

# Farmington Observer

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## Planning future storage

The new bottle law is putting a crimp in the style of local store managers, who must figure out where to keep returned bottles and cans. Basim Abdelour (above) shows a team of owners into the architect's renderings as he looks at the wall he will knock out to make more space at Meadow Pharmacy, Mike Gush (left), an employee, at Godmare's Rexall in Farmington, tries to find space in an already crowded storage area. (Staff photos by Harry Mauthe)



## Bottle bill lament voiced by merchants

The bottle bill is a bust. That's the word from store owners who view the new deposit on bottles and cans containing beer as a misguided attempt to tidy up the highways.

Merchants are concerned the regulation, which goes into effect on Dec. 3, will clear some of the bottles and cans from the highway and deposit them into back rooms of stores across Farmington. Most merchants view their back rooms as being too small to accommodate the expected flow of used containers.

To add insult to injury, the merchants listen to customer complaints about the new deposit. Sometimes the same customer who advocated the bottle bill experiences a change of heart.

"The same people who vote for it are complaining about it," said Sam Patros, owner of Mid-Nine Market, 22200 Middlebelt, Farmington Hills. A customer advocating the deposit argued with Christopher Andres, owner of the Farmington Party Store, 29470 Ten Mile, Farmington Hills, over the merits of the bill.

"When Andres objected to the bottle bill, the customer accused him of being biased because it will cost store-owners money.

"I TOLD HIM, it won't cost me money, it'll cost you money. That same person came in the other day and paid for the deposit on a six-pack of beer. He said he wouldn't buy a six-pack because he can't afford to pay 60 cents (extra for deposit)," said Andres.

Customers and merchants will need a score card to keep all the deposits straight, according to Basim Abdelour, co-owner of Meadow Pharmacy in Farmington Hills.

The average deposit will be 10 cents on small pop bottles and all cans. The average 12 ounce bottle will carry a 10 cent deposit and the average 16 ounce bottle will carry a 10 cent deposit.



The old habit of crushing cans will become expensive under the new bottle and can return and deposit law. Stores won't give refunds for crushed cans—or even accept them. (Staff photo)

Pepsi will charge 20 cents for a deposit on a quart bottle and 40 cents deposit on its two liter bottle. Seven-Up will have a 20 cent deposit on their quarts and 10 cents on their plastic two liter.

Michelob will have a 10 cent deposit on bottles and an additional 10 cents on the carton. Bud Mohsons will charge 10 cents a bottle without an extra cost for the cardboard carton.

Standard beer bottles, used by all companies, will have the 10 cent deposit. Non-standard will vary. A case of beer will carry a deposit ranging from \$1.30-\$2.50 depending on the type of bottle used. Pop will have a \$1 deposit on cans.

Other customers say they will refuse to pay the deposit or go out of state to buy their beer and avoid the deposit charges, according to Andres. "They tell me, 'We're not going to

bring garbage back—why don't they find the people who litter?'" Andres said.

Customers walk out empty-handed when they discover a deposit has been added to the cost of their favorite pop or beer, according to Mike Love, manager of Andy's Country Market, 22595 Middle Belt, Farmington Hills.

Customers are disgruntled because they weren't informed about the repercussions of the bill, according to Andres.

"Nobody told the whole story. The bill isn't a benefit to anybody..." Andres said.

Now a \$2.25 deposit on some products by the case will greet the customers. The idea might have received a better reception if the state had set up redemption centers, Andres said.

AT LEAST IT WOULD have kept the bottles out of the store room, Andres said.

The smell of old pop and the threat of roaches from storing the empty bottles is an unpleasant experience for some merchants.

Keeping the used containers in the back room will attract flies and other bugs, according to Don Feldpausch, co-owner of Dan-Dee Finer Meats, 21001 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills.

Storage will be a problem at the shop, which specializes in meat and doesn't carry much pop.

"I'll just cut down on the amount of pop I order," he said. Already he's seen some customers stock up on non-returnable containers so they can delay the day they pay a deposit.

"Some customers come in and buy 10 cases of pop at a time so they won't have to return it," he said.

Although some beverage companies, such as Coca-Cola are advising merchants they will have containers for the empties available to stores, most (Continued on page 8A)

## Centennial families remembered

For many families, the move westward in the last century stopped in Michigan instead of in the exotic gold fields of California or the flat lands of Kansas.

Instead of taking their possessions and their children further into the country, some families ended their journey in Farmington.

Their stories are recorded in the Farmington Hills Historical Commission's third book, "Farmington's Centennial Families."

The commission's latest offering tells the story of families such as the David Leets, who walked from Orange County, N.Y., to their farmstead on Thirteen Mile in Farmington Township in 1830.

David and Amelia Leet packed up their 12 children and three cows and drove a team of oxen into Michigan. The younger children rode inside the wagon with the family's possessions.

One of those young passengers was 3-year-old Israel Leet, who later became the grandfather of Winifred Otis, of Farmington.

The oxen yoke used to pull the wagon to the family's new home still keeps an honored place in Mrs. Otis' home. Long retired from labor and given the new role of family heirloom, the yoke hangs over Mrs. Otis' fireplace.

YOUNG ISRAEL taught school in Farmington Township and was an inspector for 35 years.

He toured the area's one-room school houses checking to see that correct lessons were taught and the furnishings worked.

Israel's son was born in the house his parent's built on Thirteen Mile. In turn, his son saw the birth of Israel's granddaughter, Winifred, in the same home.

Mrs. Otis, her sister Verna and her brother Clyde grew up in the house. When Mrs. Otis married, she moved to town.

Eventually the old home was sold but the family moved only a quarter of the mile down the road.

