

Dolls tell story of our foremothers, 1B

North plays for title, 1D

Livonia shopping plan gets DDA veto, 10A

# Farmington Observer

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## Farmington FOCUS

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**I**n the limelight, Crain's Detroit Business chose Mike Ilitch, president of Farmington Hills-based Little Caesar Enterprises, as its Top Newsmaker of the Year mainly because of his commitment to move his corporate headquarters to the Fox Theatre, the old movie palace in downtown Detroit he's restoring to an office-entertainment center.

"That move was a gutsy one, but not at all untypical of the man who built a \$225 million-per-year business from a single pizza parlor in Garden City," Crain's wrote in an opinion Feb. 29. "Neither is concern for Detroit's pride new to Ilitch, who restored the dignity of another symbol of old Detroit fallen on hard times: the Red Wings."

**EXCHANGING** places for a day. Pairings have been set for Mayors Exchange Day, Monday, May 23 — part of the 35th annual Michigan Week celebration.

Farmington will exchange with New Baltimore, Farmington Hills with St. Clair Shores.

**REMINDER:** Local community mental health programs will be discussed at an Oakland County Community Mental Health Services Board public forum 7-9 p.m. Wednesday, April 6, at Farmington Hills City Hall, 31555 11 Mile.

**FOOTNOTES:** One year ago this week — In the second crackdown on liquor law violations in 1986, Farmington Hills police, using undercover agents, cited 75 percent of the city's liquor-licensed businesses for selling to minors.

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photos by RANDY DORST/staff photographer

"Fasting is a discipline. It is a constant reminder of what's going on (in the Soviet Union). It reminds me if I'm this little bit uncomfortable, what Yull's doing in his 17-day fast," says Rabbi Efray Spectre.

## Rabbi Spectre fasts to aid refusenik held in Moscow

By Joanne Maliszewski staff writer

Rabbi Efray Spectre's one-day fast in support of Soviet refusenik Yull Kosharovsky is a short-term reminder for a long-standing issue.

"This is a symbolic fast," Spectre said Monday, just hours before sundown when he would break the rotating fast in which he and other congregants at Adat Shalom Synagogue, Farmington Hills, are participating.

"Fasting is a discipline. It is a constant reminder of what's going on (in the Soviet Union). It reminds me if I'm this little bit uncomfortable, what's Yull doing in his 17-day fast?"

The 46-year-old refusenik has tried for 17 years to get an exit visa to emigrate from Moscow to Israel with his wife and three sons. Soviet authorities told the Hebrew teacher and former electronics engineer as one of eight people they refuse to ever allow to leave the country.

Soviet authorities maintain that Kosharovsky and the other seven on the list were employed in jobs that gave them access to government secrets, which they still hold.

Kosharovsky agreed to remain in the Soviet Union for three years following his 1968 resignation from the Scientific Research Institute of Automation of Sverdlovsk.

"I do not know if the refuseniks are still held in Moscow," Spectre said. "He teaches three classes, six days a week. He continues to teach them so when they go to Israel they will know the language."

Kosharovsky and his family have endured defamation in the Soviet press, short-term detentions, threats and intimidation, Spectre said.

The rabbi calls his fasting and that of others in his congregation and around the Detroit area a symbolic gesture. But the rabbi has no doubts that the publicity alone could generate at least uncomfortable feelings for Soviet Secretary General Mikhail Gorbachev.

"I do know his staff reads the for-

"THE USUAL time that's set for that is 5-10 years. The secrets he had are no longer relevant secrets," Spectre said. "It is a ruse. He's a leader. They are using him as an ex-

ample."

Kosharovsky teaches Hebrew in Moscow, though it is a forbidden language in the Soviet Union. "He taught himself Hebrew," Spectre said. "He teaches three classes, six days a week. He continues to teach them so when they go to Israel they will know the language."

"I do know his staff reads the for-

By Casey Hans staff writer

## Man is given 15-50 in jail

A former Farmington Hills man was sentenced to 15 to 50 years in prison after his conviction for the murder of his wife in 1985.

He also was found guilty of burning his house on Rhonswood after his wife's death and received a concurrent sentence of 7-20 years in prison for an arson conviction.

Oakland County Circuit Judge Francis X. O'Brien exceeded court recommendations Wednesday in sentencing James Arnold Edwards, 56, who now lives in West Bloomfield Township. Parole is allowed on both convictions.

"I've got two daughters that need me," Edwards told the court before sentence was passed, his voice cracking. "I did not murder

my wife, and I did not burn down our house."

Edwards faced up to life in prison for the second-degree murder conviction, and up to 20 years for the arson conviction.

A circuit court jury found Edwards guilty Feb. 25 after deliberating for two days.

EDWARDS RETURNED after 19 years with Ford Motor Co., most recently as a computer graphics worker, after his wife's death. They had been married 23 years. His daughters are in their late teens.

"I appreciate what Mr. Edwards said," O'Brien said during sentencing. "I guess only he knows, and God knows."

But the judge added that the jury "hadn't taken their job lightly" in convicting Edwards. He said that although Edwards was "not an in-

herent threat on society," he felt "these are aggravating circumstances."

"This is certainly more serious than an arson to earn money," O'Brien said.

