

Editorial Page

Downtown Development

News that nothing new seems to stand in the way of a sizeable new business development in the downtown Farmington area, announced last week, came as 'pleasant music' to our ears. What made it even more pleasant was the fact that this proposed development appeared to be almost completely dead only a few short weeks earlier. That the corporation behind the development will always keep in mind the betterment of the community as a whole as well as any personal gains that they might realize as a result of its success is our desire. We are confident that they will.

This new development can be a big help in reviving downtown Farmington back to a healthy business status again. The new development alone, however, is not enough. A restoration of the present business section will also be necessary if downtown Farmington is to become a healthy shopping center again. This can only be done through the united efforts of all businessmen in the downtown area.

A very sickening feeling has developed on several occasions in recent months as we have walked down Grand River Ave. downtown, noting the number of vacant stores and others badly in need of repairs and some cleaning up. It detracts greatly from the other well kept stores and business establishments located adjacent to them or nearby.

Hopes are high that news of the new downtown development will inspire owners and occupants of other stores in the downtown area to make some real improvements on their own buildings as well as making an earnest effort to get other store owners to do the same. (We are optimistic enough to believe that all unoccupied stores downtown can be filled before another year passes.)

Cooperation by businessmen with the city to provide additional off-street parking in other areas will be a 'must.' It may cost some money but we are certain that any money invested in off-street parking will yield returns in an increased volume of business! This has proven true in business districts in numerous other communities.

Restoration of the downtown area into a healthy business district once more should have no adverse effects on outlying shopping centers. With the rapid residential growth in this area, there is a need for both a downtown business district and neighborhood centers in other areas of the community.

The big task that faces all business establishments in Farmington city and township is not that of competing vigorously with one another for business. It is rather with getting residents to shop locally instead of in centers and business districts outside the community.

Aid To Schools

It is interesting to note that the 12-point legislative program for 1960 which the Michigan Education Association board of directors released last week gave top priority to its proposal for a three per cent improvement in the state aid formula.

We have always thought highly of the Michigan Education Association and still do but must speak out in opposition to this particular proposal which the organization indicates it will be pushing for hardest this year. Educators have already been told by State Senator Edward Hutchinson (R, Remvillie) that it's unlikely that the Legislature will even consider the matter of boosting the state aid formula in 1960. This, we are reasonably certain, is the attitude of a majority of our legislators.

Regardless of whether the money for school operations comes in the form of state aid, federal aid or local taxes, it is certain that it is eventually going to come out of your pocket and mine.

We have never quite been able to accept the practice of having it collected in the form of sales tax by the state and, after somewhat detailed and costly processing, turned back to the school districts throughout the state without regard for where the money came from in the first place.

We don't have the answer but don't think asking for more and more state and federal aid is it.

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RUSSELL S. STRICKLAND, Publisher
MICHAEL J. KILEY, Manager and Editor
J. DEE ELLIS, Assistant Manager
CLIFTON WIRTH, Advertising Manager
VICTOR S. HOWARD, Plant Superintendent

WEST POINT PARK NEWS

MIBB L. A. AULT
Phone GR. 4-4294

Sunshine Sisters met in Neighborhood Church Wednesday afternoon with a fair-sized group attending considering weather conditions. There was the usual devotional service. A number of interesting contributions were made to the program. Reports were given of the sick in the community and refreshments were served.

The next meeting of the Sunshine Sisters will be held in Neighborhood Church at 2 o'clock Wednesday afternoon, February 10. This will take the form of a Valentine Party. Each lady is requested to bring with her a valentine for exchanging.

The Sarah Circle of the Livonia Methodist W. S. C. S. held a pleasant session in the church parsonage, Flamingo Ave., Thursday. Sarah Brown, wife of the pastor, was hostess.

ALBERT OWEN, at her home on Mayfield Ave., entertained the members of her Circle from the Clarenceville Methodist Church last Tuesday evening.

The Esther Circle of the Livonia Methodist Church met at the Johnston home on Farmington Rd., Thursday.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Padol and their four children, from Monroe, were Sunday, Jan. 23, guests of Mrs. Padol's mother, Mrs. Marie Roberts on Mayfield Ave.

