

Services scheduled for Friday for Farmington bus driver

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER

A memorial service for Kath Ausland, a Farmington Public Schools bus driver, will be held at 2 p.m. Friday, June 13 at Northrop-Sessman Funeral Home, 19091 Northville Road in Northville.

Ausland, 53, and a Redford Township resident, was a bus driver for the district since 1995. She died June 5 from a bill of bone cancer, according to Tom Tousey, transportation director.

Her last day working for the district was last year when she had the North Farmington High School, Forest Elementary and Hillside Elementary routes.

However, she might be more remembered from her Harrison High School and Highmeadow Common Camp routes, which she held a longer time, Tousey said.

"She was a great employee who will be sorely missed," Tousey said. "She was very caring, a great driver. She

worked all the Farmington Hills open houses, where we had buses. She talked about bus safety. She had a good relationship with the students." Survivors, according to Tousey, include Ausland's two sons and a daughter.

Condolences can be sent care of Phyllis Clark (Transportation Department) 15413 Pmoma, Redford Township, MI 48239. She will see that the appropriate family members receive them.

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Longacre supporters agree to work on solution

BY PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER

People involved with The Longacre House in Farmington Hills agree the historic mansion is a precious gem given to the community. But who is in control of its operations and even the cost of a single membership remain in question.

Different factions agreed Tuesday to work together to keep the historic home from closing and changing its original scope when it was donated to the community in the late 1960s.

House member Brian Golden launched a membership information meeting Tuesday at the house off Farmington Road in an effort to inform people about the house's history and recruit members.

However, chairwoman of the board overseeing the house, May Arvo, contested Golden's actions early on.

Eventually, the assembly progressed into a free-for-all where people vented their concerns.

Board Treasurer Ray Okonski said Golden and board member Joni Hubred,

community editor of the Farmington Observer, were trying to undermine a four-vote decision of the board to fire the house's executive director, Denise Tawyea.

Okonski said Tawyea has looked board members from the house and that she was trespassing.

He said members have been dissatisfied with Tawyea's performance since being hired on about one year ago.

He said Tawyea has taken away classes, turned away volunteers and is transforming the building into a catering service instead of a community center.

Tawyea said the only way to keep the house in the black was by offering the only service paying enough to turn a profit. She said until board members launched successful fund-raisers and actively recruited new members to cover cost overruns, there was no point to continue classes such as yoga and dance.

"Realistically, this has to run a profit," she said.

Okonski said he was willing to have members vote for a new board of directors, but until then the current appointed board members was legiti-

mately in control.

Golden contended he wanted the meeting to gather people's opinions about the house and hopefully gain enough support to hold a membership meeting and vote for a new board of directors.

Member Linda Wantin has been involved with Longacre for 23 years and served on the board of directors from 1992-97.

"This is not the first time we've had a crisis here," she said. "It's been worse than this. This is our house and we all love it. We need to do it properly."

Attorney Mark Accettura attended the meeting out of concern for the house's future.

He agreed to examine the house's bylaws and offer an opinion on questions raised at the meeting.

Arvo said she was willing to work with Golden at the board's next meeting on June 24 and devise an agenda together. Arvo said after the meeting that she was willing to give Tawyea another chance to keep her job.

"I'm glad it ended up the way it did," Arvo said of the meeting. "In the end we want what's best for the house."

CLARIFICATION

Sunday's front page election map, provided to the Observer by Farmington Public Schools two years ago, was outdated and contained polling information from 1996. The Observer regrets the error and apologizes to voters for any inconvenience caused.

A story on The Longacre House controversy contained incorrect information about the way the House was decided. The Longacre House was decided to the communities of Farmington and Farmington Hills, Livonia and other Oakland County communities, to be operated as a nonprofit community center.

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Police respond to more ethnic intimidation

BY PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills residents who raised racial intimidation complaints to police and Farmington Public Schools officials in recent months said they have suffered another intimidation incident in their neighborhood.

According to police reports, a 14-year-old neighborhood boy admitted to police he called a 15-year-old African-American girl a "n—" while she was doing yard work at her home on Oak Forest Friday evening.

A neighbor across the street confessed what the boy said.

The boy was joined by two other boys his age, two riding their bikes and one on a Moped as they rode twice past the girl's home.

The girl's parent, Gloria Gaines-Hanna, said her twin children are being intimidated by fellow students at North Farmington High.

She reported attacks on her home over the past several months, once by a bullet being shot in a bathroom window and another time when the home's front doors were damaged with some type of explo-

sive. Police are investigating charges against the boy.

On Sunday afternoon, Gaines-Hanna told police a different 14-year-old boy in the neighborhood gave her the finger while she was doing yard work.

She said she told the boy he shouldn't be disrespectful to adults and the boy said, "F--- you."

The boy told police he only waved to Gaines-Hanna.

The cases remain under investigation.

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