



Farmington Observer

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Farmington, Michigan

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Farmington Focus

If you have a news item or an idea for a feature story or an action picture with a Farmington area connection, send a note to our downtown office at 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

DOWNTOWN Farmington

merchants, take note. The new Downtown Farmington Task Force encourages you to frame your windows with clear miniature lights during the upcoming holiday season. "This is the first step in getting the downtown area to cooperate in a common program," said Kathy Verstraete, manager of the Dress Barn. Miniature lights also will be used in the trees along Grand River and Farmington Road. "It's the kind of attraction that will bring visitors to see what we're doing," Verstraete said. She invites all downtown-area residents to follow the lead of the business community in using the miniature lights in their windows and trees.

THERE'S a new flag flying over Farmington Nursing Home these days, one that once flew over the White House. The first local flag-raising — by Joseph Pink, a resident of the home and a World War I veteran — took place during outdoor ceremonies arranged by the staff.

SHE'S a doctor in training. A student from Farmington Hills is a member of the newest entering class of medical students at the Michigan State University College of Human Medicine, East Lansing. Mary Colburn studied premedicine at Johns Hopkins University, in Baltimore. There, she was named to the dean's list and earned a bachelor of arts degree in natural science.

A GROUP of Kalamazoo College freshmen is finding adjustment to college life a little easier. That's the result of participation in the college's land/sea orientation program.

Laura Livingston and **Jordan Lorry**, both of Farmington Hills, are among 33 freshmen who spent two weeks in September backpacking and canoeing in Ontario's \$4,000-a-week Killarney Provincial Park. The group spent a final week sailing aboard a 60-foot brigantine ship.

AMONG the newest Freshmen Honor Society members at Liberty Baptist College is Deborah Ann Kip of Farmington. She's a charter member of the society. The college is in Lynchburg, Va.

REMINDER: City hall telephone numbers are: Farmington, 474-5525; Farmington Hills, 474-8115.

FOOTNOTES: Through the years, there has been a variety of ways to get around.

Harrods, home and baggage, kangaroos and wagons were among the transportation forms used in the Farmington area's trails, dirt roads and the plank road, Grand River.

The late 19th-century was the heyday of the horse-drawn carriage. In 1894, well before there was a car, a horse-drawn carriage was used to transport a group of people to the Grand River area.

There are several ways to get around in the 20th century, but the most common is the car.

Flap zeroes in on gifted and talented

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Parents in the Farmington Association for Children with Exceptional Talent (FACET) are unsatisfied with the handling of a proposal seeking an evaluation of the Farmington Public Schools' gifted program.

"It has not been dealt with adequately. It has not been dealt with to resolution," said Bobbie Tomasin, FACET president.

Graham Lewis, assistant superintendent in charge of the gifted program, disagrees. "It is being dealt with," he said. "We took some of the statements (in the proposal) and determined what areas we needed to work on."

In late September, parents, mostly FACET members, presented a proposal to the Farmington Board of Education seeking evaluation of the 10-year-old gifted program and offering suggestions for change.

At the time, parents also sought formation of a new committee to do the

evaluation and to prepare recommendations for change.

SCHOOL TRUSTEES accepted the parents' proposal. Instead of creating a new committee, however, trustees gave the proposal to the district's 17-member parent advisory council for study. The council is comprised of parents, teachers and district administrators.

Although Tomasin says the proposal was not brushed aside by the parent advisory council, members did not take any hard steps toward addressing the proposal.

She plans to ask that the parents' proposal be placed on the parent advisory council's next agenda. She will also ask that members "prepare a statement, resolution or recommendation to the school board or appoint an ad hoc committee."

"Parents would like to see what the district's objective is with gifted education," Tomasin said. "I have never been able to get a handle on what is available for us. It would be helpful if we knew what the district is offering. Then we could say this is our guarantee."

First, a proposal needs to be in the hands of a committee that has the power to do something with it. With the parent advisory council, "there doesn't exist a structure that will facilitate fully addressing the parents' proposal," Tomasin said.

LEWIS SEES it differently. Some of the proposal's issues will be addressed and a report sent to the school board's curriculum committee. "We'll be having committees to work on certain aspects," he said.

Chief among the aspects to be addressed, Lewis said, is parents' concern "about the flow of information." Some parents feel there "is no clear understanding of what the program is offering. The handbook needs revision."

Parents and school officials have to better define the terms used in the gifted program so both groups understand each other, Lewis said. The philosophy of the gifted program also must be clarified, he added.

"Some people feel our curriculum is not strong enough," Lewis said. "To someone who is looking for a particular teacher to teach the gifted, you are not going to find that."

Lewis disagrees with parents who say the district has no definite program guidelines. "We offer a consultant who actually deals with that (intellectually gifted) child's welfare." Once a student is identified as gifted, Lewis said, that student "is known to a greater degree as an individual."