THE DAN WOLKOWS, of Osmus Ave., are leaving shortly for a vacation visit to Florida. Mr. and Mrs. Howard Palm and their four children, from near Southfield, are visiting in the home of Mr. and Mrs. V. C. Reddy, on Shady Side Ave.

Miss Joanne McVicar, who attends college in Ann Arbor, has arrived home to spend her winter semester vacation with her parents, the McVicar of Shady Side Ave.

Marcella Meade, sophomore at Eastern Michigan University is at her home on Hubbard Ave. for a week's between-semester vacation.

Monday evening, Jan. 25, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Herman Schult, Shady Side Ave., a joint celebration was held, honoring the 15th birthday of Janet, youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Herman Schult, and the 6th birthday of her new sister, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jim Schult. A group of relatives and a few family friends were on hand. A beautiful birthday cake was the center of attraction. Both young ladies received lovely gifts.

John Aittama, of Shady Side Ave., was a visitor at Veterans' headquarters in Detroit Wednesday.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Blackney of Hubbard Ave., have, for ten days, been seriously ill with flu.

MISS DOLORES VARHOL of Shady Side Ave., has been convalescing from a week's serious illness. Her father, John Varhol, has also been on the sick list.

Phillip, youngest son of the Merril Johnsons, of Parker Ave., is now convalescing from a week of flu.

Miss Linda Wolkow, Osmus Ave., has been convalescing from an attack of appendicitis. Friends here have heard with regret that Mrs. Lawrence Smith, who visited so often with her daughter, Miss Louis Jensen, has recently moved from Norfolk Ave. to Lamberville, is suffering from painfully severe paraffin burns on her hands and arms.

A recent accident Mrs. Austin Ault, Brentwood Ave., suffered a foot injury Saturday, Jan. 23, and has since been getting about only with the aid of crutches.

Neighborhood Sunday School is planning a special feature at their February 7 session. It is expected to have on display birthday cake to be served in the afternoon following dismissal.

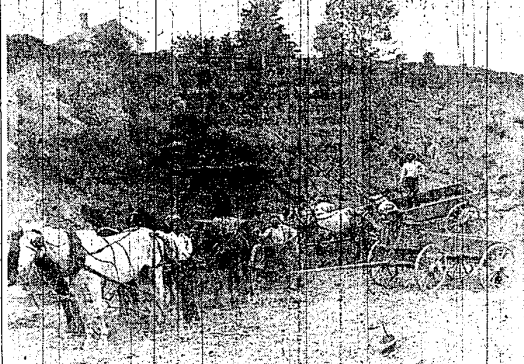
Mrs. Helen Ault, Mayfield Ave., is out of town for a few weeks.

The next Goodwill Pickup in this area is on Friday, Feb. 4, to arrange to have a truck stop at your door, call Miss Lora Ault, GR. 4-4294.

Botsford Activities Include Nike Trip

The movie bug has hit Botsford elementary school. Recently by Mr. Cunningham's sixth graders made some Tom Sawyer movies, which previous, has now been enjoyed by the first, second and third grades. Mr. Green's sixth grade also recently went to a Nike base on River Rouge park, where they saw a movie on the Nike Ajax and the Nike Hercules. They then were taken to a base and saw how men work in the control building operation of the Nike.

The Boy Scouts of America observes its 50th anniversary in 1960.



A FAMILIAR SIGHT at the turn of the century, just as it is today, was the operation of a gravel pit. This pit was located on Grand River just south of Haggerty Road by the present gas plant and the earth's depression may still be seen today. It was the custom for local farmers to hitch up their teams and partake of the work whenever any road work was being done in the area. Pictured here are three fine examples of teams: the white, the bay, and the dun grey. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Henrietta Adams—Information supplied by Vayle Lorion.)

Farmington Fifty Years Ago

By HARLEY WALTERS

This is the first portion of a story giving a glimpse of what life was like in Farmington 50 years ago. The story will be continued in subsequent issues.

The interesting pictures taken in Farmington years ago and recently printed in the Enterprise are one of my reasons for writing this article. A first-hand account of life fifty years ago—homes, social activities, schools, business places and always quiet in the parks—even the moths that stayed too long went stir-crazy.

