

# Farmington Observer

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## THE WEEK AHEAD TUESDAY

**Ask Bev: Meet Bev Cornell and her animal friends and ask questions about pet care at 2 p.m. Tuesday, July 21, at the Farmington Branch Library in downtown Farmington. Bev is a retired veterinary technician and wildlife rehabilitator.**

**Officers: The Farmington School Board will meet at 7:30 p.m. Election of officers is on tap.**

## THURSDAY

**Concert: Stars in the Park presents the Community Concert Band at Novi Community Band at 8 p.m. in Heritage Park.**

## WEEKEND

**Celebrate: The Farmington Downtown Development Authority presents Token at 7:30 p.m. Friday, under the gazebo next to Village Commons**

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## Hobbs resigns

The Farmington Hills City Council will look inside city hall and outside to find a new city manager to replace outgoing Dan Hobbs, who has a new job.



In the search for a new city manager, Farmington Hills City Council members will likely look inside and out.

Council members, some of whom are out of town, will meet within the next two weeks to decide how to seek Dan Hobbs' replacement.

Hobbs resigned Thursday after two years on the job to take the city manager's post in West Covina, Calif., which is 25 miles outside of Los Angeles. Hobbs will start Aug. 17.

"I think we'll probably look inside first and see if we have any personnel that is ready to step into the position," said Council member Terry Sever. "We have some real good people."

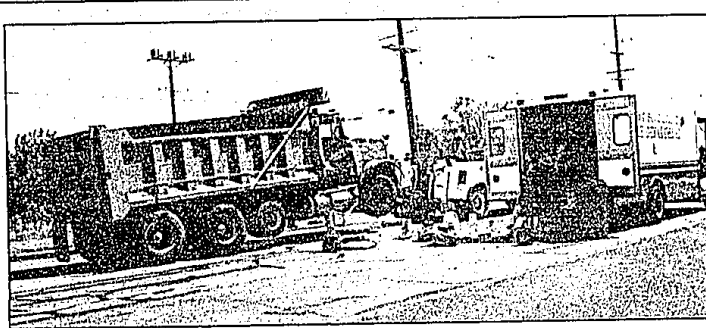
"The problem is, being city manager is not as easy as it looks. It's hard to say. We don't want to limit ourselves, either."

Added Sever with a laugh: "It may come down to where we have to steal someone from somewhere else."

City manager searches are not new to the current council. Six of the seven current members were on council when Hobbs was hired two years ago.

When Bill Costick resigned 2 1/2 years ago, council hired a Boston-based recruiting firm to seek possible successors.

Please see HOBBS, A4



**Cleaning up:** The intersection of 14 Mile and Orchard Lake Road was turned into commotion Friday morning when a van and dump truck collided, leaving a woman dead. Here, the dump truck involved in the accident is hauled from the scene.

## Woman killed in mishap

Tom Long heard nothing unusual while he was doing electrical work shortly after 6 a.m. Friday behind the Hunter Square shopping center in Farmington Hills.

But he sensed something was wrong. "I noticed a lot of traffic" building up on eastbound 14 Mile just west of Orchard Lake Road, said Long. "And then I walked over and saw the commotion."

What Long and a co-worker discovered was a deadly crash scene — a blanket of shattered glass and twisted metal and a crumpled Ford Econoline van with a dying woman inside.

Police said the driver of the van, 66-year-old Karen Tandarch of Bloomfield Hills, probably caused the 6:10 a.m. accident when she drove through a red light on southbound Orchard Lake. The accident remains under investigation. Alcohol apparently was not a factor.

The victim was going to an estate sale at an undisclosed location when her silver van was struck by a 1986



**Shock:** The unnamed husband of a Bloomfield Hills woman killed in the accident talks with West Bloomfield police.

Please see FATAL, A6

## Residents clamor for park in south end

A group of Farmington Hills residents are playing matchmaker between the city and the owner of a 14-acre parcel of land.

From such a union, they believe a nature park may be spawned.

The residents from the Parker, Lundy, Pelsom and Colfax streets in the southeast quadrant want Farmington Hills to buy the tract of wooded land near their homes. The site has a meandering tributary of the Rouge River and contains several types of rare flowers, residents said.

City officials said they are listening to residents but are mum on the specific site. The city has been looking for park land in the southeast area, but has been thwarted in the past because of inflated prices.

