

'Tis the season  
for itty bitty trains, 1D



Wrestling  
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holiday foods, 1B

# Farmington Observer

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## farmington FOCUS

# Hills to settle long Muirwood debate

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

Muirwood Square merchants are saying their prayers tonight: The Farmington Hills City Council will consider a rezoning request that would allow an expansion of the shopping center with a supermarket anchor.

Most appear to support the rezoning after nearly one year of community debate.

"I think, in the long run, it's going to be the best for everyone," said David Efros, owner and manager of Efros Drugs, a major merchant at the center at Grand River and Drake.

Because of the rezoning controversy and subsequent vacancies in the center, this year's

holiday marketing season has not been good. "Our business is way down. Our business is struggling."

Paul Terterian believes tonight's decision could mean success or failure for some of the small businesses making up the center. Both he and Dennis Molony, co-owners of the Artisans Jewelers, employ all Farmington Hills residents, live in Farmington Hills themselves and are concerned about the future of the center.

"It's called progress, and that's the biggest thing," said Molony. "We've had 30 businesses go out of business (in Muirwood Square). Let's not have any more."

"If this expansion doesn't go through, this thing will go bust."

THE ARTISANS has been in business for eight years. Its owners say they depend on jewelry job work from large retailers, which they do in the back shop.

"We feel we are very successful, but the reason that we're not extremely successful is because there's no draw," added Terterian, referring to adding a supermarket anchor at the center, part of the expansion proposal.

The Farmington Hills-based Bextak Building Co., owner of Muirwood Square, has proposed a \$10-million expansion to double the center's size to 105,000 square feet and bring in the Shopping Center Market, a specialty grocery group with stores in West Bloomfield and Southfield.

A 6.5-acre portion of 12 acres west of the center, zoned multiple-family residential, would need to be rezoned for commercial use. The remaining acreage would remain wooded open space and could be used as a recreation area for the adjacent Muirwood Apartments, Bextak officials said.

The Farmington Hills master land use plan calls for residential use on the property.

FARMINGTON HILLS planning commissioners voted unanimously in November to recommend the rezoning. The city council is expected to take action on the rezoning tonight.

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To write the Observer: 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48324. To call news line, 477-6450; sports line, 591-2312; home delivery, 591-0500; classified ads, 591-0900; display ads, 591-2300; fax line, 477-9722.

### LOOKING back.

Oakland Community College Orchard Ridge Campus faculty recently commemorated the bicentennial of the Bill of Rights.

Two new spruce trees now are on the Farmington Hills campus near H Building, planted and dedicated to the Bill of Rights.

And a set of prints of Norman Rockwell's Four Freedoms are now hanging in the campus library, in K Building.

UP with music. Guests at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Dearborn this past weekend were treated to singers from Farmington Hills Harrison High performing "Nuance Society."

The select group of singers, under Jan Brachel's direction, performed in the hotel lobby amidst elaborate yuletide decorations.

### Memory lane

50 years ago:

• Farmington's teachers and city officials will be required to pay an income tax next year, under the public salary tax act of 1939.

• Daughters of Isabella of Farmington is sponsoring a New Year's Eve old-time party at Gramers Dance Hall on Inkster and 10 1/2 Mile.

— Farmington Enterprise, Dec. 21, 1939

### This week

FARMINGTON Hills City Council members tonight will consider a controversial rezoning request necessary to double the size of Muirwood Square shopping center at Grand River and Drake.

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**Reminder**

Your Observer Carrier will be stopping by this week to collect for the month. Please have the money ready and be sure to get your receipt. It's worth a \$2.00 discount on the next classified advertisement you place in your hometown newspaper.



SHARON LAMIEUX/staff photographer

Executive director of the Farmington-Farmington Hills Community Center, Dorothy Plaff faces her toughest programming challenge in the wake of a city-imposed ban on use of sound amplification at the amphitheater.

## Ban hits center in the pocketbook

See related story, 4A

By Joanne Maliszowski  
staff writer

Community center executive director Dorothy Plaff isn't financially counting on cultural performances in 1990.

"I have to be financially responsible without hanging a hat on something that is if-comes. I can't look forward to revenue from summer concerts at this point," Plaff said.

