

Couch potato gear:  
A complete guide, 1D



Hawks roll  
to win, 1C

Food sales give  
club a boost, 3A

# Farmington Observer

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## Farmington FOCUS

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**R**EGAIN control over your life. John Landis of Madison Heights-based Symbiosis Inc. will tell you how. He's the guest speaker at the Farmington-Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce luncheon at noon Thursday, Nov. 19, in the Quality Inn of Farmington Hills, 31525 12 Mile. The cost is \$10 per person. Landis is immediate past president of the Professional Speakers Association of Michigan. For reservations, call the chamber: 474-3440.

DID you know that of the Farmington Hills Police Department's 83 officers, one has a juris doctorate, four have master's degrees and 47 have bachelor's degrees? More than 20 have at least the equivalent of two years of college. The average number of years of higher education for full-time officers is 3.3 years.

**BACK** on board. Farmington City Council has reappointed Wilmarth Street resident Denise Tanyea-Nitz to the beautification committee for a two-year term. The four-year resident actively served on the Downtown Development Authority Beautification Subcommittee during the formative stages of the DDA development plan.

**FOOTNOTES:** One year ago this week — A major capital fund-raising drive will be launched to provide much-needed renovation of the historic mansion housing the Farmington Community Center.

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## Downtown spruce up revamped

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

Interested contractors will have until mid-January to submit bids for the first phase of the \$1.4 million Downtown Development Authority rejuvenation project, scheduled to begin next spring in downtown Farmington.

Bids will be let in early December, giving contractors up to six weeks to review the site and submit proposals. DDA board member and city manager Robert Deadman suggested the DDA board release bid specifications early to give contractors enough time to study the area before snow falls.

"Typically, contractors wait until the first of the year to firm up prices," city planner Christopher Wzacy said, explaining the mid-January deadline. "They don't really start bidding until January."

DDA members hope to get a bet-

ter response this time than they did last July, during the first round of bid letting. After receiving only one bid for \$398,000 from a Livonia contractor, the DDA board voted to postpone the project start until next spring.

**STILL CONSIDERED** the most costly at about \$500,000, the first phase of the project was restructured last week to add paving and renovation work on the north side of Grand River, and delay work scheduled south of State Street to Alla Loma, which includes the Downtown Farmington Center parking lot.

The parking lot will be done in the project's second phase, according to the city planner. Work on the parking lot north of Grand River, plus installing a sidewalk network, was expensive enough that a trade-off had to be made with another part of the project, Wzacy said.

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## It's 'the year of the Vietnam vet'

*Editor's note: In honor of Veterans Day, profiles of veterans from World War I and II, Korea and Vietnam will appear in Thursday's Observer, with an overview report on the meaning of Veterans Day. Following is more detailed information about Vietnam.*

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

Americans are in the midst of an information craze about the Vietnam War.

"This is really the year of the Vietnam vet," said Oakland County veteran Ed Smith, a Farmington Hills resident and Vietnam combat veteran who is spending this week in Washington D.C. for a Veterans Day rally.

Movies such as "Platoon" and "Full Metal Jacket," plus a weekly, television series, "Tour of Duty," hit the screen this year.

They bring a special awareness about the undeclared war that began for the U.S. in the late 1950s, escalat-

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## Ruling may mean money for locals

*'I haven't been this happy about the effectiveness of our state constitution for nine years.'*

— Richard Headlee, author  
tax limitation amendment

Local governments across Michigan could get \$400 million more in state aid, if an Oakland County Circuit Court decision survives appeals from Gov. James Blanchard's administration.

"I haven't been this happy about the effectiveness of our state constitution for nine years," said an elated Richard Headlee, Farmington Hills resident and father of the 1978 Headlee Amendment. The amend-

## 'Are the Bad Guys Winning?'



Reuben Greenberg, police chief in Charleston, S.C., addressed the National Council of Jewish Women's Greater Detroit Section and Professional Branch Tuesday. His topic: "Are the Bad Guys Winning?"

## Criminals Probation, not jail, is common

*'We presume these criminals inadvertently committed a crime and got caught. But how do you inadvertently commit a sexual offense?'*

— Reuben Greenberg  
police chief  
Charleston, S.C.

By Joanna Maliszewski  
staff writer

**C**RIMINALS SIMPLY don't take anyone very seriously.

"We presume these criminals inadvertently committed a crime and got caught. But how do you inadvertently commit a sexual offense?" said Reuben Greenberg, police chief in Charleston, S.C.

"Forget that. Criminals do intend, plan, to commit crimes.

That's why criminals are laughing," Greenberg told more than 150 people at Adat Shalom synagogue, Farmington Hills, Tuesday. Greenberg's presentation, "Are the Bad Guys Winning?" was sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women's Greater Detroit Section and Professional Branch.

Criminals don't take the police, public and courts seriously because they know punishment won't necessarily be their fate. Criminals caught by the police and put

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## Players' president pulls it all together



Bob Smitham, in his first season as head of the 130-member Farmington Players.

By Loraine McClith  
staff writer

Bob Smitham holds the only office for Farmington Players that does not have a job description.

"The directors, the lighters, the costumers, every technician and every committee head has a job description. Maybe even the ones who park the cars, but there is no written-down job description for the president," said Smitham, in his first season as head of the 130-member theater troupe.

"I'm the coordinator. I'm the one who is supposed to pull it all together and make it work. If anybody needs anything for anything, they come to me."

Pulling it all together is a little more demanding for the president of the 1987-88 season than it has been in seasons past on two counts.

First, the players are producing four plays this season rather than the usual three, "a decision made by

## people

the board before I took this job," Smitham said.

Second, Smitham took an on-stage role in the season's opener, Agatha Christie's "Unexpected Guest."

"They weren't going to allow me and my accent to slip by white casting for an Agatha Christie murder mystery," Smitham said with his unmistakable British accent. "I played Inspector Thomas. Quite well, I think."

SMITHAM HAS been involved one way or another in community theater since his school days in his native England.

He was introduced to Farmington Players when he moved here in 1984 by neighbors who were members of the group.

"I used to do this sort of thing off

and on. Now I'm up to my teeth in it," he said.

Because of the four-play season, auditions were called for the players' next show, "Alone Together," before "The Unexpected Guest" closed. The overlapping will continue from "Alone Together" into casting for "I Am a Camera" and again into "Reality Speaking."

The pace has demanded a 40-hour week on nights and weekends in addition to his 40-hour week as a mechanical engineer so there aren't too many technical problems we can't solve between us," he said.

For the most part, he shies from on-stage roles.

"Lighting is my forte, I guess. I'm a mechanical engineer so we deal with electrical things in passing and all of our backstage crew has some technical background so there aren't too many technical problems we can't solve between us," he said.

"Never did get that fog machine going though (for the Agatha Christie mystery). Too loud. Too distracting for the audience."

A RULE of thumb in theater is that it takes seven people backstage for every one person on stage to produce a play.

"Every one of us is important. Most of us have some specialty. A lot of us are multitasked and sometimes do double duty. And I have a good and large roster to call upon for whatever needs be," he said.

He cited script reading as a specialty.

"Not everybody can read a play and make an assessment. These people have to visualize how words on a page are going to be delivered, get an immediate feel for it, know if we have the space, the money, the means to produce it. It's an art in itself. For me, it's not only dull but I don't have the staying power for it," he said.

"We have an exceptionally good play-reading committee. We also had an exceptionally good advertising committee last season that draped the entire barn with banners. It not only got us sold-out houses. It

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