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Farmington Observer

Volume 100 Number 30

Monday, January 16, 1989

Farmington, Michigan

44 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

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REZONING sought. Southfield-based Providence Hospital is seeking the rezoning of part of 22 acres southwest of Inkster and Northwestern Highway for an outpatient health care facility in Farmington Hills.

City planners will consider the rezoning request Thursday. Senior city planner Ed Gardiner said the hospital may seek to maintain RA-1B residential zoning of the acreage abutting Woodcrest subdivision while seeking OS-3 zoning, consistent with the office zoning along Northwestern Highway, for the remainder.

Hospital officials have met with Woodcrest homeowners to try to allay concerns about expanded office zoning in the area.

The hospital bought the acreage from Daughters of Charity. The order of Roman Catholic nuns owns the hospital and runs the 60-year-old St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center on land adjacent to the 22 acres.

Memory lane

25 years ago:

Ground has been broken at Middlebelt and 11 Mile for a 125-acre development by the Roman Catholic Sisters of Mercy. The master plan includes administration headquarters, a convent, a Catholic high school and a main chapel.

Development plans for two north-end subdivisions, Olde Franklin Towne and Canterbury Commons, have prompted the Farmington school board to consider the need for more classroom space.

— Farmington Enterprise, Jan. 16, 1964

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IN EVERY MONDAY
AND THURSDAY ISSUE

Couple killed while living beliefs

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

When William Darnell Jr. and his pregnant wife, Bette, weren't promptly at work Thursday morning, colleagues of the northeast Detroit couple knew something was wrong.

"We were worried immediately," said Michael Ball, president of American Business Computer Information Systems in Farmington Hills. Bill Darnell is a company vice president.

"Bill and Bette were 100-percent reliable. There was no circumstance we could imagine where they wouldn't show up or call. We called Bette's employer. We called everyone. Since they were out of touch, we thought something was wrong," Ball added.

Employees at Gentlinger Associates in Troy were equally concerned when Bette Darnell wasn't at her usual post as a full-time contract programmer Thursday. "It was not like Bette not to call in. She was here all the time. Even when she would be late, she'd call," said Beverly Parker, customer support manager.

Concerned when their calls provided no answers, business associ-

ates of Bill Darnell went to the couple's rented house in the 17300 block of Cooley, near Grand River-Lanser, in Old Redford shortly before 1:30 p.m. Thursday.

Entering through an unlocked back door, they found the body of the Darnells' 24-year-old daughter, Stephanie, upstairs near her crib. The bodies of Bill, 34, his wife, Bette, 40, and Alicia Smith, 24, an unwed mother taken in by the couple, were found bound, gagged and stabbed in the basement when Detroit police arrived. Kitchen knives believed used in the attacks were found inside the house. Smith's 16-month-old daughter was reported to be with her father in Inkster at the time of the slayings.

NUMBED COLLEAGUES closed the Farmington Hills computer company Friday in memory of Bill and his family. A memorial service is scheduled for 4 p.m. Tuesday in Schrader Funeral Home, 280 Main, Plymouth. Funeral services for the Darnells will be in Texas, where the Darnells have parents and grown children from previous marriages. They moved from Houston two years ago.

Memorial contributions can be

made through the funeral home to the Darnell Fund for the Betterment of Life.

No motive or suspect had been identified by early Saturday. The murders occurred Wednesday night or early Thursday.

"All the adults were fatally assaulted," Detroit police officer John Lavens said Friday. Stephanie's throat was slashed. A report that the adults had been shot was early incorrect information, Lavens said.

News reports Saturday said police were looking for a male friend of Smith for questioning. Bruised, Smith sought refuge with the Darnells the weekend before the murders because of an apparent drug debt owed the man, police said.

Bill Darnell was vice president of technical services and manufacturing and a partner in the 11-employee ABC Computer Information Systems, 24400 Sinclair Court. He was "very popular, friendly, outgoing,

He'd do anything for you," said Mitch Baker, vice president of operations and one of ABC's founders.

THE DARNELLS were active at St. Agatha Catholic Church in Redford Township and committed to Right to Life, Baker added.

"That's why she (Bette) helped Alicia (Smith). She just felt she had to be open to help someone who was

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Victims 'cared for people'

By Pat Murphy
staff writer

William Darnell Jr. and his wife, Bette, were "very caring people," active in both Catholic and Protestant churches, according to a Houston-area friend who was shocked at their deaths.

"They cared for people," said Robert DeGrave, a deacon at the Prince of Peace Catholic Church. DeGrave said he knew the couple quite well because of their involvement in the Curiallo movement in Houston-area Catholic Churches.

Although he was close to the Darnells at one time, DeGrave said he had lost track of the couple and did not

know they had moved to Detroit. "I was shocked when I learned they were dead."

The northwest Detroit couple was murdered last week in their Old Redford home along with their 24-year-old daughter, Stephanie, and, Alicia Smith, 24, an unwed mother who the couple met about two years ago and who they helped during her pregnancy. News reports said Smith's 16-month-old daughter, Alyssa, was in Inkster, where she's being cared for by the child's father.

DeGrave said the couple was fun-loving. "They weren't the kind to dance on the roof. But they enjoyed fellowship and being with people. That's part of the reason they were active in Curiallo," DeGrave said.

