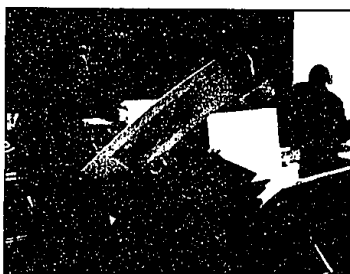


# Pride shows 'Festival of Arts' celebrates role

Farmington's pride was showing Sunday — and those who want to a glimpse of it and some fine works of art still have a chance through this weekend.

Congratulations are in order for the Farmington Area Arts Commission for its "Festival of the Arts," which began its week-long celebration with a big opening reception Sunday at the William Costick Center.



Art show: Farmington Mayor JoAnne McShane examines some offerings at the "Festival of the Arts" show Sunday at the William Costick Center.

New there wasn't a huge turnout for the ceremony — the audience was comprised of mainly award winners, award givers, officials and members of the 24 arts-related groups that help put on the eight days of events at the Costick Center. Attendees had to be dedicated, since the starting time of the reception clashed directly with starting time of Game 6 of the Detroit Red Wings/St. Louis Blues playoff game.

Still, well over a hundred people showed up to pay tribute to a couple dozen award winners, including local students, members of the Farmington Artist Club and two special honorees — Artist-in-Residence Award Winner Barbara Selinger and Distinguished Service to the Arts Winner Shelby Newhouse.

Selinger's role as artist-in-residence will bring her dance expertise to her hometown where she will share it with her community; Newhouse was honored for his film production contributions to both art and the community.

Both winners, though, teased part of the credit back to the people whose efforts bring about this annual Festival of the Arts, which celebrates art, dance, music, drama and much more at a time when others might attack or downplay the need for the arts in our lives.

An example of how the arts can be attacked

is right on today's front page — a criticism of the North Farmington High performance of the play "Pippin" recently. The fact that high school students were allowed to put on such a suggestive, PG-13 rated performance could be a big target for complaints in some towns. Few complaints were made. Credit the schools for handling this issue well — briefing parents of performers and showing them the questionable part well before it was ever staged, and putting on the PG-13 label as a warning to others. It's also worth noting that everyone, even critics, thought the performance was nearly professional in its quality.

The festival continues this week with displays of artwork, plus numerous community and school groups perform throughout the week. The rest of the schedule includes: Farmington Players — Readers Theater at 7 p.m. Thursday; Detroit Ballet — "Swan Lake" at 7 p.m. Friday; Michigan Classic Ballet — "Forbidden," 2. "Swan Lake," at 1 p.m. Saturday; and the Farmington Community Band & Chorus — "Around the World in 80 Minutes."

Kathleen Ergren of the Farmington Artist Club referred to the event as a "showcase of our diverse artistic talents."

It's also a way for the community to display the value it puts on celebrating the arts.

# Wrong number from Ameritech

What telephone area code are you in — this week?

Ameritech, the Illinois-based phone company that used to be called Michigan Bell, has a customer relations fiasco on its corporate hands as most of Oakland County prepares to change from area code 810 to 248.

Two years ago, Ameritech split part of the old 313 area code into 810. One would have thought that good planning might have forecast the growth in business and avoided a second change.

A new area code in Oakland County will be costly to customers.

Homeowners will have to inform puzzled out-of-the-area friends about changes.

Businesses will have to print new business cards, stationery, invoices and pamphlets. Ameritech won't help out with any of those costs.

Some of the confusion could have been avoided if Ameritech had assigned different or longer codes for car and cellular phones. Most of those users program their numbers so that they are punching only a couple of digits anyway.

Much of the problem has resulted from overselling of telephone "services" for cellular, fax, vehicle and computer calls.

The turbulence began in 1984 when a federal anti-trust suit broke up the old Bell system and resulted in a series of new regional operating companies, or Baby Bells, like Ameritech. While the change was supposed to stimulate competition, it's benefits have not been apparent.

Meanwhile, Ameritech is before the Michi-

■ Some of the confusion could have been avoided if Ameritech had assigned different or longer codes for car and cellular phones. Most of those users program their numbers so that they are punching only a couple of digits anyway.

gan Public Service Commission seeking rate increases for residential bands known as A, B, C Call Plan 50, Call Plan 400, Call Plan Extended and Call Plan Unlimited. Said Attorney General Frank Kelley on March 4:

"MPSC should be particularly skeptical of Ameritech's proposal to increase local exchange rates in Michigan when it is currently reducing local exchange rates in its other states. . ."

"While Ameritech is proposing to increase some residential customer rates by \$1.25 per month in Michigan, the company has proposed the following rate reductions in its other states. . ."

The attorney general cites free touch-tone in Ohio and Indiana; residential cuts of 85 cents a month and business cuts of 60 cents to \$7.55 in Ohio; residential and business cuts of 41 cents a month in Indiana ("fourth reduction in two years"); and both residential and business cuts in the millions of dollars for Illinois.

Ameritech's customer relations fiasco seems to worsen by the day. Business and residential customers deserve some kind of assurance — possibly financial — that this new area code is a well thought out technical change.

## TURNING BACK THE PAGES

This week in history as reported in past editions of the Farmington Observer and the Farmington Enterprise.