A pre-sentencing report recommended guidelines for sentencing of between 14-2 1/2 years for the arson conviction and 8-14 years for the second-degree murder conviction. Oakland County assistant prosecutor Joyce Todd called the recommendations "piffally low" in pleading with the court for a more stringent sentence.

"This was not a homicide in isolation," Todd said. She called it a "reckless, wanton act."

STANLEY BEEBESE attorney Thomas Wilhelm reminded the court his client was a first-time offender and called the situation "an

isolated incident in Mr. Edwards' life."

Several letters were given to the judge before sentencing, including one from Mariene Edwards' mother, another from her sister and a third from a long-time friend. O'Brien re-read the letters silently before passing sentence.

Wilhelm said he will seek his client's release, pending appeal of the convictions, before Edwards is transferred to Southern Michigan Prison at Jackson.

During the five-week trial, prosecutors argued that Edwards either stabbed or strangled his 50-year-old wife during a family argument, then set fire to the house, near Eight Mile and Halsted, to cover up the act. Damage in the fire, which occurred Oct. 14, 1985, was estimated at \$200,000.

## Similarities probed in hotel robberies

A man who implied he had a gun has robbed desk clerks of more than \$800 at three Farmington Hills hotels since Feb. 20.

He also is believed to have pulled similar stickups in Southfield and Bloomfield Township.

In each of the Farmington Hills stickups, the robber "had the same physical description, clothing, manner of speech, was wearing dark sunglasses and implied he had a weapon," said Sgt. Charles Nebus of the Farmington Hills Police Department.

"We're working with other police agencies in hopes of identifying the guy," said Farmington Hills Lt. Richard Murphy.

It's possible there's a connection between the robberies, said Southfield Officer Gary Coak.

"I'm not sure if the robberies are connected yet. We're going to investigate that," said Detective David Reister of Bloomfield Township.

IN THE first two Farmington Hills robberies, the robber milled about the lobby for 10 minutes until one of the clerks left the desk. He then implied he had a gun and would shoot if he wasn't given money.

In the latest incident at 11:35 a.m. Monday at the Envoy Inn, 38300 Grand River, the robber first asked for a room. When the clerk asked him to fill out a registration form, he

reached under his jacket as if he had a gun and demanded money.

At 4:50 p.m. Feb. 20, the robber left the Quality Inn of Farmington Hills, 31525 12 Mile, with more than \$500. He ran out the door to a waiting car occupied by a woman.

In the next robbery at 4:30 p.m. Feb. 21, the robber, after the clerk complied with his demand, ordered her and a housekeeper to lie on the floor behind the desk. He then ran out the door with nearly \$200. No car was seen.

After receiving more than \$100 from the Envoy Inn clerk Monday morning, the robber ordered her to lie on the floor behind the desk before leaving.

## Schools slate choices to nip overcrowding

By Casey Hans staff writer

A centralized, magnet-type school for gifted and talented elementary students will open this fall, Farmington school trustees decided Tuesday.

The optional, two-year pilot program will be at Highmeadow School and will run in conjunction with current gifted programs at other elementaries.

Superintendent Graham Lewis called the program a "common campus for children who love to go to school." He said attendance would not be limited to students recognized by the district as "gifted and talented," although they would have first preference.

"I don't think we should lock the doors (to non-gifted students)," he added.

"We are a diverse community. We all have different points of view. We're very capable of offering choices — that's the theme."

THE PROGRAM not only offers choices for Farmington public school students and parents, but allows school officials to avoid boundary changes that were proposed because of overcrowding. The boundary changes were opposed by many in the community.

Several parents attending Tuesday's board meeting were concerned about segregating gifted and talented students. One said she was "distressed" about the Highmeadow concept because it would segregate students from other, general education children.

"You have to consider the whole child," she said. "Part of their education is learning about the real world. The real world isn't a separate school."

Others thanked the board for the opportunity to make a choice. About 75 parents attended Tuesday's meeting.

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## Southfield, Hills study sewer cost

By Joanne Maliszewski staff writer

Farmington Hills and Southfield elected officials want some financial assurances before \$48.5 million in improvements are made to the deteriorating Evergreen-Farmington sanitary sewer system.

"It's big bucks to us guys," Southfield City Council member Eli Robinson said. "Forget the county, the cities of Farmington Hills and Southfield are paying for it."

Financial questions about the proposed improvements dominated the two-hour joint meeting Monday night between Farmington Hills and Southfield. Most of the questions and comments came from Southfield council members.

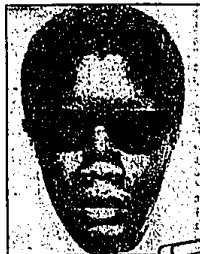
The Oakland County Drain Commission would own the improved sewer system, though Farmington Hills and Southfield are paying the greatest local share of the long-

planned improvements. The remaining 55 percent is expected to be financed by federal Environmental Protection Agency grants.

This is not the first time Farmington Hills and Southfield have applied for grants for the improvements. Last year, the application was halted when the state Department of Natural Resources said some required items were not addressed in the application.

"IT'S BEEN a long process. We are now at the end of the tunnel and we want to come out," said Tom Binassell, Farmington Hills public services director.

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This is a composite drawing of the Envoy Inn robber.

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