

# Farmington Observer

Volume 92 Number 61

Thursday, May 14, 1981

Farmington, Michigan

72 Pages

Twenty-five cents



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

## Rear-ender fender-bender

Farmington Hills firefighters clean the aftermath of a three-car collision on southbound Orchard Lake at 12 Mile roads Monday morning caused by a driver who failed to stop within a safe distance. The

culprit was ticketed and one woman was treated for minor injuries at Botsford General Hospital.

## Council OKs housing plan

By Steve Barnaby  
editor

Despite opposition from the mayor, Farmington Hills city council paved the way toward construction of additional senior citizen housing for its residents at this week's council session.

In a 5-2 vote, the council agreed to grant an option to the Detroit Baptist Manor to purchase five acres of city-owned property at Freedom and Drake roads.

Baptist Manor officials will apply to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) this week for funding of a planned 102 units.

Baptist Manor needed the option agreement by May 15 to be eligible for the HUD funding. But the privately-run senior citizen housing outfit will only be one of a number of groups applying for the limited funds.

Before the city council would agree to the option, it reached an agreement with Baptist Manor that at least 50 percent of the residents would be from Farmington or Farmington Hills.

Both Lange and Wolf disagreed with the percentage agreement.

"I DON'T KNOW how the 50 percent figure came out. But all of a sudden it is cast in concrete. I would like to see 80 percent," Wolf told his colleagues. "I would like to see us bargain a little more fully with it. As business people we can drive a harder bargain," he said.

Lange agreed that 80 percent was a preferential figure and went one step further. He wanted only Farmington Hills residents counted as the city's percentage.

But council colleagues reminded Lange that when the city of Farmington

built its senior citizen complex, it included Farmington Hills residents on its list.

Councilman Oppertbauer's mother is in the Farmington home on School Street.

"My recollection was that residents of the two cities were to be included," said Soronen. "Farmington agreed to put our residents on their list."

For a time during the council debate it looked like the agreement might go down to defeat when Alkateeb objected to the wording of the agreement submitted by the Baptist Manor board of directors.

The council had requested an agreement calling for the city clerk to keep a list of eligible persons. But the councilman's objections were shot down by Dolan who called it nitpicking.

"BAPTIST MANOR was approached to consider sponsoring the project. They didn't come to us," she told her colleagues.

"This is the only chance we have for senior citizen housing in the foreseeable future," she said.

Burwell also expressed reservations about possession of the eligibility list. But the tide turned when Baptist Manor director Roderick Smith addressed the council.

"Once the project is approved you won't have any responsibility to HUD," he told the council. "We will, as manager of the organization, I have to have control of the list."

"The cold hard facts are that we are the owners and operators."

He assured the city's legislators they could inspect the list at any time to assure that the new units were occupied with 50 percent of Farmington and Farmington Hills residents.

Baptist Manor already operates a 351 unit senior citizen housing complex at 13 Mile and Orchard Lake roads in Farmington Hills.

## Company liquidates assets

# Many firms bid for White Motor

By Craig Piechura  
staff writer

Several firms have submitted offers to purchase White Motor Corporation's 20-acre headquarters in Farmington Hills, according to a company spokesman.

The disclosure follows last Friday's joint announcement that the firm has reached preliminary understanding to sell its heavy truck operations to AB Volvo of Gothenburg, Sweden.

The White Motor Corp. pays close to \$18,000 per year in city taxes.

If a definitive contract is approved by the board of directors of both companies and the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Cleveland, White will be left with only the White Motor Credit Corp. division, a major subsidiary.

Approval of the sale will mark the end of all manufacturing for the company. It began making steam-powered autos in 1906 and sold heavy-duty trucks under the brand names White, Autocar and some models of Western Star. Corporate headquarters

of the firm moved to Farmington Hills from Eastlake, Ohio in the mid-'70s.

