

Hometown honors Ernie Harwell's return to the air

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Ernie Harwell said thank you to those who came to honor him Saturday. Words couldn't sum up his appreciation, though.

So, the Baseball Hall of Fame broadcaster decided to regale the audience at the Uptown Plaza in Farmington with a story.

The narrative centered on a conversation with Detroit Tiger farmhand Rich Rowland, who is a lumberjack in northern California during the off-season.

Harwell inquisitively noted how difficult it must be to tumble one of those gigantic redwood trees with their deep roots. Not so, the catcher told him. In fact, the roots are rather shallow.

But how do the trees withstand those tremendous storms they have in the Northwest? Harwell asked. Easy, Rowland said, the roots are interconnected and reach out and support one another.

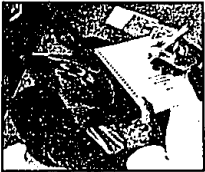
"That's what you've done today," said Harwell, thanking those who turned out to honor him at Uptown Plaza.

Merchants, officials and residents turned out to salute the golden-voiced play-by-play man who calls Farmington Hills home.

Harwell is behind the mike for the Tigers this season after a year hiatus. The celebration was of his return and endurance.

Harwell, whose wife, Lulu, and daughter, Julie, were in attendance, received warm salutations from the Uptown Farmington Business Association, which presented him with a framed Farmington Observer article about him.

The Oakland Express, a softball team affiliated with the Special Olympics, gave him a jersey with his name and number. "I finally found a team I could



Name game: Ernie Harwell's name meant something Saturday at the Uptown shopping center in Farmington.

make," Harwell said.

Proclamations came from Farmington Hills Mayor Nancy Bates and Farmington Mayor William Hartsock. Bates offered a perspective on Harwell's residence.

"Today, we're going to share one of our own — Ernie Harwell," Bates said. "Ernie Harwell lives in Farmington Hills, but part of his heart is in Farmington."

Afterward, Harwell sat down on a metal chair on the makeshift stage. But the platform might as well have been a neighbor's front porch.

He signed autographs for nearly an hour. He only stopped to smile for photos.

"Oh, shoot 'em up," he said to the camera-toting brigade of well wishers.

When a young girl presented Harwell with some cards to sign, the pen betrayed her.

"Uh oh, that one won't work," said Harwell, going to his shirt pocket. "Let me try mine."

On a glowing sunny day, all that was missing was nine innings on a diamond. Then again, the day already had its gem.



STAFF PHOTOS BY JOHN STORMAN



A hug for a fan: Above, Ernie Harwell has a warm greeting for Kirk Mason, a member of the Oakland Express softball team. At left, Ernie Harwell fans and Farmington Hills residents Denise Albrecht and her 8 1/2-year-old son, Jason, display their prize autographs.

Going On-Line:
Greg Day of the computer services department says On-Line was designed to be "an extension of the newspaper."



O&E's computer network delivers the news, services

Folks looking for a quick access to local news plus information to help plan everything from their investment portfolio to tomorrow's dinner can now turn to "On-Line." The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers' new information computer network.

O&E On-Line is a potpourri of information kept inside the belly of a computer at the O&E's main office in Livonia. Besides the 12 O&E editions, the bulletin board service also includes two magazines, Associated Press news stories, stock market listings, games, computer programs and more.

You can plug into all this if you have an IBM-type computer and a modem that hooks your computer to the telephone lines. Service for Apple computer users is coming soon.

"The public is relying more and more on computers to gather their information," said Steve Barnaby, O&E managing editor. "We want to help them do just that. We'll offer as many services as possible. Not only can we communicate with the readers, they can communicate directly with us and with each other."

The software to run On-Line is available through the mail for \$5, or free if picked up at one of several locations. These are: libraries in Canton, Farmington and Livonia, plus the Soft-House Computer Center in Garden City and PC Outlet in Westland. The software is also available at the O&E's Birmingham office.

