



# Farmington Observer

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## Library chief defends plans and practices

By Julie Brown  
staff writer

After months of rumors and last week's published criticisms by former employees, the beleaguered director of the Farmington Community Library has spoken out in defense of his administration.

In a Friday evening telephone conversation with the Observer, library director Gordon Lewis defended his reorganization plan, explained recent employee resignations and financial practices of the library administration.

Lewis said the library's accounting procedures are good ones.

"That's been a library procedure for approximately 10 years," he said when asked if library staff had been instructed to forward gift monies to him without ringing them up on the cash register.

The accounting procedure has to do with the two types of gifts that come into the library, he said. Small gifts are defined as those under \$25, Lewis said.

"They're put in the cash register and they're deposited in the bank. Large gifts are sent to the director's office. They usually go in the gift account, and they're usually expended according to the wishes of the donor." Some gifts have an undesignated use, he said.

"The principal purpose is so we do not have large sums of money in the building at any one time."

Receipts are made out for gift monies that come into the library, Lewis said, and an acknowledgement card is sent to the donor. For memorial gifts, a card is sent to the relatives of the deceased individual.

"And then the gift funds are expended either according to the wishes of the donor or as designated by the Library Board."

"It's a very simple bookkeeping procedure," Lewis said. "There are two funds of money. Both are used to purchase books, so the funds are pooled."

**THE RECENT RESIGNATIONS** of seven Farmington Community Library professionals have not affected the quality of library service, according to Lewis.

He said the resignations are for "normal, routine" reasons.

"The resignations that we've had at the library, with the exception of one, have all been for normal, routine reasons. Whenever you have turnover, then you have training time for new staff."

The one exception is the resignation of librarian Jill Locke, he said.

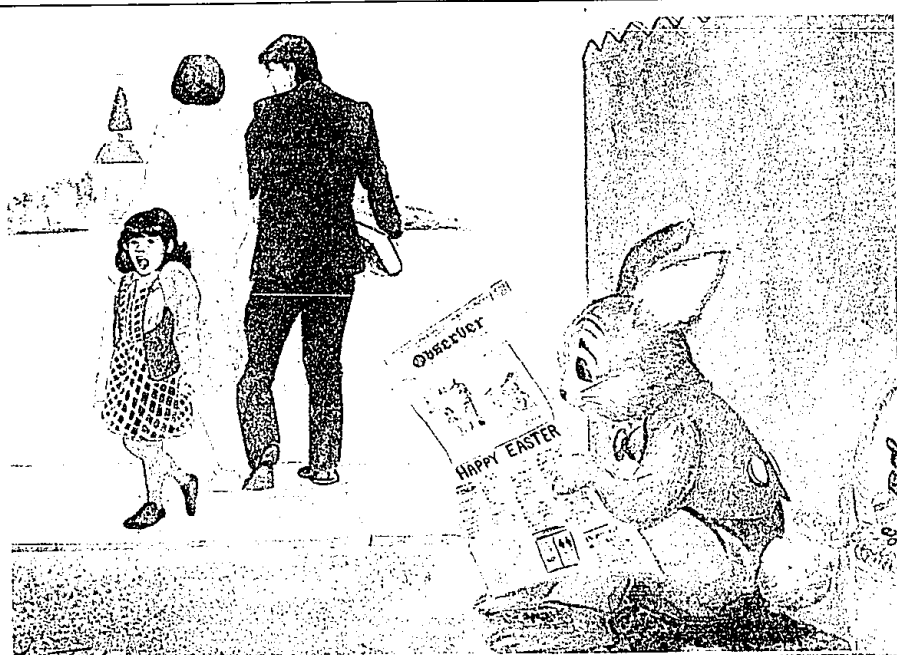
Locke was branch head for the Farmington Hills Library and children's coordinator for both the Farmington and Farmington Hills branches.

Lewis said the resignations had not affected the library system's ability to attract good employees.

"We've not had any difficulty at all. We've attracted some fine, qualified people already."

"Yes," was the library director's response when asked if he believed he had performed his job well. "I would rather have someone else speak to you about that," he said when asked to elaborate.

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## Bunny season

The Easter bunny visited the area Sunday, bringing with him a variety of Easter treats. Area families also marked the holiday by

attending worship services at local churches. The bunny, after finishing his appointed rounds, paused briefly to read the paper.

MARVIN TEEPLES/illustrator

## Handguns put bureaucratic squeeze on cops

### Regulators are busy

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

It used to be that the Oakland County Gun Board would meet only once a month.

Times have changed though. With increasing requests from residents to carry concealed weapons, the county gun board now meets twice a month.

The changing times are evident in the number of concealed weapons permits issued in 1983 compared to 1984.

In 1983, for example, the gun board issued 3,061 permits. Last year, 3,558 permits were issued, said Joan Brown, gun board clerk.

But the number of permits issued by the gun board is only a small indication of the number of people in Oakland County who have registered firearms.

