

Farmington Observer

Serving Farmington and Farmington Hills for 111 years

HomeTown
COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK
Putting you in touch
with your world

VOLUME 111 NUMBER 69

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN • 64 PAGES • <http://observer.eccentric.com>

SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS
© 1998 HomeTown Communications Network, Inc.

THE WEEK AHEAD

MONDAY

Love a parade: Farmington's annual Memorial Day Parade rolls down Grand River starting at 10 a.m. May 25.



In memory: Don't forget: your trash pickup is delayed a day this week, while city, court and most public offices are closed today for the holiday.

TUESDAY

Prom night: Both Farmington and North high schools are holding their senior proms 7 p.m. May 26.

WEDNESDAY

Blood drive: The American Red Cross takes donations from 3-9 p.m. May 27 at Detroit First Church of the Nazarene, 21260 Haggerty.

INDEX

Arts & Leisure/C Malls/BB
Autos/14 Movies/CS
Business/B4-6 New homes/E1
Classified/E2 Obituaries/B3
Crossword/E5 Police, fire/AB
Health/ED Rentals/E9
Jobs/H1 Real Estate/E1

HOW TO REACH US

Newsroom: 248-477-5450
Newsroom Fax: 248-477-9722
E-mail: dvarga@homecomm.net
Nightline/Sports: 734-953-2104
Reader Comment Line: 734-953-2042
Classified Advertising: 734-591-0900
Display Advertising: 248-901-2524
Home Delivery: 734-591-0500

Assistant principal punched by pupil during FHS bust

A Farmington High School sophomore punched out an assistant principal about 10:30 a.m. Tuesday during an interrogation about suspected marijuana possession, said Scott Herrmann, detective for Farmington Public Safety and interim high school police liaison officer.

According to Herrmann, who said he saw some of the incident, the 15-year-old student tried to run out of the office after being asked to empty his pockets. The student then took a swing at Bob Crawford, recently promoted to FHS assistant principal. Herrmann said Crawford's glasses were knocked off his face and were broken.

After the student was taken into custody at the Farmington Public Safety Department, a plastic bag containing 2.4 grams of marijuana fell out of his pants, Herrmann said.

But after the student was released to his father, he jumped out of the car and was "on the loose," Herrmann said.

The student could face charges for possession of marijuana, assault and battery and malicious destruction of property over \$100, Herrmann said. He added that the case was turned over to the Oakland County Probate Department.

Hills waits for signal on traffic



Two-thirds of Farmington Hills residents surveyed say traffic congestion is a serious problem. That survey and a report on ideas for fixing things in Farmington Hills will be the focus of a public forum Wednesday.

Instead of a looking at a map, residents who want to know where the road leads in terms of relieving traffic congestion need only look at their calendar.

At 7 p.m. Wednesday, Farmington Hills Department of Public Services will host a public information meeting on the recent mobility study. The session is in city council chambers on 11 Mile and Orchard Lake and is open to

the public. Representatives from the Metro Transportation Group, the Chicago-based firm that helped put together the Farmington Hills Mobility Study, will be there to explain their findings.

Turnout for the meeting may reflect the community's concern. In the study's survey, nearly two-thirds of all respondents rated traffic congestion as a serious or very serious problem in the

Hills. "It's on the minds of the people," said Tom Biasell, public services director. During the estimated two-hour meeting, residents will be presented the summary of suggested ways to improve traffic flow.

"The idea is to make a presentation to the community and then make the determination, 'Does it make sense?'" Biasell said.

Rather than calling for wholesale road widening - which can run \$3-\$4 million a mile - recommendations focus on loosening bottlenecks at troublesome intersections. Costs for intersection improvements are estimated at \$6

million, which doesn't include the price for obtaining right-of-ways.

Not surprisingly, the Orchard Lake/12 Mile intersection tops the list, not only in terms of curses uttered under motorists' breaths, but the need for widening.

To fix Orchard Lake/12 Mile would cost \$500,000 to \$600,000 and involve adding dual north and southbound lanes, adding a westbound right turn lane and converting an existing southbound right turn lane to shared through and turn lanes.

Other intersections recommended for improvements include: Orchard

Please see TRAFFIC, A2

School's out for seniors



Kick up your heels: Melissa Moss, center, and Marci Brown, right, keep the hakey-sak going at Heritage Park Thursday. Also playing are, from left, Sheila LaHousse, Jill Turner, Mark Kassa, Nikki Lambert, Kathie Collins and David Zorn. North Farmington seniors from the Class of '98 celebrated their last day of school with some friends from the Class of '97 on a sunny, warm afternoon at the park Thursday.

Murder victim shunned violence

Little by little, the brother of a Farmington Hills murder victim is getting more information about events that led to his sibling's death.

All he knows is his brother, Mikhail Ellis, 32, whose body was found a week after he was brutally stabbed more than 40 times, had been friends with James Summerville.

Summerville is awaiting extradition here where he's expected to be arraigned in the murder. A warrant had been issued for his arrest in the case when Minneapolis police arrested Summerville on May 14 as he was driving the victim's jeep.

Summerville, 28, could return and be formally charged some time this week, Farmington Hills police say.

"It's like putting pieces of a puzzle together with the information I'm getting from people who know him," said Keith Hicks, Mikhail's brother. "He's met in 1992 and had been good friends for six or seven years."