40 YEARS AGO — MAY 2, 1957 (ENTERPRISE)

Paving and widening of Farmington Road was ready to begin for a stretch from 10 Mile to 12 Mile after Oakland County officials reported that a contract was awarded. Plans called for 22-foot-wide pavement, plus extra space for road shoulders.

25 YEARS AGO — APRIL 29-30, 1972

Stoves, televisions and couches cut into two pieces — all kinds of junk items were to be taken away this week as Farmington Township began its semi-annual cleanup. Scout troops and other volunteers were also spending a week cleaning up.

2 YEARS AGO — MAY 2, 1995

North Farmington High School students were being allowed to continue voluntary community service for another year, with plans to make it a requirement put on hold.

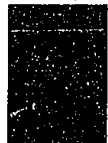
## COMMUNITY VOICE

QUESTION: Why does art exist?



The arts are a channel for mankind to freely express inner feelings and enable the viewer to participate.

Sharon Welsswasser  
Beverly Hills



It's an essential way to express your inner feelings and to share with other people the beauty of creating.

Nancy Wall Smith  
Plymouth



I'm into different kinds of art. It's for entertainment. It's a way to get out your feelings.

Carolyn Wolff  
Farmington Hills



It's to let people express themselves without using words.

Jason Dzik  
Farmington Hills

We asked this question at the William Costick Center in Farmington Hills.

## LETTERS

### No money trees

The dilemma is not with the people — but with the Farmington Board of Education members that can't read or deny what is in plain print in front of them.

I don't like to knock people down in print but sometimes — one must try to get the officials' attention for taxing purposes.

Philip Power wrote on 4-10-97 what I feel is quite an informative article. Not everyone is college minded when in high school, growing up, learning — under peer pressure and public scrutiny. Not to mention the pressure from dear mom and dad. But they do want to graduate high school, because they know this is one of the first tools needed to get a job and for future successes or higher learning.

The board of education wants to know why so few people vote on school issues. First off, the elections are held when the board feels they can get the least "no votes" to get taxpayers' money to spend because they are unfairly autonomous, with very little allowed public input as to how, why, when and where the public money will be spent. If each use of spending was put to the taxpayer, I'm sure there wouldn't be so many raises given to the administrators or teachers after each millage increase for the board's use of our money from taxes or the length of contracts or long bond issues.

There was a time when a contract couldn't be any longer than the term of office of a person that held it — for one election.

Now I have a question. Are the T.V. stations in question going to have towers in a residential only area? How much pressure does the media involved put on the school board members to cross this line to open new avenues of encroachment into our regulated controlled zones?

The sad part of our educational system is the poor judgment the leaders use to pressure our children to come home crying because the adults won't bend to the board pressure.

The taxpayer knows how much he can afford to pay with their income. Yet it seems the board wants to get to be a banker and keep too heavy of a reserve (such as \$20 million) and cry to themselves — "We can't improve the buildings" — "We don't have enough money." It isn't theirs to begin with. We the people want them to use it to repair and update. Ask for what you need, not your dream wish for self-gratification for your own political reasons. We taxpayers don't have money trees.

George Strelezuk  
Farmington

arrangements for a public hearing and setting up focus groups to find out what people in the community think.

Does that include the viewpoints of taxpayers falsely accused of having "... narrow personal and political agendas that (sob) worked to deprive our children of the best possible tools to prepare them for the future?" Will people mislabeled as being right-wing, religious fundamentalists (because they want traditional academics and teaching methodology available for their children) have a prayer of being listened to? Are the opinions of parents, who stopped fighting the system and now pay extra for private schools, home schooling, or tutors, suddenly valuable? How about the parents who have tried to get safer bus stops, letter grades on report cards, higher academic standards, sibling priority at High Meadow, phonics, genuine gifted education, logical redistricting of catchment areas, and additional High Meadow-type schools? Is there any possibility that their wants and desires will be heeded?

Why bother going through another charade? Administrators pay lip-service to the idea of diversity and then vilify, sabotage, lie about, or ignore anyone who doesn't goose-step to their predetermined outcomes. It's no accident that facilitators, chosen to guide the decision-making committees, already agree with the administration's agenda. The powers-that-be consistently ignore valid educational alternatives and concerns.

It's funny. Until taxpayers said, "No!" to the \$110 million, the schools weren't very interested in what the rest of the community thought, much less wanted. If administrators seriously want to know what voters think, they should start by contacting the people whose diverse opinions haven't been treated with respect (much less acted upon) and listened to them.

Patricia A. Alspach  
Farmington Hills

### Social Security alarm

Well, they've finally done it! The Social Security Administration has now accomplished perhaps the greatest act of irresponsibility toward the American public in U.S. History. They have published your entire earnings history and that of every American, on the Internet.

All that is necessary to access the information by anyone are a few basic details about you and your mother's maiden name. That information is readily available to anyone interested enough in checking you out.

If this alarms you, I suggest you call your local congressman, who happens to be Joe Knollenberg. His telephone number is 810-851-1366.

Kenneth Kemp  
Farmington Hills

### Not another school charade

Farmington Public Schools say they really want to know why voters didn't approve the \$110 million bond issue. They are making

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— Philip Power