

Cars come of age as works of art, 1D



Regional results, 1C

Father cooks for family, 1B

# Farmington Observer

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## farmington- FOCUS

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**CHAMPS, too.**  
In announcing Tuesday that a Warner Middle School team won a world title in *Dyslexy of the Mind* creative problem-solving competition the weekend before in Iowa, Superintendent Mike Flanagan said: "The Pistons aren't the only world champs. We have our own world champs."  
"And we're very proud of them."

**PARK talk.**  
Farmington Hills City Council has endorsed the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission's request to receive a 0.25 mill for operations in the Aug. 7 primary election.  
The council chose to remain neutral on the request for a one-mill levy of a 0.5 mill to develop Orion Oaks County Park.

### Memory lane

**50 years ago:**  
Supervisor Arthur Coe of Farmington Township will resign to tend a bar he recently opened at Grand River and Eight Mile.  
Howard Warner and Florence Leo were re-elected to the Farmington school board.  
— Farmington Enterprise, June 13, 1940

### This week

ITS graduation time in the Farmington school district: Tuesday for Farmington High graduates, Wednesday for North Farmington graduates and Thursday for Dearborn graduates.

### what's inside

- Building scene . . . Sec. F
- Classifieds . . . Sec. C,E,F
- Auto . . . . . 9E
- Index . . . . . 9E
- Real estate . . . Sec. C,F
- Employment . . . Sec. E,F
- Creative living . . . Sec. E
- Crossword puzzle . . . 3E
- Entertainment . . . 5D
- On the agenda . . . 5C
- Opinion . . . . . 8A
- Police/tire calls . . . 9A
- Sports . . . . . Sec. C
- Street Scene . . . Sec. D
- Taste . . . . . Sec. B

Look for the Farmington Hills Suburban Cable Weekly



## Murderer Bonelli gets life



By Darrell Ciom Staff writer

Convicted murderer Anthony Bonelli, in his final statement before being sentenced Thursday to life in prison, apologized for the drowning death of 17-year-old Kristina Marie Frachcia.

"I'm sorry for what happened," Bonelli said. "There's nothing I can say or do to express myself."

Bonelli, 18, appeared calm as he was sentenced by Oakland County Circuit Judge Alice Gilbert to a life term with no parole. Before he was led, handcuffed, from the courtroom, Bonelli smiled at defense attorney James Andary and shook his hand.

The victim's mother, Sandy Frachcia, who sat in the front row, sobbed loudly and then fainted after Bonelli was sentenced.

"I don't understand this," she said at one point as family and friends tried to console her.

She lay unconscious on the courtroom bench for several minutes before the First Emergency Medical Service arrived, placed her on a stretcher and took her to Pontiac General Hospital. At one point she appeared unable to move, saying, "I can't move my hands."

She was treated and released from the hospital Thursday afternoon.

Bonelli's mother left the courtroom quickly after the sentencing and wept in the hallway.

IT WAS clearly the most emotional part of the entire court proceedings, including a two-week trial that

Please turn to Page 3

Anthony Bonelli, right, listens to defense attorney James Andary after being sentenced to life in prison for murdering his former girlfriend.

## 7 of 34 stores stung in liquor sweep

By Joanne Maliszowski Staff writer  
With local high school graduations this week, package liquor and beer-and-wine dealers have made an improved showing in Farmington Hills' seventh undercover crackdown on sale of alcoholic beverages to minors.  
Seven of 34 package liquor and beer-and-wine dealers were ticketed

Friday for selling to undercover police cadets younger than 21. But this is the first crackdown in which no licensee was ticketed, only employees.  
"We're pleased that licensees are making concerted efforts to control violations," Police Chief William Dryer said.  
"Businesses in our operation have made efforts to train employees not to sell to minors. In two cases Fri-

day, licensees fired two of the employees on the spot."  
But that doesn't mean Dryer hadn't hoped for a better showing from the licensed businesses. "Obviously, we would have preferred there would be no violations. There's been improvement. But it's still somewhat disappointing that we would even have seven violations, especially with all our efforts, education and notice given to licensees."

Six of seven businesses ticketed are repeat offenders. Pace Warehouse, 24800 Haggerty Road, was ticketed for the first time. A Pace Warehouse manager said Saturday he was not permitted to comment about the ticket. Other licensees or managers at ticketed businesses were either unavailable for comment or preferred not to comment.

