

## Beef up bargaining might

# Teachers join regional unit

By LYNN ORR

Farmington teachers made their first official plunge into regional bargaining recently as they voted to join 20 other Oakland County Michigan Education Association (MEA) affiliates to coordinate bargaining efforts this year.

"There are a number of reasons for the decision," said Farmington Education Association (FEA) President Ken Barry. "Coordinated bargaining will help us get better contracts than we've been getting. It's the most logical step in collective bargaining."

Before passage of Public Act 33 in 1966, which gave public employees the right to bargain as a group, teachers negotiated individual contracts with the district.

MEA affiliates in Oakland County will be coordinating their bargaining efforts, but county-wide bargaining by one agent is not the intention of the group now, he said.

"REASONABLE" SALARY increases, maintenance of "first class" health and dental insurance coverage, uniform expiration date for all county contracts, and reasonable maintenance standards are the basic goals of coordinated bargaining, said Richard Dengate, chairman for coordinated bargaining in Oakland County.

He refused to comment on whether all local bargaining units would be specifically seeking the same goals in terms of salary increases, class size and insurance.

"I'm not saying we won't and I'm not saying we will," said Dengate.

Barry deferred to Dengate about the possibility of uniform goals.

Dengate said coordinated bargaining will avoid duplication of efforts in local districts without attempting a master contract for the county.

The main thrust now, he said, is a series of training sessions for negotiations.

**BARRY SAID** the Michigan Supreme Court decision in the Crestwood case, which upheld the district's right to fire striking teachers, is part of the impetus behind coordinated bargaining.

"Our teachers believe we have less of a bargaining position at the table as a result of the Crestwood decision," he said. "If you upset the balance of equivalent power so that either side has tremendously more power, do you exert any kind of pressure?"

"We've been forced to look at other options, and coordinated bargaining is an option we've chosen. Contract bargaining has always been tough, and it's going to get tougher."

"But I don't think teachers are going to run scared," he said. FFEA, representing about 800 Farmington teachers, will expire Aug. 31. Barry expects to meet soon with district officials to lay the ground rules and procedures for negotiations.

**COORDINATED BARGAINING EFFORTS** in Oakland County are only one aspect of a statewide drive by the MEA to coordinate teacher bargaining, said Dengate.

Projects of this sort have been de-

veloping in various areas of the state for the past few years, but this is the first year that all MEA affiliates across the state are being encouraged to participate in a statewide project.

"We hope to achieve better contract settlements for our 10,000 members here in Oakland County."

### Landsberg honored for insurance record

Farmington Hills resident Leon H. Landsberg, an agent with Connecticut Mutual Life in the Detroit area for 30 years, was recently honored for his outstanding contributions to the life insurance industry.

Landsberg received the E. H. "Bill" Meyers memorial award, given to members of the Detroit Association of Life Underwriters who have given outstanding service to the business association and community.

A graduate of Detroit's Cooley High and the University of Michigan, Landsberg joined Connecticut Mutual in 1947. During his career he has qualified 20 years for the Million Dollar

Round Table and for the National Quality Award in 26 years.

He has also been selected many times for the company's masters club, leaders round table and honor club, in addition to serving as president of board member of Detroit Life Underwriters Association and the Detroit Chapter of the Chartered Life Underwriters.

He has also won Connecticut Mutual's Scholarship Award, the Bernard S. Rose scholarship award, and several other awards given by the insurance industry.

Landsberg and his wife Patricia live at 28108 Harwick with their two children.

### NFH grad is a Chattertock

Dorecy Baker, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Baker of Novi, is a junior at the University in Rhode Island and is majoring in history.

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