

# Farmington Observer

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Twenty-Five Cents

## Recreation program fate examined by Farmington

With the demise of the Farmington Area Recreation Commission (FARC) planned for July 1, City of Farmington administrators are beginning to explore ways to continue offering recreation programs.

Still surprised by the timing of Farmington Hills' withdrawal from the commission, Farmington City Council members are thinking about

subscribing for services from their neighbor's new recreation department.

Earlier this month, Farmington Hills voted to split from FARC and form its own parks and recreation division. Under this system, Farmington Hills would withdraw all financial support from FARC.

"We're part of FARC until June

30," Mayor John Richardson said. "I hope the projects can continue; that the recreation commission could continue to function until the end of the summer, until we know if we want to go on our own or contract with Farmington Hills."

"We sure better run the summer programs straight through even if it

costs us in excess," said Councilman Alton Bennett.

COUNCILMEMBERS WANT to avoid segregation from Farmington Hills after the commission folds.

"I'd be interested in whatever area they are considering to offer to us on a long-term basis," said Councilman Richard Tupper.

Whatever course the city follows, it will avoid separating its basketball and baseball teams from those in Farmington Hills, according to Richardson.

By working together, the two cities can provide a full complement of recreational services for each other, Councilman William Hartsock said.

"Let's face it, our city isn't that large to support peripheral services such as the Hills can," Hartsock said. "These people (in Farmington) aren't going to go for it," he said.

At this point, the recreational facilities needed by the two cities differ, according to Hartsock.

"IN THE SHORT RUN it would benefit the Hills department to be with us. We have a baseball diamond and Shawwassee Park, for instance," Hartsock said.

Both Hartsock and Richardson agree that, in the long run, Farmington Hills will benefit from going on its own.

"Their needs are different from ours," Richardson explained.

"They need to invest their money in capital improvements, such as a park. Our needs are to maintain our programs," he said.

Richardson pointed out that many people believe that Farmington's programs are concerned with senior citizens, and Farmington Hills has more young families to serve.

"There are senior citizens in Farmington Hills and young people in Farmington," he said, pointing out that the two cities could compliment each other.



### Hanging in there

Farmington Falconer Dick Radatz practiced hard for last night's game against Bloomfield Hills Lahser in the regional tournament. To see how it turned out, turn to the sports section. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

## Testing threatens sewers if guidelines change

If federal guidelines for Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grants change after Sept. 1, Farmington's bid for money to repair parts of its sewer system could be excluded from consideration, according to city officials.

Farmington is preparing to apply for a grant to repair leaks which allow ground water to seep into its sewers and to correct a possible pollution problem in its line to the upper Rouge River, said City Manager Robert Deadman.

A required in-depth evaluation of the existing lines could postpone the repair work until after Sept. 1, when current guidelines for grants expire.

If those guidelines are changed to exclude such projects in new EPA legislation being considered by Congress, Farmington's sewer separation project could be ditched for lack of funds.

"Sewer separation doesn't carry a high priority under the federal clean water bill," Deadman said. "Projects such as treatment plants and sewer construction have high priority."

U.S. Senator Edmund Muskie (D-Maine) is leading an effort to retain the present EPA guidelines. If he fails, Deadman said, Farmington will join the ranks of other small cities to see their projects cancelled.

Although the cost of the sewer separation project has yet to be determined, the federal government's share would be 75 per cent.

"The bill has a good chance of passing," he said. "If it doesn't, it would pretty well stop clean water programs."

Farmington's project could have been ready to submit for EPA evaluation in September, but the EPA demanded that a sewer system evaluation survey be done first.

The survey will pinpoint leaks in the sewer system. It will include television inspection of the interior of the lines, measurements of the amount of water in the pipes and testing for loose seams.

violation of the department's pollution standards, according to Deadman.

The overflow system is designed to allow water to spill into the upper Rouge River during heavy storms. The diverted storm water would otherwise flood area basements.

THEORETICALLY, by the time the storm is heavy enough to require the overflow, sewage has been forced through the lines to its destination and the Rouge receives only rain water.

City engineers are conducting a study to see if the overflow is actually polluting the river, said to Deadman.

