

Farmington Observer

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Mom wants teen tried as adult



The mother of a 16-year-old Farmington Hills beating victim is outraged at the possibility the teenage suspect might be charged as a juvenile.

By MARY BROUQUE
STAFF WRITER

A mother is outraged that the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office has not yet agreed to try as an adult a 16-year-old Oak Park youth arrested for allegedly beating her son nearly two weeks ago in a Farmington Hills store parking lot.

Oakland County Probate Court's Juvenile Division is filing a petition to have the youth tried as an adult. After a hearing Thursday, the teen was being held in Oakland County Children's Village in lieu of a \$40,000 bond.

"It was a totally unprovoked attack," alleges Pam Radzinski of Farmington Hills. Her 16-year-old son, Jay, suffered a cut lip resulting in six stitches and a concussion in the Aug. 13 beating. He

was treated at Botsford General Hospital, Farmington Hills.

The incident occurred about 10:30 p.m. in the 7-Eleven parking lot at Orchard Lake and 13 Mile roads. The victim and two of his friends, both 16-year-old Farmington Hills residents, were standing outside the store talking when a green Jeep Cherokee pulled into the lot.

As Pam Radzinski recounts what happened: One of the youths inside the Jeep asked her son why he was staring at him. "My son said, 'I thought you were someone I knew.' The guy said, 'If you ever stare at me again, I'll beat your ass. In fact, I'll beat you right

now." The last thing Jay remembers is being shoved up against a wall. He blacked out. Witnesses told police Jay was punched in the left eye, fell to the cement, then was kicked in the face several times. One of his friends fell on top of him to prevent further blows while his other friend ran to a nearby business to call 9-1-1.

Hills police Lt. Richard Murphy confirmed the mother's side of the story. "He took many full football kicks to the head. That's attempted murder," said Pam Radzinski. "The Farmington Hills police recommended he be tried as an adult. I don't understand why they

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IN THE PAPER TODAY

Fall Fashion

Dear readers, Has fashion gone to the dogs?

Find out on Thursday, Aug. 28 when the second edition of our new fashion magazine *Eccentricité*, appears in your Observer.

We've got 44 pages of fall's smartest looks presented by the finest merchants in town — and some colorful canines!

Don't miss it!
Susan DeMaggio
Susan DeMaggio
Fashion and Retail Editor

City talk: Officials from Farmington Hills and West Bloomfield want to talk about the roads that connect their cities. /A3

SPORTS

Hoop it up: Farmington Harrison has its entire team back from a year ago when the Hawks were conference and district runners-up. /D1

BUSINESS

Instant replay: Financial advisor Rick Bloom is now dispensing advice by video. /F5

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FARMINGTON FOCUS

Fire station dedication

Firefighters have already made themselves feel at home at their recently-built station on Orchard Lake, but city and fire officials will officially open new Farmington Hills Fire Department headquarters — Station 5 — with a dedication ceremony 11 a.m. Friday, Aug. 29. The new station is south of the Farmington Hills City Hall complex on Orchard Lake.

The department will also use the dedication ceremony to recognize the promotion of three battalion chiefs, seven career firefighters and several paid-on-call firefighters.

Trip on display

Sharing your vacation pictures isn't always easy. You've got to invite folks over, bribe them with refreshments and supply interesting stories to accompany the visuals. Not so for Boy Scout Troop 110.

Scouts from that troop, based at Our Lady of Sorrows in Farmington, got the chance to decorate the window of the Kerner Barber Shop at Farmington and Grand River with a picture, displays and decorations about scouting and their summer trip.

About two dozen scouts and parents visited the Boy Scout National Jamboree at Fort A.P. Hill in Virginia late last month, then took a high-adventure backpacking trip on the Appalachian Trail.

Send items to Farmington Focus, 33411 Grand River, Farmington 48335; or fax them at 1-248-477-9722

Celebrating Harrison's green



STAFF PHOTOS BY BRYAN MITCHELL

Money made: Harrison High seniors Jodi Schuld, left, Nikole Meier, center, and Katie Crites count the money raised at a class-sponsored yard sale Thursday and Friday. By Thursday afternoon, students made more than \$300 for senior-related projects during the school year. At right, Virginia Kaptor of Southfield looks at some curtains as John David Jacobs, of Farmington Hills, in the background, checks out a book.



