



Did depression spark violence?



BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Women who suffer postpartum depression describe a feeling overwhelmed and, at times, even panic-stricken after giving birth. But could those effects lead a Farmington Hills mother of four to shoot her husband twice while her children slept and then turn a gun on herself?

Another Farmington Hills woman — who has battled postpartum depression and founded a support group — said they could. "Unfortunately, I had four of the group members call me and tell me, 'It's too bad we didn't get to her. We could've helped,'" said Kathie O'Donohue, who started a local chapter of

Depression After Delivery that meets twice a month at Providence Hospital.

Louis Ansara, 41, is expected to recover after being shot twice by his wife, Leila Ansara, 29, while he slept in the family's Farmington Hills home early Thursday morning. He was in serious but stable condition after 90 minutes of emergency surgery at Botsford Hospital.

He managed to dial 9-1-1 from a bedside phone. The family's four children were asleep during the incident. After firing the shots, police say, Leila Ansara put the .38 caliber

handgun in a linen closet, went to the family garage and started both cars in an attempt to asphyxiate herself with carbon monoxide. She then found another gun, a .44 caliber pistol, and shot herself in the chest.

Big question: Why?

The question that remains is why. "That's what we're trying to find out," Farmington Hills police inspector Thomas Godwin said. "There was something. We know that."

See SHOOTING, 9A

TAXING
ISSUE

Do you support Proposal A — the school finance plan on the March 15th ballot? Why or why not?

Call 953-2011

Rotary dial may be used

IN THE PAPER TODAY

Park palaver: The Farmington Hills City Council wants to address concerns about several issues involving Heritage Park. /2A

Cable concern: The Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission soon will decide whether Metro-Vision has lived up to its end of the deal. /2A

Oh Mercy! The announcement that Farmington Hills had closed on the Mercy Center property brought a collective sigh of relief from city council members. /3A

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

Teen Talk: Hudson's is giving Troy Athens High School students the chance to be models for a day in Saturday's Prom Show at Oakland Mall. /4A

Tie one on: Columnist Linda Bachrack shops for scarves that add more than color to a wardrobe. /4A

OPINION

Silver streak: The suburbs had their own link to the Winter Olympics with a silver medal winner who has a heart of gold. /10A

SPORTS

Title game: Farmington High was in the championship game of the Western Lakes boys basketball tournament Friday. /1C

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Talking taxes at North Farmington



Quiz the candidate: Kevin Demeter talks with Larry Owen, running for governor as a Democrat, after a class. Joining in are (clockwise from right) Sara Brodowsky, Jon Szutarski, David Midgal and Dan Greenhaigh.

Candidate to students: Both tax plans flunk

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

It's left politicians and taxpayers alike in a fog, but it hasn't stopped North Farmington students from focusing their high beams on Proposal A. Democratic gubernatorial hopeful Larry Owen visited Barbara Dubb's public speaking class Wednesday to help shed some light and cut through the haze. Student Aaron Scheinfeld served up the questions. Afterward, other students piped in with a few of their own. One student said Owen put the

March 15 proposal on finance reform into plain English. Another wasn't so sure. "It was informative," said senior Jon Szutarski. "It's still confusing about Proposal A. I'm not sure what the differences are between the two." Actually, Owen was quick to stress the merits of both, which in his opinion, are zilch. Either way, said the East Lansing Dem, there will be a negative fallout for schools. "How many of you have heard anything about making schools better in the last four months?" said

Owen, who is former mayor of East Lansing and a trustee at Michigan State University. "How much have you heard about taxes? They didn't mean it. They're not willing to do those things to make schools better. "Both plans are lousy. I don't think taxpayers should be forced into a box: Let's take lousy plan A or let's take lousy plan B." The ballot proposal, also known as the sales tax plan, would tack an additional 2 cents on every dollar spent on goods and services while lowering property taxes. Farmington area residents would pay 22.24 mills

under the sales tax plan instead of 32.8 mills levied previously. If Proposal A fails, the back-up plan would raise the state income tax from 4.6 percent to 6 percent. Homestead millages would be slightly lower, 20.42 mills in Farmington. However, nonhomestead property taxes would be higher — 32.42 mills instead of 24 mills under the ballot proposal. A mill equals \$1 of tax for every \$1,000 of state equalized property value. See CANDIDATE, 3A

Hills likely to skate ice arena plan before voters

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Someone had written "Hi, think ice" on a chalk board in city council chambers before the Farmington Hills City Council met with the ice arena study committee where everyone was thinking dollars, location

and votes. After more than a year of study by the 35-member committee headed by Mayor Larry Lichtman, an extensive market analysis, discussions with consultants and with several other arenas in and outside of the state, committee members had come to the

conclusion that a multi-use ice arena was a practical project for the city. But at least three council members — Cheryl Oliverio, Jon Grant and Aldo Vagnozzi — said they wanted to take it to the voters. Grant, who supports a plan to build an ice arena, said he and other coun-

cil members had promised voters first right of refusal. "If any city government can make a facility like this . . . our staff can do it," he said. "But we are still risking tax dollars. I would not risk tax dollars. See ARENA, 2A

A tale of two cities

And now for some local history: New Yorker Joshua Simmons III brought his new bride, Hannah, by steamboat and then wagon to the wilderness of Livonia Township in 1826, traversing the wilds of Farmington Township along the way. While Joshua spent his first night in Livonia in a drizzle with their household goods, which the wagon masters had unloaded on the ground, Hannah rested comfortably a mile away at the Farmington home of a Mr. Thayer. Throughout their lives, the pioneering Livonia couple developed many ties to Farmington. Their farmstead still stands as part of Greenmead Historical Village on Eight Mile west of Haledet Road, along the border between the two communities. The many ties these Livonia people had with

FARMINGTON FOCUS

their neighbor to the north is the subject of the latest Farmington Hills Historical Commission display in the glass case outside the city council chamber in the Farmington Hills City Hall, 11 Mile and Orchard Lake roads. Bob Sklar, Farmington Hills Historical Commission, assembled the display with assistance from Sue Daniel, who chairs the Livonia Historical Commission. The display runs through April. Discussion and debate on 'A' Ure sure about how to vote on finance reform and Proposal A in the March 15 special election? Two upcoming events, open to the public, might help you decide.

On Wednesday, March 9, the Farmington PTA Council will sponsor a discussion on Proposal A from 7-9 p.m. at the Farmington Training Center, 33000 Thomas, Farmington. State Sen. Jack Faxton, D-Farmington Hills, and state Rep. Jan Dolan, R-Farmington Hills, will be on hand to take questions. One day later, Thursday, March 10, the Farmington Democratic Club will host a debate on the merits of Proposal A at 7:30 p.m. at the Botsford Inn on Grand River north of Eight Mile. Aldo Vagnozzi of the Democratic club will argue against the ballot proposal. A pro-A speaker has yet to be announced. Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21898 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, or dropped off at the newspaper office.