Farmington Players break ground on new theater

The Farmington Players staged an official groundbreaking ceremony Thursday for their new barn theater, on Twelve Mile west of Orchard Lake.

of Orchard Lake.

Among those starring in the production
was Don Briggs, 88, a longtime group member who helped buy the first Player's Barn in
1983. He joined Farmington Hills Mayor
Nancy Bates, Farmington Mayor Jim
Mitchell and others, standing on long sheets
of plywood laid on mud near a construction
trailer.

trailer.

After remarks from dignitaries, Briggs sunk a chrome-tipped shovel into muddy dirt, and tossed shovel-fulls of soil in the air for photographers. "Want another one?" he asked, as 25 onlookers laughed and egged

in the air of photographers. "Want another one?" he asked, as 25 onlookers laughed and egged him on.

"This is an example of what can be accomplished when the community, private business and the city partner." Bates said.

Mitchell said people throughout the community "really appreciate what the players have done over the years."

Players board member Phil Hadley told the gathering, "We're excited about what the theater will be." He said professional level sound and lighting equipment planned for the finished theater will also be available to the community, for shows and more.

The new theater will also be on one level, making it more accessible.

Hadley said that people would sometimes tell him they hardly noticed the old Players Barn, which stood on the same site until spring 2001.
"They're going to notice this place," he proclaimed.

Also heading the ceremony were Farming-

claimed.
Also heading the ceremony were Fermington Players President Dave Ternes, and past president Cynthia Tupper.
During remarks, nearly a dozen Sachse Construction & Development Corp. crew

STAT PROTO BY THE RESIDER
DIG It: Don Briggs mans the shovel
with support of Phil Hadley, Cynthia Tupper, David Ternes, Mary
Ann Tweedie, Jim Mitchell and
Nancy Rete. Nancy Bates.

members worked to prepare the site. Yellow survey tripods sat near rows of yellow straw, contrasting with brown soil.

The new facility will feature an auditorium that will sent about 240 people, a workshop to prepare stage props, a make-up room and office sance.

office space.
For the last two seasons, the Players have been performing at Barnes and Noble Booksellers in West Bloomfield. The players hope to open the new facility in the 2002/2003 sea-



son.

The Farmington Hills city administration has pledged \$50,000 per year from the recreation tax to use the facility for a range of events and the Teen Theater program.

The opportunity to improve the theater came when a developer offered to contribute money to a new facility, if the original barn could be torn down to make way for a senior housing development, Sunrise Assisted Living.

housing development, Sunrise Assisted Living.

The senior complex will share a driveway parking and utilities with the theater.

The Farmington Players have announced they will seek financial help from businesses to help pay for the new theater.

The Players next production, "The Rainmaker" opens at Barnes and Noble Feb. 8-March 2. The Players last show of the season, "Once upon a mattress," opens May 3.

Staff writer Paul Pace contributed to this

posed drawing of the Farming-ton Players new theater.



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Motorola headquarters on target despite auto woes

BY KEVIN BROWN
STAFF WRITER
KHOWNBOC-homecomm.net
Layoffs and other recent setbacks for the auto industry are
not affecting the scheduled opening of a new Motorola Automotive and Industrial Electronics
Group headquarters in Farmington Hills, a company official
soid.

Group headquarters in Farming-ton Hills, a company official said. There will be no delays in the opening of our new facility. In fact, the opposite is true, we will move into our new facility one month ahead of schedule, said Ken Hopkins, Motorola director of marketization. Motorola broke ground in November 2000 on a three-story 125,000 square-foot building at

12 Mile-and Halsted. The facility will house Motorola's Automotive and Industrial Electronies Group, and other automotive and transportation-related groups. While Ford Motor Co. recently unnounced meetings with supplicate to discuss possible cuthoks.

while rord Motor Co. recently announced meetings with suppli-ers to discuss possible cuthneks in contracts, Hopkins said, "We are not aware of any canceled business with any OEM cus-tomers."

business were and tomers."

While nn official opening day has not been scheduled, company spokeswoman Kim Hurley-Young said it will likely be in section.

spring.
The new building, on 23 acres just off of I-696, can accommodate up to 500 employees. It will

Yamasaki Associates and developed by Kojaian Companies.
"Motorol has made a commitment to the automotive industry, therefore we are focusing on growing our presence in Detroit and in Farmington Hills," Hopkins said.





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