

# Farmington Observer

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## ROAD CLOSING

**Closure:** The Michigan Department of Transportation has closed the westbound M-5 off-ramp to Grand River-Halsted and northbound Freedom Road, from Tree Hill to Grand River for the next 30-45 days.

## OPINION TODAY

**Fault:** There's plenty of blame to go around for a faulty educational system. /A12

## COMMUNITY LIFE

**Ballet:** A former Farmington man is involved with the Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo, which performs beginning tonight in Detroit. /B1

## SPORTS

**A win:** The second-half running clock has become a weekly feature of Farmington Harrison football games. The Hawks invoked the mercy rule Saturday during a 35-0 win over visiting Northville. /C1

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# Compuware still eyeing Detroit



BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Compuware Corp. is considering numerous factors in deciding where its new headquarters will be built. Time is apparently not one of them. Officials at the Farmington Hills-based computer software developer were expected to make an announcement by the end of August. That deadline was more a guideline, a Compuware spokesman said.

"The decision will be made when all the pertinent data is available," said Chris Norris, Compuware spokesman. "The aim is to make a proper decision for everyone involved."

A Chicago company is expected to present the city of Detroit economic developers a report of the costs involved in relocating its headquarters and 2,800 employees from the suburbs. The study will offer Detroit officials a chance to make a proposal to the software giant.

Compuware officials won't divulge the exact figures in the cost study. Detroit officials also signed a nondisclosure agreement, Norris said.

Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer, who

was the keynote speaker for the multicultural/multiracial community council rally at the William Costick Activities Center Tuesday, has not seen the study yet.

"I won't know until we're able to see what they have," Archer said, "but rest assured, we will do whatever we can to close whatever monetary gap that is there."

In addition to a break on land costs, the city of Detroit is offering a personal property tax exemption on new equipment for the proposed facility.

Archer, who spoke on the need to break down barriers between the suburbs and the city, doesn't believe Compuware's exodus will drive a rift in those relations.

"I'd would like to think if they were going to leave the city (of Farmington Hills), rather than see them go to another city in a suburban community, they would pull for them to come to the city of Detroit," Archer said.

Ginopolis Restaurant owner John Ginopolis has told friend and Compuware owner Peter Karmanos he wants his company to stay in Farmington Hills.

Please see MOVE, A5



Talking politics: Al Schrier and Jose Beher discuss gubernatorial politics at the Rustic Pub.

## Opinions

### Voters offer theirs

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

At the Rustic Pub, the needle on the election barometer rises and falls with flats grasping beer bottles.

After watching excerpts from the Clinton tapes on Monday, patrons at the Farmington haunt were not shy with political opinions, especially in regard to the upcoming election Nov. 3.

Democratic gubernatorial hopeful Geoffrey Fieger has a smattering of

support, although begrudging, from a few patrons. One of those includes a guy who proclaimed he's going to run for governor himself.

"Engler pulled a sealawag on us and had all these roads torn up as the election gets closer," said Jim Simmons, a Budweiser within reach. "Fieger is a very outgoing guy. I think he tells the truth."

While hearing this, another patron reminded Simmons that Fieger is an attorney. "He's a shi-

Please see OPINIONS, A5

## LAST OF A FIVE-PART SERIES

# Male elementary teachers are few and far between

STORIES BY TIM SMITH • PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER

### EDUCATION UNDER FIRE

When a Gill Elementary School committee last spring interviewed candidates for a fifth grade teaching position, one in particular stood out. And stood taller.

The tallest one, Jon Vondrasek, got the job. Committee member Tacey Williams said Vondrasek was enthusiastic. He was well-qualified. And, he's a man.

"We weren't specifically looking for a male teacher,"

said Williams, a fifth grade teacher at Gill. "... but it certainly was nice to add him to the team" because of his gender.

Mike Duff, principal at Gill when Vondrasek was hired, noted that Vondrasek's gender "wasn't the paramount consideration" but it wasn't ignored, either.

