

# Hills officials support patrol tower use

BY PAUL R. PACE  
STAFF WRITER

Two Farmington Hills officials testified in Lansing Tuesday to help support the new Oakland County emergency radio system that would use Michigan State Police radio towers.

Farmington Hills Police Chief William Dwyer serves as chairman on phone bills for Oakland County residents have generated \$43 million to enhance the emergency radio system. Improvements will allow police agencies the ability to communicate with each other.

One way to make the Oakland County Law Enforcement Consortium sys-

tem work would be erecting new radio towers.

Dwyer said the county can save millions of dollars by piggy-backing onto Michigan State Police's radio towers in rural areas.

However, state police have rejected the idea and now a bill in the state House aims to make towers available for the project.

Dwyer and Vicki Barnett, Hills city councilwoman who also chairs the National League of Cities Steering Committee on Information, Technology and Communications, were in Lansing to show support. The bill is expected to be voted on the House floor soon.

"Those towers were paid for by the taxpayers so it's ludicrous that they cannot be used

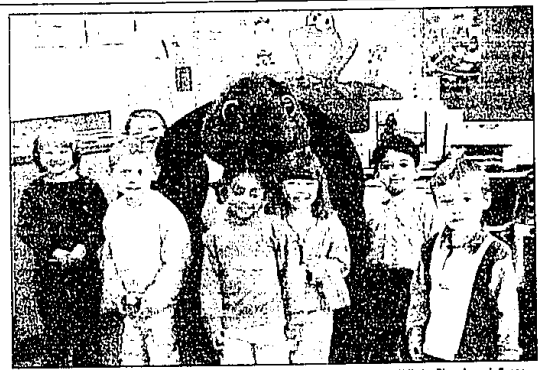
by us," Dwyer said.

Barnett said that when the state police built a new radio system years ago, officials did not ask local agencies if they could be a part of the system.

She said police have to use several different radios to communicate at times and the new Oakland system would resolve the issue.

Dwyer said even Farmington and Farmington Hills had trouble communicating with each other when the two departments handled a structure fire together not long ago.

The new system is powerful enough to receive transmission in buildings, which can be an important feature in structure fires, he said.



Pictured with Franklin are: Victoria Riddett-Maki, Alex Smith, Dalton Korczyk, Pratiksha Dhandapani, Grace Powers, Kirishiksh Munugata and Jacob Marshall.

# Schools celebrate Reading Month with many characters

BY SUE BUCK  
STAFF WRITER

Franklin The Turtle visited Farmington Community School and the Early Childhood Center in celebration of Reading Month.

Also during the month of March, Mother Goose and some of her friends visited classrooms.

Little Boy Blue, Humpty Dumpty, Old King Cole and the Queen of Hearts are expected to visit this year, according to Sue Williams, an education specialist at FCS.

In addition to special classroom activities, FCS sponsors several special events, Williams said.

On Fabulous Fun Friday on March 14, Williams worked with parents to teach them the importance of language play. Phonemic awareness, the ability to hear the sounds of oral language, is essential to learning to read.

Parents learned simple songs, poems and nursery rhymes to share with their children.

The activities, with the

theme, "Songs, Rhymes and Finger Plays," are what Williams called "the building blocks for future reading success."

Fabulous Fun Fridays at FCS are a twice monthly parent education workshop. Parents attend a workshop while children are cared for by staff in one of the classrooms. Williams said Bedtime Story evening on March 18, featured songs, music, storytellers, puppets and costumed characters. After an evening of stories, the families enjoyed a bedtime snack of cookies and milk.

During "Everybody Reads," guest readers from all walks of life - grandparents, teenagers, secretaries, construction workers, nurses, cashiers and many others - took time to read to small groups of children, sharing their favorite children's books. Farmington Community School is located at 30415 Shinwassee.

"All children will carry teddy bears as we parade around the school wearing hats representing our favorite books," said Patty Bruder, a preschool science paraprofessional.

The theme throughout Reading Month is "Beary Happy Readers."

The school celebrated reading with home activities, a bedtime story party, and birthday celebrations for Dr. Seuss.

Building Administrator Nancy Ely hosted special story times, "Teddy Bear Picnics" with each class. Ely wore "bear feet" as she shared stories.

Students celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday on March 3 and 4, heard Seuss favorites and ate green eggs and ham. Ely read to classes at Teddy Bear Picnics on March 10, 11, 17 and 18.

On March 19, the school's parent organization hosted "Beary Good Bedtime Stories." Children returned to school in the evening, dressed in their pajamas, to hear stories read by staff and parents. Fairview Early Childhood Center is located at 28500 Oak Crest Drive in Farmington Hills.

**FAIRVIEW EVENTS**

Fairview's Celebrate Reading Parade is March 26 and 27.

# Radio station collects care packages for U.S. troops

To help troops overseas, 97.1FM Talk radio, located 15600 12 Mile in Southfield, is collecting care packages.

The care packages will be collected from 12 noon to 7 p.m. this Tuesday and Wednesday at WRRK studios, back parking

lot. For those who would like to help, care packages should consist of: toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, stick deodorant, combs and other toiletries.

Do not include aerosol cans or any powdered substances, like talc or foot powder. Letters

and cards to the soldiers are OK, but no addresses, e-mail addresses, names or locations should be used.

All toiletries should be placed in separate, plastic Ziplock bags. For more information, go to www.971fm.com.

# Oakland Schools hosts safety workshop

Oakland Schools will host a workshop titled, "The Impact of Terrorism on School Security and Crisis Preparedness Planning," 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, March 25 in the Oakland Schools KIVA, 2100 Pontiac Lake Road, Waterford. Speaker Kenneth S. Trump is

president of National School Safety and Security Services, a Cleveland-based national consulting firm specializing in school security and crisis preparedness training and consulting. He has written two books and more than 35 articles on school security and crisis issues.

Breakfast will be served at 7 a.m., and is included in \$20 cost.

To register, call Oakland Schools Event Management department at (248) 209-2500, or register by e-mail via EMRegistration@oakland.k12.mi.us.

# Read Observer Sports for local game coverage

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