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American Red Cross nurse Jackie Blasser prepares Madolino Styos for a blood donation Thursday. Styos is a Farmington school bus driver.

Gunshots break 2 bus windows: no one's injured

By Bob Sklar
staff writer

Gunshots darkened the ride home for 10-12 Walled Lake Western High School students when the driver of a passing car fired two pellets or BBs into the emergency door windows of their school bus on 14 Mile Friday.

"The kids handled it quite well. They were stunned but didn't panic," said bus driver Bernadette Vowles, who described the gunshots as a banging noise.

"I tried to remain calm and gather my bearings. Nobody was hurt. That was my major concern," she said.

One student told television reporters that four students in the back of the bus saw "this gun aimed at us and as we ducked down, we could hear the shots going at us and then the glass breaking and everybody screaming on the bus."

The gunman, driving a 1986-88 red Fiero, was described as white, 17-23 with dark brown hair, spiked on top and jelled back. He possibly had a mustache. He was wearing a white or light-gray Adidas sweatshirt. A female passenger was described as 17-19 with neck-length blond hair.

POLICE HAVE no motive in what they say is the first such incident in Farmington Hills.

"The bus driver doesn't think the kids exchanged any gestures with the driver or did anything to provoke the shooting," said detective Darnel Krause of the Farmington Hills Police Department.

Sky fear was that the windows would shatter and there'd be nothing left to inspect."

Police don't know if the incident is related to a fight, involving knives, that Oakland County sheriff's deputies broke up Thursday between two student factions at Walled Lake Western.

They don't think the incident is related to the rash of highway shootings on metro Detroit freeways, "but we're looking into that," Farmington Hills Sgt. Charles Nebus said.

School buses also were shot at Thursday in Plymouth Township and Friday in Rochester Hills. But different kinds of cars were involved, Krause said.

VOWLES, A bus driver for three years, was turning left from 14 Mile into Timbers Edge subdivision, west of Farmington Road in West Bloomfield, at 2:45 p.m. Friday when the driver of an eastbound car passing on the right fired two shots into the rear emergency door windows.

The shots shattered the safety glass in a spiderweb pattern but didn't penetrate it. Damage was estimated at \$275-\$300. Pellets or BBs aren't considered lethal but can cause serious injury.

Students first noticed the trailing car near Haggerty, 2 1/2 miles west. After determining no one was hurt, Vowles radioed the bus garage in Walled Lake to report the incident, then completed her high school run.

VOWLES THEN drove to Maple Elementary on Maple in West Bloomfield, where she changed buses for her elementary school run. "My fear was that the windows would shatter and there'd be nothing left to inspect."

Local blood donors get in a giving mood

Things are picking up again for the American Red Cross, as various groups schedule blood drives in the Detroit area.

"It's just starting to pick up from the holiday doldrums," said Cliff Taylor, a regional representative. Drives such as the one held last week at Farmington schools, all help the Red Cross with its minimum requirements of 1,000 to 1,100 pints of blood per day, he added.

The school blood drive held Thursday was sponsored by the district's Transportation Department; 17 em-

ployees had signed up, and they had several walk-ins during the day.

To give blood, a person must weigh at least 110 pounds, be in good health and between the ages of 17 and 65. Those older than 65 who have regularly given blood are sometimes accepted.

"The bottom line for any blood drive is the community," Taylor added. "People have to realize that there's no other source for this medicine."

Taylor, a former Farmington Public Schools teacher, said he was at the site to help coordinate the drive and to help a friend through her first time giving blood.

High-tech teaching Computers, videos ushering in new era

See related story on Page 2A

By Casey Hans
staff writer

One day soon, Johnny and Jane will be able to study from their desks at home without visiting the library.

Their home computers will link into networks, getting instant research for homework and special school projects. Teachers of tomorrow may use interactive video disks as part of their lesson plan.

"We haven't really even begun to tap technology yet," said Michael Flanagan, deputy superintendent of schools for the Farmington district. This month, Flanagan is giving a series of talks

on Technology in Education to interested parents, employees and residents of the district.

"Technology is not a replacement for teachers," he added. "We will have the same number (of teachers), it's not more. At best, it's really a supplement, a tool." He believes new technology can bring a "spark of creativity" to education.

FLANAGAN is asking the community to approach all the new technology with an open mind, and learn to accept changes as they come. The school board will consider next month whether to implement a "Teacher on TV" program, which would link the three high schools by cable, so students could take advantage of a course not taught at their particular school without traveling.

Without such a tool and linking a larger number of students, courses like German might not be of-

fered. There are about 20 courses that could use this new technology.

"Our point is very direct," Flanagan added. "We wouldn't be offering a class. The kids wouldn't have the opportunity."

The Farmington school district will approach technology in a big way this year, as the size of the media center at Farmington High School is doubled and enhanced to serve as the high tech hub for the district. It will eventually link the district's three high schools, other school buildings, and serve as a technological bridge to the community.

Flanagan realizes the introduction of technology will not be without problems and concerns.

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science: an
educational
MELTDOWN

The National Assessment of Educational Progress has given our schools failing grades in the teaching of science. But a solution to our children's science illiteracy is a complicated issue that must be attacked on many fronts. To understand why our children lag behind foreign counterparts and what is being done to tighten the gap, see Thursday's Observer & Eccentric for the beginning of a two-part series.