

Beauty makeover  
creates '87 look, 1B



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# Farmington Observer

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## Farmington FOCUS

If you have a news item or an idea for a feature story or an action picture with a Farmington-area connection, send a note to our downtown office at 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

### SAFER travels

Three people died in traffic accidents last year in Farmington Hills, the city's lowest fatality rate in 15 years.

Sgt. Ray Cranston of the Farmington Hills Police Department attributed the decrease to increased traffic enforcement and more drunk driving arrests by police and increased seat belt use and wider alcohol awareness by motorists.

"We've stepped up enforcing traffic laws at locations where accidents are most likely to occur," he said. "As a result, we're seeing not only a drop in accident rates at these areas, but a reduction in the severity of injury accidents."

Last year also was the first year in 10 years the number of accidents reported on public streets dropped — from 3,284 in 1985 to 2,210 in 1986. Drunk driving arrests last year totaled 305, 42 more than the previous year.

Increased police patrols in subdivisions have helped "remind people about speed and the operation of their vehicles," Cranston added.

NEXT Monday, Jan. 10, is Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, a federal holiday.

So the U.S. Postal Service will operate on a holiday schedule.

Farmington Postmaster Kenneth Harris said there will be no regular residential or business mail delivery. Special delivery, Express Mail and Post Office Box service will be provided.

Limited caller service will be available only for customers who regularly pick up mail at the Farmington Post Office, 33200 Slocum, or the Farmington Hills Post Office, 33455 12 Mile. Service windows will be open between 8 and 10 a.m., but there will be no financial transactions.

Mail will be picked up from all residential collection boxes as late in the day as possible to meet first-class mail service standards. All business collection boxes with the large 5 p.m. decal will be picked up after 5 p.m.

All city offices will be open Monday.

KEEP these numbers handy for reference when calling the Farmington Observer: news line, 477-5450; sports line, 591-2313; home delivery, 591-0500; classified ads, 591-0900; display ads, 591-2300.

FOOTNOTES: One year ago this week — Back in the early 1960s, Wood Creek Farms Village residents were tired of big-city living and moved to the tree-laden and mostly vacant lots along Northwestern Highway to revel in a rural atmosphere.

When Farmington Hills incorporated in 1973 — including Wood Creek Farms Village in its boundaries — only two commercial developments stood along the village segment of Northwestern.

Today, at least 17 office buildings, offering more than 30,000 square feet of space, dot the divided state highway.

## Under study Cable company ponders raising its service rates

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Will MetroVision subscribers in Farmington, Novi and Farmington Hills pay more for cable television services in 1987?

That's a question approximately 21,000 subscribers in MetroVision's tri-city franchise area are asking — and an issue MetroVision officials are still pondering.

"Basically, it's certainly an item being looked at by us as well as by

other cable companies," MetroVision Regional Manager Tom Bjorklund said. "It would be too speculative to give any answer at this point."

For the first time, cable television companies can increase their monthly rates without obtaining approval from the local government units that hold the cable television franchises.

The Communications Act of 1984 — a cable deregulation law that went into effect Jan. 1 — strips municipalities of authority to control cable rates.

IN LIGHT of the new law, Lark Samouelian, executive director of the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission, anticipates increased subscriber rates in 1987. The cable commission represents the three cities.

"Yes, I expect them to raise their rates. Most cable companies sent announcements to subscribers on Dec. 30," Samouelian said.

The new law — the result of controversial debate and cable company lobbying in 1984 — basically "opens the cable industry to market their services without restraint from local government," Samouelian said.

MetroVision's basic rate is \$9.95 a month. Movie channels, such as HBO and Cinemax, are \$7.50 a month. The

others allegedly in possession of alcohol in a motor vehicle. Three were arrested for allegedly throwing snowballs at a police vehicle.

Others were arrested for allegedly driving with a suspended operator's license, reckless driving, and disturbing the peace and drunk driving. A car also was impounded.

ALTHOUGH SEVERAL of the arrests took place outside Cahoot's during Teen Night Friday, Dwyer praised managers and owners for "taking all the steps possible to avert problems inside and outside the business."

## Orchard Lake Road — 'quiet'

For related editorial comments, see Page 14A.

Amid increased police surveillance along the Orchard Lake Road business stretch north of 12 Mile Road, 13 young people were arrested over the weekend.

Ages ranged from 15-22. Average age was 16. Only one was a female. Their residences included Auburn Hills, Detroit, Livonia, Birmingham, Oak Park, Southfield, Madison Heights, Beverly Hills and West Bloomfield.

