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Fifteen Cents

Hills teen is convicted of murder

By STEVE BARNABY

A Farmington Hills teenager has been convicted of second degree murder in the June 10 slaying of 10-year-old Joan Wagner, also of Farmington Hills.

Probate Judge John J. O'Brien has made the 14-year-old male a ward of the court. He will be detained at the Oakland County reception center and be under psychiatric treatment at Lafayette Clinic, Detroit. Parole hearings and home visits will be considered only if a request is made by the

youth's attorneys, says O'Brien. He will remain in detention until he turns 19, the legal limit the law allows a person convicted of murder, according to O'Brien.

"I'm just sorry we couldn't have tried him as an adult," the judge told the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers Friday. "I'm also sorry we couldn't retain jurisdiction over him after he was 19 years old."

The only chance of retaining the youth after he becomes 19 is if the prosecutor comes back to court in

five years and makes the request, says O'Brien. Oakland County Prosecutor Brooks Patterson originally had attempted to try the youth on a first degree murder charge, but lost that request when a lack of concrete evidence of premeditation could be shown.

The conviction closed the book on the tragic incident which began two months ago when the Wagner girl was reported missing after not showing up for an afternoon baseball practice session. She was found the next day inside a plastic garbage bag in a yard

between two houses on Malden, north of South Brandon, in the Forest Park subdivision near Nine Mile and Inkster, Farmington Hills.

Medical examiners indicated the girl had died of a stab wound to the chest.

The convicted youth had been picked up by the police the day after the murder. A search of his room uncovered bloody sheets and towels in a laundry room and blood on the floor of the boy's bedroom, according to police officials. A knife also was found. At the time of the arrest, Patterson said the slaying occurred in the bed-

room and that the girl had been strangled, as well as stabbed.

The death was the third juvenile slaying in Farmington Hills in two years. The most recent murder was that of Henry James Johnson, whose body was found on the city's south end July 23. Police recently arrested Alan Meharry of Detroit in connection with that case.

An areawide search was made after the Wagner girl's disappearance. Police from both Farmington and neighboring Southfield participated in the search. The State Police mobile crime labortary was called to the scene.



JOAN WAGNER

Deadman says

Sewage rate lawsuit looming

By MARTHA MAHAN

Detroit has about 10 days to cut its sewage rates voluntarily or face legal action by the City of Farmington. The city council has authorized City Attorney Robert J. Kelly either to join Oakland County in its lawsuit seeking reversal of a recent rate increase or to begin separate litigation on the city's behalf.

A decision awaits Detroit's answer to a letter from City Manager Robert F. Deadman asking that the rate increase be revoked.

"I suppose we won't get an answer before the Detroit Board of Water Commissioners meets and can consider the letter," Deadman said. "But we should hear in about 10 days."

"If they refuse, we'll make our decision which way to go."

The new rates would cost the City of Farmington about \$3,000 this year, Deadman estimated.

If allowed to go unchallenged, "who knows," he said, "it might be \$10,000 next year and more and more each year."

Farmington's contract with the Detroit Metro Water Department permits metered sewage flow adjustment payments on what is known as a "92-108 per cent" formula. The formula allows the users to be billed for sewage transmitted to Detroit for disposal on the basis of water usage.

Here is the way it works:

If Farmington transmits to Detroit the same amount of sewage as the amount of water purchased, the city is billed at a rate equal to 100 per cent of its water usage.

However, if Farmington transmits 25 per cent more sewage than its

water purchase, the city is not billed for the first eight per cent of the excess sewage.

On the other hand, if Farmington transmitted less sewage than it purchased in water, the city receives no credit for the first eight per cent of that reduction.

"We have been sending more sewage than our water purchases, so that

we have been able to take advantage of the eight per cent benefit," Deadman said.

The rate increase, from 89 cents to 94 cents per 1,000 cubic feet, would result in the city paying five cents more than those wholesale customers who are paying for sewage on a flat 100 per cent basis, Deadman claimed. Communities covered by the South-

ern Oakland County Water Authority, which has a water contract with Detroit similar to that of Farmington's, recently won a court ordered rate reduction to 89 cents from the 94 cents.

Oakland County Circuit Judge John N. O'Brien ordered the rate cut at the pretrial hearing of the Oakland County Drain Commission's suit.

Area unemployment higher than the national average

The latest figures from the Michigan Employment Security Commission (MESC) show that while unemployment figures for the Farmington area are better than those of the state, they are higher than the national average.

With 209 people out of work, the City of Farmington registered a rate of 12 per cent unemployment during June, according to a spokesman from the MESC.

Although more people were out of work in Farmington Hills (2,350) during June, the unemployment rate for the city was 9.8 per cent.

Statewide, the unemployment rate is 14.2 per cent, down from 15 per cent from May. More than 625,000 persons were out of work in Michigan during June.

A DROP OF two-tenths of a per cent in the June unemployment rate brought the nation's average down 8.4

per cent, lower than either Farmington or Farmington Hills. Compared to Oakland County, however, the Farmington area is doing fairly well. During June, there were 64,775 unemployed persons throughout the county, bringing the average of the nation's sixth wealthiest county to 14.3 per cent unemployed.

