

# Farmington Observer

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## Duo gets jail term despite cops' plea

By MARY GNIEWEK

Two defendants who pleaded guilty to kidnaping a Farmington Hills businessman June 27 were sentenced to prison Friday despite pleas for probation made by the Farmington Hills police chief and a police sergeant.

Rick Scogean, 19, and Gary Lee Kelley, 22, both of Salt Lake City, Utah were sentenced to one to 20 years and 1 1/2 to 20 years, respectively, for their part in a plot to kidnap Mr. and Mrs. Byung Park and hold their children for a \$40,000 ransom.

*'Even though on a scale of one to 10, I'm 9.5 hard-nosed cop, I still had to do what my conscience told me to do.'*

— Police Chief John Nichols

Oakland County Circuit Judge Hilda Gage ordered the sentence after hearing pleas for leniency from Police Chief John Nichols and Sgt. Al Havner. "Sgt. Havner and I worked with the individuals since the aborted kidnaping," said Nichols.

"Even though on a scale of one to 10, I'm a 9.5 hardnosed cop, I still had to do what my conscience told me to do," he said.

## Comedy Castle wins its battle

By JUDITH BERNE

Again, there is just one "Comedy Castle."

West Bloomfield's two houses of comedy reached an out-of-court agreement last week that the name "Comedy Castle" belonged to its originator, Mark Ridley.

"We reached a settlement," Ridley's attorney Arnold Weintraub said last week. "They have submitted to a permanent injunction against using the name 'Comedy Castle' or 'Friday's Comedy Castle' and to stop any and all advertising using that name immediately. They have 15 days to inform their vendors and suppliers of the change."

"We got what we wanted. We're very happy," Weintraub said. Ridley and his "Comedy Castle" have moved from Friday's in Pine

Lake Mall to the banquet room of Stafford's Restaurant in Orchard Mall.

"Comedy continues at Friday's, where owners Cary Hanson and Timothy Busch recently decided to take over their own comedy bookings — and the 'Comedy Castle' name.

Now, the restaurant and comedy house is answering to "Friday's Comedy."

But Hanson said an eight-week contest starts this week to come up with a name to replace the question mark. Winner will get a weekend trip for two to Los Angeles with reservations at the "Comedy Store."

BOTH SPOTS are reporting good audiences since the split. Tuesday was opening night for the

(Continued on Page 2A)



### Goin' fishin

Steve Wright, 12, in the water, and Phil Beau-champ, 15, found the fish biting in a stream adjacent to Eight Mile in Farmington Hills. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

## Fight for EMS

### Firefighters file suit

By MARY GNIEWEK

The Farmington Hills Firefighters Association will file suit in Oakland County Circuit Court this week to force the city into placing an emergency medical service (EMS) proposal on the November or a special election ballot.

The firefighters were put off last week by the Farmington Hills City Council in an attempt to get a question before voters in November.

On advice of City Attorney Paul Bibeau, who said the firefighters request is in violation of the city charter because it involves expenditure of city funds, the council tabled the issue. It scheduled a study session to discuss alternatives to private-run EMS now contracted from AmCare Inc. of Redford Township.

Attorney for the firefighters, George Kruszewski, said the firefighters are asking only for the establishment of an EMS system.

"Financing is a concern of the city council," he said.

"If the city attorney's opinion is valid, then no one could initiate an ordinance because it would cost money."

Kruszewski is a member of the same Detroit law firm, Marston, Sachs and Nunn, who researched the Farmington Hills City Charter for the firefighters before they drafted a petition.

The petition submitted to the city clerk's office in July had 4,000 signa-

tures of residents who want city-run EMS.

"THE CITY ATTORNEY'S opinion upset us," said Steve Hume, president of Firefighters Local 2659.

"A few council members have supporters in the volunteer (firefighter) ranks here. They're being fed detrimental information."

"They put the pressure on and restrict our efforts to improve our professionalism."

A split within the firefighter ranks surfaced last week. Currently the department is a combination of eight full-time firefighters and paid volunteers who work on a callback system on weekends and week nights.

"A division of human rescue is needed, but you can't fight fires and be a paramedic at the same time," said one paid volunteer who wished to remain anonymous.

"Fulltime paramedics are the eventual goal (of the fulltime department) for the best service. A combination firefighter paramedic won't solve the problems immediately," he said.

The fulltime firefighters want full-time paramedics to run advanced life support ambulances, the part of EMS most crucial in the first minutes of a life or death emergency.

Fulltime firefighters say the private run service, which contracts to other cities including Livonia and Redford Township, makes it impossible for a life support unit to be stationed in Farmington Hills at all times.

BOTH FULLTIME and volunteer firefighters have seen lives lost in those crucial first minutes. Both agree the firefighters could provide the service more cost efficiently than any other group.

"We've had no opportunity from the city to provide any case at all," Hume said.

But City Manager Lawrence Savage said last week that he is prepared to meet with the firefighters and hear their plan.