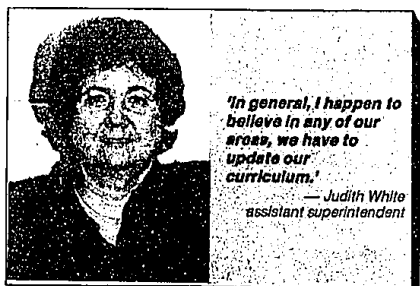
"It was generally very quiet," said Chief William Dwyer of the Farmington Hills Police Department.

Seven of these arrested were mi-

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## U.S. schools urged to look to Japan



*'In general, I happen to believe in any of our areas, we have to update our curriculum.'*  
— Judith White  
assistant superintendent

By Casey Hane  
staff writer

Should Japanese learning techniques be exported to the United States?

Only a change in American culture would allow such educational styles to be accepted here, education officials said.

They responded to U.S. Education Secretary William Bennett who recently suggested the United States could improve its school system by patterning it after the Japanese. Respect — not a problem in Japan — is the missing element in the relationship between American students and their teachers, he said.

"We are looking at lots of ways to get enhanced respect for teachers," he added. "Hold them to higher

standards, reward excellent teachers and you're going to have that same kind of atmosphere" in the United States.

"If we make teaching a more interesting profession, where people can see that they can move ahead by doing well . . . we'll see some of the same respect throughout our system that we see in Japan."

ALTHOUGH SOME of the aspects could be studied, much of the operation of the Japanese school system is affected by cultural influence.

"I think there is and always has been a tremendous respect for teachers and elders in the Japanese culture," said Zan Alley, executive director for the Farmington Education Association, which represents many unionized employees in the

Farmington district, including teachers.

"The real difference goes back to the emphasis placed on education within the family and in the country as a whole."

Bennett completed his 75,000-word study of Japanese education, "Japanese Education Today," after teams from both countries studied each other's systems.

Teachers in Japan earn higher salaries, are expected to take on additional curriculum and counseling duties and even visit elementary pu-

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## 'He was just a plain great guy'

By Casey Hane  
and Bob Sklar  
staff writers

Twenty-year-old B. Michael Bowen was known as a dedicated athlete, an inspiration to students at North Farmington High School, and a caring person, said those who knew him.

The co-captain of the 1983 North Farmington High School football team was killed early Saturday when the car he was driving left a Leelanau County road and struck several trees. Two passengers were injured.

The three Alma College students were in the Traverse City area on a ski trip.

The youngest child of Joan and J. Michael Bowen of Farmington Hills, Bowen was a junior majoring in business administration at Alma. His mother is a secretary at Forest Elementary in Farmington Hills.

*'He (B. Michael Bowen) was just a fantastic kid. I was shocked. The whole family is outstanding. It's a disaster — what more can I say?'*

— Don Cowan, principal  
North Farmington High School

was a two-way starter in the offensive and defensive tackle positions, said Jim O'Leary, head football coach.

"He was a very outstanding young man," O'Leary said. "He was a very emotional, dedicated kid."

Bowen spent much of his free time during the summer helping O'Leary prep the high school team for the fall season.

planned to go out for the team again before graduating, O'Leary added.

"HE WAS just a fantastic kid," North Farmington principal Don Cowan said. "I was shocked. The whole family is outstanding. It's a disaster — what more can I say?"

Bowen died in a crash at 1:40 a.m. Saturday on M-22 near Sugar Loaf Mountain ski resort. He was pronounced dead at the scene. Passengers David Jeffery Polier, 20, of Battle Creek, and Michael Clark Neirink, 21, of Flint, were taken to Munson Medical Center in Traverse City. Leelanau County Sheriff's Deputy Lowell Jacobson said.

Bowen lost control of the car while trying to negotiate a snow-covered curve. The car slid across the two-lane, paved road, struck three



B. Michael Bowen  
'An inspiration'

trees and eventually burst into flames, according to Jacobson. Bowen was pinned beneath the wheel.

Polier, the front-seat passenger, managed to get out. Neirink, the back-seat passenger, was thrown from the car. Neirink was the only one not wearing a seat belt, Jacobson said.

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## Sun-splashed



Tuesday's sunshine provided the perfect backdrop for a sun-splashed winter scene in Farmington's Shawansee Park. This peaceful setting shows the beauty of the park even in winter. The tree-framed Rouge River is in the foreground.

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A new column —  
starting today!!