The firm filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection last Sept. 4 in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Cleveland. Since that date, the corporation has already sold its farm equipment operations in the United States to the TIC Investment Corp. of Dallas, Tex. and divested itself of its Canadian and Australian truck operations by selling out to consortiums formed in those countries.

THE FARMINGTON Hills complex, which includes an 83,000-square-foot building on a 20-acre parcel of land, remains at present in the control of the White Motor Credit Corp., said Craig Thompson, vice president of corporate communications at White.

Thompson refused to name the firms interested in purchasing the local property or describe the types of businesses in which potential purchasers are involved.

The corporate headquarters is one piece of real estate White continues to hold in addition to miscellaneous assets. Sale of the firm would furnish the

company with proceeds and a tax credit.

Corporate spokesman Thompson said White's fiscal problems can be traced to three factors: the recession, high-interest rates and under-capitalization.

"What happened was three things came together at one time," Thompson said. "The company had been an under-capitalized company for some time. Then, early last year, we saw the total drying up of the farm equipment market. That — and a combination of high-interest rates and the Russian grain embargo — caused the farm market to die. Interest rates went up and the heavy-duty truck market declined."

IF THE PURCHASE offer by Volvo is approved, the Swedish firm will acquire White's truck assembly plants in Dublin, Va. and Ogden, Utah as well as a stamping plant in Orrville, Ohio and White warehouses.

By acquiring White, Volvo would also get White's 240-dealer network, explained Dan McCosh, an associate editor at Ward's Automotive Reports.

Volvo intends to continue using the name White and Autocar on heavy-duty trucks which will complement its line

of smaller, European-made cars, trucks, buses and related components.

A Volvo spokesman called White "one of the great names in the truck industry" and said the trademark is "among the best known in the world."

The president of Volvo Truck Corp. hinted that while the company's smaller trucks would be imported first for sale in the United States, those same trucks may be manufactured in America at a later date.

"White's New River Valley facility in Virginia is one of the more modern truck assembly plants in the United States," said Sten Langenski, Volvo Truck Corp. president.

"In addition to being well-suited for manufacture of White trucks, it would make a fine facility for assembly in the United States of Volvo trucks."

BEFORE FILING for bankruptcy, McCosh said White officials attempted to merge the firm with two German truck firms, Maschinenfabrik Augsburg A.G. (M.A.G.) and Daimler-Benz, which last week reached an agreement with Consolidated Freightliner Corp. to take over that American firm's truck-making operation.

## Witness wanted

Farmington Hills police are looking for persons who witnessed a fatal hit-and-run accident involving a car and a motorcycle at the intersection of Middlebelt and 13 Mile roads early Saturday.

Denise Kral, 19, of Farmington Hills, was killed when a car hit the motorcycle on which she was a passenger.

The motorcycle driver Roland Yee, 19, also of Farmington Hills, was treated for injuries at a local hospital.

Police tracked down the hit-and-run driver after receiving an anonymous note on a scout car windshield at the scene describing the car, a blue Toyota, and license plate number.

The driver is in police custody. His name is being withheld pending arraignment in district court.

"We need to talk to the witness or witnesses to find out information about the accident," said Lt. Ernest Miller of the Farmington Hills police traffic division.

"The driver may have run a red light."

A police officer found the note on the scout car after administering first aid at the scene. The accident occurred at 12:42 a.m.

Persons with information should call the Farmington Hills police at 474-6181.

## WXYZ's Lowell Newton

# Pope shot, he was there

By Craig Piechura  
and Judith Berne  
staff writers

A routine stop in Lowell Newton's Italian vacation itinerary turned into a major news story Wednesday afternoon when the WXYZ-TV editorial director found himself in the crowd as Pope John Paul II was shot.

A resident of the Walden Woods apartment complex in Southfield, Newton, 47, said he was standing on the edge of a fountain in St. Peter's Square trying to take pictures of the pope from a distance of 50 yards with a telephoto lens when he heard three gun shots.

Newton said he did not witness the actual shooting or see the assailant fire his gun.