Wine Liquor & Deli, 27843 Orchard Lake Road, Aveco Discount Drug Center, 25870 Middlebelt Country Ridge Quality Market, 31102 Haggerty; K mart, 30800 Orchard Lake Road; Mike & Son's Party Store, 31511 13 Mile; and Five Brothers, 29010 Eight Mile.  
Farmington Hills police, at the request of Franklin police, also visited

Please turn to Page 6

### School election day is today

Farmington Public Schools voters will fill two school board seats from among nine candidates in today's annual district election. The new terms will run for four years.  
In the running are incumbent R. Jack Inch and challengers James Barnes, Richard DeVries, Kim Jaske, Laura Myers, Sharon Rands, Robert Ranney, Allen Warner and Catherine Webb. Barnes has said he is not an active candidate.

Please turn to Page 4

## Move to close sledding hill eyed

Related story, 4A  
By Casey Hans Staff writer  
Safety and liability issues at a local sledding hill have come to the forefront, prompting officials to discuss closing it down.  
Owned by the Farmington Public Schools, the hill is on Farmington Road just north of Shilawassee.

Both school and Farmington city officials are concerned about the hill, which has increased in use over the years. The city was sued over it during the past sledding season.  
A good snowfall can draw hundreds to the hill to sled in one day.

The hill was discussed at a recent school board meeting, where trustees were asked to approve an administrative plan to plant evergreen trees on the hill, effectively closing it to sledding. Trustees deferred the issue until their June 19 meeting, when they hope to have more information.

REACTION to the landscaping plan, which prompted Tuesday's discussion, was mixed.  
"All we're going to have are kids sledding between the trees," said trustee Jack Cotton. "That's been there too long."  
Trustee Susan Rennels said that "times have changed," including the age mix of people visiting the hill, larger crowds and worsening traffic along Farmington Road. "It has been a continuing problem," she said. "There is no choice. It's not safe."

LAST YEAR, superintendent Michael Flanagan appealed to residents to use the newly opened Heritage Park in Farmington Hills. It was shortly after that, he said, that the lawsuit was filed. To bogging on the hill was prohibited last year because of the short stopping distance at the hill's base at Farmington Road.  
Flanagan said he received a letter from the city last season, encouraging the district to take action and stop the sledding.

Please turn to Page 4

## Off-duty cop: 'Felt like he was going to kill me'

By Casey Hans Staff writer  
An off-duty Detroit police officer said he was "in fear for my life" when he shot a Gateway Apartments resident May 29 after the man approached him with a shotgun.  
"I ran into the guard shack, pulled my gun and badge," said Officer Robert Dunlap, who works in Detroit's 4th Precinct. "He came toward me. He started leveling the shotgun at me."  
"I felt like he was going to kill me."  
Dunlap's testimony came Friday during the preliminary examination of Miguel Vassel, 37, of Farmington Hills in 47th District Court.  
Vassel was arrested and charged after witnesses said he removed a shotgun from the trunk of his car and approached Dunlap with it the night of May 29 at the Gateway Apartments gatehouse on 12 Mile, west of Middlebelt.

Farmington Hills police ruled that Dunlap fired in self-defense. No charges were sought against him.  
After a short preliminary examination Friday, District Judge Margaret Schaefer of Farmington ordered Vassel to stand trial in Oakland County Circuit Court on one count of felonious assault and a second of using a firearm while committing a felony. If convicted of the two felony charges, Vassel faces up to six years in prison.  
AN ARRAIGNMENT date had not been set in Oakland County Circuit Court, said a spokeswoman there.  
At about 10:45 p.m. on May 29, Dunlap fired once at Vassel with his police service revolver after Vassel refused to drop the gun, according to testimony. Vassel was wounded in the left forearm and hip. He ran but was arrested soon after in a residential back yard.

Please turn to Page 2

## Drug series on tap

Just how serious is the illegal drug problem in Oakland County?  
That's an "important" question. Many members of the national media try to answer that question by reviewing "control" from Washington or New York. Using statistics and predictable "footage" and photographs, they reinforce the idea that the Detroit area and its northern suburbs are thick with drugs, and the problem is bordering on catastrophic.  
In 1977, for four months, more than 20 members of the Observer's Executive staff talked to the people who work in the county, from grade school children to adults. We also interviewed narcotics officers, local police and local officials with 400 goals in mind: to answer the question on a community level by talking to the people who know



The result, in Suburban Hills, a special report that will appear starting June 18 in the Oakland County Observer, is a 10-part series. It presents a complete picture of the drug problem in our part of the county, with information gathered by school principals, lawyers, police, judges, and others. It also includes a special feature on how to spot a neighborhood that may be a drug area. The series will be published in three parts: the first on June 18, the second on June 25, and the third on July 2.