**'We just want the city to buy it to keep it out of hands of developers.'**

Denise Hall  
—Resident

After Monday's meeting, Farmington Hills City Council met in executive session to talk about general land acquisition.

"We just want the city to buy it to keep it out of hands of developers," said Denise Hall. "It's really scenic when you walk through it."

Several residents echoed both sentimental and practical reasons for maintaining a park there during Monday's meeting.

With the land's relative flatness, a nature park would offer an alternative to the more hilly terrain of Heritage and Woodland Hills for physically-challenged walkers, one resident said.

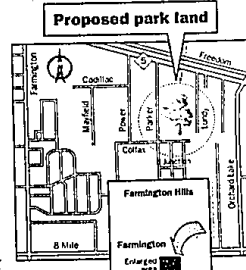
Lundy Street resident Mary Ellen Newlin led the group, which filled three-quarters of council chambers.

The property, owned by Richard Golden, allows the city to fill an immediate void in the southeast quadrant, Newlin said.

"The over-development of this property would be the loss of a natural resource which could never be recovered," she said. "We as residents are proud and lucky to be able to alert the city to this window of opportunity."

Residents have also talked to Gold-

Please see PARK, A4



## Talks set to resume

After a few weeks off to catch their breath, negotiators for Farmington Public Schools and various employee unions will return to the table Monday.

According to Susan Zurvallec, assistant superintendent for staff and community services and among the district's top negotiators, the contract talks will begin slowly and then really accelerate.

## SCHOOL UNIONS

"We start up again on Monday and we have meetings set up through the end of August."

Zurvallec, Friday, said contracts are being negotiated simultaneously for employees in several groups affiliated with the Michigan Education Association.

These include: unionized teachers; maintenance and cafeteria employees; secretaries and paraprofessionals and transportation employees. The district also is discussing a new deal for administrators, who are not part of the MEA.

The contract for the district's 850 teachers will expire at the end of August; those for other employees run out as of July 1.

Zurvallec said she is confident the negotiations, which so far have been without acri-

Please see TALKS, A6



**Can you hear?** Joan Barber, who lives right next to I-275, uses a decibel meter to measure the sound of cars and trucks on the freeway.

## Noise woes land on deaf ears

The sounds of a cooing 10-month-old granddaughter and the gobble of an enormous pot turkey cannot compete with the roar 100 feet away.

That has Joan Barber livid.

Barber, who lives in a 1834 Greek Revival style home on Nine Mile Road, east of I-275, wants the state to build a noise barrier. Her plea has fallen on deaf ears, she said.

The state transportation department refused to budge because such a wall would be for one house.

There's already a 4-foot and 11-inch safety wall, but as semis and other large vehicles barrel north on I-275, their tops are readily seen from her yard. Besides, Barber noted, the barrier only covers three-fourths of her property.

They've suggested she move, although the home is a state designated historical site.

"My argument is this house was here before Michigan became a state," Barber said. "Michigan has just disregarded that. The automobile and truck are king here."

With her turkey trailing behind, Barber points to where a wayward truck left the freeway and took out a few trees in her yard before crashing into a garage at neighboring Polo Club Apartments.

Please see NOISE, A4

## ATM theft bears sign of inside job

Farmington Hills police say an automatic teller machine burglary in which \$90,000 cash was stolen bears the hallmarks of an inside job.

Between 1:45-1:59 a.m. Friday, someone used a key and a combination to get into the automatic teller machine's safe at National Bank of Detroit on 12 Mile Road. Nine bundles of \$10,000 were taken.

"The ATM machine and safe were not damaged; Someone had to know the combination in order to get into the safe," Farmington Hills Police Chief Bill Dwyer said.

Police arrived shortly after a burglary alarm sounded. Officers saw the ATM service door open and the safe ajar. The ATM is in a self-contained building south of the bank in the rear parking lot.

ATM personnel and security arrived and discovered the company's drop of \$90,000 missing. The machine is serviced by Wilson Group-ATM Services.

The machine is serviced Thursdays, police reports said. Bundles are left inside the ATM safe and in a mechanical feed. The bundles enable bank employees to fill trays when they empty. The safe can only be opened by using a key and a combination.

A safe key is stored in a lock box. Please see ATM, A6

