

# Farmington Observer

VOLUME 106 NUMBER 14

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1994 • FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN • 36 PAGES

FIFTY CENTS

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IN THE PAPER

**TODAY**

**Fine finances:** Despite giving 3-percent raises to teachers and administrators, Clarenceville Public Schools still will have a healthy chunk of money in the rainy day fund. /2A

**A cheery scene:** Are the cheerleaders' pompons shaken with the same fervor when girls are playing? /3A

**Groups collide:** One of the hottest issues at the Farmington Hills polls last week wasn't even on the ballot. /6A

**Judging it?:** Even if residents collect enough signatures to force a referendum on a controversial development, a judge could end their quest. /6A

**MALLS & MAINSTREETS**

**Peaceful Kingdom:** Walk among the animals at Twelve Oaks Mall's very special holiday exhibit and zoo benefit. /6A



**Tree giveaway:** Laurel Park Place in Livonia is looking for local charitable groups who could use the six, giant holiday trees the shopping center wishes to donate. /8A

**TASTE**

**Low-fat cooking:** Chickens from the Frankenmuth Poultry Company contain less than five percent fat. /1B

**Super Supper:** The Beebe Family of Canton shares supper strategies for busy families. /1B

**SPORTS**

**Grid playoffs:** A trip to the Class A semifinals was the prize Saturday when Harrison played South Lyon in post-season football. /1C

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## Meeting, group's status at issue



Did six Farmington Hills council members buck a recall break the law when they met with supporters? A state attorney says they may have.

By BILL COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

A citizens group trying to recall six Farmington Hills City Council members will ask Oakland County to prosecute them under the state Open Meetings Act.

Although City Attorney John Donohue advised the six council mem-

bers that if they weren't conducting city business, they could meet with supporters at the city library on 12 Mile Road Nov. 2, an attorney with the state Attorney General's office said that meeting could have violated the act.

"There have been very few prosecutions under the act," said Amy

Rosenberg of the AG's office.

"So it could be that the courts would read it that way (not a violation). But the act says (a quorum. In this case four) council members can only meet socially or by chance for them not to be in violation."

In 17 years, there has only been one case where a council, in Vassar, was successfully prosecuted, Rosenberg said from her Lansing office.

Violation is a misdemeanor with a maximum fine of \$500 for the first count and up to \$1,000 for the second count within a term of office and up

to one year in jail.

"The statute is designed to serve more as an injunction against violations," she said.

The Attorney General's office does take an active role in open meetings act cases without an official request from the state, Rosenberg said. She added that a local jurisdiction, such as Oakland County, would handle the case.

Mayor Larry Lichtman, one of six council members targeted for recall

See ISSUES, 6A

### World War II exhibit — Lest we forget



ANN HEALEY/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

On the walk: Librarian Marilyn Smith and Jack Curd, who likes to be called "Uncle Jack," show off some of the World War II exhibits in the library.

## Wall of history bulges with WWII battles

By LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Dates, facts and photos are there to view. Exhibit organizers hope their display to mark the 50th anniversary of World War II strikes more than casual interest.

"They want the collection to jog a few minds . . . and a few memories. The wall of history in the Farmington Branch Library is adorned with 40 posters, 10 black and white

photos and a commemorative flag. Anyone can view the display in the lower level during regular library hours.

The exhibit officially opened Saturday, one day after Veterans Day. It will remain until Nov. 11, 1995.

"A lot of people get flashbacks about World War II," said Jack Curd, chairman of the Farmington area commemorative committee. "They don't want to talk about it or

think about it. "Others, it strikes a chord with them."

Curd is striking more chords than a heavy metal guitarist. He's tapped a variety of sources to get the message out, including the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce and Motrobank.

Librarian Marilyn Smith is enthused about the project. She offered to display the collection on the

library's wall of history, which is dedicated to Farmington historical photos.

"I think they compliment each other," Smith said. "A lot of people who are interested in Farmington history are also interested in World War II history. It's sort of all encompassing."

The collage of indelible images

See WALL, 7A

## Bathroom dispute hearing rescheduled again

By LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

A hearing has been rescheduled to Wednesday, Nov. 16, involving parents of a wheelchair-bound Harrison High student who want to assist their daughter during bathroom breaks.

Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Barry Howard granted a temporary order allowing Ralph and Julian Laderoot to physically help their daughter, Kelly, 17, rather than her use a hydraulic Hoyer lift. The already twice-adjourned hear-

ing is set for 10:30 a.m. in Oakland Circuit Court.

Farmington Public Schools officials want her to use the lift, citing staff safety concerns. A staff member was reportedly injured while assisting Kelly, who has cerebral palsy.

Her parents have assisted Kelly since she returned to Harrison Nov. 7. School officials have said the Laderoots' presence has been disruptive. Kelly Laderoot was removed from school by her parents for two weeks after they said she was being harass-

ed. An attorney representing the district disputes the charge.

"It's not true," said Kinsley Cotton, "and school staff has been working very hard with Kelly to resolve these issues."

Ralph Laderoot said there have been no problems since she returned Nov. 7.

"When she went back to school, she was left totally alone," Ralph Laderoot said.

"She went back in and her first test was a 'D.' It's taken its toll on her."

Ralph Laderoot

## Toy gun prank triggers police, school reaction

By LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

A Power Middle School student, 13, thought it would be funny to scare three 10-year-olds by pulling out a toy gun.

The three boys didn't find the prank humorous. Neither do Farmington police, who have petitioned juvenile court for simple assault charges.

"From its appearance and distance, it appeared to be real," said Farmington Public Safety Deputy Director Mike Wiggins.

Around 3 p.m. Nov. 4, a boy on a bike spotted three members of the Longacre Elementary safety patrol on a pathway, which connects Longacre Street to the school.

According to police reports, the teen on the bike said, "What are you looking at?" He then pulled out what appeared to be an automatic pistol.

When one boy asked if the gun was loaded, he was told, "You'll find out, you're next." All three fled to the school and informed Principal Bill Smith.

The boys said they thought the gun was real by the metallic noise it made when the teen pulled the trigger.

Police questioned the teen, who said he and a friend bought two 7 1/2-inch "Special Mission" toy guns at a 99-cent store in Farmington.

He also said a Power Middle School principal confiscated the toy guns during a football game. They were returned afterward.

School officials took the matter seriously. Smith sent a letter home to parents, detailing the incident. He followed up with another missive saying the gun was a fake.

"I wanted to make the issue known," Smith said. "The possibility was that we had somebody out there who is up to no good, and parents and neighbors needed to know."

"In the back of our minds, we thought this was a prank with a toy gun. As I indicated in my follow-up letter, . . . it was a bad joke."