

Public infringement on private enterprise?

By Brian Murphy
staff writer

Officials at several area preschools say the Farmington Public Schools (FPS) are infringing on their rights and their pocketbooks with the district's own preschool operations.

The FPS opened the Fairview Early Childhood Center about four years ago. Now, due to increasing enrollment, the district plans to open Alameda Early Childhood Center this fall, according to Donald Howell, FPS director of community services and federal projects.

Both centers are located in Farmington Hills and replace their namesake elementary schools which closed due to declining enrollment.

Both centers will offer separate

preschool programs for traditional preschoolers as part of the district's Community Education program as well as a separate Developmental Kindergarten program.

The district's Head Start program, which is entirely federally funded and open to the district's more economically disadvantaged children, is being transferred from Fairview to Alameda. Fairview will keep its special education preschool classes.

Of the four preschool class groupings the district offers, only the Community Education classes are tuition based.

Fairview has been increasing its enrollment at the expense of the Farmington Co-op Nursery (FCN) and other area preschools, according to Mary

Lou Grant, a teacher/director at the FCN.

"I have very strong feelings about what the Farmington Public Schools are doing," Grant said.

"This year we are having difficulty filling our enrollment with 4-year-olds. Our enrollment is down in the afternoon groups; we have also enrolled only one out of a possible 22. We need to have 22 kids in a class with a waiting list."

Grant blames the district's recent addition of a Developmental Kindergarten program for her own organization's enrollment decline. The Developmental Kindergarten classes are available to children aged 5 whose parents believe their child is not socially prepared for traditional kindergarten.

These classes are free.

The FCN has been forced to increase its "money-making projects from once to twice a year, according to Grant, due to its declining enrollment. The FCN is a non-profit organization.

Grant admits, however, that the "bad economy" and high parental unemployment may also have played a part in the FCN enrollment decline.

While the school's community education preschool classes have increased their enrollment during the 1980-81 school year, the amount of increase over the previous school year as well as the enrollment projections for the 1981-82 year were not available last week, according to Howell and Graham Lewis, assistant superintendent of special services.

Richard Raiter, the Fairview principal who has these figures, is on vacation until Aug. 18, they said.

Last year's (1980-81) preschool enrollment figures were released recently, however. The district offered 43 classes to 888 preschool children (all four programs) during that year, according to the annual district report released last Tuesday.

"Our preschool programs are designated to be self-supporting," Rowell said.

"The parents pay for the whole program. Tuition covers the costs of salary, supplies and some items of equipment."

"Preschool is part of the total community education program. Taxes help support all of the school district pro-

grams, you can't separate it out, yet they (taxes) only go for the preschool building center buildings' costs."

Some private nursery or preschool officials are indifferent to the public schools' lower tuition rates, free developmental kindergarten classes, increasing enrollment or their entrance into a once private domain.

In fact, two former nursery school owners are ready to join the staff at Alameda next fall.

"We weren't too happy when Alameda moved in across the street, but now we realize that the Farmington Public Schools have been good to us and we are going to work for them in the fall," Billy Karhu, former co-owner of the Early Childhood Nursery, said.

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Radio control race

At left, (clockwise) Andrew Briggs, Scott Chapman and Ron Kwanickoz get settled near a Farmington Hills pond and begin the task of rigging their speed boat, controlled by the radio. Chapman is holding. Above, the mission is accomplished and the miniature speedracer is on its way.

RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Third man convicted in kidnap conspiracy

By Mary Rodrigue
staff writer

A painting contractor from Utah was found guilty Friday of plotting to kidnap a Farmington Hills couple last June.

Insmag (Henry) Kim, 31, of Salt Lake City, was charged with conspiracy to kidnap Mijun Park, kidnapping her husband, Byung Park, and with possession of a firearm in the commission of a felony.

Free on \$200,000 bond, Kim could face life imprisonment at his July 28 sentencing before Oakland County Circuit Judge Frederick Ziem.

The three-week trial concluded prosecution in the 18-month-old case. Two other Salt Lake City men were convicted of conspiracy charges last August.

The two, Gary Lee Kelley, 23, and Ricky Scogean, 20, testified against Kim at his pretrial hearing last year, pegging the Korean citizen as the plot ringleader.

KIM OFFERED the two men, employees of his painting business, \$4,500 and traveling expenses to help him kidnap the Parks and hold their two young children for \$40,000 ransom, according to court testimony.

Kim was an acquaintance of Park's brother, Sung Park, of Salt Lake City. He believed the Farmington Hills couple, naturalized U.S. citizens from Korea who operate a Detroit shoe store, to be wealthy, according to testimony.

Kim, Kelley and Scogean flew to Detroit June 26, 1980, rented two cars at the airport and drove to Farmington Hills where Kim rented a room at the Holiday Inn. They sought directions to the Park home from a gas station attendant.

The plan flopped the morning of June 27 when Mrs. Park, accosted by the gun-toting Kelley in her driveway, broke away and ran inside her house to call police.

Kelley, who left in the Park's station wagon with Mr. Park, was arrested just a block away from the home near 11 Mile and Middlebelt. Park was released unharmed.

Scogean was arrested later that day at the airport in Detroit.

Kim was arrested at the Denver airport while making a connecting flight from Detroit to Salt Lake City. He was extradited to Farmington Hills last July.

