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# Farmington Observer

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## FH man guilty in murder of roommate

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

A jury found a 28-year-old ex-marine guilty of second-degree murder Friday in the shooting of his former roommate in their Newport Creek apartment in Farmington Hills in July.

The verdict came after several hours of deliberation, and after the defendant, Raymond Joseph Florian, Jr., had taken the stand Thursday in his own defense. There, he admitted he was frantic to detain 40-year-old Daniel Magon, the man who he testified had bliked him out of \$25,000 and was planning to leave town.

After contacting police the morning of July 3, Florian drove to the Meijer Thrifty Acres at Eight Mile and Haggerty and bought a gun and ammunition.

**'Clearly, Ray (Florian) gave very compelling testimony about the breach of trust he had with Magon.'**

— David Binkley  
defense attorney

"I knew I couldn't just go to him and say . . . I would like to be reimbursed — I want my money back. He was smooth. I needed some kind of influence," Florian said.

He shot and killed Magon shortly after noon that day at the Newport Creek complex on Eight Mile.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY David Binkley, who pleaded the case as manslaughter, said he was not

surprised at the second-degree verdict because he did not believe the prosecution proved premeditation.

Premeditation is required for a first-degree conviction, for which Florian was charged.

"Clearly, Ray gave very compelling testimony about the breach of trust he had with Magon. He felt betrayed and acted angrily. He felt like he was being provoked."

"I think it's a really sad thing on the part of both families," Binkley added. "Both families (defendant's and victim's) lost."

Binkley said he is unsure just what type of sentence his client will receive, though he can get up to life in prison with a chance for parole.

Sentencing for Florian is slated for Dec. 20 before Oakland Circuit Judge John O'Brien.

Oakland County assistant prosecutor Robert Hodges said he was "satisfied with the verdict" and that "the degree of guilt is based on his (the defendant's) mental state at the time."

FLORIAN TESTIFIED he meant to threaten Magon and "never in-



SHARON LAMUEUX/staff photographer  
Defendant Ray Florian hangs his head moments after testifying that he shot Daniel Magon.



**FARMINGTON FOCUS**  
AMERICAN history isn't being forgotten in Farmington by George Washington's likeness soon will grace a wall in the Farmington Council chamber at City Hall. The poster is a gift to the city from councilwoman Shirley Richardson and her husband, John, a former councilman.

The full-figure portrait depicts the Father of Our Country symbolically offering the viewer a goose-quill pen to endorse the Constitution.

Robert Schoeller, an Austrian-American artist, created the work as a Bicentennial gift to honor the Bill of Rights, which turns 200 this week. A California financier funded the printing and distribution.

The likeness resembles the famous "Roosevelt" bust made from plaster by sculptor James Earle Fraser in Washington's face. The inscription is shown dressed in a brown suit, similar to the one worn at his inauguration.

Lettering at the bottom says, "The Constitution is for all keepers, the people."

The poster was presented to the city Wednesday during a "Salute to the Bicentennial of the Bill of Rights" luncheon at the Farmington Elks Club.

MANY PEOPLE know Weldon Pets, retired elementary school principal, as a collector of Abraham Lincoln documents and artifacts who presents numerous programs on the subject.

But Pets also has an extensive group of antique and interesting Santas. Some of them — including a Santa on a sled that was hand-carved by Pets' father many years ago — are on display at the Farmington Hills City Hall 11 Mile and Orchard Lake roads.

Others include a roly-poly nodding Santa and some dressed in very diverse costumes.

They can be seen in the Farmington Hills Historical Commission case just off the main lobby in City Hall.

POSTAL OFFICIALS remind customers that stamps may be purchased from vending machines in the lobby of the main Post Office on 12 Mile road, as well as at three non-postal stations in supermarkets in the Farmington area.

They are: Farmer Jack, 22128 Farmington Road, and Kroger stores at 25789 Middlebelt Road and 37550 W. 12 Mile Road.

MEMORY LANE — From the Dec. 20, 1931 Farmington Enterprise:

Rita Christian, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Christian, was named the Daughters of the American Republic "Good Citizen" of Farmington High School for 1931. The FHS senior was president of the student council and editor of the yearbook.

The Farmington City Council named James Tennant assistant city manager on a 30-day trial basis.

Charles J. Habermeil was appointed acting postmaster of the Farmington Post Office.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21858 Farmington Road, Farmington 48338, or dropped off at the newspaper office.



JOHN STORMZAND/staff photographer  
**A salute to Ernie**  
Ernie Harwell, a Farmington Hills resident and longtime voice of the Detroit Tigers, shares a laugh Friday with WCAR radio producer Marylou Janiga. The station selected Harwell as the 1991 Senior of the Year in Michigan. For more, see Page 1B.