Milk was delivered direct from can to pan. The milkman dipped out the amount desired and covered the pan to keep the flies out. There were no garages but barns were common with horses or cows stabled therein. Animals could be pastured nearby but not just anywhere. This notice appeared in the Enterprise: "The Official Board of the Methodist Church respectfully requests that no cows be pastured on church property."

SOCIAL LIFE centered around the following organizations, religious and otherwise: Masonic Lodge, Eastern Star, Epworth League, The Guild, Ladies' Aid, Ladies' Literary Club, Ladies' Union, Grand Go-Go Club, and the Uplifters. The Ladies' Literary Club held meetings to read poetry and prose and partake of the daily refreshments that inevitably followed.

Arrival at the post-office an hour before the mail could be sorted was not only a social activity but a news-gathering festival. Medicine shows also attracted crowds. Each year at least one show would stop to do what it could for the health of the community. This writer, twice a member one practitioner who

trip to the clothes line where they received a pounding with a carpet beater. The women would stay up most of Sunday night to be first to hang their washing out on Monday morning.

Most homes had a well-shed, musty smelling room called a parlor. The accepted reason for entering that room of course was to see the minister or family, a visit by the minister from a distance, such as India or Egypt. It was always quiet in the parlor. Even the moths that stayed too long went stir-crazy.

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guaranteed his potent elixir would sustain anyone's life span to 100 years, including his own. He died that night in his room at Grand River and Farmington Road. He appeared to be not over fifty, but perhaps he had sold his last bottle and didn't have enough left to see him through the night.

Other summer visitors were bands of gypsies with their horses, wagons and colorful costumes. They told fortunes, traded hangers and picked up everything not nailed down. After their departure a number of things usually turned up missing.

OUR SCHOOLS, which had been built in 1889 and destroyed by fire in 1918, stood where the east end of the Farmington Junior High School is on Thomas Street. Of brick construction, the first floor contained three grade rooms in triangular shape. The second floor center section housed the respective high school and there was a tall tower at the front. Boys didn't wear long pants until they graduated to the second floor.

The bell was rung twice at five-minute intervals, the first a warning and the second, final call. If a student hadn't reached the school by the time the last bell started tolling, he knew he had better start thinking up a good excuse for tardiness. The shortcut was a path across the present site of the Methodist church.

The teaching staff consisted of Professor Goodrich, Miss Sloan, Miss Whitebeck and two other teachers. The school's operating expense for 1909 had been: teachers \$2,150, fuel \$111, janitor \$200, loan \$300 and miscellaneous \$288. William B. Gledits Smith composed the graduating class that year.

Drinking water was brought in from the outdoor pump in pails and a collapsible tin drinking cup was a necessary piece of equipment. Fertilizer was needed for the various odors brought in by the farm boys and the amateur snuff trappers. The cold noon lunches were often aromatic, too. For the sake of a little fresh air, the cleaning of black board erasers by striking them against the outside walls was a much sought-after privilege.

The graduating class of 1910 was Lloyd Guillen, Forest Dickerson, Will Ely, Cassie Goodrich and Lucie Sprague. (Continued next week)

Now at Brooklyn

William P. Gidden, seaman U.S.N., of Farmington, Mich., is now serving at the Naval Training Station, Brooklyn, N.Y.

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Naturalist To Visit Bond

Rainer Brocke, Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority naturalist, will visit Bond Elementary School in Farmington on Monday, February 8 where he will present four lectures and slides. The topics are: "Birds and Mammals" and "Plant and Animal Communities." The appointment was requested by Principal Richard Goodwin and arrangements made by the school's Audio Visual Committee. One of the members of this committee is Mrs. Rita Dodd, fourth grade teacher, who contacted the authority for a naturalist lecture. Brocke is associated with the Nature Center at Kensington Metropolitan Park.

At Advanced Artillery School

Army Pvt. John R. Amick, son of Mrs. Mary J. Amick, 3610 Eldred, Farmington, is receiving eight weeks of advanced individual artillery training at The Artillery and Missile Center, Fort Sill, Oklahoma. The training is scheduled to be completed Feb. 21. Amick is being trained in the duties of a cannoneer in a 105 millimeter howitzer section.

He entered the Army last April and completed basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. The 18-year-old soldier attended Clarenceville High School.

The Boy Scouts International Bureau at Ottawa, Canada, coordinates Scouting in 67 nations.

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