Prompted by residents' complaints, the Farmington Hills Planning Commission set a one-year ban on the Farmington-Farmington Hills center's outdoor use of speakers and microphones.

The ban, Plaff said, potentially decreases the center's revenue and its role as a community cultural center on Farmington Road, between 10 and 11 Mile.

Of the community center's total budget, 64 percent comes from programming (50 percent) and rentals (14 percent). Of the programming revenue, 50 percent will be affected by the ban, Plaff said.

"The ramifications really could eliminate the art and culture we're offering to families and children in the community," said Lawrence Freedman, center board president.

Specific dollar amounts are still unclear because Plaff and other board members say they believe the ban will have far-reaching effects on other outdoor programming — some that use microphones and speakers, others that don't.

"THE QUESTION is, 'How, by natural forces, will we be too loud?'" Freedman said.

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## Hospital vows legal fight

Providence asks for zoning talks

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

The Farmington Hills City Council is leaving a rezoning debate to its attorneys, though Providence Hospital officials have threatened to "vigorously proceed" with legal action if the council doesn't meet with them to discuss the standoff.

Frank Brock, director of development for the Southfield-based hospital, sent a letter to Mayor Terry Sever Dec. 7, requesting a meeting with the council to try and reach a compromise on the lawsuit filed by the hospital. Brock said several attempts at a meeting have been "rebuffed or ignored."

"It would seem to be a more prudent use of tax dollars to meet and explore what other options or alternatives might be possible, rather than continue to accumulate large bills for legal fees," he said. "However, in the absence of such a meeting, we have no choice but to vigorously proceed with the legal process."

Sever could not be reached for comment.

"It's in the hands of the attorney and that's where we decided to leave it."

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## U.S. funds OK'd for Connector

A total of \$2.8 million in federal money was earmarked last week for the proposed Haggerty Road Connector project.

The \$75 million project is tentatively slated to begin in 1990, assuming an environmental impact statement gets approval from the Federal Highway Administration. Federal money is expected to fund some 78 percent of the total project, with state dollars used to pay the balance.

According to information from the office of U.S. Rep. William Broomfield, R-Birmingham, allocation of the money was approved Dec. 12 and will be taken from the Interstate Discretionary Fund, used for construction of ramps and related improvements.

The Haggerty Connector is proposed as a five-mile link beginning with an interchange at I-496, I-275 and I-96 in Novi, building north and ending at Pontiac Trail in Commerce Township, relieving congestion on nearby Haggerty Road. Plans call for the controlled access boulevard of six to eight lanes to be built about one-half mile west of Haggerty Road. Access to the new roadway would be at 12 Mile, 13 Mile, 14 Mile.

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## Mystique of Jaguar hooks car buff's fancy

By Amy Reuch  
staff writer

It was the mystique that drew him in. Gary Carson, 57, bought his first Jaguar last July. "It was the mystique of the name," the Farmington Hills resident said. "It was the fact that all of the cars have been designed by one man."

William Lyons started building the cars, then built under the company name of SS in 1936. Carson said the swallow-tailed cars assembled by Lyons himself made them unique and appealing.

Carson didn't buy the car on the spur of the moment. It came after his wife bought him a book on Jaguars for Christmas a couple years ago.

He combed newspaper ads, finally coming upon an advertisement in the Detroit Free Press for a 1968 3.8 S Jaguar.

Carson went to look at the car and decided that it was for him. He describes it as a sports car with a sedan body. "Sedans are more fun in that you can use it all year," he said.

The car had been kept in one family; a father eventually sold it to his son. Now, the son needed money for a house. "Basically, the car was in

### people

sound shape with no rust. I think it's been babied all its life," Carson said.

"I got the car and it was full of rice. It had been used in a wedding."

CARSON BOUGHT the car for \$6,000, took it home and began restoring it. "I totally stripped the inside and re-dyed the leather," he said. It took him four days: "It was one ton of work. I was black, literally black."

The car's interior is unusual — walnut and leather with an all-wood dashboard. The car was manufactured for just two years, serving as a transition between two other models.

After restoring the interior, it was on to the exterior. Carson spent two days rubbing the paint to make it look its best. "It had been painted five or six years ago, and not by an expert."

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SHARON LAMIEUX/staff photographer

Gary Carson poses with his prize Jaguar.