

Polite ways to make it through the day, 1D



Girls hoop tourney, 1C

Committee is formed to reduce crime, 2A

# Farmington Observer

Volume 99 Number 18

Monday, December 7, 1987

Farmington, Michigan

52 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

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## Farmington FOCUS

To write the Observer: 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024. To call: news line, 477-5450; sports line, 591-2312; home delivery, 591-0500; classified ads, 591-0900; display ads, 591-2300.

**HOLIDAY** get-together. The Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce will host a holiday luncheon at noon Wednesday, Dec. 16, at the Botsford Inn, 28000 Grand River.

Oakland County Circuit Judge Gene Schenzel will be the guest speaker. The price is \$10 per person. Call the chamber for reservations, 474-5500.

**POSITIVE** response. November evening parent-teacher conferences were well received, reported superintendent of schools Graham Lewis to the Farmington Board of Education.

"Teachers collectively felt it was one of the most positive things we have done," he wrote in a memo.

He acknowledged that too many parents of lower-achieving students still aren't turning out. But overall, "The relationship between parents and teachers is very wholesome."

**HOLIDAY** feast. Residents of the Sarah Fisher Home for Children in Farmington Hills enjoyed a Thanksgiving feast thanks to the folks at the Michigan Trade Exchange in Oak Park.

Employees donated money for turkey, pumpkin pie and all the holiday trimmings for the 60 children and 22 unwed mothers who live there.

**FOOTNOTES:** One year ago this week — Residents of Howard Road, Farmington Hills' only designated natural beauty road, are pleased that the cards are stacking up against a proposed mini-mall becoming a part of their landscape.

## Coaching football —not his only love

By Dan O'Meara  
staff writer

**M**ENTION THE name John Herrington, and one immediately associates it with Farmington Hills Harrison football.

The two have become synonymous since Herrington, as the only head coach in the school's 18-year existence, receives much of the credit for the amazing success the

### people

Hawks have enjoyed on the gridiron.

His career record stands at 140-30-1, and his teams have won two state championships, been to the finals on four occasions, qualified for the postseason playoffs seven times and won 10 league titles.

But that's merely the high-profile side of the 46-year-old Herrington.

Meet John Herrington the historian, the family man, the college graduate who aspired to be a basketball coach and the self-described sports nut.

**WHEN THE** football team is winning game after game on successive Saturday afternoons, it's easy to overlook the fact Herrington also spends time in the classroom between games and practices.

As a member of the social studies department, his specialty and subject of great interest is the Civil War.

With a four-month-long football season complete, Herrington might be found relaxing in his favorite chair in the family's Orchard Lake home, reading a book about that event in American history.

Herrington and his wife, Fran, have spent recent summers traveling to and visiting Civil War battlefields, including such sites as Petersburg, Chancellorsville, and Fredericksburg, and the most famous of all at Gettysburg, Pa.



John Herrington, Harrison High football coach for the past 17 years, watches the action Nov. 28 during the Class B state finals against eventual winner Grand Rapids Catholic Central in the Pontiac Silverdome.

*'I try to keep things in perspective. I'm not always as easygoing as it may seem. I keep a lot of it inside, and sometimes things are really churning.'*

— John Herrington  
Harrison football coach

**HERRINGTON** HAS a favorite story about the conflict at Petersburg, which he retold for an interviewer just as he would his students.

The Union Army used coal miners to dig under the Southern line, Herrington begins. The plan was to blow a hole in the ground and allow the troops to surprise the enemy. But too much dynamite was used, creating a deep crater that

left the soldiers vulnerable to the Confederate guns.

"They couldn't get up the other side," Herrington said, "and they were all killed."

"The tunnel is still there today. I got to stand there and see it."

"I was the only one on the battlefield, and it was raining a bit," he said. "And it just kinda struck me."

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## Police primed to probe each suspicious act

By Bob Sklar  
staff writer

In the wake of the rape-robbbery of two women in a house in northwest Farmington Hills Thanksgiving night, police are urging residents to beware of prowlers — peeping toms as well as suspicious cars.