"This case cost us a bundle," said Detective Sgt. Al Havner, of the Farmington Hills police.

"A multitude of out-of-town witnesses were called. There was a minimum of overtime duty every day."

Havner also praised Assistant Oakland County Prosecutor James Jordan.

"He stuck with the case all the way and did a superb job," Havner said.

Kim was represented by Southfield attorney Jeffrey Lee.

President of state group

He's the chiefs' chief

By Mary Rodrigue
staff writer

For the first time ever, Farmington's chief of police has been elected president of the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police.

G. Robert Selfert was named president on July 1 at the organization's annual conference at Boyne Highlands near Harbor Springs.

More than 500 law enforcement executives attended the weekend seminars. The 59-year-old organization has a membership of more than 600 police officials from Monroe near the Ohio border to Menominee in the Upper Peninsula.

"I'm honored because of the peer acceptance it represents," said Selfert, who joined the Farmington force on March 3, 1980.

"I'm interested in advancing and maintaining the professional ethics and practices of police administration in this state."

As president, Selfert will be the chairman of the group's board of directors meetings and act as ceremonial fi-

gurehead at various law enforcement functions across Michigan.

"Bob is well respected by his colleagues," said Tom Hendrickson, MACP executive director, from his Okemos office.

"When he talks, everyone listens. He has a good historical feel for the association and an ability to translate words into action."

THE MACP IS represented in Lansing by professional lobbyists pushing its viewpoint on criminal justice matters. MACP also provides management training seminars for law officers and publishes a newsletter which updates current laws and attorney general rulings.

Selfert, formerly police chief in Gaylord, was chosen from a field of 130 applicants for the Farmington command post job last year.

He has served on the MACP board of directors since he became a member of the organization in 1976.

He is a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the American Academy for Professional Law Enforcement, the Southeast Mich-



G. Robert Selfert.

igan Association of Chiefs of Police and the South Oakland County Association of Chiefs of Police.

Selfert also serves on the criminal justice advisory boards at Michigan State University and Lake Superior State College.

Selfert's presidential term will expire on June 30, 1982.

Patrol nabs offenders

Fifty-seven motorists were nabbed for traffic violations on I-695 in Farmington Hills over the July 4 holiday weekend.

The tickets were issued by Michigan State Police working a special Combined Accident Reduction Effort (CARE) patrol.

CARE is a federally funded program operating in 48 states to improve traffic safety, specifically by reducing the number of drunk drivers on the roads and encouraging the use of safety belts.

Operating July 2-5, the Northville-based State Police patrol made eight

arrests for drunk driving and wrote 320 citations. Besides Farmington Hills, their target area included Livonia, Novi, Plymouth, Canton and Northville.

No drunk driving arrests were made in Farmington Hills.

CARE was first established July 4, 1977, to beef up compliance to the 55 mph speed limit.

The main efforts of CARE are to remove drunk drivers from the roads and increase voluntary use of restraints in cars," said Sgt. David Ford, traffic services officer in Northville.

Half of all traffic fatalities involve

alcohol, Ford said.

"The one thing common in all fatalities is that victims don't wear seat-belts," he added.

CARE is designed for holiday patrols because estimates show a 40 percent increase in traffic during those times, Ford said. On some holidays, volume on north-south routes is double the normal traffic.

"We want to make CARE synonymous with safety on holiday weekends," Ford said.

The campaign slogan is "Drive with CARE." The patrols will be reinstated for the Labor Day weekend.

Resigns Birmingham post

Fire Chief hired in the Hills

By Alice Collins
staff writer

Birmingham Assistant Fire Chief Larry Karon resigned this week to become chief of the Farmington Hills Fire Department.

Karon, a 19-year member of the Birmingham department, said he is "looking forward to the challenges of a larger department in a community that's continuing to expand." He assumes his new duties on July 27.

Karon will succeed former Farmington Hills Fire Chief Thomas Johnson, who has resigned. Fire Marshal Wil-

liam Gearhardt has been serving as acting fire chief during the interim.

Farmington Hills City Manager Larry Savage said Karon was selected from a field of 79 applicants. A final 15 of the applicants were screened orally by a board set up through the Michigan Municipal League. It consisted of two area fire chiefs and the city manager from a neighboring community.

The final two candidates were interviewed by the city's district chiefs. Savage said this "was a very lengthy but thorough process, and I am pleased with the caliber of person who will be coming to lead the fire department."

Birmingham is expected to appoint a new assistant fire chief soon.

"My career with the Birmingham department has been very rewarding and exciting," said Karon this week. His responsibilities in Birmingham included the development and launching of the city's Advanced Life Emergency Medical Service (EMS), officially put into operation in July 1979.

AS ASSISTANT chief in Birmingham, Karon was the operations officer of the department, serving under Fire Chief Gary Whibmer.

He has been responsible for the day-

to-day operations, personnel training, EMS, coordination of the volunteer fire squad activities and long-range development within the department.

Karon joined the Birmingham department in 1982. He came up through the ranks and was appointed assistant chief in May 1979.

Farmington Hills has an 87-member department — 11 full-time firefighters and 76 who are on call and paid when they are called to work. About 24 percent of the fire companies throughout the country are paid-call combination

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