



# Farmington Observer

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## Farmington FOCUS

If you have a news item, feature story idea or an action picture with a Farmington area connection, send a note to our downtown office at 32283 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

**HALLEY'S** Comet, up close.  
JoAn and Dan Reynolds of Farmington Hills recently returned from a vacation in southern Florida, where they saw Halley's Comet just before dawn on March 9. The viewing was with the Southwestern Florida Astronomical Club.  
"We were in an area that looked like nothing existed for miles, which makes the viewing of the comet more spectacular," said JoAn, Farmington Hills clerk.  
"We never imagined that we would be in the right place at the right time to observe this once-in-a-lifetime thrill," she added.  
JoAn reported that the club president "was very accommodating with the 12-inch telescope, and was having us view Saturn, Mars and other star clusters. There were probably 75 telescopes set up in the area, some taking pictures."  
Dan is a member of the Detroit Astronomical Club. Both Dan and JoAn enjoy the planetarium and observatory at Cranbrook Educational Community, Bloomfield Hills.

**HOMICIDE** was the topic of a weeklong seminar attended by Farmington Hills Police Department Sgt. Dennis Rochford March 17-21.  
The Rockwell Technical College Criminal Justice Department-sponsored international homicide investigation seminar was held in Columbus, Ohio. The 125 participants represented police, prosecutor, medical examiner and public defender agencies.  
Rochford, detective sections supervisor, called the seminar a "real learning experience."  
"It was very interesting and well presented," he said. "The information was very useful and practical."

**BREAK** a leg, Michael. Wayne State University student Michael Mendelson of Farmington Hills was among 10 WSU finalists surviving competition to participate in the national auditions by the University/Resident Theatre Association, an affiliate of the American Theatre Association.  
Mendelson is a senior majoring in theater.

**MOTORISTS**, beware. Stopping, standing and parking is prohibited from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. school days along the north side of Shilwassee from the west driveway of the William Grace School to the school's west property line and along the south side of Shilwassee from Whittington to Rockwell.  
The Farmington Hills City Council authorized the traffic control orders last week.

**FOOTNOTES:** A look back in time — Robert Wilcox was the first Wilcox to come to Farmington. He was born in 1748 in Putnam County, New York. In 1814, he came with his family from Hector County to Farmington and lived here the remainder of his life, according to "Farmington's Centennial Families," a 1978 publication of the Farmington Hills Historical Commission.

## Country club's future in limbo

*'Time is going to squeeze us out of the area.'*  
— Roy Trevisan  
Farmington Hills Country Club

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer  
After more than 1 1/2 years of negotiations and planning, it's unlikely the Farmington Hills Country Club will be moving across the street to make way for a new industrial park.  
"I have both good news tonight and that could be potentially bad news. At this time, it appears unlikely the Farmington Hills Country Club will move,"

said Peter Burton, one of several developers who have been working on plans to move the course. "It appears likely the deal will not be consummated."  
Roy Trevisan, chairman of the country club's development committee, confirmed Burton's report to the Farmington Hills City Council last week.  
"We seem to part on money issues," Trevisan said. The club's board of di-

rectors planned to send developers a letter last week telling them "we have reached a total impasse," he said.  
Proposed plans originally called for the private country club and 135-acre golf course — on the south side of 12 Mile and Haggerty roads since 1955 — to move to the northeast side of the intersection. The move would have made way for what was to have been the city's larger contiguous office and industrial research park, where the exist-

ing country club now sits.  
**THE PROPOSED** land swap would have involved construction of a new golf course and clubhouse on the northeast corner of 12 and Haggerty. The new course would have been surrounded by single-family homes and multiple-family housing.  
Both sides of the intersection last  
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The newest addition to the fire department's fleet is Squad 1 (above), a heavy rescue truck that responds to fires, medical calls and other emergencies. The truck, purchased for \$104,000, is based at Station 1, near Research Drive and 10 Mile Road. It is equipped with foam and rescue tools. Shown in front of the truck are Station 1 firefighters Gary Nicu and Larry Henderson.

## Fire runs drop

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer  
Although the Farmington Hills Fire Department responded to almost 3,000 incidents in 1985, only 462 were actual fires — eight less than the previous year.  
And of the \$1.5 million in damages caused by the fires last year, more than \$1 million of the total was attributed to five major fires — meaning the majority of fires were controlled during the early stages, said Fire Chief Richard Marinucci in his annual fire department report.  
"Our fire prevention has been good. The actual number of fires has decreased. Some of our fire preven-

## 9 selected finalists for superintendent

By Casey Hans  
staff writer  
A Farmington Public Schools assistant superintendent and the interim superintendent are finalists in the school board's search for a new chief, officials said.  
Lawrence Freedman, assistant superintendent for elementary instruction, and Graham Lewis, interim superintendent, have made the list of nine selected from 60 applicants. All 10 will be interviewed during public board meetings April 8 and 12.

Two of the 10 work outside Michigan. Five are superintendents.  
Trustees expect to select a new superintendent in mid-May, they said.  
IN ADDITION TO Freedman and Lewis, those being considered as new superintendents for Farmington Public Schools are:  
• Jack Anderson, superintendent, East Ramapo Central School District; Spring Valley, N.Y.  
• Donald Chalker, principal, Chipewau Valley High School; Mount Clemens.

• Michael LaBay, assistant superintendent, Birmingham Public Schools; Birmingham.  
• James McKimney, superintendent, Northwest Jackson Schools; Jackson.  
• Joseph Nicita, superintendent, Saginaw Intermediate School District; Saginaw.  
• Burton Nygren, superintendent, Mounds View Public Schools, District 621; St. Paul, Minn.  
• William Price, superintendent, Clawson Public Schools; Clawson.

Trustees began their superintendent search when Lewis Schulman retired Dec. 31.  
**THE BOARD** retained the Michigan Association of School Boards as consultant for the search. The association has provided workshops in screening applications and interviewing for the board during the past several weeks. It also did the promotional brochure and initial mailing nationwide in the search for a new school chief.  
Association representatives met with

community members during public meetings in February to gain insight into additional criteria trustees might use when considering the candidates.  
The board is considering allowing the new superintendent to apportion his salary and benefits as he sees fit, so long as the cost to the district does not exceed a given amount.  
The board is seeking a candidate with teaching and administrative experience and a person with excellent human relations skills.

## Easing up Metropark's chief retires after 33 years

**people**  
By Casey Hans  
staff writer  
Charles Damm is ready to pick more carrots from his garden, and start enjoying the good life.  
Besides spending two years in Florida's Everglades, the Farmington resident served in World War II and the Korean Conflict as a member of the U.S. Naval Reserve. He brought his love of nature to a career of 33 years at Kenington Metropark.  
Damm officially retired March 15 as park superintendent at Kenington, located off of I-96 near Millford, where he began as a park naturalist and also served as assistant park superintendent before being appointed to the top post.  
He was an integral part of the first nature program at Kenington, which was eventually used in the entire Haron-Clinton Metroparks system. Countless numbers of students have visited Kenington and learned the wonders of nature through Damm's presentations and hands-on programs.



Charles Damm credits his love of nature to his mother, who enjoyed many of the same things. He also always had a "natural curiosity" about nature.

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