

Not long gone: Ernie Harwell to speak Nov. 14

BY JULIE BROWN
STAFF WRITER

Hosannas and home runs may seem to be an unlikely combination, but they'll be a winning one come Sunday, Nov. 14.

Longtime Detroit Tigers broadcaster Ernie Harwell, a Farmington Hills resident, will speak 10 a.m. that Sunday during a program sponsored by the West Plymouth Community Church.



The Rev. Phil Rogers, pastor of the congregation, wrote to Harwell about four months ago,

"thinking I'd probably not hear from him."

"He's so down to earth," Rogers said of the radio announcer, who contacted him right away. Rogers and others at the church are looking forward to the arrival of Harwell, who's been the voice of the Detroit Tigers for more than 30 years.

"To say they're excited would be an understatement," said Rogers, a Livonia resident. "They are elated." Some worshippers, in fact, at first thought Rogers was joking when they heard Harwell would be speaking on Nov. 14.

The church rents space from the Metropolitan Seventh-day

Adventist Church, north of Five Mile on the west side of Hagerdy. That building's available on Sundays because the Seventh-day Adventists worship on Saturday. That's where Harwell will speak.

"Knowing him, he'll probably sprinkle in some humor and a baseball story or two. We're pretty excited," Harwell won't be preaching as such, but his message will be inspirational, Rogers said.

"He's just going to share his story, talk about his life," Harwell will speak for about 30 minutes and will stick around afterward to sign autographs for fans of all ages.

"It'll be fun," Rogers said. Church members see having Harwell speak as an opportunity to reach out to other Christians and to those who don't have a church home.

Harwell and his wife worship at an area church. His faith was a source of strength for him when he was abruptly fired by former Tigers owner Tom Monaghan, Rogers believes.

"I've talked to him a little about that. His Christian faith really shined through that episode," Harwell, of course, had the last word, coming back to share WJR-AM broadcasting duties with the newly-hired duo during the 1993

season after Mike Ilitch bought the team.

Now that the season has ended, Harwell will be leaving the broadcasting booth at Michigan and Trumbull. He'll continue to work for the Tigers in a public relations capacity.

Harwell was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y., in 1981. He's been named National Sportscenter of the Year 12 times. He and his wife, Lulu, have been married for 52 years and have four children.

West Plymouth Community Church members have been busy spreading the word on Harwell's

appearance. They've put up some 400 posters in the Plymouth, Canton and Northville communities.

"We expect a pretty large crowd. I would expect several hundred at a minimum," Rogers said.

Rogers and others at his congregation don't have any problem with Harwell speaking during football season.

"It doesn't matter when he comes," Rogers said with a laugh. "We'd have him on Christmas Eve."

Admission to the Sunday, Nov. 14, program is free. For more information, call 461-9722.

Love and joy

Greeting card sales benefit area charities

BY ETHEL SIMMONS
STAFF WRITER

Christmas and holiday cards purchased from area charities have an extra message.

Besides the message of good cheer they send to the recipients, the cards also convey a message that they are helping a worthy cause. Proceeds from the sale of the cards go to the organizations that assist children and adults in special ways.

The Rainbow Connection, headquartered in Rochester, grants wishes of children with life-threatening illnesses. This year, there are eight different cards to choose from. The cards will be on display at offices of the Rainbow Connection, 527 N. Pine in downtown Rochester, and at the Livonia Civic Library, 3277 Five Mile Road, Livonia.

Cards submitted by this and other organizations also are being displayed at all five offices of The Observer & Eccentric through the holiday season. Readers may stop

■ Besides the message of good cheer they send to the recipients, the cards also convey a message that they are helping a worthy cause.

in at any O&E office to look through the Christmas card book, select cards and find out how to contact the organization for orders.

Farmington area residents can stop in at the Farmington Observer or office, 21898 Farmington Road, just south of Nine Mile.

Other area O&E offices are located in Livonia at 36251 Schoolcraft (northeast corner of Schoolcraft and Levan), in Birmingham at 805 E. Maple in downtown Birmingham, in Rochester at 1814 S. Rochester Road or Plymouth at 744 Wing St.

The Christ Child Society of Detroit is offering three different

Christmas cards, including a Hummel religious card. The society provides personal services to needy children throughout the metropolitan area — regardless of race, creed or national origin.

Cranbrook Hospice Care of Bloomfield Hills has four cards, with designs including a reindeer, partridge, flight and cherubs. Four cards from the Children's Hospital of Michigan Auxiliary have themes of a teddy bear, snowman, gingerbread cookies and teddy bear on a carousel horse.

Some organizations' cards are based on drawings from individu-


als who use their services. The Arc of Northwest Wayne County, with offices in Redford, offers two designs drawn by local residents with disabilities. Heidi VanEe of Plymouth and Donovan Clay of Detroit, who both work at STEP in Livonia. The Foundation for Mentally Ill Children, Inc., in Bloomfield Hills has chosen a card designed by a 13-year-old student at Fairlawn Child/Adolescent Psychiatric Center.

The American Cancer Society's Oakland County Unit in Southfield has 12 different cards, including religious themes for adoration and for flight; contemporary for a city scene and birds and trees; and nostalgic, for a Currier & Ives design.

The Michigan Cancer Foundation in Detroit has a range of eight designs, with everything from a polar bear to "Mother and Child."



Santa's watching: This card is among the designs offered to benefit the Children's Leukemia Foundation. Prices begin at \$14 for a box of 25 cards and envelopes. Samples are included in the Christmas card books available for viewing at the offices of The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.




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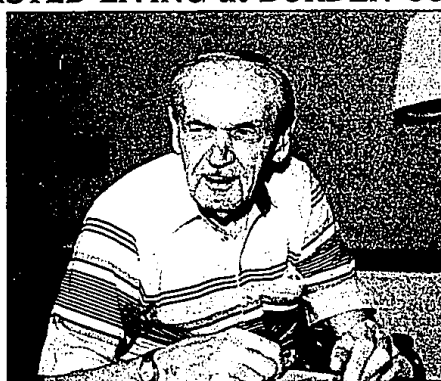
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