

Brushing up on art preservation, 1D



Baseball report, 1C

Asparagus stalks spring season, 1B

Farmington Observer

Volume 101 Number 58

Monday, April 23, 1990

Farmington, Michigan

50 Pages

Fifty Cents

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AUCTION time. Farmington Hills police will host their annual public auction at noon Friday, April 27. The department, on the southwest corner of 11 Mile and Orchard Lake Toa will auction office equipment, bikes and miscellaneous items, including a 1980 Chevrolet Chevette. Farmington police will hold a similar auction at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 28, at the DPW Building on Nine Mile, just west of Farmington Road. The fare will include stereo speakers, cassette players, stereo equalizers, tools, children's and women's clothing, bikes and jewelry. Police confiscated or recovered the items during the course of their investigations but could not find the rightful owners.

Memory lane
50 years ago:

• Farmington voters will consider granting a 30-year franchise to Detroit Edison to supply electrical power to the city.
• Farmington residents will soon be able to take a limited express bus from Grand River and Lahser in Old Redford to downtown Detroit.
• Superintendent Orville Dusckel announced that the Farmington High senior class has donated an electric scoreboard for the school gym.
— Farmington Enterprise, April 25, 1940

This week
ACTIVITIES in observance of Earth Day — Sunday, April 22 — will take place throughout the week in the Farmingtons.

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Reminder

Your Observer Carrier will not stop 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.

Farmington budgets tax rate cut

By Casey Hans staff writer

But SEV hike offsets lowered millage

Though Farmington proposes to cut its tax rate to near inflation levels, residents will still see taxes rise next year because of expenses over which the city has little control. In his annual city budget proposal Monday, city manager Robert Deadman said despite rubbish disposal cost increases of 60 percent and other increases, the city will still be able to cut its property tax rate from 10.10 mills to 10.05 mills per \$1,000 of state equalized valuation. A mill represents \$1 per \$1,000 of state equalized value of property.

SEV represents 50 percent of what property will sell for on the open market. "You're going to find some rather dramatic price increases in some areas," Deadman said. "Even with these large increases, we'll be able to hold close to the inflation rate." Last year's inflation rate was 4.8 percent. But residents will likely see a 5.1-percent increase in their taxes with the new fiscal year July 1 since

property values have increased. The city is required to hold a Truth in Taxation hearing to explain why it proposes to increase taxes more than the rate of inflation. That hearing is scheduled for May 21. THE CITY council has scheduled three special meetings at which members will discuss details of the budget before they adopt it in early June. The first meeting was Thursday, April 19. The second is sched-

uled for 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 1, and the third will be at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 2. All will be at city hall. Deadman's proposal calls for a \$9.2 million budget, with \$4.7 million for general operations, \$1.27 million for highways, \$560,000 in debt service, \$528,000 in the capital fund and \$1.65 million in the Water and Sewer Fund. Last year's budget total of \$6.8 million did not include figures for the debt service and the capital fund,

which were detailed separately. The largest item in the budget, \$1.6 million, is for water and sewer operation and maintenance paid for with usage fees charged to residents. In the general fund, police and fire expenses handled by the public safety department total \$1.45 million, followed by public services department at \$741,000 and city insurance costs, which are estimated to top \$711,000. Deadman highlighted major projects with budgetary impact for the 1990-91 fiscal year. • Water and sewer rates will go



Larry Meyer, director of the Michigan Department of Commerce, was keynote speaker at a luncheon hosted by the Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce for 'Networking '90'.

'Networking '90' State commerce director is keynoter at trade expo

By Susan Duck staff writer

He's a Republican appointed by a Democrat. A businessman by ideology. Larry Meyer, 46, who was president and chief executive officer of the Michigan Retailers Association, Lansing, from 1972-89, recently replaced former Michigan Department of Commerce director Doug Hess, who took a position in Washington, D.C. Meyer was appointed by Governor James Blanchard last year. He was a staff aide for U.S. Senator Everett Dirksen in 1968 and served

as manager of state relations for the American Retail Federation in Washington, D.C. from 1968-72. Meyer, a father of four, was keynote speaker at the Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce's first business-to-business trade show exposition "Networking '90," April 17-19, at Mercy Conference Center in Farmington Hills. "This show is a good example of how working together helps us all," Meyer said. "As we all know in the business community, how we treat our customers determines our success and failure."

