

## CHAT ROOM



KATHIE O'DONOHUE

## Perplexities of parenting just proliferate

**I**n the more time I invest in this parenthood thing, the more I find myself simply amazed, or perhaps dumbfounded. No one adequately warned me to be prepared for the unexpected. Here's what I mean:

"Eye see." I often wonder whether my son will be the only child in history whose vision actually worsens with glasses. An eyeglass wearer for two years now, no matter how many times I ask him if they are dirty, he says no. When I check them, however, it's like looking through crumpled wax paper. I worry about that kid and his eyes, so I supplement his diet with lots of extra carrots and try to ignore the orange tinge his skin is taking on.

Another son complained a year ago of not being able to see the chalkboard well, so I took him for an eye exam. The doctor determined this one's vision to be 20/20, but added that my son confessed to him his deep admiration and longing for some of the eyewear styles sported by kids in his class. He was particularly fond of a pair of glasses with little cars on the frames.

### No easy answer

I have learned that for some problems, an answer cannot always be clearly seen. Welcome to the brave new world of orthodontics. My sons' dental accessories are quite appropriately named appliances, for they're virtually as costly and have just as many problems. This category could also be aptly titled, "See Mommy Cry."

A series of words and phrases should suffice to describe our relationship with these little gadgets: Lost. Broken. Don't fit. Cause pain. Keep Tylenol makers in the money. "I don't know." Noncompliance. Spend more time in lunch boxes, pockets, and on bedroom floors than in mouth. If lunchbox zipper suffered malocclusion, it would be cured. Amount of maternal yelling and nagging appears directly proportional to degree of wearing.

Now the dentist has discovered more torture treatment: the cemented-in appliance. Considered at least temporarily permanent (an oxymoron if I've ever heard one), these dislodge from both wearers' mouths about twice a week and always on my busiest days.

I recall being talked into these devices to spread teeth that are in too narrow a jaw. If untreated, my kids would potentially suffer from any number of jaw, neck, spinal or other problems later in life. But since the appliances entered the picture, I am the only one suffering! At the very least, my kids could have sucked their thumbs for years to make it all seem worth it.

### Orthodontic monster

A third child wears a bite splint and, surprisingly enough, seems to have adapted well since discovering he can scare younger kids by jutting it from his mouth over so slightly while bugging out his eyes.

What lessons have been revealed to me since encountering the orthodontic experience? Just a ruminating mantra: must feed them mush, feed them mush.

On the flip side, I wonder if my daughter will wear out her gums from over-brushing as we have to practically drag her screaming from attending to her little pearly whites.

"That does not compute!" There is only one question burning in my mind: Do babies born these days possess inherent skill and lack of cyber fear? After several years of trying to familiarize myself with the computer, I am still extremely limited. I can shop online, e-mail friends and use the word processor on a very basic level. But to me, a hard drive remains simply a description of any junk in my van with all five children, and a "mother-lease" is someone you don't want to mess with.

The above might while on the word

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# Moms unite to end gun violence

**■ Farmington area mothers are joining the Million Mom March in Washington, D.C., on Mother's Day, May 14.**

BY MARY RODRIQUE  
STAFF WRITER  
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Sylvia Kambouris can't think of a better way to spend Mother's Day than marching in the Million Mom March in Washington, D.C.

The Farmington Hills aerobics instructor and mother of two children feels compelled to join this grass roots national campaign of mothers seeking an end to gun violence in the U.S.

"After the shooting of the little girl (the Michigan first-grader shot to death by a classmate) I didn't have to think hard about this."

She attended a meeting at the Livonia Civic Center Library earlier this month of the local contingent of the Million Mom March and signed on.

"I think having the march on Mother's Day is symbolic and very appropriate," she said.

The non-partisan group was started

nine months ago by a small group of mothers to raise awareness to the threat of guns to children. The mission of the march is to educate and mobilize families nationwide to seek common sense gun safety legislation and strict enforcement of those laws.

Specifically, the Moms want sensible cooling off periods and background checks; licensing handgun owners and registering all handguns; safety locks for all handguns; limiting purchases to one handgun per month; no-nonsense enforcement of gun laws; and enlisting the help of corporate America to achieve those goals.

"I'd really like more people from the Farmington area to get involved," said Kambouris. "I've been sending letters to day-care centers, schools, churches, any place where people might be sympathetic to this cause."

### A family affair

Her son, Jonathon, a senior at Farmington High School, will accompany her to the nation's capital in May as will her husband, Chris. Her daughter, Liann, who now lives New York City, plans to join her family at the march.

"They're very supportive of this effort. My son is still in high school. We worry about it (violence)," she said. "I think that idea of safety is gone. The threat is there; it's real wherever you live."

Million Mom March literature states that "While we acknowledge that guns may be necessary for hunting, law enforcement, and national security, the

proliferation of firearms intended for one purpose only — killing another human being — has become untenable."

Mary Washington, also of Farmington Hills, is a regional coordinator for the march. Her job is to rouse moms from Farmington, Farmington Hills, Southfield, Bloomfield Hills and part of Detroit to help coordinate the Michigan contingent.

