



Farmingington Observer

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farmingington FOCUS

Mayor: restudy Carrington Place

By Joanne Maliszowski
staff writer

Farmingington Hills Mayor Jean Fox wants the city council to take a second look at Carrington Place Apartments for Seniors and its new low-income housing program now that Detroit Baptist Manor won't be managing the 100-unit facility.

"It was very important that Detroit Baptist Manor was going to manage it. I believe it was a factor in their (council members) vote," Fox

said. "It is important that the city council be given all the facts before they vote on an issue."

City Manager William Costick agreed. Carrington Place was granted a tax break in March.

"The city council deserves to know who the management company is going to be if we are granting a payment in lieu of taxes."

Carrington partner Sam Yaker of Liberty Construction Co. in Southfield said he hopes

the change in management companies won't be a problem.

"I hope that is not an issue." The Michigan State Housing Development Authority has given Carrington Place partners a "conditional commitment" that it will receive a low-interest mortgage. That will allow the partners to provide their average \$600-a-month apartments to low- and moderate-income senior adults at reduced rents.

"We expect to have a firm commitment within 30 days. We expect to close before the

end of June," Yaker said.

BUT MSHDA twice denied Detroit Baptist Manor of Farmington Hills as the company to manage the apartment development on the northeast corner of Drake and Freedom.

"We have certain kinds of information and policies. We did not receive it in a way we found satisfactory," said Ann Harrison, MSHDA spokeswoman. MSHDA officials would not elaborate.

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THE night sweeper's job is a golden opportunity — literally.

Paul Terterlian, craftsman-jeweler at Artisan's Jewelers at Mulwood Square in Farmington Hills, says as much as three pounds of gold are salvaged each year by his staff.

"We do a lot of custom jewelry work in gold. And that means a lot of dust is always flying around."

"We even have a special catch basin in the sink that recovers gold dust from hand washings," partner Dennis Moloney says. "The dirt on our hands is as good as gold."

EXCHANGING hot seats.

Farmingington will host visiting Mayor Richard Jones and his group from the city of Flat Rock on Tuesday, May 22 as part of Michigan Week. A noon luncheon at the Botsford Inn will highlight the daylong visit.

QUOTE of the week

I know it sounds big. But it really isn't. We began with a \$2 billion assessment roll. So that's less than 1 percent of the roll.

— Dean Babb, Farmington Hills assessor, reacting to \$17 million in lowered property tax assessments by the local Board of Review. Story: 1A.

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HOME & GARDEN

SPECIAL SECTION IN TODAY'S ISSUE



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Students from Warner Middle School will go on to rival students from other countries in Odyssey of the Mind competition May 30. Here, team members Carrie Riordan (left), Samantha Rowland, Amy Roberts, Jon Krause, Marie Tripp, Gordon Eick and James Haynes work on rejuvenating their props.

Team to take Odyssey to finals

Seven students from Warner Middle School are readying themselves, and their props, for an international competition and a live spot on NBC's "Today Show."

They're preparing their version of Noah's Ark for the Odyssey of the Mind competition, for which they placed first in the middle school division in state competition at Central Michigan University April 26.

They will travel to the University of Iowa for OM world competition May 30, after which they will go before millions of "Today Show" viewers live on Monday, June 4 to demonstrate their team problem with OM originator Sam Micklus. The "Today Show" airs locally from 7-9 a.m. on WDIV-TV Channel 4.

"Since they're going to be on the 'Today Show,' they're going to make it look good," said OM coach Dee

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— Dee Krause
OM team coach

Krause, watching her charges in her West Bloomfield basement revamping their props. The basement was transformed into OM headquarters last September. ODYSSEY OF the Mind is a creative problem-solving activity offered through the Farmington Public Schools. All students are eligible to participate in the team activity, which begins each fall with competi-

tions running throughout the school year. It stresses team dynamics.

