

# Farmington Observer

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Beverly Cornell, who suffers from a rare bone disease, "bristled" when first approached by the National Wheelchair Athletic Association because "I didn't enjoy thinking of myself as handicapped." After setting four swimming records with the Motor City Wheelers, Cornell is campaigning for a soccer program for the handicapped and financial support for the organization. "So many people don't know we exist," she said.

## Taking one day at a time adds up to life of valor

By M.B. Dillon Ward  
staff writer

What Bev Cornell of Farmington Hills has cheerfully endured since she was seven years old would send most people plummeting into a permanent state of depression.

The 35-year-old has overcome her rare degenerative bone disease in a myriad of ways, the latest victory coming at the Michigan State Wheelchair Athletic Association games at Macomb Community College May 7.

Cornell, whose bones are soft fiber instead of hard bone material, broke records in the 100-yard freestyle (1:27.17), 100-yard backstroke (1:40.01) and the 400-yard freestyle (6:45.0).

Although the times qualified Cornell for national competition, she will be unable to enter the National Wheelchair Athletic Association championships in Minnesota this week.

SHE RECENTLY WAS operated on for the 23rd time since contracting the most acute form of polyostotic fibrous dysplasia known in this country.

The surgery replaced a six-inch long section of abnormal tissue in Cornell's right tibia (shin bone) with normal bone. Because the bone graft places strain upon the artificial hip and stainless steel tubing in Cornell's right thigh, doctors have ordered her confined to a wheelchair for most of the summer.

"That upsets Cornell, but isn't about to defeat her."

"I always take one day at a time. I make sure I always set a short-term and a long-term goal. After I joined the National Wheelchair Athletic Association and a meet was coming up, my long-term goal would be to get to the meet and swim it," she said.

"I don't care whether I win or lose. It's getting there (that counts)."

"I always set a daily goal too,

whether it be mending, or working on a project for my husband Tom, or my son Kirk (11). Goals keep me from thinking about problems."

YOU'LL RARELY CATCH Cornell cooped up watching TV. If you do, she's lifting weights and working out along with an exercise show.

Since she was two, Cornell has loved to swim — an avocation she now puts to work by teaching swimming at Woodbrook Hills Swim and Tennis Club on Thirteen Mile Rd.

"I wheel myself down our street (about half a mile) to Thirteen Mile, and then one of the kids on the swim team comes over to help me cross."

"I really enjoy teaching — especially adults, because they learn to grow over fears they've had all their lives," said Cornell who until her most recent operations

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## Feds provide funds for home revamping

By M.B. Dillon Ward  
staff writer

Approximately \$7,500 per homeowner in low-interest loans is available through both Oakland County Community and block grant funds for qualified residents of Farmington and Farmington Hills.

This year \$1.7 million has been set aside for housing rehabilitation for low- and moderate-income families in Oakland County.

To qualify for a loan, homeowners must own and reside in a single-family home and have a limited annual income of approximately \$13,000. (Applicants also may be buying their homes).

Funds below market interest rates are available, varying with income level. Repayment of loans may be spread over a number of years, and in some cases may be deferred interest-free until the home is sold.

Eligible repairs under the program include electrical systems, plumbing, heating, masonry, wells, water or sewer connections, septic systems, roofs, siding, insulation, sidewalks and access structures for handicapped and elderly persons.

Eligible improvements include special assessments, patios, decks, fencing, additions, mobile-home improvements, air conditioners, air cleaners, stoves or refrigerators.

"People just don't have the extra funds they would have had before, and this is an additional resource for low- and moderate-income people of all ages," said Karry Rieth of the Oakland County Community Development program.

"Inflation, high interest rates and rising construction costs have all but put homeowners out of reach of home improvement. They just don't know what resources are available."

FARMINGTON'S HOME IMPROVEMENT program is affiliated with Oakland County, while Farmington Hills has elected to participate with the Department of Housing and Urban Development without the county as liaison.

"This program isn't for someone who wants to put an addition onto their home. Essentially these repairs are for health and safety and for code violations," said Jerry Horner, administrative assistant coordinating the program for the city of Farmington.

"The intent is to repair things to rectify health and safety and other code violations in order to bring substandard housing up to code."

Horner encourages applicants who've been residents for at least a year to stop by his office in City Hall to be screened and given an application.

"There's backup material that's needed to go along with the application — a bank statement for the amount of money in savings, an amount from an employer on how much money per year the applicant is receiving, and verification of the deed so we know the home is yours," he said.

"When we get all that information, I send it through to the county."

Once the homeowner is accepted, bids from contractors recommended by the county, city and applicant are considered. The job goes to the lowest bidder provided the company is licensed and in good standing.

"Out of the people who come in and apply, 70 or 75 percent are eligible and do receive some level of funding," Horner said.

"There's not that many people who come through and apply, partly because it's unknown to people. We've had about 25 people apply since the program began in 1975."

Most of the applicants who've received funds under Farmington's program have been senior citizens who fall into the income guidelines, added Horner.

Applicants to the Farmington program are granted deferred loans on a sliding scale.

"If you're at the lowest income, \$3,000, you're eligible for a 100-percent balloon loan, meaning if your income is \$2,500 the loan would not have to be paid back at all until the ownership of the home changed hands."

