



# Farmington Observer

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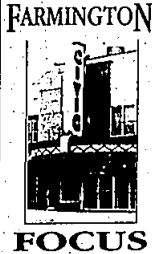
Thursday, January 30, 1992

Farmington, Michigan

64 Pages

Five Cents

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**AN 'OPTIMISTIC' young lady, that Jennifer Chen, and she should be.**

The North Farmington High School student penned the winning essay in the recent Optimist Club competition, according to Neal Wolfson, president of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Breakfast Optimist Club.

Her entry will be judged in the Optimist district competition, which will include entries from throughout Michigan. The district winner will earn an expense-paid trip to a four-day conference on freedom and leadership at Valley Forge, Pa.

Taking second place in the local competition was Jill K. Timco of Livonia Churchill High. David Schuly of North Farmington took third place.

**KNOCK-KNOCK** who's at the door? It's members of the National Honor Society and the Clarenceville Community Education Advisory Council talking to senior citizens in the People to People Partnership survey.

Student volunteers will be walking the Clarenceville District — which includes a portion of southeast Farmington Hills — from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 4.

They will be asking seven brief questions to determine the needs and interests of senior citizens. The goal is to bring the seniors closer to the Clarenceville District.

Advisory Council members include Dave Simowaki, high school principal; Gary Gasser and Verlene Dunbar, board members; Tom Collins and Janet Gaffie, volunteers; Mary Lou Lively, teacher; Bea Wright, business owner; Rose Govig, Community Education manager; and Pat Vickers, administrative assistant for instruction.

Students participating in the survey will be wearing ID tags. The Clarenceville District also includes parts of Livonia and Redford Townships.

**SO WHO DID IT?** Come to the On the Tee Restaurant in Farmington Hills on Saturday, Feb. 22, and help solve a murder.

In this plot — a murder mystery dinner theater — a murder has occurred at the restaurant at the San Marino Golf Course, and theatergoers/diners are invited to help solve the crime.

The company Murder For Hire will be performing from 7:30 p.m. It should take a super sleuth to solve the crime.

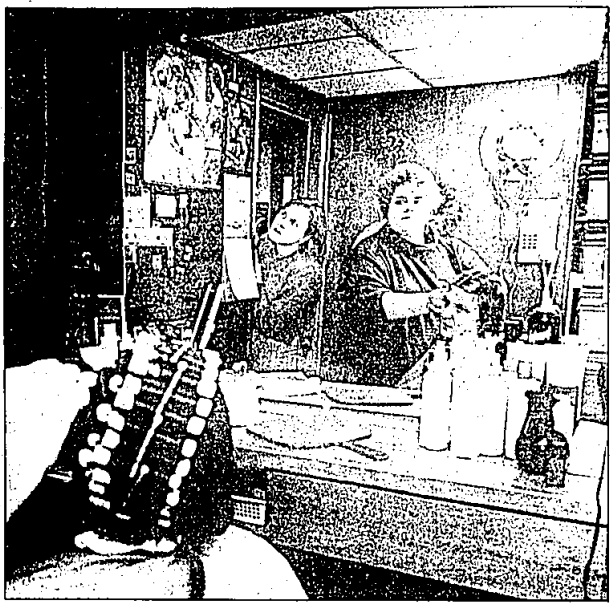
A buffet dinner will be served and a cash bar will be available. Pre-registration is required at the recreation office, 31555 W. 11 Mile Road, behind the Hills City Hall.

For more information, call 473-9570.

**MEMORY LANE** — From the Jan. 31, 1984 Farmington Enterprise:

- The Clarenceville School District will receive no federal funds for new school construction, announced Louis Schmidt, superintendent.
- About 1,000 jammed the Farmington High auditorium to see the Detroit Civic Players' production of "Little Women."

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 2188 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, or dropped off at the newspaper office.



SHARON LEMUEUX/staff photographer

## Permanent diplomacy

It looks like just another mother-daughter day at the hair salon. But for Ludmila Erpot (seated right) and her daughter Julia (left) traveling from the Tarter Republic in what was once the Soviet Union, it was an after-

noon to remember. Robin Wheeler, (center) hairdresser and co-owner of House of Style in Farmington Hills, helped give both of them new, Western-style looks. For more on their day at the salon, turn to Page 1C.

## Year-round plan will offer choice for Gill students

By Casey Hans staff writer

A "school-within-a-school" program will be piloted at Gill Elementary this fall, offering students and parents there a choice between a traditional school schedule and one which operates throughout the year.

