

# Farmington Observer

VOLUME 106 NUMBER 73

THURSDAY, JUNE 8, 1995 • FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN • 116 PAGES

SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

## Dear readers:

Inside today's Observer are three exciting new sections - Arts & Entertainment, At Home and Real Estate.

Arts & Entertainment includes coverage of fine arts, music, theater, movies, travel, restaurants and special festivals. Keely Wygonik edits this section. You can contact her at (313) 963-2103.

The cover story of At Home, a new tabloid, features a Plymouth resident's "house makeover." Mary Klemic edits At Home. Readers can contact her at (313) 901-2569.

Our Real Estate package provides the most comprehensive editorial and advertising package in metro Detroit.

Heading up this feature team is assistant managing editor Hugh Gallagher. You can reach him at (313) 963-2110.

Readers can contact me at (313) 935-2148. Call, fax (313) 591-7279 or write us at the Observer Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150 with your comments on the new sections.

Susan Rosick,  
managing editor

## Council to pound out pooch plan



BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

A pooch peninsula in Shiawassee Park? Farmington City Council members are gnawing on the idea.

A group of Farmington pet owners proposed sectioning off a seldom-used portion of the city park where their dogs could run — unchained.

Ten or so residents presented their plan to city council Monday night. City administration will look into the matter.

For the past two years, 25 or so dog owners met daily in the park to socialize and let their pets run around together. The city's new leash law has put a crimp in those gatherings.

City council enacted the ordinance in April after receiving complaints about people being frightened by dogs running un tethered and leaving droppings. Two tickets have been issued so far to violators.

The leash law was seen as a compromise. Few parks allow animals at all, council members said. Owners spoke passionately about dogs being pack animals and the need to run free occasionally. They also pledged to continue to clean up after their pets.

"Our dogs are depressed and getting overweight from sitting around all day watching the O.J. trial," said

Frederick Street resident Martin Frey, adding some levity. "Not to mention the doggy therapy bills that are piling up."

The proposal is a win-win situation, Frey said. Martin and Ruth Frey own a yellow Labrador retriever.

Under the plan, a southern peninsula of Shiawassee Park would be partitioned off. Dogs could run together, but would not disturb other park patrons.

The owners' presence — especially during the early evening — makes the

See POOCH, 2A



And they're off: The Farmington Hills police are sponsoring a run that will benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association. /3A

Chemical spilled: One was injured after a truck containing lawn chemicals was involved in an accident and its load was spilled on 12 Mile Road. /4A

The PD was open: A device that usually measures the speed of cars was clocking the speed of thrown baseballs at the Farmington Hills Police Open House. /9A

## OPINION

Walled Lake keepers: The Observer's choices for the Walled Lake Board of Education are: Siegler, Altman and Onder. /10A

A win this time: Programs and building facilities are among the things that would benefit from a much-needed millage at Oakland Community College. /10A

Write on!: The Farmington School Board election has voters switching on their letter-quality printers and hunting up stamps. /11A

## A big hug for the big day



At Farmington High Commencement: Smiling graduates look on as Meredith Lee Geiger jumps into the arms of classmate Leon Juncuj, FHS' 106th Commencement took place June 1 at the University of Michigan's Crisler Arena. For a story and more photos, please see page 3A.

## Candidates dash to the finish line

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

If one more doorbell can be rung or phone call made, the next few days are paramount for two Farmington Board of Education hopefuls.

Linda Enberg, 49, and Jennifer Levin, 25, are squaring off for one four-year term on the school board in Monday's election. Polls are open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Voters will also be asked to vote on an 0.8-mill request by Oakland Community College. If passed, OCC officials said the added revenue will be used for school improvements.

Vote turnout for school elections is traditionally low. Last year, 2 percent of the district's 54,000 registered voters re-elected incumbents Cathy Webb and R. Jack Inch.

OCC's failed millage request in March. About 900 people have taken out absentee ballots for this election.

OCC's second attempt coupled with the SMART election Tuesday definitely puts a different spin on things.

"I think we will at least have what we saw in March, perhaps a little more," said Betal Rothrock, director of the district's Business Support Services.

"I think (two elections) make for a higher awareness, and I think that might bring more people out."

Enberg's and Levin's campaigns enter the final stages this weekend.

Enberg ran a second printing of brochures and is planning to send out 1,400 endorsement cards. She'll also

See ELECTION, 2A



Linda Enberg



Jennifer Levin

## Vote keeps SMART on road in Oakland County

BY PAT MURPHY  
STAFF WRITER

Having received a new lease on life in Oakland County, it's now up to SMART to put up or shut down.

That's the view of supporters and critics alike ahead of Tuesday's election when voters approved a hike in property taxes to provide additional operating funds for the area transit system.

Approval will provide about \$6 million annually in new revenue for SMART to maintain and upgrade existing services, including new routes along Telegraph Road and Northwestern Highway.

By a 72 percent majority, voters in 20 Oakland communities approved raising taxes by about \$14.50 (on a house valued at \$100,000) to provide more operating funds. Similar tax hikes were approved two weeks ago in Macomb and Wayne counties, providing SMART with an estimated

\$10 million in additional revenue.

The tax hike expires in Oakland, Macomb and Wayne counties in three years.

"SMART has three years to improve services and take care of its weaknesses," said Aldo Vagnoni, a Farmington Hills city council person who supported the SMART tax hike.

"I was pleased by the election results," Vagnoni said Wednesday, "but not surprised. Not many people ride SMART, but those who do don't have any real alternative."

Cathy O'Malley, general manager of the Northland Center in Southfield, said she was pleased by the election results because SMART service is important to workers and shoppers alike. "But SMART must make some changes, get more efficient," she said.

Oakland County commissioner Sue Ann Douglas, an outspoken critic of SMART, attributed the SMART victory to smart politics rather than

overwhelming support for the transit system.

"They (SMART officials) purposely scheduled a special election in order to have a small turnout," said Douglas. "A small turnout (about 14 percent of the registered voters) favored SMART."

Douglas said her views on SMART haven't changed. "I still don't have wonderful things to say about SMART. Let's see what happens in three years."

Commissioner Larry P. Crake, chair of the county board of commissioners, said he, among others, would accept no excuses from SMART. "We don't want any whining, we don't want any excuses. We want SMART service to improve. The ball's in SMART's court."

The SMART victory was attributable, at least in part, to good campaign strategy, acknowledged

See SMART, 3A

|                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Calendar . . . . . 7c    | Opinion . . . . . 5A       |
| Community News 15A       | Police/Fire . . . . . 6A   |
| Entertainment . . . 1B   | Sports . . . . . 1C        |
| Obituaries . . . . . 11A | Street Scene . . . . . 10B |

## HERE'S HOW TO REACH US

Newspaper: 313-477-6450  
 Newsroom Fax: 313-477-9722  
 Sports: 313-953-2141  
 Reader Comment Line: 313-953-2042  
 Classified Advertising: 313-951-0900  
 Display Advertising: 313-951-2300  
 Home Delivery: 313-951-0300  
 Cable/TV Weekly: 313-953-2182