While the county gun board has the final say on who will carry concealed weapons, the local jurisdictions, such as the Farmington and Farmington Hills police departments, are responsible for issuing purchase permits and safety inspection certificates for weapons which are not intended to be concealed.

When someone is interested in buying a handgun or a firearm under 30 inches in length they must go to the local police department and apply for a purchase permit. Rifles and shotguns are not required to be registered.

"THE permit allows you to buy and possess a handgun, period," said Frank Lashoff, director of the Farmington Public Safety Department. "It specifically does not allow anything else."

Applying for a permit to go to a dealer to buy a handgun does not always mean the applicant gets what he wants.

In Farmington Hills, for example, 491 applications were made for purchase permits in 1983. Only 419 were issued to applicants. In 1984, 547 applications were made, but only 402 purchase permits were issued.

Farmington police officials issue far fewer purchase permits. In 1983, 73 permits were issued, compared to 65 in 1984.

The application process for the purchase permit, either at Farmington or Farmington Hills, includes providing identification, and a check to see whether the applicant has any felony convictions.

"We run a computer check for criminal records," Lashoff said.

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Ed Wozniak, Farmington Hills police officer, looks over some of the weapons recently confiscated by the department.

RANDY BONSTATT/photographer

## Gun storage bulges

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Some of the firearms locked in the Farmington Hills Police Department property room have been confiscated, others have been used in crimes and suicides, and still others have been dropped off by people who just don't want the weapons in their houses.

Despite the varied histories of each weapon in the department's basement, all have a common destination — the melting pot.

"We take them to Lansing and turn them over to the state police. After they have gathered a load, the weapons are trucked to a foundry and turned into auto parts," said Ed Wozniak, the Farmington Hills police officer in charge of the property room.

In 1984, Michigan State Police received from local police departments 6,367 handguns, 1,341 long guns, shotguns and rifles, and 731 miscellaneous weapons to be destroyed, said Liz Dotts, supervisor of the state police firearms records division.

The total number of firearms received by the state police for destruction doesn't mean all are destroyed, Dotts said. Antique weapons or those of great value can be given to museums, she said.

"There are some weapons that the commissioner can determine can be recycled," Dotts said.

Back on the local level, the wait for the melting pot can be a long one, especially for those firearms used in crimes. The local police are required to hold on to these weapons until court proceedings are completed. And that can take years, Wozniak said.

Even those firearms turned in by residents who no longer want them go through the paperwork process.

"Even if they don't work, they will still go through the whole bit just like real operable weapons," Wozniak said, picking up a box of old, rusted handguns.

"There is a very long paper flow to the state before they go," he continued. "They go through the prosecuting attorney's office before going to the state police."

Stolen firearms are put through checks including ballistic tests to determine whether the weapon can be tied to any crimes, Wozniak said.

Other firearms that have not been used in a crime can be sent to Lansing as soon as Wozniak gathers about 40-50 of them and completes the necessary paperwork.

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## Schools ask for millage renewal

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Farmington School District voters will be asked to renew four mills for 10 years when they go to the polls in the regular school election June 10.

In a unanimous 7-0 vote last Tuesday school trustees without discussion authorized the request for renewal. The four mills expire this year.

The voters in the district have previously authorized this millage," said Superintendent Lewis Schulman. "We're not asking them for additional mills. We are asking them to renew it."

The four mills that are up for renewal this year are part of the district's total 37.29 mills voters previously authorized years ago.

Even when school officials don't plan to use a portion of the total authorized millage, a request for renewal is made when portions of the total expire, Schulman said. When another four mills expire next year, a similar request for renewal can be expected.

"We are not planning new taxes for the people," Schulman said.

**ALTHOUGH VOTERS** have authorized the district to levy a maximum 37.29, the district's preliminary 1985-86 \$49 million budget is based on a 35-mill levy. Consequently renewing the requested four mills does not mean voters will be paying on a higher tax rate.

The proposed 35 operating mills expected to be levied in 1985-86 is a decrease from the current levy of 34.7

(including 1.7 mill for debt), Schulman said.

In 1985-86, school officials don't plan to levy mills for debt as in the current year because they have acquired enough (and equity (\$2.0 million)) to pay the debt without a levy, Schulman said.

When asked what would happen if voters don't renew the requested four mills for 10 years, Schulman said about 90 percent of all renewal requests "are accepted."

In previous years, Schulman said, taxes have been higher. In 1981-82, the district levied 35.25 mills. In the following year the district decreased the tax rate to 33.7 (including 1.0 mill for debt) and maintained that rate in 1983-84. The tax rate was increased to 34.07 (including 1.7 mills for debt) in 1984-85.

While school officials don't necessarily plan to use the mills up for renewal, Schulman said the district likes to ask for renewal when mills expire so voter authorization is maintained should the district need additional money.

Even though district officials expect to continue operating with 33 mills in 1985-86 (the current operating levy minus 1.7 mills for debt) homeowners total tax bills may increase nonetheless due to a projected \$83 million increase in the district's state equalized valuation (SEV).

As required by state law, school officials will receive public comment on the preliminary budget at a public hearing scheduled for May 7.

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