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Attorney says find flooding cause



City attorney John Donohue suggests that city officials find the cause of basement flooding. Meanwhile, he says a ban on future development should be taken under advisement, pending results of a flooding investigation.

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Flood drenched Farmington Hills residents are not surprised by a city attorney's opinion, which recommends against invoking a ban on future development until the sewer system is fixed.

City Attorney John Donohue doesn't rule out such a measure, either. He suggests city officials find out the cause of flooding in August, which brought a

torrent of angry residents to city hall.

A Lincolnshire resident hit by flooding asked Hills city council members to consider the moratorium during a contentious Aug. 10 regular meeting. Such a measure maybe hasty, if not ineffective, Donohue said in a written report last week.

"My recommendation is that the city put the question of a moratorium sort of under advisement until they complete their investigation into what was

the actual causes of the flooding," Donohue said. "If we can identify it is a problem if they connect additional properties to the system, then it may be appropriate to issue a moratorium."

In order to stand up in court, such moratorium would have to be for a limited time and show that measures were in place to correct the problem, Donohue said.

"You've got to be very very careful," he said. "Courts tend to frown on moratoriums. Again, you have the confiscation (of property) issue."

Residents are proceeding with a lawsuit against the city and county. So far, 80 residents have joined the action. Though the ranks of angry homeown-

ers could swell to 200, one resident said.

"We're still contemplating taking petitions out to have it (development) stopped," said Jeanne Jones, who had asked for the development ban. "We've taken a different approach with a our class action suit ... That has a little more influence."

One problem with a city-imposed halt on building is that the developers are the ones who are punished, Jones said. "As long as the city tells them it's OK, who wouldn't build?" she said.

Another factor is 95 percent of the city is already developed.

Please see BAN, A4

IN THE PAPER TODAY

OPINION

Respect: Labor Day brings with it a reminder that corporations should respect their employees./A12

Blight: Property owners should be ashamed for letting their buildings and grounds fall to disrepair./A12

COMMUNITY LIFE

How do they do that? A couple of 100-year-old residents swear by regular exercise./B1

SPORTS

Sweet victory: Farmington High snapped a 23-game losing streak in girls basketball Tuesday by defeating Royal Oak Dondero./C1

MEETING

Agenda: The Farmington Hills Zoning Board of Appeals will meet at 7:30 p.m. Thursday at city hall, 31555 11 Mile.

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Charges sought in beheading

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Two men are expected to be charged with animal cruelty after a duck was beheaded in front of horrified onlookers at a Farmington Hills apartment complex.

ANIMAL CRUELTY

Around 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, an Independence Green Apartment resident saw three men feeding ducks from his window. He went to get his girlfriend so she could see what he thought was a cute moment.

However, the nature scene quickly turned into rage when one of the men pinned a duck down while the other swung a golf club.

"He took a full swing. It was like he was chopping down a tree," David Galvin said. "It was grotesque. There was blood all over the wall."

Galvin ran out of his apartment and held one of the men while a neighbor phoned police. The other two men fled and one was

Please see DUCK, A4



Attentive: Danielle and David Irwin listen closely to their teacher at William Grace.

Side-by-side, twins begin kindergarten

In one respect, Danielle and David Irwin had it easier than other kindergartners who on Monday attended their first day of school in the Farmington district.

The twin siblings had each other. Danielle and David, 5, had the luxury of being side-by-side for much of the 8:09 to 11:06 a.m.

session in the classroom of teacher Maria Murray at William Grace Elementary School. But, just to ward off any possible nervousness, the twins' parents escorted their first day pupils to the Shiawassee school and even had time to visit Murray's classroom.

By recess time, the twins seemed to be enjoying themselves with their new teacher, paraprofessional Cindy Close,

Please see TWINS, A10

THE first day

STORIES BY
TIM SMITH
PHOTOS BY
BILL BRESLER



Almost time: At left, Cara Lazare puts on her shoes as she gets ready for school. Below, she gives mom a kiss before she hops on the bus while dad rolls videotape.

Cara takes some of mom's heart to school

The bus that would take their daughter to kindergarten for the first time ever wasn't going to be at the corner for another half hour. But Amy Lazare was already saying her goodbyes.

"Whenever you want to think of Mommy and Daddy, this will be close to your heart," said Amy Lazare, giving 5-year-old Cara a

Back to School • Part 2 of 2

necklace with a gold heart-shaped charm, almost as a going away gift. "When you're thinking of us, will you hold it?"

The recipient nodded and smiled at her mother, who seemed to be the more nervous of the two.

"She'll get a charm for every year of school," explained Lazare, watching Cara wait anxiously for the school bus to pick up her and next-door neighbor Robbie Minically and take them to Wood Creek Elementary School in the Farmington district. Waiting at

Please see CARA, A10



Hills officer talks man out of committing suicide

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

When three officers went to help a distraught man teetering on an I-275 overpass, he only let one officer approach.

Luckily for the would-be jumper, he summoned Hills officer Richard Goble who admits, "I'm very social. I talk a lot to people."

Goble talked the 19-year-old out of committing suicide by listening first.

Goble responded with three other officers, including a trainee. They went to Alfoceino Restaurant where the call came from and didn't find anyone.

A person alerted them that a man was on the overpass. When police arrived, he was straddling the rail and leaning over into traffic. Tears poured down his face as he screamed he had nothing to live for.

Three officers approached, causing the man to panic and slide further along the rail. Goble tried to soothe him.

Within minutes, he learned the man

■ 'When you mentioned some things, you could tell by his body language you had hit a nerve.'

Richard Goble
—Farmington Hills police officer

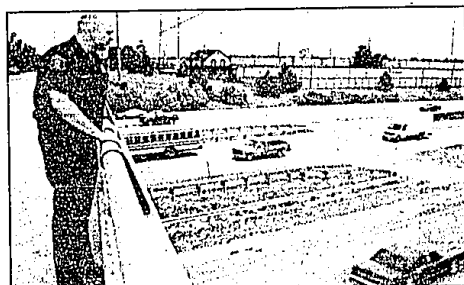
had lost a job and broke up with a girlfriend. The man also mentioned he just had an argument, giving specific natures.

Goble guessed those people were family members and immediately brought them into the conversation during the July 27 incident.

"When you mentioned some things, you could tell by his body language you had hit a nerve," said Goble, a nine-year veteran.

"You see situations where the person is

Please see HELP, A4



Helpful: Farmington Hills officer Richard Goble used patience and empathy as he talked a young man from jumping off an overpass.

STAFF PHOTO BY LIZ CARNEGIE