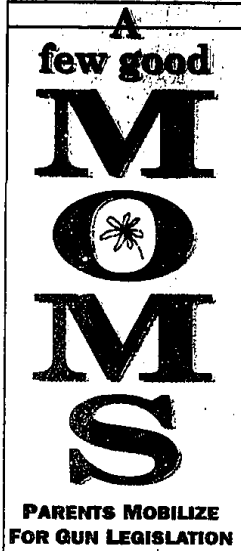
Washington works with the Kintno Educational Foundation, established in memory of her two nephews who were killed by gunfire in Benton Harbor three years ago.

"They were innocent victims in a bad situation," she said. "They were just about to start college, had all kinds of goals and things."

**Alternative to violence**

She explained that the foundation works with children in grades kindergarten through 12 to teach them alternatives to violence. "Someone has to show them a different way."

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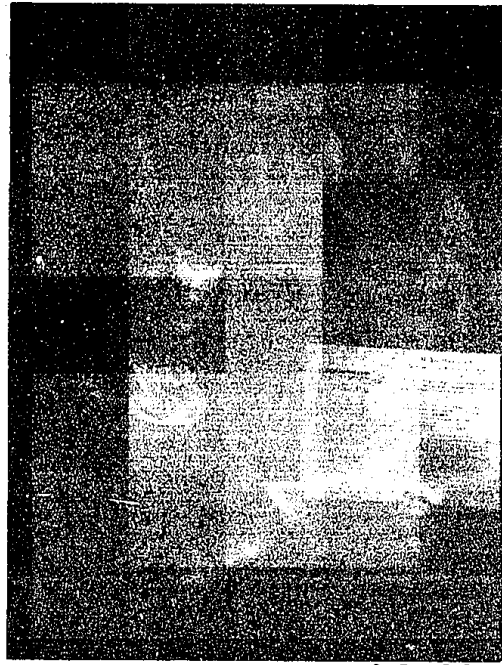
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STAFF PHOTO BY BOB BACHMAN

**Local Moms: Sylvia Kambouris (seated) and Mary Washington, both of Farmington Hills, are spearheading the local drive to get mothers involved with the Million Mom March in Washington, D.C., on Mother's Day.**

distributors know we are taking a step toward changing things. Legislation is only the beginning."

Washington said as a single mother, she raised her son, an attorney, and daughter, a computer specialist, 28 and 26 years old respectively, alone. Today she works in her son's legal practice in Southfield. She plans to travel to Washington by bus with fellow marchers "to keep the motivation going."

"We're really just getting started in the Farmington area and the response has been good," she added. "Churches

and organizations are jumping on the bandwagon with us."

National endorsements include the National PTA, National Education Association, National Council of Catholic Women, National Council of Jewish Women, League of Women Voters, and the NAACP.

Anyone interested in the Million Mom March can attend a meeting at 2 p.m. Sunday, March 26, at Busch's Market, upstairs meeting room, Newburgh and Six Mile roads in Livonia. Call toll-free 1-888-989-MOMS or visit [mimam-march@yahoo.com](http://mimam-march@yahoo.com)

## Halsted Road named for family with deep roots

BY RUTH MOELMAN  
SPECIAL WRITER

Two houses in the Farmington Hills Historic Districts are associated with the Halsted family. They are on Halsted Road.

Dr. Lee Halsted, who died in October

1999, is remembered as the beloved doctor who cared for Farmington's medical needs for over half a century. In various interviews and speeches he recorded the history of his family and that of Farmington.

The first of the family was James

Boorn. He came to Farmington to develop the 80 acres "taken out" from the government May 16, 1827. The first purchase of land in a territory is not just bought. It is removed from public lands, thus taken out.

James Boorn had three occupations.

He was a farmer, ran a slaughter house on his land and was a cobbler. He tanned the leather and made the shoes.

A tributary of the Rouge River and a

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## WOMEN IN POLITICS

**■ Editor's note: In the next few weeks we will highlight area women elected officials in anticipation of a campaign workshop to help new comers to the political field learn how to run**

for office. The workshop is 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, March 25, at the William Costick Activities Center. Call the League of Women Voters for more information, 248-647-1350.



Marla Parker

Ask Marla Parker how her career in politics began, and she has a simple answer: "I think it all starts with community involvement."

While Parker, a 47th District Court Judge, doesn't consider herself a politician in any way, she landed in the thick of it during the 1992 campaign for her current post. After Judge Margaret Schaefer retired, Parker was named to fill the seat.

While she had been a part of many Farmington Hills organizations and events, this was Parker's first shot at public office.

"The campaign process was a life-consuming



Joan Dudley

Though local politics was once a mainstay in Joan Dudley's life, she doesn't pay attention to much of what's happening any more.

The 47th District Court Magistrate has a pretty good reason, though.

"I can't get involved because the judicial tenure committee says if a person is going to be on the bench, they can't get involved in local politics," she explained.

Dudley still votes, of course. But she isn't nearly as much a part of the political scene as she was in 1972.



Cheryl Oliverio

The toughest challenges for Farmington Hills City Council member Cheryl Oliverio hasn't involved any of the difficult issues she has faced in chambers.

It wasn't campaigning, or going up against angry residents or even disagreements with her fellow council members.

The toughest part of being a council member has been juggling her life as a single mother. "I don't have someone at home with the kids, so when we have a break, I have to quick go call the kids to make sure everything's OK," she said.

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Please see DUDLEY, B3

Please see OLIVERIO, B3