

Farmington Observer

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IN THE PAPER
TODAY

On reserve: Several new reserve officers were sworn in on Farmington's public safety department. /A3

About education: Residents turned out in force Wednesday to plead for funding for adult education. /A4

Budget hearing: A critic questioned spending in the Farmington School District. /A4

In the Pipeline: Many Farmington-area college students have received honors. /B4

TASTE

Burgers: Discover new ways to prepare America's favorite food. You'll flip over the vegetarian burger recipes. /B1

Taste Buds: Chef Larry Janes answers reader requests for cooking information, and recipes. /B1

SPORTS

Farmington skaters: The boom in popularity of in-line skating has led to the creation of a local club for the enjoyment and promotion of the sport. /C1

Championship game: Mercy High School played Livonia Stevenson for a district tournament title in girls soccer Friday. /C1

Right on track: Farmington-area tracksters competed for honors in the league meet. /C1

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Hills hopes to nip parks vandals



BY WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills' beautiful parks are getting lots of use, but too much abuse to suit city officials. Although vandalism is no stranger to Farmington Hills' parks, recent incidents have gotten city officials' attention. "We're now getting to a stage where there is increased use of the

parke and with it, an increase in problems," said Hills Police Chief Bill Dwyer.

Those problems have included break-ins and vandalism at the concession stand a Founders Sports Park, vandalism of phones and buildings at Heritage Park and garbage left at Woodland Hills, the city's newest park.

Dwyer announced that police will

be stepping up efforts to make sure the parks are kept safe and in good repair for the busy summer season. In addition to the current staff of park rangers on patrol, Dwyer plans to ensure a visible police presence in all city parks. Citizens will notice motorized, bicycle and foot patrols in the parks, he said.

Dan Potter, the city's director of special services, said the park patrol program has been very successful, but has not operated after the parks are closed. That has been when the trouble starts.

"That's why we brought it to the attention of Chief Dwyer," Potter said. "We did not want the situation

to worsen." Potter, who has been involved in municipal government and parks issues for more than 30 years, said Farmington Hills' parks are not heavily vandalized compared to other cities.

"For the most part, this vandalism is being done by teenagers," he said. "But for the most part, young people are doing positive things."

Potter said various youth groups have built trails and done other work at the parks, but a few vandals have done the damage.

Dwyer said police will be in plain

See PARKS, A2

Stumbling on a store in Farmington



What's in store?: Tracy Ellis, left, who works in Farmington Hills, spends her lunch hour shopping at Victorian Lace Elegance in downtown Farmington. Ellis was looking for Village Shoe Inn, but stumbled on Victorian Lace, owned by Sandi Burchart.

Downtown getting known for its crafts

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Farmington is getting crafty. Stores selling creations made of lace to concrete, and everything else in between, are popping up faster in downtown Farmington than American flags at a Fourth of July parade.

The city is also becoming known for its bountiful array of antique

stores: Hickory Hill, Steven's and Cherub's Chest. The Antique Mall on Slocum Street features dealer displays.

The community of crafts has taken on a life of its own.

"I like crafts and I think most people when they have a house, they want to decorate it," said Nicole Ferrebee, who works at Something Wood in the Village

Mall.

That can include everything from to wreaths, candles, and oven mitts. But craft stores in Farmington specialize in exclusive items.

Need a gargoyle or a statue to keep the tomato plants? The Concrete Garden in the Village Mall, offers those items along with cement geese and bird baths. Victorian Lace Elegance caters to

a different winged variety.

The shop in the Village Mall carries angels in the form of paper, cards, notepads, wood, and fabric. Owner Shari Burchart is a member of Great Lakes Angels Chapter of the Angels Collectors Club of America.

Victorian Lace Elegance carries

See CRAFTS, A2

Senate hopefuls will face off at Hills City Hall

Willis Bullard Jr. and Barry Brickner, candidates for state senator in the 16th District, which includes Farmington, Farmington Hills and West Bloomfield, will participate in a candidate forum beginning 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 29, at the Farmington Hills City Hall, 11 Mile and Orchard Lake roads.

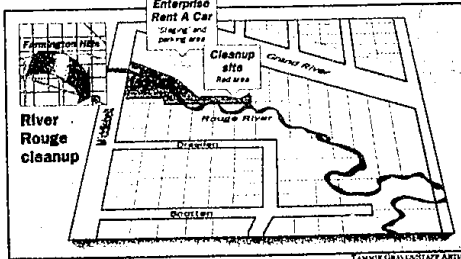
The forum, sponsored by the Council of Homeowner Associations of Farmington Hills, will be open to the public and cablecast live on Channel 8 on the Time Warner cable system in Farmington and Farmington Hills.

Phone-in questions will be accepted. The number to call will be flashed on the screen during the forum.

Bullard is a Republican from Milford, and Brickner is a Democrat from Farmington Hills. The winner in the Tuesday, June 4, special election will serve as state senator from the 16th District, replacing David Houlman who resigned due to ill health.

Bullard, a longtime state representative from the 38th District, bested Republicans Terry Sever, Barbara Dobb and Ed Cox in a special primary May 13. Brickner, an attorney and member of the Farmington Hills Planning Commission, was the only Democrat running.

The sprawling 16th Senate District includes the Farmington area, West Bloomfield, as well as several municipalities to the west.



Hills helps Rescue '96

BY WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Area residents will take part in history Saturday when they gather at the river for a 26th anniversary.

In Farmington Hills, residents will chip in as they will at several other sites, to clean up the Rouge River in Rouge Rescue '96.

"It's like a family event for a lot of people," said Jean Barrett, Farmington Hills assistant to the director of public services. "We seem to

have a core group of 100 and we've had up to 300 people show up."

The actual cleanup site in Farmington Hills has varied over the 10 years the city has taken an active part in the project. This year, anyone interested should meet behind Enterprise Rent-A-Car on Grand River, east of Middlebelt and north of Dresden.

Registration begins at 8 a.m., with coffee, juice and donuts provided;

See ROUGE, A2

Larkshire renamed Lanigan Elementary

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Larkshire is now Lanigan.

The Farmington Hills elementary school has been renamed in honor of its one and only principal Al Lanigan, who is retiring in June after 38 years in the district. The announcement was made as Lanigan was being honored during a school open house Thursday, which was officially designated by both cities as "Al Lanigan Day."

Nearly 1,000 well-wishers — including former students, city and school officials — attended the event.

On Friday, the school receptionist was answering the phone by saying "Hello, Lanigan Elementary."

"Board policy is permissive in that regard, but they don't do it regularly," Superintendent Bob Maxfield said. "It was unanimous in this case."

Lanigan, 64, was named principal when Larkshire opened in 1965. Lanigan was praised for his generosity and innovations at the retirement party.

He started a breakfast program at Larkshire, which was designated as a Chapter One school because 25-percent of the students came from

low-income households.

Larkshire was the first elementary school in the Farmington district — and second in the state — to receive North Central Accreditation.

In a recent interview, Lanigan said he'll miss the people the most.

"The big people and the little people," Lanigan added. "It was a hard decision. It was difficult telling people that I was retiring."

"You have to understand: The elementary children, they all love you. They'll come up and give you a hug. They're happy to see you and you're happy to see them."