"It was discussed," said Duff, who ultimately recom-

Please see MALE, A3

Listen up: Gill Elementary School fifth grade teacher Jon Vondrasek quiets students before they enter his classroom recently. "Mr. V." is the only male classroom teacher at Gill.



Scott Stautler

## He follows his heart to teaching

For a long time, Scott Stautler knew in his heart that selling insurance, as lucrative as it can be, just wasn't it. There was some other way where he could leave "footprints in the sand" and make a positive impact.

Twelve years after graduating from college, Stautler decided to find out where his heart wanted to go. The path he chose is one that men typically don't follow - elementary school teacher. After going back to school and earning his teacher certification, he is in his first month as a third grade teacher at Beechview

Please see HEART, A11

## Hills father murdered

BY SARA CALLENDER  
AND ZACHARY GORCHOW  
STAFF WRITERS

As their family wept in a courtroom, three brothers were arraigned Tuesday in connection with the murder of a Farmington Hills man in an upscale northwest Troy neighborhood.

Christian Long, 28, of Redford, stood mute as he was arraigned in 52-4 District Court before Judge Michael Martone on one count of premeditated first-degree murder and five other charges. A not-guilty plea was entered on his behalf.

Pramukh Patel, 60, of Farmington Hills, was killed at his daughter's Troy home last Friday.

Officials are saying little about the circumstances leading up to the crime, only that Christian Long and Patel knew each other.

Oakland County Prosecutor David Goreycan said Patel picked up Long and drove him to his daughter's house in Troy the day of the killing. The reason Patel took Long to his daughter's home and the nature of the pair's relationship is unknown, Goreycan said.

Troy police received a call on a reported carjacking about 12:10 p.m. Friday from Patel's daughter's house, said Troy police Lt. Stove Zavalak. Ajay Sharma, Patel's

Please see MURDER, A10



## Traffic woes: Improvements sought for 3-way intersection

BY TIM SMITH  
STAFF WRITER

Relief from rush hour madness is being sought for Farmington residents who live near the dangerous, heavily used intersection of Orchard Lake, Grand River and Nine Mile.

Farmington city council members Monday heard recommendations from Robert DeCorte, of the traffic and safety board, that physical changes to the twisting, convoluted intersection are seriously needed. Those suggestions were received by the council, and will be forwarded to the Michigan Department of Transportation, Oakland County road commission and state Rep. Andrew Rzezkowski.

DeCorte told the council that heavy traffic in all directions during morning and evening rush hours make it a problem that's nearly impossible to fix with timing devices. Instead, the traffic and safety board recommended adding right-hand turn lanes in two locations of the unusual intersection, which is in both the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills.

One of the lanes would be built on eastbound Grand River at Orchard Lake, for motorists turning south.

The other would enable traffic on westbound Nine Mile to turn onto westbound Grand River.

According to DeCorte, and Farmington Public Safety Director Gary Goss, those improvements would enable traffic flow to be much smoother and minimize the current trend of motorists cutting through the subdivision.

DeCorte cited a Farmington Hills-funded study by Barton-Aschman Associates Inc., which reported 21 accidents at the intersection in 1994-95, with seven occurring on left-hand turns.

Ongoing construction in the area, on the M-5 bridge at Freedom Road, for example, does not help the situation.

"You can't get 10 pounds of candy in a five-pound bag," DeCorte said.

What some drivers are doing to circumvent the back-ups - and avoid turning left from northbound Orchard Lake onto westbound Grand River - is to cut through Floral, Lilac and Violet streets over to Shiawassee, and then return to Orchard Lake north of Grand River.

"I live in that area," Councilman James Mitchell said. "And I avoid going the way people try to go to miss that light. I'm surprised we haven't had people killed making the attempt to go up Floral Street."

Goss, who is also on the traffic and safety board, said the problem of cut-through motorists was brought to

Please see 3-WAY, A10



Woes: A recommendation suggests changes to the intersection of Orchard Lake, Nine Mile and Grand River.