A project to stop leaks in the system would be of financial as well as environmental benefit, according to Deadman.

"The survey is being conducted so we're not paying for facilities to process non-sewer water, like storm water," he said.

The city is awaiting approval to begin testing from the Department of Natural Resources and the EPA.

This year, cities in Michigan will vie for \$600 million in federal funds for EPA projects.

## Congregation splits in theological battle

By LYNN ORR

A long-standing dispute in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has split a Farmington Hills congregation. About 20 members of the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church of Farmington Hills recently broke away to form their own congregation, Hope Lutheran Church, currently meeting in the University Hills Christian Center

on Farmington Rd. south of Twelve Mile.

The congregation is now in the process of applying for membership in the newly-formed New English Synod, a move that three Livonia Missouri Synod Lutheran Churches recently made.

The break occurred when the moderates in the church failed to capture a two-thirds majority vote to join the

New English Synod, as did the former Missouri Synod churches in Livonia. As a result, the moderate members formed their own congregation, while the conservative members at Prince of Peace will continue as a Missouri Synod member.

"The interpretation of the Bible from a theological viewpoint is the basis of the controversy," says Rev. Victor Mesenbring, a Missouri Synod minister for 26 years, the last eight years serving the basically Kendallwood Subdivision congregation of Prince of Peace.

The controversy has been brewing since the election of Dr. J.A.O. Preuss to the presidency of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod three years ago.

"With his election the church took a turn to a more conservative stance," Rev. Mesenbring says.

PREUSS INSTIGATED the firing of various professors at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, based on their figurative rather than literal interpretation of certain Biblical passages, Mesenbring explains.

"Women's position in the church is another issue," he says. "The Missouri Synod has taken a firm stand against the ordination of women ministers, whereas the moderate elements of the church would be open to other positions."

The New English Synod was formed last summer, splintering one of the largest Protestant groups in the U.S. About 96 per cent of U.S. Lutherans belong to Missouri Synod, the Lutheran Church of America, and the American Lutheran Church.

The suspension of Dr. John Tietjen, president of Concordia Seminary, triggered a walk-out by 85 per cent of the student body as well as 40 of 45 faculty members, who then formed another seminary, Seminev, or Concordia in Exile, three years ago.

The Missouri Synod has refused to ordain Seminev graduates, another point of contention between the conservative and moderate elements of the church.

"I'm much relieved to have left the conservatism of Missouri Synod behind me, and I look forward to new ministries," says Rev. Mesenbring,

who's busy organizing his new congregation.

"We will probably be doing some things with Antioch Lutheran Church (part of Lutheran Church of America) such as combining Lenten services. That would not be possible in the Missouri Synod."

A fellowship between the different synods of the Lutheran Church has become increasingly more favored in recent years, he explains, but the new conservatism of Missouri Synod disapproves of the fellowship, which involves the sharing of services and the exchanging of pastors and ideas.

Meanwhile, the 300 confirmed members of Prince of Peace are attempting to consolidate their congregation, Rev. Edward Einem, a member of the Board of Social Ministry of the tri-county area, will serve as a temporary part-time pastor while the process continues to call another minister.

"No one likes to take a side in a situation like this," says Harlan Lorenz, chairman of the elders at Prince of Peace. "I consider myself a conservative but not an ultra-conservative. We had hoped to make peace in our con-

gregation but it just wasn't possible." Lorenz confirms the basis of the split as theological differences, and maintains there is no animosity between the two groups.

"I have tremendous respect for Rev. Mesenbring, as do the majority of the congregation. The conservative element of Prince of Peace went along with most of what the moderates wanted to keep peace."

"WHEN IT CAME down to the final issue, however, they said no," he said, referring to the vote on joining the English Synod.

Lorenz believes changes in society caused the differences between the conservatives and moderates.

"The Catholic Church is experiencing the same problems as we are," he says. Other issues separating the groups are the acceptance of abortion on demand and homosexuality, Lorenz explained.

Both groups admit to facing budget problems. Prince of Peace has to maintain a \$100,000 budget despite the loss of almost half the congregation.