"Don't hesitate to call us so that we can check them out. We've asked our officers to make an extra effort in trying to check out all suspicious activity near residences," said Sgt. John Hedrick of Farmington Hills.

Hedrick, supervisor of the Farmington Hills Police Department Juvenile Division, is overseeing the hunt for the man who may be responsible for at least seven rapes or attempted rapes in Oakland County since April.

"We're making special emphasis on checking out people arrested or stopped for prowling," he added.

In addition to the rape-robbbery Thanksgiving night in Farmington

*'We've asked our officers to make an extra effort in trying to check out all suspicious activity near residences.'*

— Sgt. John Hedrick  
Farmington Hills

Hills, similar incidents or attempted rapes have taken place in residences in West Bloomfield, Bloomfield Township and Birmingham.

"There's a good possibility the same man is responsible for all, except maybe the Birmingham incident," Hedrick said.

The common link appears to be the rapist's physical description and method of attack, which were "very similar," said Chief William Dwyer

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## Adult housing proposals due by late winter

□ Hills housing panel  
subject of debate, 4A

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Developers interested in buying and developing city-owned property for senior adult housing will be asked to submit plans to Farmington Hills officials by February or March.

A request for proposals, detailing what's expected in development plans, will be distributed this month. At least six developers or development companies have shown an interest in developing property according to city stipulations.

The plan to sell 8.8 acres, donated

two years ago by Ronald and Catherine Hanaway, includes a stipulation that the property be used for elderly housing. The property's sale would depend on whether a developer can meet certain criteria established by the city for housing.

When the acreage, on the north side of Freedom between Drake and Gill, was donated to the city, officials agreed not to sell it for two years although they discussed using it for senior housing.

Zoned for elderly housing, the property has been appraised by the city assessor at \$30,000 an acre, or \$265,000 for the total parcel.

**SINCE** A proposed request for

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## Child care puzzle

### Dependable day care: major concern for parents

By Sue Mason  
staff writer

*"Baby sitter is needed for a 2-month-old baby, weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., in your area or ours. All baby accessories will be provided."*

The classified section of the newspaper tells an all-too-familiar tale of working parents in need of dependable child care.

More than 50 percent of women in the tri-county area with children under 6 now work and United Community Services estimates that figure will reach 64 percent by 1990.

Since 1980, women in record numbers have hung up their aprons and headed off to work.

Television scenes of Harriet caring for the home while Ozzie goes off to work have been replaced by couples climbing into their cars and heading off to their respective jobs, their children bundled off to child care givers, be it organized centers or the neighbor down the street.

"Detroit has always been one of the centers of child care," said Louise Mosteller, regional director of Children's World of Michigan Inc. "During World War II, an enormous number of women were hired to work in the factories and left their

children in day care centers.

"It's not new, but today you don't have grandmas at home, you don't have aunts at home, you don't have women in the neighborhood at home. There's not the secondary people there to pick up the needs of a family."

Census statistics for the last three decades for the Wayne-Oakland area show an ever-increasing number of women, especially mothers with preschool-age children, entering the work force.

**THEY MIRROR** the national trend. America's idyllic concept of motherhood has been reshaped and, as a result, one of the major concerns of working parents today is who will care for their children while they're at work.

The 1980 U.S. Census showed that 70,363 Oakland County women worked and 10,498 had children under age 6. By the 1980 census, 204,506 Oakland County women worked, with 22,474 the mothers of preschool-age children.

A similar trend is seen in Wayne County. In 1980, 300,755 women worked, of which 38,937 had children under age 6. By the 1980 census,

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□ Thursday  
Caring for children at home.

□ Monday, Dec. 14  
How corporations and legislators view child care.

□ Thursday, Dec. 17  
Professional day care centers and education respond to demand.

□ Monday, Dec. 21  
Choosing home over career; and the effects of non-parental care on children.



FANDY BORST/staff photographer

Two-year-old Eric Gloes may be a bit young for career exploration, but he has discovered all the wonderful shapes that can be made with a construction set while attending the First Step Day Care Center at the Farmington YMCA.