million last year.

Local taxes include an effective .07 mill tax increase. The debt retirement millage was reduced by one mill, and the board levied 1.2 mills allowed by the Oakland County allocation board, and 0.5 mills unlevied from the operating limit.

More than \$1.9 million of the increase will come in the form of "wage and salary improvements or additions," Prisk told the audience. Other items accounting for the increase include fuel, utilities, supply items and special education costs required under the state's new mandatory special education act.

Supt. Marinus Van Ameyde said the district "has elected to take the position that the

most important part of the needs is teachers. The district ranks 10th in ability to pay, but our salaries are third—sixth in pay."

Reductions were made in some areas; to give others priority, according to the administration. Three elementary reading specialists were cut from the budget to give priority to the junior high expansion in reading.

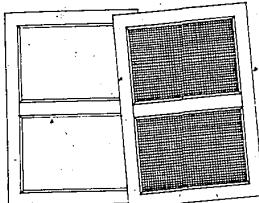
"The budget is a living document, and I hope the board would give some consideration to restoring the reading specialists," said former board member Aldo Vagnozzi.

Discussing revenues for the coming year, Prisk said: "We have taken the law at face value and assumed that reimbursements will be fully funded. In the past, the state has not been able to fully fund its programs."

Also expected to affect revenue are the 1.4 mills allocation

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