Ellis, who changed his name after a fallout with his father, shared an

Please see VICTIM, A2

District takes a pitch on library millage

The Farmington Board of Education is now at the other end of a money pitch.

During Tuesday's regular meeting, board members listened to a presentation by Farmington Community Library officials asking for their support for the millage proposal going to the voters Aug. 4. The board likely will adopt a resolution supporting the millage at an upcoming meeting.

Besides expanding and renovating

the Farmington and Farmington Hills branches, the millage would enable for the upgrading of technology - one of the areas the district included in its September 1997 bond issue proposal.

The library millage would be increased by six-tenths of a mill over 15 years. That translates to 60 cents per \$1,000 of a property's state equalized valuation, half of market value, or inflation-capped taxable value.

"As we enter into the 21st century,"

said Library Board President Robert Plummer, "we must improve our infrastructure for technology. We have 30,000 log-ons, or 'hits,' per month and we're continuing to grow."

The strong link between Farmington Community Library and the school district was emphasized by Plummer and Beverly Pappi, director of the library.

"Farmington Public Schools is one of the few (districts) in the state in which every school has a professional library

an," Pappi said. "It's one of the areas you've chosen to emphasize and I applaud you for that. And the library serves an ancillary role to public education ... young children come to us before they come to you."

Pappi said the library and school district have a lot in common - the educational success of children, which is heavily influenced by being able to

Please see LIBRARY, A2

Jaske to bring board to people

Bringing the voice of parents to the forefront to trumpet the educational needs of children is a continuing mission for Melody Jaske.

For a number of years, Jaske parlayed a leadership role with the PTA to work toward that goal. And now, she is trying to win election to the Farmington Board of Education - a place where more people can hear what she has to say.

Jaske is among five candidates vying for two four-year terms on the school board in the Monday, June 8, election. "I decided to run because I've been involved in the community. I've been involved in my daughter's school (Flanders Elementary) through the PTA and I thought I could just make a difference."

One way she proposes to do that is by

bringing a PTA staple to the board - taking meetings out to the people, at schools around the district. Road meetings, Jaske said, would improve communication between parents and district officials.

"I'd like to bring more openness to the board," Jaske said. "By taking school board meetings into the schools, maybe once a month ... In that setting, parents seem to talk more."

"At PTA meetings, parents say what they're feeling, what they're thinking. But it never gets up to the school board level. They don't go to the school board meetings and voice their concerns."

Along with sparking more opportunity for two-way discussion, Jaske said school officials must try to change a perception with some people that they aren't open-minded enough.

Jaske said the district has a good special education program. But she noted that families with special needs children sometimes don't have adequate input into directing the educational and developmental path of their youngsters.

"Each special education case is very individual," Jaske explained. "I'm familiar with a family (which has) a special ed child. If the parents go out and do their research on special ed services for their child, then the district ought to listen and not just say, 'This is what we have.'"

Meanwhile, fostering two-way talk is only one of Jaske's goals. She also has some strong opinions about everything from promoting enrichment classes to finances to opposing high school stu-

Please see JASKE, A4



CANDIDATE PROFILE

■ Name: Melody Jaske
■ Age: 39
■ Family: Married; daughter, Abigail, 9, who attends Flanders Elementary School.

■ Occupation: Part-time sales assistant for SCS Detroit and editor of a monthly newsletter at First United Methodist Church.

■ Education: Currently pursuing legal program at Oakland Community College.

■ Community: Treasurer, Farmington PTA Council; Flanders PTA legislative chairperson; member, Farmington Families in Action; Girl Scout troop leader; director of after-school program at First United Methodist Church; Odyssey of the Mind coach; driver for Meals on Wheels program.

Timely talk on 'Youth Violence'

Ken Korte said he couldn't sleep Thursday night after hearing about the 15-year-old who shot his classmates, killing one, and killed his parents in Oregon.

Korte has been working for weeks to organize a panel discussion at First United Methodist Church in Farmington. The event will be called "Family Forum: Youth Violence - Warning Signs & Prevention," and it's from 7:30-9 p.m. Thursday, May 28, at the church.

Similar school shootings in Jonesboro, Ark. in March, and Edinboro, Pa. in April, prompted plans for the town hall-style discussion.

But hearing about last week's incident, Korte

FARMINGTON FOCUS

said: "It was just spooky."

Korte, who is FFUMC Council on Ministries member and chair of the event, will be the moderator. Panelists will be Farmington Hills police Chief William Dwyer, Dr. William Rowell of the Psychological Institute of Michigan, Executive Director Maryjane Puck of the Boys & Girls Republic, and the Rev. William A. Wylie-Kellermann, a professor at Whitaker School of Theology in Detroit. Audience participation and questions will be

encouraged. The church is on Grand River at Wrenner in downtown Farmington.

History rolls by

If you remember the Interurban Trolley Line that once ran through Farmington, West Bloomfield, Livonia and Northville and have pictures or stories about it, Brian Golden wants to talk to you.

Golden, vice president of the Farmington Historical Society, is gathering information for a book and lecture about the trolley in the Farmington area. He hopes to share the charm and fascination of the days of the trolley, which rolled until 1928. Call him at (248) 701-8112 or write to P.O. Box 551, Farmington, Mich. 48332-0551.



6 53174 10065 4