"If your income is up to \$4,000, you're still qualified for a 90-percent deferred loan, and a 10-percent loan payback (at 3-percent interest). You can defer 80 percent while paying back 20 percent with an income of \$5,000."

FARMINGTON HILLS' program is brand new and a product of the city's recent entry into HUD's Community Development block grant program, which is supplying \$105,000 for home improvement.

"Hopefully, we'll have a brochure out soon with the income guidelines we'll follow. We'll talk to people to see whether they qualify. If not, we'll refer them to other programs for loans for housing and rehabilitation," said Farmington Hills City Planner Richard Lampi.

A loan committee will review loan applications and consider occupation, income, other assets, and expenses.

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## Computers pick books for reader

By M.B. Dillon Ward  
staff writer

Computers are reducing book hunting in Farmington libraries to a science.

Computer Pix '82, the result of a pilot program originated last year by the Wayne Oakland Library Federation, picks up where the Readers' Guide and Dewey Decimal System leave off.

It matches young readers with books for free.

To participate in the summer program, young adults must fill out a questionnaire available at both the Farmington Hills and Farmington branches through June 30. By answering five questions, readers indicate topics, settings, time periods and types of characters that interest them.

The information is fed into a computer and compared with 700 biographies and works of fiction stored in the computer by librarians.

IN AUGUST, readers will receive a

printed list showing book titles that best reflect their interests.

"The idea is to promote reading. A lot of young adults stop reading after the sixth grade because they're influenced by contemporary things," said Lorene Bauman. Bauman coordinates the program at the Farmington Hills branch.

"The program is for middle-through high-school-age students, but we're targeting towards middle schools in particular."

Although the committee still is evaluating the program, it seems to be the most successful young adult program the organization has ever attempted, said Kaye Grabbe, chairwoman of the Young Adult Services Committee of the Wayne Oakland Library Federation.

About 80 percent of those participating in the personalized computer interest matching have checked out books suggested to them by the computer — a success rate that is drawing nationwide attention to Computer Pix '82.



Telling about his family's history, Pete Hulm takes pride in his longstanding link with the Farmington area.

## Historians honor 'Pete' Freedom was goal for his family

By Craig Plechura  
staff writer

One of the first recipients of a historical plaque honoring local families who live on land settled by their ancestors more than 100 years ago is Wellington "Pete" Hulm. Hulm, 73, is still working as a radio and TV repairman out of his home.

Hulm has lived at the address since the age of 5, when he moved from a neighborhood near Detroit's old Hamlin Street out to the country to be raised by his great-aunt, Mary Wilson.

He lived there with his great-aunt, his cousin Claude, who went on to become Oakland County's first black police officer, and his maternal great-grandparents, Aaron and Ellen Wilson.

The Wilsons were ex-slaves who escaped twice from Virginia during the Civil War — once being caught. Escaping a second time, the Wilsons went to Canada and finally Farmington Hills, where they found acceptance in their first bid for freedom.

"There was no resentment, not at all," Hulm said when asked if his family suffered any consequences for being the only black family in the area. "They helped the slaves out here."

"Well, one of the neighbors belonged to the KKK, and he wanted to move me out."

But a township official, Hulm said, told the man to leave him alone, and that was an order.

The Wilson/Hulm home itself isn't close to being 100 years old, but the

land it sits on has been in family hands since 1883, when the family first settled before being sent back to slavery. His family has lived there uninterrupted since the early 1890s.

IT IS HOMES like Hulm's that the Farmington Hills Historical Commission is interested in, said Kay Briggs, chairwoman of the group. To qualify for a state historical farm plaque, a home must be on at least five acres and have been in the family's hands for at least 100 years. Because most farms were subdivided into smaller parcels, Briggs said few places qualify for that designation but do qualify for the Farmington Hills honor.

Persons who live on land and their ancestors settled on in Farmington Hills more than 100 years ago should contact the township clerk's office for more information, she said.

Hulm remembers when the property he lives on south of 11 Mile Road, east of Orchard Lake Road was good for hunting and planting.

First there was the orchard on the property, but that "went state," and row upon row of strawberries went in.

"There were thousands of strawberry plants," Hulm recalled. "The small ones taste good, and the big ones look good. The smaller ones taste twice as good. The people from the city would pay 45 cents a pint for the big ones when the small ones were much cheaper."

Hulm also remembers trapping animals on land behind the house, setting

traps all the way up to Middlebelt.

"I CAUGHT some mink and got a good price for them," he said. "Twelve dollars, and that was good money, I mean good money, those days."

Hulm says he was glad to move out of Detroit because he didn't get along with his brother, who hit him over the head with a hammer.

"Now when I go downtown and tell (other blacks) I live in Farmington Hills, they say, 'Oh, you live out there with those rich people.' They think I

just moved out. This was the farm when I came out here. And I never wanted to live in a big city."

The only other place he ever thought he might like to live is Inlay City, located in north Macomb County.

It's not because he's been there. When he was young, Hulm said, he would hear the streetcar conductor call the city's name out in announcing its destination.

"I used to get a chill when that con-

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