

Police chiefs see strength in numbers

Continued from Page 1

of involved police agencies county-wide, Lauhoff said.

Both small departments and large participate and receive equal information, despite any differences in operations. "The reasoning is, we all realized we needed each other for support," Lauhoff said. "We're all looking at the same issues, since law affects us all. There's just a volume difference."

"Our goal is to reduce crime," Lauhoff said.

In addition to that general goal,

OACAP members set their sights on legislative activities in Lansing, which directly affect how an officer does the job. "Our goals tend to be set by changes in legislation," Lauhoff explained. "Every change in legislation affects law enforcement. Money, manpower, we look at all those things."

BUT THE police group also looks at the recent, high-technology additions to their departments, which create an electronic network to

make the job more efficient and, it is hoped, catching criminals an easier task.

The E-911 system is scheduled to go into operation during 1988 and has required coordination not only by police agencies, but computer and telephone vendors who must route the emergency calls.

And the AFIS - Automatic Fingerprint Identification System - is still being debated in Lansing's po-

litical arena. Lauhoff calls it the "biggest thing in law enforcement in the last two-three decades." The computerized system will link fingerprint information from around the state, allowing almost immediate print matches.

In-car computer terminals, recently approved for Farmington officers and already used in Farming-

ton Hills, allow officers to run checks on vehicle licenses as they make a traffic stop, saving valuable time.

BRINGING THIS technological advance to Oakland County was the brainchild of Hills police chief and OACAP secretary William Dwyer; today, agencies can obtain the units

through a centralized county purchasing system.

"A lot of our efforts are centered on new technology," Lauhoff said. "But everything that's legislative impacts our ability to serve. We have to be heard."

"I'm happy about the rapport between departments," he added. "It's kind of unique. We operate very well supporting each other."

Schools stress reading

Continued from Page 1

LAST WEEK, Mahalak gave school board trustees an overview of the district's new definition of reading and the progress made by her committee during the past several months.

"As our committee looked into reading, we found the nation as a whole was looking into reading - especially the literacy area," she explained.

The definition of reading was segmented and has changed to reflect individual needs and more understanding.

"Reading is really more," she said. "It is a process of constructing meaning. The question is, 'Do students understand what they're reading?'"

FARMINGTON'S NEW definition includes interaction between the author and reader, adding new information to the reader's knowledge base, and teaching readers to adapt to a variety of reading types. Teachers will look at a combina-

'This is not just a teaching philosophy, but a philosophy for all time. All of us have to be teachers of everything, right on down.'

—Carolyn Mahalak
Farmington reading specialist

tion of the reader, what is being read, and the context in which the individual is reading.

"It makes good sense and probably was already in place," Mahalak told the board. "We need to re-focus."

This new way of viewing reading is also being used by the Michigan Department of Education, according to information from the Michigan Reading Association as presented at a conference last March. According to John Barrett, language arts coordinator for Farmington, Michigan and Illinois are

the only two states revising their reading programs.

The district is also reviewing its reading program in light of planned changes in the Michigan Educational Assessment Program, or MEAP state testing program. The MEAP is given to fourth, seventh and 10th graders throughout the state each fall.

In 1989, MEAP reading narratives will be longer, and the test will probably be graded differently, Mahalak said. State testing officials have not determined how the MEAP scoring will be done.

New program called success

Farmington students in grades 6-10 are learning to enjoy and understand reading through a newly introduced novel reading program.

"Historically, this (reading novels) has been part of the high school, not the middle school," said Farmington language arts coordinator John Barrett. "This is a continuation."

The program takes a "whole language" approach to teaching literature, he said.

Taking students through a novel program grade by grade will show "how prior knowledge makes a big impact on what we read," Barrett said.

Barrett discussed the novel program with the Farmington school board last week as part of a presentation about the changing reading curriculum in the district. He called the program a "resounding success."

A panel of teachers is investigat-

ing possibly using the novel reading program in grades 3-5 in the future, Barrett added.

The novel program attempts to develop a systematic way of teaching literary works, to integrate writing with reading and to add higher order thinking skills to the student's learning. Teachers in all the participating grades are trained in the novel reading program, which focuses on a core of books and suggests additional novels to enhance the program.



On the air

Student interns from Channel 10, the local educational access cable channel based at North Farmington High School, did the station's first live shoot of a sporting event Dec. 17 at North. Lauren Mator works the camera with intern Robin Baker at right, as the North Farmington Raiders challenged the Harrison Hawks in basketball. The Hawks won, 58-52. Both interns are seniors in the Farmington schools. The intern program trains students from the three public high schools in telecommunication education.

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