Candidates participating in the debate, held in the Botsford Inn, were incumbents Jan Dolan, Jodi Soroczen and Ben Marks and challenger Jonathan Grant. Challenger Terry Sever was not present.

Talk of the grants program began as a member of the audience asked about the Farmington Hills City Council's distribution of CDBG money. The city council earmarks the allocation for three areas: a housing rehabilitation program for low-to-moderate-income residents, emergency funds and capital improvements.

CDBG money is provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and is based on a community's population.

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Grants prompt debate

election '85

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

The federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program drew the attention of Farmington Hills City Council candidates in the last debate of the 1985 election season.

Four of the five candidates met at the invitation of the Farmington Democratic Club Thursday night to discuss their political views and answer audience questions.

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By Cecy Hane
staff writer

U.S. Bankruptcy Court Judge Stephen Blakes confirmed Monday the reorganization plan for Rembert Mutual Investment Trust, formerly of Farmington Hills.

A representative of the Detroit court's docket section said the plan was approved by the judge, but the legal order had not yet been filed.

The company filed a petition in March 1983 for court-supervised reorganization under Title 11, Chapter XI of the Federal Bankruptcy Act. Commonly known as Chapter 11, the act offers companies legal protection from creditors until a plan of repayment can be completed.

In the Rembert case, a trustee was appointed by the court to handle the real estate investment firm's interests.

Birmingham attorney Robert Hertzberg is the trustee's attorney. He was preparing the court order late last week, and said it would be entered in two to three days.

MORE THAN 400 creditors will divide \$782,000 to \$800,000 recovered from sale of the company's assets under the plan. Each will receive eight to 10 cents on the dollar investment. After the court order is filed, it will take "about 45 days for the first check to be sent," Hertzberg said.

The average investment with the company was \$10,000, according to



Janet Gleason, inside the historic Pettibone House on 12 Mile — a historic site now housing a life insurance agency.

Labor of love Couple 'adopts' historic house

By Lisa Gilson
staff writer

This antique is for keeps.

When the Gleasons' lease was up, they knew they wanted a very special atmosphere for their new offices. "We wanted something unusual, and we didn't want something new," Janet Gleason said.

Owners of the Creative Capital Group, a life insurance agency, Janet and her husband, Charles, wanted more than a modern suite for their business offices.

After months of looking for the perfect old house to transform into office space, the Gleasons took on restoration of the historic Pettibone House, at 8400 12 Mile. The Victorian house was designated a historic building last winter.

Originally from Chicago, the Gleasons sold their house in Birmingham, partly to finance the costly renovation of the Pettibone House. They now live in Chelsea, in what has been their summer residence for 25 years.

BOTH GLEASONS attended Denison College in Granville, Ohio. An avid interest in antiques was something the two shared then.

"How else can we learn without examples (of the past) in front of us?" Gleason asked. "It is our heritage. I feel the building belongs to all of us."

The Pettibone House was built in three stages by the Pettibone family, who immigrated to Millford in the 1840s from Bennington County, Vt. The first stage, now the central section of the house, was built in 1841. Additions came in 1870 and in the early 1900s, according to Gleason.

The Pettibones lived in the house until 30 years ago, when they sold it to Charles Solar. The Gleasons bought the house from Solar last May.

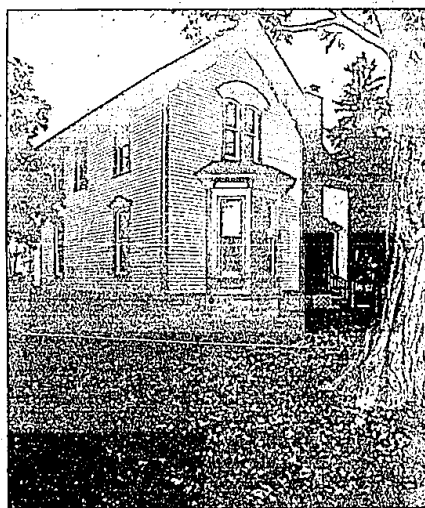
"THAT'S 1870s," Gleason said in reference to the home's elevated, majestic facade. "The three stages show the (historical) progress (the house) goes through."

Achieving an authentic exterior and interior was the Gleasons' goal from the beginning. The outside

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"How else can we learn without examples (of the past) in front of us?"

— Janet Gleason
history buff



The original portion of the newly renovated Pettibone House dates back to 1841.

Reorganization plan approved

By Cecy Hane
staff writer

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The average investment with the company was \$10,000, according to

Hertzberg's calculations. Many of those investing were retirees.

A creditors' committee, which oversees Chapter XI plans in the interest of all creditors, has also approved the reorganization plan, Hertzberg said.

The company has been operating in a "liquidating Chapter XI," Hertzberg explained. The company actually ceased operations three years ago shortly after the reorganization petition was filed. The court allows a liquidating situation, in the interest of the creditors.

After filing the order, only administrative work will remain in claim objections and approvals, according to Hertzberg. Rembert was owned by Francis J. Solar Jr.

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