

Retreats can offer the best get away, 1D



Swimmers lauded, 1C

Traffic accident takes man's life, 2A

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FARMINGTON HILLS resident Clifford Culham Jr., who died of Lou Gehrig's disease, which attacks nerve cells that control muscle movement, included in his will that he be removed from artificial life support systems if there was no hope for a decent life.

After Oakland County Circuit Judge David Breck granted legal immunity Dec. 15, a Birmingham physician disconnected the 57-year-old man's life-sustaining ventilator and feeding tubes three days later.

Culham had sought disconnection for a year so he could die "in dignity and in comfort," as Breck put it.

Such a request through a will isn't binding. But Breck told Channel 7 newscaster Bill Bonds Dec. 16, "It's certainly helpful."

Breck, who visited Culham in his Ohio nursing home room to assure he understood the ramifications of his request, added that Culham's will "gave me even more credence to his wishes."

BACK on board.

The Farmington Hills City Council reappointed three residents Dec. 21 to the assessor's residential board of review.

Dorothy Jeffries, George Doom and Gordon Meyers accepted assessor Dean Bab's reappointment offer of one-, two- and three-year terms, respectively.

FOOTNOTES: One year ago this week — Farmington Hills' San Marino Golf Course and Recreational Maintenance Center has received the Award of Merit from the Park Maintenance and Grounds Management magazine for its efficiency and attractiveness.

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Early Holiday Deadlines

To place your classified in-column "liner" ad in our Monday, Jan. 4 issue please call before 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 30.

Oakland County
644-1070

Wayne County
591-0900

Rochester
852-3222

Alcohol free Virgin drinks are served up

'A couple years ago I'd sell a few six packs of non-alcoholic beer. Now, we're selling five and six cases a week.'

— Jack Dunleavy
Dunleavy's Pub & Grub

By Chris Rizk
staff writer

It's nearing the end of the year, and if you never go out any other time, chances are that you'll make plans to celebrate on New Year's Eve.

And that means maybe having a drink or two.

This year, as previous years since the campaign to curtail drinking and

driving began, the emphasis is on having fun without overdoing it, according to law enforcement officials and Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

As a result, local taverns and bars are gearing up for requests for non-alcoholic beverages.

Reaction to the popularity of non-alcoholic drinks is mixed, according to restaurant managers, but most

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Pia Sgroia, day bartender at O'Sheehan's, serves non-alcoholic wine and virgin daiquiri at the Farmington Hills tavern and restaurant.

Rezoning denied for new elderly housing complex

By Casey Hans
staff writer

They admit there is a growing need for senior housing.

So, it was with mixed feelings that Farmington Hills City Council voted 6-0 Dec. 21 to deny a rezoning effort that would have allowed a local developer to plan more senior housing for the city.

The council followed a unanimous recommendation by the planning commission, because the requested zoning did not comply with the city's master land use plan.

Councilwoman Jean Fox was absent.

"I understand we don't want to change the master plan," said councilman Joe Alkateeb, "but that's not really the answer. I'm concerned with the elderly population increase."

Historic graves to be moved

Action is being taken to move 25 gravesites in the West Farmington Cemetery in the name of progress.

The graves need to be moved in preparation for the future widening of 12 Mile Road and intersection improvements at 12 Mile and Halsted Road, where the cemetery is located.

It is in the city of Farmington Hills. Of the 25 gravesites, five families have signed affidavits allowing disinterment and reinterment of graves in the affected area, according to a city report.

The other 20 sites have no next of kin, according to city records. Farmington Hills city attorney Paul Bibeau will immediately seek a court order allowing the graves to be moved, he said Monday.

All the graves will be moved to another area of the West Farmington Cemetery.

THE HILLS City Council voted Dec. 21 to authorize low bidder Thayer-Rock Funeral Home of Farmington to move the gravesites. It will cost \$27,770 to make the moves, according to the bid. A second bid of \$32,844 was also received. This includes costs of disinter-

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Alkateeb added that he thought zoning for elderly housing "would be a good neighbor to residential."

Other council members also commented on the growing need for senior housing, but apparently were not willing to go against the master plan.

PROPOSER PAUL Hendrickson requested a rezoning change from RA-3 single family residential to RCE, elderly housing residential district.

The approximately three acres of property is on the east side of Orchard Lake Road, between Eight Mile and Folsom, and is owned by Edward Sierens. A mosque is currently under construction across from the proposed site; the surrounding property is zoned and master planned for single family homes.