## Football champs honored

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

Members of Harrison's championship football team and their coach were lauded Tuesday night by Farmington school officials, who encouraged them to continue their success throughout life.

"They are here this evening . . . because we care about them and we take pride in their accomplishments," said Farmington school board president Jack Cotton, retired athletic director for the Farmington district.

Cotton and other officials stressed that they are proud not only of student athletes, but for the work they do in the classroom as well.

"We've got successful high schools, period," said Superintendent Michael Flanagan. "We're proud of you not just because of what you've accomplished on the football field."

"The toughest think about success is that you have to keep on being a success. We're really proud of you."

TEAM CAPTAIN Mike Pesci thanked the community for "all their support" and head coach John Herr-

## MEAP changes probably mean low scores

By Susan Buck  
staff writer

Those hoping for high Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) scores are likely to be disappointed this year, according to two University of Michigan educators.

"There's a 30 percent success rate (expected on the new math) in the first year for grades four, seven and 10," said Sue Rigney, an assessment consultant for the State Board of Education. "The test changed radically for all grades."

Test results of Farmington Public school students will be discussed at Tuesday's school board meeting, said Carolyn Mahalak, of Farmington's assessment office.

Meanwhile staff members, many of whom on Thursday had not yet seen the test results themselves, are holding their breath.

"We do not know when they will be mailed (to parents), Mahalak said. Several staff personnel volunteered to take part in statewide review sessions of the math portion of the new MEAP along with other state teachers. Locally, they were Mahalak, Joan Armstrong of Wooddale Elementary's learning center, Beth Bosse, of Wooddale Elementary fourth grade teacher, and Carolyn Jones of Larkshire Elementary's learning center.

"We all reviewed the same material," Armstrong said. "We took the test ourselves and studied placement of test items relative to other test items, graphics, etc. The main focus is on problem-solving by application of mathematics rather than by computation skills."

THE MATH SECTION of the test has been revamped to place greater emphasis on conceptual thinking and reasoning skills, according to Joseph Payne, professor of mathematics education and co-chair of the state Department of Education Committee to Develop the Michigan Essential Goals and Objectives for Mathematics Education.

For the first time this year, MEAP test takers were allowed to use calculators on major portions of the test.

"In redesigning the test, we were trying to define a new goal for math instruction in Michigan, to de-em-

phasize rote computation and highlight math skills that people use in real life," Payne said. "The test places a greater emphasis than ever before on conceptual understanding and contains a broader range of content. Sections on problem solving, algebra, statistics, mental arithmetic and estimation have been included."

The old MEAP test was a test of "minimal skills," according to Payne, primarily measuring students' ability to perform operations such as addition, subtraction, long division and multiplication.

Many teachers, who have not

taught this type of material, are likely to think the new test is unfair, because it measures skills that have not been included in most Michigan school curriculums," Payne said. This is an opportunity for them to look at where their curriculum needs to be changed and make the necessary adjustments," Payne said.

"We (as a nation) are miserable in math and science," Rigney said. "The people who work at math are good at it. We are dying here because our kids do not have basic skills. What was good for our parents is not good enough for us."

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## Reporter finds mini-MEAP a challenge

By Susan Buck  
staff writer

Ever since my last parent-teacher conference with my daughter Annie's teacher, I had to know what was on the new Michigan Education Assessment Program's (MEAP) test for fourth-graders.

Annie's teacher, who works in an alternate suburban district, spent much of our allotted 15-minute conference session with her critique of the new MEAP, both the math and reading portions.

The use of calculators — which students weren't prepared for — and the need for advanced logic in one reading question were some of her concerns.

Michigan teachers have complained the test is more difficult and students tire easily, said Sue Rigney, the state school board's assessment consultant for mathematics.

**I got four wrong, and had to concentrate intensely.**

— Sue Buck  
Observer reporter

So, when Farmington Public schools extended an invitation to some parent representatives, school board members, school administrators and this paper to take a portion of the MEAP, I jumped at the chance.

It's always more fun to be a voluntary test taker. The last mandated standardized test I took was the SAT in 1969.

So, I slipped into the first seat in the first row of Farmington High school's mgla center.

I WAS IN good company. Mike Flanagan, Farmington Schools superintendent, was taking the test. So were others like board members Helen Prutow, Susan Rennels and Cathy Webb.

"Before I left, my husband asked me if I had eaten a good breakfast, had a good night's sleep and had a sharp pencil," Farmington parent Jan Bennett joked in a whisper from her seat directly behind me.

It was Bennett's suggestion to hold this test session, I later learned.

"The only reason I'm here is because it's confidential," Flanagan joked.

A source close to the superintendent's office said that Flanagan missed two questions.

I got four wrong, and had to concentrate intensely on some questions.

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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.