"WE HEARD three very quick gunshots in quick succession," Newton said. "Pop, Pop, Pop. We were 50 yards away. I knew what had happened instantly. He released his grip on the rail and sort of settled into the truck."

At the time of the attempted assassination Newton said he was with his wife, Betty, and two friends, Mike and Donna Johnson of Trenton, Mo. Johnson was also taking pictures with a telephoto lens and photos from both men were taken to the ABC news bureau in Rome for developing.

Newton gave his account of the incident on national and local television Wednesday and described the events in an Observer & Eclectic reporter in a telephone interview from his hotel room in Rome.

Newton said he and Johnson took a number of pictures of a dark-haired young man with a revolver in a black leather jacket seen leaving the scene in a hurry. The man is not the Turkish nationalist, Mehmet Ali Agca, who was arrested in connection with the shooting, Newton said.

"He was running the opposite way of everyone else," Newton said. "He was not running hard, just loping along. But he had a small gun, a revolver, in his hand. Earlier reports had placed the crowd at only 10,000."

"I did shoot still pictures of him leaving. But I don't even know if he was involved," Newton stressed.

Mallan authorities reportedly had two men in custody initially but one man was later released.

Persons at the scene said the pope rode once through the crowd, which Newton estimates was around 150,000 persons, in an open-air, jeep-like vehicle. Earlier reports had placed the crowd at only 10,000.

IT APPEARED the pope was going to get out of the truck and climb on a stage they'd erected for him, Newton said, when the pope signaled the driver to make a wider circle around the outer edge of the large crowd in order to greet more persons.

"So he did it again, widening the circle to the fringe of the crowd. He was three-quarters of the way through that second circle, with the crowd right up on him by then when it happened."

Asked if the pope's order to drive further into the crowd may have put him closer to the gunman, Newton said

"It would be purely speculation but that's the way it seemed." A White security around the pope wasn't tight, Newton said "there's no way to restrain people from meeting their leader."

Seconds after the shots rang out in the square, everyone knew the pope had been hit, Newton said, "no one even asked what happened."

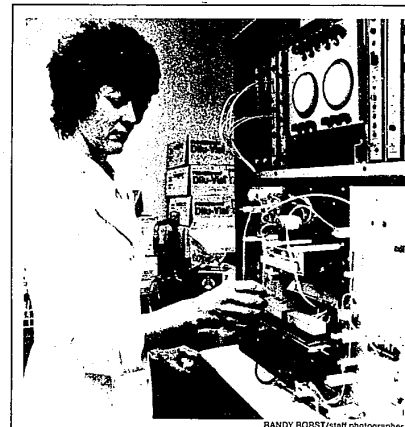
"There was much screaming and crying but no diving for cover as some reports have said," Newton said. "Everyone started walking toward the direction of the gunshots."

"Within a minute or two a voice, in Italian, came over the public address system informing the crowd to pray for the pope and led the crowd in prayer, Newton said.

NEWS OF WEDNESDAY'S attempted assassination of the pope hit hard on the campus of Orchard Lake St. Mary's, which the pope has visited twice.

When news of the shooting reached the campus yesterday morning, a special prayer service was conducted immediately in the chapel of the Polish-Catholic private school where faculty, students and members of the board of regents prayed for his recovery and world peace, reported Mark Dobozy, a seminary student.

The Rev. Clifford Ruskowski, OLSM vice chancellor, said the assassination attempt "is indicative of the violence in the world. People always talk about the American society being violent, but it's a world problem."



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

## Wellness fair

Mary Ruth Satterthwaite analyzes blood on a Coulter S blood analyzer at Botsford General Hospital. Satterthwaite will be testing complete blood counts during the hospital's wellness fair Saturday, May 16. The fair, offered free to the public, will screen participants for hypertension, glaucoma, audiology, speech and language screening for preschoolers, dietary counseling, height and weight evaluations, and demonstrations of CPR and equipment like ultrasound. The fair will be in the professional building adjacent to the hospital. Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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