Speaking at the public hearing Dec. 21, Hendrickson said he "didn't think it would be detrimental" to the area to rezone the parcel.

But planning commissioners gave several reasons when they recommended the council deny the measure following a Nov. 19 public hearing.

Not only does it not conform to the master plan, but it would be considered a form of spot zoning, would not be compatible with other uses in the area, and would have a negative impact on the city's future ability to follow the master plan in that area.

"The proposed rezoning, if approved, could change the single family character of Orchard Lake Road, between Eight Mile and Nine Mile Roads," said a report submitted by planning commission chairman Philip Arnold.

A review by city planner Claude Coates of Southfield-based Villacoe-Lemman & Associates concurred. "It will have an impact on the surrounding area once this kind of thing gets a foothold," Coates said Monday.

COUNCILWOMAN JODY Soronen said she expects more requests for rezoning changes in that area. "I gave this a great deal of thought, because I know there is a need," she said.

"It's a difficult decision, because there is a need for senior housing," added councilman Aldo Vagnozzi. "But we must follow the master plan. It is a key to rezoning."

Vagnozzi called the section along Orchard Lake Road "an area on the

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I wasn't conscious of the hate



Farmington residents Derwin and Dianna Success show some of the damage done to their house early last week. Racial slurs were painted on the outside walls Tuesday night; windows were broken Monday.

Racial slurs Bi-racial couple's home vandalized

By Casey Hans
staff writer

A BI-RACIAL Farmington couple whose house was painted with racial slurs last week wants the public to be aware that bigotry still exists.

Police are investigating two incidents at the Siliwassee home of Dianna and Derwin Success, where windows were broken and aluminum and brick siding of the house spray-painted with offending graffiti on Monday and Tuesday last week. Screens were also cut and a decorative fence torn down.

Dianna Success is white; Derwin Success is black. They have been married and living in their Farmington home for the past two years.

Symbols of the Klu Klux Klan, a swastika, racial slurs and obscene words, plus warnings to "get out" were included in the hate messages discovered Wednesday by the couple, only two days before Christmas.

"I think people need to know that people still have these kind of

'We're in the late '80s; I thought we were past that point (racial prejudice).'

— Dianna Success
Farmington resident

feelings," said Dianna upon discovering the damage to her house. "It's no good to the world, society or everybody."

"We haven't had any problems (before this). We just mind our own business, and our neighbors are friendly."

IN THEIR two years in Farmington, Dianna said the couple had experienced only minimal racially motivated comments, and only during summer months when they were outside walking or playing tennis. Wednesday, neighbors expressed outrage at the destruction and offered their help to the Successes.

"I wasn't conscious of the hate," Dianna said. "It wasn't an issue

and I didn't think about it. We're in the late '80s; I thought we were past that point."

Ironically, the two work together in a Farmington Hills-based business that teaches children of all ages to develop their self-esteem and how to motivate themselves.

They believe the people who did the damage have low self-esteem. "I'm not mad or anything," said Derwin. "It's ironic that I teach the opposite (of what was done). This just shows we need to pay attention to the needs of our young people."

"I don't think adults did it — it's kids calling for help."

SOME OF the children helped through the Successes' program are black, and are occasionally guests in the couple's Farmington home, the couple said. They did not speculate as to whether he thought this may have caused a problem in the community.

Dianna has three children from a previous marriage, who she said

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Military cadet has 'clearer view of what really matters'

By Chris Rizk
staff writer

"I could tell you what I did today, but you wouldn't believe it anyway," Mike Bindon wrote home in 1985.

Two years later, they still wouldn't believe him.

Life at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, N.Y., is hard, or was hard, Bindon said, adding that "hard" has a different meaning for him now that he's no longer a plebe.

Bindon, 20, is a seasoned upperclassman. His perspective of what in life is difficult has altered drastically

people

ly, he said.

"I have a lot clearer view of what really matters now," Bindon said. "Things that I thought were important have a different meaning for me now."

It's no wonder. Survival during the first year for the former North Farmington High School student was nothing short of a

miracle.

"If you made it past the first year, then you're OK," Bindon said. "The worst is over."

PLEBES ARE new students at the nation's toughest and most prestigious military academy.

It's a time, Bindon said, when the eager, and frightened, students sort through what they want, what they expected to get out of West Point and how they'll manage to combine the two.

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Michael Bindon, 20, is now a seasoned upperclassman at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.