According to a bulletin published by the National Consumer Finance Association (NCFA), the nation's civilian labor force rose by 680,000 in May to 92.9 million, marking an increase for the third consecutive month.

The increase occurred among all adult workers and teenagers. Over the years, the civilian labor force has risen by 2.1 million, with adult women accounting for more than 11 million of the increase.

The number of unemployed persons increased by 360,000 nationally in May, raising the unemployment total

to 8.5 million and the unemployment rate to 9.2 per cent.

Since August 1974, when joblessness began its sharp upward trend, total unemployment has increased by 3.6 million.

An NCFA survey showed that consumer optimism about the future increased sharply throughout March and April, with 23.6 per cent of the respondents expecting better business conditions and 21.6 per cent expecting more jobs in six months.

A JANUARY-FEBRUARY survey showed 18.4 per cent were hoping for better business conditions and 16.2 per cent expecting more jobs.

Reporting on personal income, the NCFA said that it increased by 9.3 billion nationally in May to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$121.9 billion, compared to revised April increase of \$8.9 billion.



To the rescue

Royce Reetz, 13, of Farmington took a bad spill while riding his bike on Grand River recently. Farmington police officers Anthony Gubacz (left) and Carl Swandorski answered the call in a few minutes. The lad, who sustained a fractured wrist, was treated and released from Metro West Hospital. See related comments on editorial page. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

Jaycee chief learns of life in "white house"

By FELICIA KOBVLIANSKI

Richard L. Robinson had a taste of what it's like to run for the presidency. Robinson, an executive with the Alexander Hamilton Life Insurance Company in Farmington Hills, was elected president of the United States Jaycees on the first ballot.

"I was elected at the Miami Convention Center in June," Robinson explained. "There were 6,000 Jaycee delegates and 10,000 Jaycees from all 50 states there."

Robinson, who defeated three other candidates, began his one-year term of office July 1. He will oversee Jaycee affairs from the organization's

official headquarters at Tulsa, Okla.

"My year will be involved as head of the corporation which encompasses 7,800 chapters in the 50 states," Robinson said. "I have a full-time staff of 80 employees who provide programs, materials and services to the local chapters."

As president, Robinson will visit 42

states as well as Japan and Europe.

"It's a great way to see the country," he said. "My family will travel with me. They're accustomed to Jaycee life."

JAYCEE LIFE for the Robinsons now includes a 12-room, \$138,000 home in Tulsa known as the "White House." "It spells us," Robinson admitted. "I hope we can get used to life back in Michigan again."

"The Jaycees bought the house in 1960 as a home for the first family," Robinson explained. "I know that sounds kind of funny, calling it the first family."

The home also functions as a place for entertainment. "The president of the International Jaycees, consisting of 83 countries, will spend two days

with us at the White House," Robinson said.

The 35-year-old president finds his new position an "exciting opportunity, although it's demanding time-wise. I work about 80 hours a week and I'll make 300 speeches this year."

"We're working on a national program for government involvement, trying to increase it on all levels," Robinson said. "It's a very specific program on not why, but how to become involved."

The new president believes that with our country's 200th anniversary coming up, such a program is most appropriate and "so badly needed."

Robinson became involved with the Jaycees in 1968 when he joined the Rochester, Michigan chapter. "I was looking for an organization whereby I could become involved in community

service," he said. "I worked on community projects for three or four years before becoming president of the Michigan Jaycees."

As the state president, Robinson supervised Michigan's 200 chapters and helped raise total membership to 14,000, the third largest in the country. In 1974 he was selected to serve as one of 10 vice presidents of the United States Jaycees. As a vice president Robinson was assigned to five states and served on the executive committee from which he was elected to his present position.

ROBINSON WILL receive a salary of \$27,000 as president, the only paid position in the organization. In order to assume the post, he took a one year leave-of-absence from the Alexander Hamilton Life Insurance Company of America, the principal subsidiary of Hamilton International Corporation in Farmington Hills.

Richard Headley, president of the corporation, and Robinson's employer, was president of the U.S. Jaycees in 1968.

Candidates' night will be held

inside

The Farmington Democratic Club will sponsor a candidates' night for Farmington Hills City Council hopefuls 8 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 14, at the Farmington Community Center, Farmington Road north of Ten Mile.

Six candidates have filed for four positions, including incumbents Keith Deacon, Jan Dolan, Earl Oppenheimer and William Ortman and challengers Bernard Christy and Joanne Smith. Each candidate will make a brief statement and then answer questions from the floor.

Three of the council positions carry four-year terms and one is for two years. The meeting is open to the public.

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All consuming

Fireball is more than just a game to the committed players at a controversial amusement center.

See page 3A.



Farmington Hills police are investigating the shooting death of an unidentified man which happened Saturday night in a shopping mall on Orchard Lake and 13 Mile. The body was found in a blue Ford Torino. A shotgun was discovered by

police at the scene. Although police officials were reluctant to comment, witnesses said they heard a shot fired about 9:45 p.m. Police were unwilling to say whether the shot was self-inflicted or if a homicide occurred. (Photo by Craig Newman)