Girl's tragedy drives plea for blood donations



Melissa Garr

By TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
Something positive is coming out of the Melissa Garr tragedy.

An American Red Cross blood drive to honor 16-year-old Melissa is scheduled from 9 a.m. to 9

p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 2, at the Farmington Hills Fire Department's new headquarters, 31465 11 Mile Road. After people donate their blood, they will be invited to write a message on a giant get-well card to be sent to Melissa, in a coma at University of Michigan Medical Centers in Ann Arbor.

"I talked to Mr. and Mrs. Garr about this," said Robert Rebtov, assistant to

Hills Fire Chief Richard Marinucci. "Even though Melissa hasn't needed that much blood herself, knowing she's helping other people through something like this" is of some consolation to the family.

Melissa, daughter of Hills Fire Lt. Michael and Susan Garr, was injured July 23, when a heavy tree limb fell and struck her in the head at the

Farmington Glen Aquatic Center. Her prognosis for recovery is very poor. On Tuesday, she would have been starting her junior year at Farmington High School.

The need for blood donors is critical, according to Rebtov and Diane Risko, American Red Cross donor representative serving southeastern Michigan.

See DRIVE, A2

Stingrays' merger with 'Y' keeps swim club afloat

By TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

A merger between the Farmington Family YMCA and former Michigan Stingrays Swim Association is being hailed as a way to buoy interest in the sport and ensure long-term stability.

"This is a wonderful thing for the community," said YMCA publicist Mandi Skeegan, "in terms of another solid programming piece that citizens can take advantage of."

With her last point in mind, the new Farmington Family YMCA Stingrays will hold a registration meeting 7 p.m. Thursday at the YMCA, 28100 Farmington Road. Tryouts are set from Tuesday, Sept. 2 through Friday, Sept. 5, with practices beginning Monday, Sept. 8. Swimmers will be grouped accord-

ing to ability, said Marilyn Kluka, president of the new club.

The Stingrays, a competitive swimming program for youths ages 6-18 and affiliated with U.S. Swimming, will be coached by Eric Newton. According to Kluka, merging with the YMCA will magnify opportunities for swimmers to compete in various meets.

Concerning was Skeegan. "This arrangement will maximize the ability of the swim club to serve kids who want to swim. This doubles the ability for kids to compete in the swim world."

Kluka emphasized that the new collaboration wasn't prompted by previous difficulties with the Farmington Public School District — such as increasing pool fees (disputed by school officials) and a dwindling number of available swim slots for the Stingrays.

Membership in the club dropped from the usual 150 members to about 100, some parents opted to take their children elsewhere and Head Coach Dave Neck resigned in March.

"We were in negotiations last year, before we had the trouble with the schools," Kluka said.

Skeegan said the YMCA has a healthy relationship with the district, something that might help reduce any lingering friction. Actually, with the new arrangement, Stingray swimmers will swim both at Harrison High School and the YMCA pool.

After start-up costs, swimmers will pay from \$35 to \$95 per month, with fees including both organization, Skeegan said.

For information about Thursday's registration, call 248-553-4020; 248-478-4484.

District jump starts bond drive

By TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Bond issue publicity is in full swing, with the Sept. 16 election date just about three weeks away. And so far, at least, Farmington schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield is confident people are getting the message.

That is, the \$93.1 million package they will decide on is significantly different from the \$110 million proposal defeated in March.

"I haven't heard anything negative from people," said Maxfield, noting that a second postcard about the two-part bond issue was mailed Friday. A short video will be soon made available at all buildings in the district, for small community gatherings, and will be aired on Channel 10.

See BOND, A4

Bus fleet gears up for school

This is another in a series of "Back to School" stories pertaining to the Farmington district. Look in Thursday's paper for continued coverage. The 1997-98 school year begins Tuesday.



By TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Signs that another school year is about to start are everywhere in the Farmington district.

Teachers are readying lesson plans and getting classrooms in order. Students are grabbing last-minute school supplies and taking in one final breath of summer. And fleet services supervisor Roland St. Laurent made sure the district's 84 yellow school

Please see BUSES, A4