While city council members say they support the concept, they balk at financing the 24 hour service. Council estimates hover between \$500,000 — \$800,000 while firefighters say it could be accomplished for \$300,000 — \$400,000.

City Clerk Floyd Cairns said if the lawsuit spurs a special election, it will cost the city at least \$8,000.

Sept. 16 is the deadline for submitting proposals to Oakland County for inclusion on the November ballot.

## Sidewalk progress is slow

By MARY GNIEWEK

If you're waiting for sidewalks along major streets in Farmington Hills, be patient.

That advice comes from Mayor Joanne Soronen, who learned last week that paving 80 miles of sidewalk along the cities major thoroughfares would cost \$5,766,846.

The estimate is based on a study conducted by the city's engineering department.

Just who would pay — or how — is still an unanswered question.

"The cost boggles our minds," the mayor said.

"We have asked the city manager to sort out some of the areas he feels are a priority, like around schools."

"We'll go over that list and figure an estimate from that."

The city has a couple of alternatives for financing.

It could treat sidewalks as a special assessment district (SAD), a category used for sewers and roads. In a SAD, residents who would benefit from the sidewalks would pay for them.

The other alternative is to ask Farmington Hills voters for a millage increase sometime next year.

"We cannot put it on the ballot this November," Mrs. Soronen said. "There's no time to get state approval."

Ralph Magid, department of public service director for the city, said the \$5.7 million estimate includes more than just installation of sidewalks.

"IT WAS A very broad estimate," Magid said. "It includes placement of the sidewalk, excavation, fill required, drain crossings, slopes and an additional estimate to establish easements in certain areas."

Engineers and staff planners worked intermittently for the past 1 1/2 years on various sidewalk studies.

The department did one detailed estimate for the south side of 13 Mile from Orchard Lake to Baptist Manor, a senior citizen residence west of Middlebelt.

Mrs. Soronen said Baptist Manor probably would be a high priority area, as would the property in front of North Farmington High, Harrison Junior and East Junior High School.

Commercial and industrial developments, apartments and new subdivisions are now obligated to sidewalks before site plan approval is granted by the city.

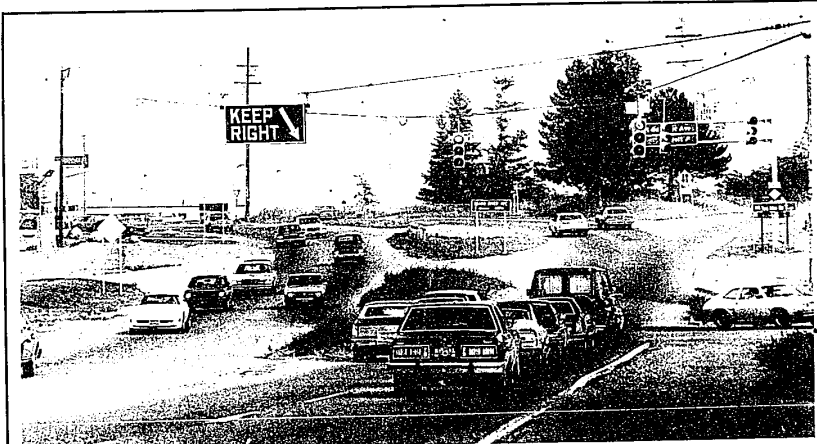
## Committee searches for beautiful spots

The City of Farmington Beautification Committee is working on its annual awards program. This will be the 12th year the committee has carried out the program honoring businesses, industries, churches and individuals for their efforts to keep Farmington beautiful.

The awards luncheon will be conducted in mid-October. Those honored for excellent property maintenance will be notified early in that month.

The awards committee has reassessed the properties recommended by the Beautification Committee members and noted businesses which consistently keep their properties clean and well maintained. They also noted properties being renovated or improved.

The Beautification Committee is a volunteer organization whose members are appointed by the city council.



### Remodeling job

That tricky 10 Mile-Grand River intersection got some help last week with the installation of traffic lights. City Engineer Tom Biasell said the lights — installed by Oakland County and Farmington Hills — will minimize confusion, reduce congestion and make for a safer intersection. Farmington Hills Police Lt. Ernest Miller said new fast food restaurants and the entrance to the Farmington Hills Industrial Park on 10 Mile have added to congestion problems in the area. Most

accidents in the area occurred at lunch hour or at rush hours, according to Miller. Ten accidents have occurred at the intersection so far this year. Last year, there was 17 accidents, including one fatality. But Miller said 10 Mile-Grand River isn't even among the 10 worst intersections in the city. Orchard Lake and 12 Mile was the worst last year with 43 accidents. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

### what's inside

Community Calendar . . . 6B  
Inside Angles . . . . . 3A  
Opinions . . . . . 9B  
Sports . . . . . 1-2C  
Suburban Life . . . Section B

#### GOOD OL' DAYS

Sporty cars of a bygone era were on parade recently for a worthy cause — muscular dystrophy. Read about them and their owners on Page 3A.