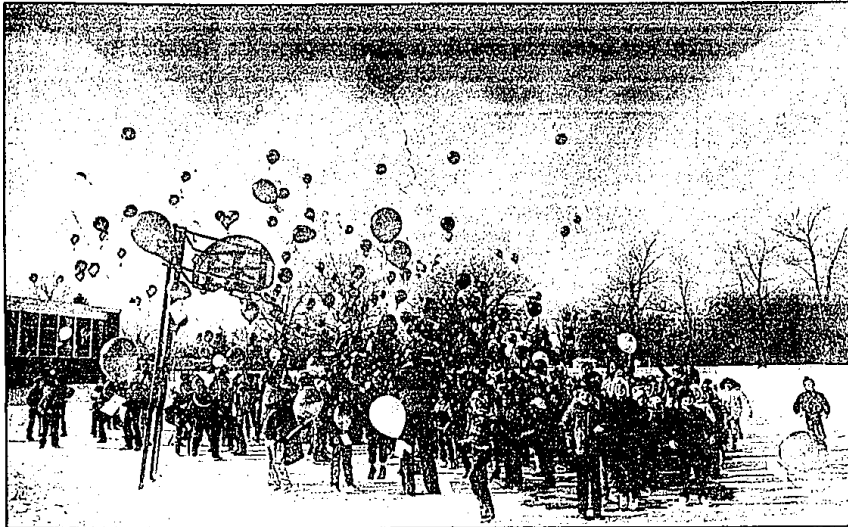
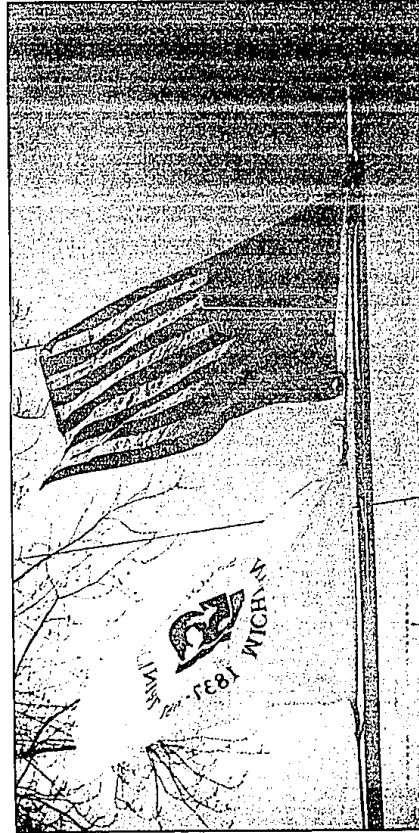


Sesquicentennial flags are unfurled



William Grace Elementary students release a cascade of colorful balloons in honor of Michigan's sesquicentennial Monday.



The Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce and the Farmington Area Sesquicentennial Committee donated sesquicentennial flags to both Farmington and Farmington Hills.



Public safety officers (from left) Robert Mitchell, Joe Schorack and Tom Daniels — the Farmington Honor Guard.



At Farmington Hills' afternoon flag-raising, Mayor Ben Marks presents a proclamation to Farmington Area Sesquicentennial Committee member Kay Briggs.

AT RIGHT: Senior Rhonda Furman performs with the Farmington High Symphony Band at Farmington's morning flag-raising.



MONDAY WAS Michigan's day to celebrate. Statehood Day was a blend of bands, balloons, proclamations, speeches, school skits and flag-raising for the souls who braved the sub-zero temperatures to participate, as many of the events were outdoors.

Church bells around the state rang at noon and the 83 Michigan counties held ceremonies in celebration of Michigan's heritage.

Margaret Walker, local historian and member of the Farmington Area Sesquicentennial Committee, said residents were "saluting our pioneer generations."

Walker presided over the city of Farmington's celebration Monday morning, shared by city, chamber of commerce and state officials. It ended on an upbeat note from the Farmington High School Band.

Afternoon flag-raising ceremonies involving the North Farmington and Harrison bands were held at Farmington Hills City Hall and at the Botsford Inn in Farmington Hills. Throughout the day, teachers reminded students of their heritage through a variety of school activities.

LEADING UP TO Jan. 26 were 22 Magic of Michigan Birthday Parties held over the past weekend — including one at Tally Hall in Farmington Hills Saturday — where Harry Blackstone performed his magic for the crowds. Other events such as a professional bike race, a statewide canoe flotilla and a Salubration 150 on the Great Lakes are planned during the coming birthday year.

"The theme of the Sesquicentennial — 'A Celebration of what was and will be' — represents our state's rich history and even richer future," Secretary of State Richard Austin said.

Michigan is the only state that claims two birthdays. The first, on June 15, recognizes the admission of both Michigan and Arkansas into the Union in 1836.

But legislation stipulated the Michigan-Ohio border dispute be settled before statehood could be formalized. Congress offered Michigan the western portion of the Upper Peninsula in return for Toledo — an offer that was accepted in December 1836.

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Farmington Hills' afternoon flag-raising included Honor Guard members Brad Schwartz (left) and Daniel Horrick.