



Farmingington Observer

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FIFTY CENTS

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IN THE PAPER TODAY

Easier choice: Tom Lyczkowski has said that he's not interested in running for the Farmington City Council. His name will still be on the ballot, though. /2A

Sidewalk saga: Some Farmington Hills residents feel they have won a round in their battle to keep sidewalks off a section of Gill Road. /3A

A suspect: A man has been charged with breaking and entering a vehicle in the city. /3A

Solutions needed: Parents of students in Farmington's Beechview Elementary have come together to discuss overcrowding in the school. /5A

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

Book it: Children's story hours are becoming more and more a part of weekends at our local malls. /6A

STREET SCENE



Singing the blues: Although they've yet to be signed to a record deal, The Alligators have found plenty of enthusiastic blues freaks who like their sound. /8A

TASTE

Wine column: Find out what's new in California wine country. /1B

COUNTY NEWS

Moth mayhem: Oakland County says it can't afford to coordinate a program to eradicate the gypsy moth unless local communities pay the bill. /4B

SPORTS

Grid showdown: Harrison began Western Division football play Friday against unbeaten Northville. /1C

Comeback effort: Former prep soccer star Jenny Emmett has recovered from a bone-marrow transplant and is playing again for Schoolcraft College. /1C

CABLE TV WEEKLY

Local access: "Lansing Connection" on local access Channel 12. Check your cable guide for time and date.

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School chief to leave



With "very mixed emotions," Michael Flanagan, superintendent of the Farmington Public Schools since 1989, has decided to leave that position for a new challenge in Wayne County.

By LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Michael Flanagan will leave his position as superintendent of Farmington Public Schools to accept a similar job with the Wayne County Regional Educational Service Agency. Flanagan, who has been at the helm of Farmington schools for five years, begins his new duties Jan. 1.

A search is likely to start immediately. "It's very mixed emotions," said Flanagan, who replaced Graham Lewis as Farmington superintendent in 1989. "It's an opportunity of a lifetime. I'm sad because I just loved it here in Farmington." Flanagan, 44, was sought out by

RESA. He was asked to interview for the position, which was vacated with the retirement of William Simmons.

Oversee staff of 900
As superintendent for the Wayne County agency, Flanagan will oversee a staff of 900 employees and a budget of \$125 million. Terms of his contract have not been worked out yet. The move might come as a shock to many, but not to Farmington Board of Education president Cathleen Webb.



See CHIEF, 4A

Michael Flanagan

'Gay Nineties' concert



GUY WARREN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Some real ringers: Margaret Jacobs (holding bell) takes a cue from music therapist Rose Morgan during the "Gay Nineties" concert at the Botsford Continuing Health Center in Farmington Hills recently. The 18-member resident bell ringers' choir performed. Members range in age from 68 to 103.

Christensen marches to citizen award

By LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

With a snap of a flag and a line drive to left center, Walter "Wally" Christensen is being waved home as the Farmington/Farmington Hills 1993 Citizen of the Year.

Christensen, 68, is best known in the area for his tireless work on the annual Farmington Memorial Day parade and as an American Legion

baseball manager. But his community work has extended beyond parade routes and ball diamonds. He's helped veterans in need and is involved with the Farmington Goodfellows.

Christensen will be honored at the chamber's annual dinner and board meeting 6 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 23, at the Botsford Inn in Farmington Hills. Tickets are \$30 a person.

"He's personable and energetic," said Gerald Lynch, commander of American Legion Post 346 who nominated Christensen. "He manages his time better than anyone I've met. 'Wally' has proven himself year and year for 32 years in this community. Year after year he instills a sense of pride in the community."

Overwhelmed at honor
Christensen, who is also known for

his saloonkeeper's handlebar mustache, usually bristles at attention. He was overwhelmed when told of this honor.

"It's unbelievable," said Christensen, who has lived in Farmington since 1972. "I never expected it. . . I know what the qualifications are and some of the past recipients. I was just elated, as was my wife (Lorraine).

See CITIZEN, 5A



Aldo Vagnozzi

Vagnozzi wants people to be heard

Aldo Vagnozzi is one of six candidates, including four incumbents, running for the Farmington Hills City Council. Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 2.

By BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

When incumbent Aldo Vagnozzi announced he would be running again for the Farmington Hills City Council, he pointed to the need to find a permanent home for the city's senior programs as a primary reason. Now that the city has agreed to buy more than 27 acres, including 67,000 square feet of building space from the

Sisters of Mercy, Vagnozzi wants to see the deal signed, sealed and delivered.

As throughout his 45-year career in politics, Vagnozzi also wants to make sure the concerns of constituents are heard and that the council has to make sure those citizens are not left out of the informational loop.

Vagnozzi said a recent planning commission hearing to consider qualifying a proposed retail development for consideration caused as much of an uproar because neighbors had to find out by word-of-mouth or through the Observer about it — not from the city directly.

"We've got to inform people sooner when there is something being considered that could affect them," he said.

Vagnozzi said now that the city has acquired and is developing the sod farm on Eight Mile, called the Founders Sports Park, the active-use parks that provide playing fields and family picnics and recreation areas complement the passive parks such as Heritage and Woodland Hills parks.

"I think we have a good mix now," he said. "I would like to see us get

See VAGNOZZI, 2A

Classical music du jour

The Farmington Hills-based Group du jour will begin its 1993-94 season with music with the first of four concerts on Sunday, Sept. 28.

Group du jour, conducted by Karen Nixon of Farmington Hills, will perform at Farmington High School beginning at 7:30 p.m. The concert will feature Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov's exotic masterpiece "Sheherazade," Shchedrin's "Naughty Limericks," and Modeste Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition."

Other performances will have wild west themes (Oct. 15), a winter fantasy theme (Feb. 6) and a brass theme (April 10). Tickets are available at the door for each performance or can be purchased, at a discount price,

FARMINGTON FOCUS

for all four performances. For further information, call 478-2075.

Meet Hills candidates

The six candidates for the Farmington Hills City Council are expected to attend the Farmington Democratic Club's candidate forum at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 23, in the council chamber of the Farmington Hills city Hall, 11 Mile and Orchard Lake roads. The forum will be broadcast live for the first half hour and taped for the last 30 minutes.

Something's fishy

Naturalist Joe Derek will conduct a seminar on tropical fish from 7-9 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 29 and Oct. 6, at the Farmington Community School, 30415 Shiawassee. Pre-registration is required. Call 489-3393.

Memory Lane

From the Sept. 24, 1953 edition of the Farmington Enterprise: A seven-foot snake, identified as a boa constrictor, was killed at the Rainbow Park Motel on Grand River. Donald Cox, a motel resident, tried to capture the snake, but it put up such a struggle that he had to kill it. It is believed that the snake was left at the motel by a guest.