"I'm very, very proud of it," said Mrs. Otis of her family background. "I used to know everyone and their

grandfather and grandmother," she said.

Another pioneer family who settled in Michigan claims a judge who helped in Detroit, a bookie and a sheep thief.

The McDowell family came to the state before 1870. Some of them started their journey from New York State.

They say they can claim kinship with a member of the Farmington Hills Planning Commission, Judy McDowell Guertin.

MRS. GUERTIN finds her family's story entertaining but admits that the real enthusiasm is her brother Brian.

The McDowell family, from which she traces her ancestry, arrived in the United States in 1812 from Canada. The family had relatives fighting on both sides during the War of 1812.

One of the uncles the family claims is Judge Augustus Woodward, who conceived the wagon wheel shape of Detroit's streets.

"There was some political chicanery there," she said. "It was that more than anything else. He sold the wheel shape design to the city planners but part of their acceptance of the deal was to name the main street after him," she said.

The wily judge would probably be happy that most persons believe the city father honored him by naming the street after him as a tribute of their own accord.

Another member of the family sewed his wild oats as a young man by stealing sheep.

"If he had lived in another part of the country he would have been lynched," Mrs. Guertin said.

The sheep thief was a member of the Schweizer family. Mrs. Guertin's great-grandfather was Gottfried Schweizer, who founded the Detroit restaurant which still bears the family name.

HER GRANDFATHER was a bookie, she admits but hastens to add the occupation was slightly more legal than that.

Grandfather died in 1914. Until his death, he made book on horse races in Detroit and owned several trotters.

While researching the family's history, her brother and his wife made a trip to Salt Lake City, Utah, to use the Mormon's genealogical library.

About 45 family groups including Mrs. Guertin's and Mrs. Otis' histories are included in the Historical Commission's book, available at the Farmington Hills City Hall and Jerry's Book Store.



Winifred Otis relaxes at home under a piece of her own family history. The oxen yoke over her fireplace was used by her grandfather's family to move from New York to Farmington more than 100 years ago. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

## Off-year record set for absentee ballots

By STEVE BARNABY

Farmington editor

A record number of absentee ballots made it a long election night for voting officials.

The threat of long lines caused by the "bedsheet" ballots was blamed for the high number of absentee applications, agreed both Farmington Hills City Clerk Floyd Cairns and Farmington City Clerk Nedra Viane.

The Hills recorded 5,700 absentee votes, while Farmington chalked up 1,800. Usually the Hills counts about 3,500 absentee ballots during an off-year election, according to Cairns.

The overall vote in Farmington Hills also was much higher, with more than 60 per cent of registered voters casting ballots. Out of the 32,900 registered, 20,923 voted. Usually only about 50 per cent of those registered vote in an off-year election.

City of Farmington voters matched the 1974 vote with 49 per cent of those registered going to the polls. Out of 7,722 registered, 5,325 voted, according to Mrs. Viane.

With the aid of the computer punch card system, Farmington Hills was able to finish the tally about 1:45 a.m. Wednesday morning. Farmington finished about 2:30 a.m.

Cairns geared up his workers to start counting absentees at 7 a.m. on voting day. They didn't finish the tally until 9 p.m.

"I thought we were in real trouble, and I was sort of long-faced when I walked into the county building. But when I got there I found I was the second municipality to report in," Cairns said.

Mrs. Viane's staff began counting absentees at 2 p.m. and finished at 1 a.m. on Wednesday.

Both Cairns and Viane commended election workers for "a job well done" in an election which saw a multitude of candidates and ballot proposals pass by voter scrutiny.

"Actually, we worked on this election for about a month beforehand," said Cairns. "When we got down to the last week, we brought in an extra eight workers to complete the work."

In that month, workers had to send out the absentee ballots along with return envelopes. Under council mandate, each registered voter age 60 and over was sent an application for an absentee ballot, according to Cairns.

On election day each of the returned envelopes had to be opened and the ballot counted.

"Believe me, your lands get sore after opening up that many envelopes," Cairns said.

While Farmington posted 20 machines in the voting precincts, Farmington Hills used 198 punch card booths.

Cairns noted that the newly installed punch card system is becoming more

and more popular among residents.

"One guy came in complaining that he didn't like the punch card system, but when he came out of the booth he remarked on how much easier it is to vote on the cards," said Cairns.

So popular is the punch card system, he said, that more voters are voting a full ballot than in previous years when machine voting was used.

"Voters start turning pages and punch some more," Cairns said.

The punch cards also made it easier for shorter persons who used to have a difficult time seeing the top of the ballot on voting machines.

While a full 20,000 persons cast ballots for the gubernatorial contest, 18,500 voted in the state senate race. With machines, between 4,000 and 5,000 fewer persons would have voted for the state senate seat, according to Cairns.

The attorney general race received 19,700 votes, U.S. senate race 20,300, and the state representative race received 18,300.

Even the judges for appellate court received 16,000 votes. More astounding, according to Cairns, is that the two local millage questions received 18,900 votes.

"With the voting machines, not more than 5,000 persons would have cast ballots for the local questions," he said.

## inside

### HOLIDAY NEWS

Because of the Thanksgiving holiday, your paper will be delivered next Wednesday and all advertising and copy deadlines will be 24 hours earlier than usual. And to get your holiday plans off to a merry start, Wednesday's edition will include our very own Christmas Gift Guide, filled with festive suggestions for you and your family.

Community calendar	3B
Club Circuit	2B
Crackerbarrel Debate	18A
Exhibitions	18C
Inside Angles	2A
Suburban Life	Section B
Sports	Section C