Students on the winning team include Jon Krause, Amy Roberts, Carrie Riordan, Samantha Rowland, Gordon Eick, James Haynes and Marie Tripp. The team selected a problem called "Geographic Odyssey" because it involved dramatic play and allowed the team to design a vehicle.

The team was required to build a vehicle — in their case, an ark — and provide costumes and props of 10 countries. The team had to drive their vehicle and place the countries' flags on a course. Each team was judged on style, solution to the long-term problem and a spontaneous solution to another problem.

"We decided to do this one because it was a vehicle — and it was more drama than anything else," said Rowland.

Tripp said she didn't know why the team was picked for the "Today Show," but that everyone is excited, nonetheless. "He watched all our props and watched us, and somehow, just picked us," she said.

In 1988, another Warner team coached by Krause went to world

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Witness: Bonelli is 'mentally ill'

By Ralph R. Echlinaw
staff writer

Defense and prosecuting attorneys duled in court this week, trying to convince 12 jurors that Anthony Bonelli either was temporarily insane when he killed Kristina Fracchia or knew exactly what he was doing.

The case, expected to go to the jury today or Friday, will depend on the jury's assessment of Bonelli's mental state when he drowned his 17-year-old girlfriend in Orchard Lake March 16, 1988.

If the jury feels Bonelli was not in control of his actions, it may declare him not guilty by reason of temporary insanity, setting the stage for institutionalization. If jurors say Bonelli was in control, he could be

found guilty of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison.

DEFENSE WITNESS Dr. Douglas Sargent, a psychiatrist who examined Bonelli before he killed Fracchia, testified Tuesday that Bonelli was not in control of himself when the murder occurred. "I think he was not (criminally responsible)," Sargent said. "From about age 11 to the present time, he has been mentally ill."

Dr. Norbert Birnbaum, a county clinical social worker who counseled Bonelli frequently after the murder, also testified that Bonelli couldn't control himself when he killed Fracchia. "I believe it had to be some-



DAN DEAN/staff photographer

Anthony Bonelli's uncle, Marlo Rea, testified as a defense witness. Bonelli lived with Rea at the time of Kristina Fracchia's death.

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Board hears record appeals

Farmingington property tax assessments, 17A

By Joanne Maliszowski
staff writer

The 17 days the Farmington Hills Board of Review heard property tax assessment appeals wasn't unusual. But the length of those days and the 1,200 appeals sparked a new record.

"We had a lot more protective-type appeals than in the past," assessor Dean Babb said.

That means a lot of property owners protected themselves by putting their appeals and complaints on record just in case the Oakland County Equalization Division later slapped on a factor — further increasing assessments — or if they found a need to appeal to the Michigan Tax Tribunal.

Many residents were disgruntled when they learned the board's appointment book was full in March. But those residents, put on a call-back list, were eventually heard, Babb said.

"We have gone as many days in the past. But we have never had to work as hard," Babb said.

The 1,200 appeals heard by the three-member board of review were on 1,470 pieces of property, including residential, commercial and industrial, for a \$17 million reduction in assessments, the majority of which was commercial. In 1989, the board reduced assessments \$11.5 million.

"I KNOW it sounds big. But it really isn't," Babb said. "We began with a \$2 billion assessment roll. So that's less than 1 percent of the roll (that's been reduced)."

Commercial reductions totaled more than \$9 million, including \$6.9 million for income adjustments; \$2.7 million from 10 Michigan Tax Tribunal decisions; and \$1.2 million in corrections made by the assessor, not the board of review.

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Focus on caregivers

In America today, 7 million people care for a spouse or an elderly parent. Many of them in the sandwich generation, mostly female, are simultaneously caring for children and a parent.

The over-65 group, the group most in need of care, is the fastest-growing age group in the country. What this means is that even more Americans will take on the role of caretaker.

Because caregiving is mainly a woman's issue, the Suburban Life editors of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers decided to honor Mother's Day by dedicating this issue to the caregivers. For our report, see Pages 1-4B.

— Loraine McClain
Suburban Life editor