If purchasing the service by mail, send \$5 to On-Line, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, Mich. 48150. "We designed this system to be an extension of the newspaper," said Greg Day of the O&E computer services department. "We're one of the first newspaper companies to attempt this kind of thing." Other newspapers with "electronic delivery" include the San Jose (Calif.) Mercury-News and the Chicago Tribune.

Eventually, a data base of old stories from all of the Observer & Eccentric newspapers will be built. On-Line users will eventually be able to scan the

system for articles that appeared in past editions of a particular paper.

Bulletin Board services are a rapidly evolving technology which, in the near future, will allow readers to access their local newspaper from handheld computers, said Day.

Although in its infancy, this type of communication already is having an impact on local readership.

Garden City resident Jerry Scott, a Realtor, said he likes the stock market listings and the O&E news stories in On-Line. "It seems like every time I go into it they've updated it and added new things," he said. "For a free service it has an awful lot to offer."

But perhaps the best part of On-Line is that you can meet new people, send electronic mail, have group discussions and write opinion pieces on any subject you chose, all without revealing who you really are.

A recent category, for example, is "What should we do about Canada geese in Livonia?" This one generated several comments including one from "Bubba" saying that there should be a hunting season for geese so our children can learn how to use shotguns instead of pistols.

Livonia resident Ted Hillebrand called On-Line "the best thing since sliced bread."

"I'm very happy with it, extremely happy. You get opinions from everybody," he said.

On-Line users can also exchange messages in pairs or with a whole group. You can even write a document on your word-processing program of up to 300 pages and transmit it through On-Line to your new friends.

Southfield inhabitant Andrew Garlick said On-Line is more or less the future of newspapers. "You're not in the newspaper business," he said. "You're in the information business. I support companies that are forward-looking like that."

SAVE MORE THAN 20% TO 60%

AT THE *Stewart-Glenn*
of Bloomfield Hills

76th Anniversary Sale

OUR 76th OPEN HOUSE SALE IS IN PROGRESS NOW WITH UNPRECEDENTED SAVINGS IN EVERY DEPARTMENT

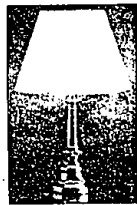
- SAVE 50% • All Pennsylvania House Wicker will be 50% Off - including special orders!
- SAVE 50% • A wide selection of discontinued pieces from Pennsylvania House will be 50% Off!
- SAVE 30% • All current Pennsylvania House, Harden and Conover will be 30% off - including special orders!
- SAVE 25% • All Pearson, Statton, S. Bent, Hooker, Bradington-Young, Hancock & Moore and Jamestown will be 25% off - even special orders.
- SAVE UP TO 60% • A large selection of "Clearance Items" is currently 40% to 60% off in our "Clearance Center." All clearance & discontinued items subject to prior sale.

WIN

Enter to win one of 6 valuable prizes in a drawing held May 22. You need not be present to win. One entry per family.

"As an Anniversary Special, take an extra 10% off the above low sale prices; even clearance items."

76th Anniversary
SPECIAL SALE ITEM



25 1/2" Brass Lamp
"Northbrook" By Shiffel Reg. '175

SALE \$76

FOR RECEIVE THIS LAMP FREE WITH ANY PURCHASE OVER \$2,000 ONE LAMP PER CUSTOMER.



SPECIAL SALE:

Save 35% on this Pennsylvania House dining room. And then take an extra 10% off the sale price during our 76th Anniversary Sale.

Stewart-Glenn
of Bloomfield Hills

2600 N. WOODWARD
JUST SOUTH OF SQUARE LAKE RD.
FINE FURNITURE SINCE 1917

Sale ends Saturday, May 22
Sales made prior to May 13
excluded from receiving
special offers.

NOT VALID IN CONJUNCTION
WITH ANY OTHER OFFER.

332-8348

OPEN MON. THURS. FRI. 9 P.M.
TUES, WED, SAT. 7:30 P.M.