

IN THE PAPER

TODAY

Parking problem: A Farmington Hills woman has found that parking in a spot reserved for the handicapped can be a big hassle. /3A

Top employee: Dorothy Gullon, Farmington Hills' Employee of the Year, "really helps morale," according to her boss. /11A

OPINION

Neglected season?: Winter's getting a bad rap thanks to the media. It's about time we celebrate the season instead of cursing it. /14A

On divorce: Guest columnist Henry Gornbein, an attorney with offices in Farmington Hills, writes on divorce and child custody. /15A

ENTERTAINMENT

Movies: Tell us about your first kiss to win a prize in our "My Girl 2" contest. /8B

Theater: North Farmington graduate stars in "Crazy For You" at the Fisher Theatre in Detroit. /5B

SPORTS

City champs: North Farmington claimed the title of city champions in boys basketball Tuesday with a victory over Harrison. /1B

Swim dual: North Farmington gave Farmington its first defeat in boys dual-meet swimming Tuesday. /1B

SUBURBAN LIFE

Splendor of the stage: Parlour Theatre Productions can bring the stage to you. The traveling company appears on demand and was born of a young couple's love of the theater. /1C

Sex offender sentenced



The sentence given a man who confessed to the sexual assault of a 11-year-old Farmington Hills boy was tougher than expected. Gerald Bauer Jr. was sentenced to 10-20 years in prison Tuesday by a Circuit Court judge.

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

A legal ordeal ended for a 12-year-old Farmington Hills boy as a man he had trusted admitted to sexually assaulting him.

But the emotional ordeal is far from over for the family of the victim and the families of Gerald Joseph

Bauer Jr. and his wife Lynn. Bauer, a 32-year-old Livonia resident, who was led in handcuffs from the 6th Circuit Courtroom of Judge Denise Longford-Morris after his sentence, will serve 10 to 20 years in prison for first-degree criminal sexual conduct and concurrent sentences of 10 to 15 years for two counts of sec-

ond degree CSC. Before Bauer's sentencing Monday, Pamela Maas, Oakland County assistant prosecutor and unit coordinator for child sexual assault, said Bauer could get time off for good behavior in prison while the boy would suffer for a lifetime.

"It's as (the boy) said during his testimony: 'He (Bauer) gets out and the memory stays with me for a lifetime,'" Maas said.

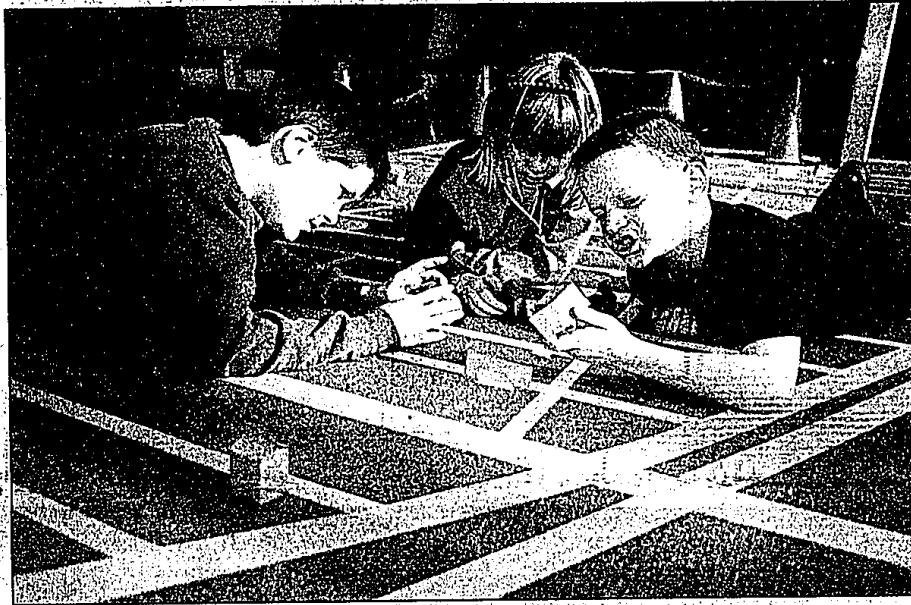
Bauer and his family were visibly shaken at the sentence, which carried a minimum that was seven years



Gerald Bauer Jr.