The one-year pilot for the year-round program was unanimously approved by the Farmington school board Tuesday. Also approved was the hiring of an elementary level administrative intern to help with that program and at other overcrowded schools.

School administrator Mary Lou Somerville chaired the study committee on year-round education during the past year. She said board approval is the first step and that the district must now approach the Gill community to see who would be interested. If more students are need-

ed to fill slots, the district will offer the program to students at overcrowded elementary schools.

Although the district is considering a "45-15" program — 45 days in school and 15 days off — the schedule has yet to be finalized, she said.

**SUPERINTENDENT MICHAEL Flanagan** has been a proponent of year-round schools since working with such a program in the Huron Valley school district. The different scheduling will allow students to retain information better, and also offers families different times of year for enrichment activities, such as vacations and visits to museums, he said.

With recent state and federal pressures to offer choice, Flanagan said he wanted to see more than just choices between schools. "Why

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## Trustee won't run

By Casey Hans staff writer

Two-term Farmington school trustee James Abernethy announced Tuesday he will not seek re-election this June, leaving one seat open on the seven-member board for the second time in recent years.

Veteran trustee Helen Prutor, whose term is also expiring, said she plans to run for a fifth term.

"For physical reasons, I will not

be a candidate for re-election," Abernethy announced at the end of the regular school board meeting. He explained that recent knee surgery had not been as successful as he had hoped, and that he did not feel he could handle the rigors of another campaign.

Abernethy said he plans to stay involved in education in Farmington and encouraged those attendance at

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## Man guilty of manslaughter in smothering

By Joanne Maliszewski staff writer

The Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor wanted at least a second-degree murder verdict — but got only manslaughter — against a former Detroitier who killed a 30-year-old Livonia woman and dumped her body in a

Farmington Hills field.

William Doll, 46, was found guilty of manslaughter Tuesday in the smothering death of Kristine Albert, whose decomposed body was found on Goldsmith, north of Eight Mile, in Farmington Hills, Feb. 7, 1991.

"We would argue this was more an accidental death. He didn't know she was dead until

the next day," said Doll's attorney, Mary Ellen O'Connell of Detroit. "He's not guilty of any crime."

Detroit Records Court Judge Leonard Townsend found Doll guilty of manslaughter, despite a request from Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor Bob Donaldson for second-degree murder.

Doll faces a maximum 15 years in prison and \$7,500 fine. Sentencing is scheduled for 9 a.m. Feb. 12.

Family members who sat through the brief trial were visibly shocked by Townsend's verdict. As Townsend made his ruling, some fami-

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## Teacher guilty of indecent exposure

By Mike Tyree staff writer

A veteran high school teacher last week pleaded guilty to charges that he exposed himself in Hines Park last summer.

Charles Donald Scheer, 54, of Farmington, a shop teacher at North Farmington High School, pleaded guilty to disorderly conduct/indecent exposure charges at 35th District Court in Plymouth.

Scheer was placed on probation and must receive personal counseling. He also was ordered to stay away from Hines Park during his one-year probationary period, according to court documents.

Northville Township police arrested Scheer after a 24-year-old Plymouth woman reported that a man had exposed himself to her Aug. 14 while she painted a watercolor in Hines Park. Scheer reportedly told police he was urinating and mistakenly came upon the woman.

The victim told police that the man masturbated in front of her, and stared at her while performing the act.

**SCHER'S ATTORNEY, Brian Herschfus,** had expressed outrage at the charges. He said he felt Scheer's "reputation was impugned" because of the charges.

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photos by SHARON LEMUEUX/staff photographer

Lois White of Detroit laughs with Dr. Rhonda Van Horn during a consultation in the dentist's

Farmington Hills office. Dr. Van Horn often sings to her patients.

## Any requests? Dentist sings on the job

By Joanne Maliszewski staff writer

If she has a next life, Dr. Rhonda Van Horn wouldn't mind coming back as Barbara Stetsand.

In this life, however, Van Horn is a Farmington Hills dentist. But no ordinary dentist. She's been dubbed the singing dentist.

"It's purely unconscious," she said. "I've always been upbeat. I sing. I love music."

Singing to patients was no thought-out plan or studied dentistry method. Van Horn was simply being who she is. She just likes to sing while she works.

"In retrospect, I think it helps relax the patient," she said. "It's re-

## know your neighbor

ally been so unconscious on my part. I'll be singing and not thinking about it."

Getting her patients to relax is all important to the 14-year dentistry veteran. She wants patients to know they — and their teeth — are welcome in her office. And she intends to do everything she can to make a trip to the dentist as enjoy-



Dr. Rhonda Van Horn: "I take requests."

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