## Reactions differ among Lutherans

Local congregations of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod have experienced divergent reactions to the controversy over Biblical interpretation within the synod.

More than 200 persons attended the first services of Hope Lutheran Church in their new facility at University Hills Education building last Sunday.

Under the direction of the Rev. Victor Mesenbring, former pastor of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church of Farmington Hills, the new congregation will probably apply for membership in the New English Synod.

Congregations of Faith Lutheran, Holy Trinity, and All Saints, all Livonia Lutheran churches, formerly within the Missouri Synod, have voted to join the New English Synod, a denomination formed last summer as a result of the controversy.

However, other local congregations of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod have retained their memberships.

ST. PAUL Lutheran Church, located at 20805 Middlebelt near Eight Mile in Farmington Hills, experienced some problems last summer when the pastor of four years, the Rev. Tom Shergar, left the church to form a new group in Novi.

Most of the congregation remained at St. Paul, and under the direction of the new pastor, the Rev. Robert Hoelt, the church attendance is booming.

"Our attendance in January broke all our records," says Rev. Hoelt. "The spirit is terrific here." Rev. Hoelt believes Rev. Shergar left St. Paul to go with the more liberal

al tendency. He believes politics and personality were involved but that the basic controversy is one over the approach to the scriptures.

Rev. Hoelt is definitely aligned with the conservatives of the church, and believes his congregation of about 1,500 supports the conservative position.

"This congregation is conservative and always has been," he says. "There were a few people allied with Pastor Shergar who went with him, but the great majority preferred to stay within the Missouri Synod."

Like the split at Prince of Peace, the division was accomplished without animosity, Rev. Hoelt says.

REV. SHERGAR and about 15 families have formed the Freedom Lutheran Church in Novi and are presently meeting in Novi Woods School on Taft Rd.

Currently, the congregation is not constituted legally, but the intention is to join the New English Synod, Rev. Shergar says.

"We hope we can also make some contacts with the community," he adds, and recent services have drawn local worshippers other than the original 15.

Livonia's newest congregation, Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church, is mainly composed of Lutherans who have elected to retain affiliation with the Missouri Synod, rather than move to the New English Synod.

The congregation is presently meeting in the Harry J. Will Funeral Home, located on Six Mile east of Newburgh, and is in the process of calling a pastor.

Classes in ballet, jazz dancing, and tap for ages four through adult, from beginning to advanced, are taught in the Community Center, 24705 Farmington Road, six days a week throughout the year.

This year's classes have enrolled 220 students, who will perform in a June recital at Harrison High School.

Ballroom dancing, once again taught by Ricky Dove, popular dance instructor, is scheduled for 8:30-10 p.m., Thursdays, beginning April 21. The 10 sessions are priced at \$12 a couple.

Dove will also instruct a course in disco dancing from 8:30-10 p.m., Fridays, beginning April 1. The five sessions are priced at \$20 per person, and singles are welcome.

Garlin Green will teach a course in Middle Eastern Belly dancing, practically guaranteed to tone the waist and stomach muscles, from 4:45 p.m. for beginning students and from 8 p.m. for intermediate students, both classes beginning Monday, April 4. Each course is priced at \$25 for 10 sessions.

NEW AEROBICS FOR WOMEN, offered from 9:30-10:30 a.m. and 10:45-11:45 a.m., Thursdays, beginning March 31, combines exercise and fun, according to instructor Ruth Baker, who combines four years of "Y" fitness experience with a recently earned YMCA Advanced Physical Fitness Specialist's Certification in exercise background.

The class combines the theory of Dr. Kenneth Cooper's Aerobics and the variety and fun of the Bonnie Franklin Exercise style. The 10 sessions are offered for \$24.

Classes in karate, the Korean art of self-defense, offer a chance to shape up your body as well as develop both the physical and mental disciplines of the art.

Beginning classes are offered from 9:30-11:30 a.m., Saturdays, beginning April 23, priced at \$18 for eight sessions. Advanced classes are offered

from 7:30-9:30 p.m., Wednesdays, beginning April 20, priced at \$22 for 10 sessions. James Yu and Ed Chostczyk instruct the classes.

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