See SENTENCE, 4A

Lessons at William Grace Elementary



SHARON LEMMON/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Follow the masking tape road: Third-graders (from left) Kale O'Neil, Tina Ittis and Danny Rumbell learn a lesson in social studies in a hallway of their school. Sue Johnson's students identify streets and landmarks on the masking tape roads.

Changes put elementary school in good Grace

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

The address reads 29040 Shiawassee, Farmington Hills. But many would say William Grace Elementary has resided in obscurity.

Little has been heard from the school, named after the man who once owned the farmland on which the school was built in 1957. The school now has 264 students from

the southeastern section of the Farmington District.

The school's achievements or programs seldom come up during board of education meetings. Grace's MEAP scores — though showing rapid improvement — have not set off fireworks.

When Grace has been in the spotlight, it's for something as dubious as a hepatitis scare.

But things are starting to change. What doesn't show up in test results or end up displayed in a classroom project for board members to gape about is what William Grace Elementary means to those who go there.

Finding hidden talents

For some children, William Grace is where they can discover a hidden

talent. For others, it's a place where an education is more likely to have a profound impact.

"For many, it's simply a home. 'We're not flashy, but we do a lot of wonderful things,' said Linda Pollak, who has been teaching at William Grace Elementary for 28 years.

See GRACE, 4A



Love stories: With Valentine's Day coming up, readers tell us how Cupid hit them with his arrows. /1C

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Frenchman finds firefighting skills translate well

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

In France, they dial dix-huit (18) instead of 9-1-1. Max Anthonard is learning, though, there's no language barrier on a call for help.

Anthonard is getting used to firefighting American style. The native of the French Alps is in his first year as a paid-on-call volunteer with the Farmington Hills Fire Department.

For 15 years he worked full time, including a four-year stint with the

country's space program in French Guyana.

Anthonard isn't alarmed by the differences in the two countries' firefighting methods. They intrigue him.

He's visited several stations in the area. He's impressed with the state-of-the-art equipment and fire prevention efforts.

Even simple things catch his eye. For instance, French fire engines have blue emergency lights instead of the Las Vegas-styled red flashers in

the United States. Even the sirens are different.

Anthonard mimics the repetitive drone of the French one, which loses its thunder compared to the wailing urgency of American sirens.

"The French like the sirens in America," he said.

While the contrasts are several, tragedy and human loss from fires and other disasters are the same. Anthonard has seen plenty of both.

In Paris, Anthonard responded to five major disasters in a span of two

years: Two subway train wrecks and three terrorist bombings. In one train collision, 100 people were killed.

"Five (disasters) is enough," Anthonard said.

Things as a Farmington Hills volunteer firefighter have been tranquil by comparison. In Paris, a station would have three fires a night.

Three a week is the norm in Farmington Hills. The volunteer concept was foreign to Anthonard as well.

See FRENCH, 10A

Earthquake relief

The Farmington Hills-based B'nai B'rith Michigan Regional Council has started a campaign to raise money to help victims of the recent earthquake in southern California.

The earthquake that struck Los Angeles in the early morning of Jan. 17 killed at least 29 and injured hundreds more.

Donations — made out to "Los Angeles Earthquake Relief" — may be sent to B'nai B'rith Relief Fund, 31600 W. 13 Mile, Suite 120, Farmington Hills 48334. The money will be used for temporary housing, blankets and medical supplies, a B'nai B'rith spokesman said.

"The people of Los Angeles have seen more than their share of disasters, and our hearts go out to them," said Kent E. Schiner, president of B'nai

FARMINGTON FOCUS

B'rith International. "When disasters hit, we realize how unpredictable nature is and how vital it is to help one another."

"Whether black or white, Jewish or Gentile, young or old, it is important that we pull together in this time of great need."

For additional information, call 855-8580.

The heart of the matter

In recognition of American Heart Month, the next general membership meeting of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of

Commerce will be in the recently dedicated west wing of Botaford General Hospital on Grand River just north of Eight Mile in Farmington Hills.

The meeting starts with a "networking" session at 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 24.

A buffet lunch will be provided compliments of Botaford's CardioCare Center. Margaret Gorchow, administrator of hospital and community relations, and Kim Ewols, clinical nurse manager in cardiology, will speak on the role of personal responsibility in health-care reform.

For a reservation, call the chamber at 474-3440.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21896 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, faxed to 477-9723 or dropped off at the newspaper office.