Residents say: Change our ZIP code

By Paula Kirach special writer

LET MY people go. That's the battle cry of some irate Farmington Hills residents in a square mile bordered by Eight and Nine Mile, Halsted and Haggerty. This square mile of southwest Farmington Hills is the only area of the city with a different city designation and ZIP code for mailing. Because the Northville post office delivers their mail, residents there are advised to use a Northville mailing address, even though they live in Farmington Hills. Using a Farmington Hills address results in returned and delayed mail, residents say. Many area residents have been working for years to correct the situation and to be considered part of Farmington Hills by the post office.

They were upset to find they were not included with the rest of their city in the scheduled ZIP code reassignment covering much of the northern suburbs. Last week, they submitted a petition seeking a change of post offices to the Northville postmaster — again. Petitions seeking this change have been submitted to postal authorities twice before — in 1985 and 1986. The effort remains unsuccessful, even though petitions represent a majority of the square mile residents. NORTHVILLE RURAL route service covers this square mile of Farmington Hills, part of Novi and part of South Lyon. Rural route service — a lower-level, more-efficient service not requiring parcel delivery — was established for these areas 30 years ago. The areas were mostly farmland and the local post offices couldn't handle the routes or didn't want them. The areas have since been developed with homes but city service at a local post office has never been instituted. When told of the petition submission, Susan Gillespie, communications manager of the U.S. Postal Service Detroit Division, said, "They can submit it and we can consider it."

She also said the situation in Northville is not unique and that the post office was only trying to achieve "efficient, cost-effective delivery." Northville Postmaster Wally Cates said he "had no objections, per se" regarding an address change when informed of the new petition submitted. John Arbuckle and Patricia O'Connell, co-chairs of the address committee, which represents resi-

denters, said they were "pleased" with the petition drive to change that.

Like many residents in the most southwesterly address and ZIP Code. He's helping to lead a petition drive to change that.

'Imagine the police trying to contact us in an emergency based on a Northville address on our license.'
—John Arbuckle



The Farmington Hills police and Federal Bureau of Investigation are looking for information regarding this unidentified man who is believed linked to bank robberies in Oakland County communities.

Man sought in 4 bank holdups

By Joanne Maliszowski staff writer

Farmington Hills police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation are looking for a man believed to be linked to four bank robberies in Oakland County communities. The latest robbery was of a Farmington Hills bank April 17. The FBI late last week released a photo of the unidentified man taken by a surveillance camera at one of the robbed banks. "We would like citizens and banks to be aware of him," said Sgt. Charles Nebus of the Farmington Hills Police Department. "If anyone recognizes him we'd like them to call the FBI." Farmington Hills police are working with the FBI to find the man they believe is linked to similar armed robberies in Southfield, Royal Oak and Troy, Nebus said. The April 17 robbery of the United Savings Bank, 33505 14 Mile, Farmington Hills, was the only one in which a gun was observed,

At 11:04 a.m. April 17, an unidentified man walked to a teller window, gave the teller a hold up note and opened his brown, soft-sided briefcase, displaying a handgun, Nebus said. Only four employees, no customers, were in the bank at the time. "He was armed with a handgun in his briefcase, which he displayed to the victim, but did not actually take out of the briefcase or point at the teller," Nebus said. After the man received an undisclosed amount of money from the teller, he calmly walked out of the bank and to his car in the parking lot. He was last seen driving east on 14 Mile Road, then north onto Farmington Road, police said. . . . based on the method of operation and the description of the robber, the FBI believes that the same individual is responsible for all four robberies," according to FBI special agent Hal Holterhoff. THE OTHER robberies believed linked to the same man in the surveillance photo are:

- Comerica Bank, 29252 Southfield Road, Southfield, Nov. 15, 1989.
 - Credit Union One, 2255 Woodward, Royal Oak, Jan. 16, 1990.
 - Midwest Guaranty Bank, 1475 Big Beaver, Troy, March 20, 1990.
- The robber always uses a demand note and has struck between 10:20-11:04 a.m. Police described the man as a professional-looking businessman, 35-40 years old, 5 feet-10 inches tall, of medium build, with dark brown or black hair and gray beard, which may be dyed. The man's car, described by witnesses, is a medium blue colored four-door station wagon, which could be 3-5 years old with Michigan license plates. The Detroit Clearing House Association is offering a \$1,000 reward for information leading to the identification and indictment of the unidentified man, according to the FBI. Anyone with information should contact their local police or the FBI, 965-2823.