

Slapstix nearing goal of liquor permit OK

By Bob Sklar
staff writer

For the second time in six weeks, the Farmington Hills City Council has nixed plans for a comedy club at Tally Hall, undergoing a major conversion after eight years as a festival food court.

Although the council voted 4-1 in favor of granting a class C liquor license and entertainment permit to B.G. Bones Inc. on behalf of Slapstix Comedy Club, five votes are needed for approval.

Councilwoman Jean Fox dissented without comment. Councilwoman Judy Soronen was absent. The seventh council seat is vacant following Joe Alkateeb's resignation Feb. 20.

Tuesday, Farmington Hills attorney John Oldham said his client, Doug McGregor of St. Louis, Mo.,

hasn't decided whether to reapproach the city council in hopes of securing the fifth vote.

"We'll decide in the next few days," Oldham said.

Slapstix planned to sign a long-term lease for the Tally Hall site at 31025 Orchard Lake Road. It also planned to make a \$400,000 investment and hire 18 employees, three full time, Oldham said.

Oldham wasn't concerned only five council members were present for the vote Monday. "We felt this was such an advantageous thing for the community, we wanted to proceed."

OLDHAM TOLD council members the club's intent is "to provide an alternative form of entertainment very popular across the country to-

After adding a menu, the business still needs 1 more council vote to move ahead with its Tally Hall plan.

day but not prevalent in our city at all."

Nationwide, the number of comedy clubs has spurted from 1 a decade ago to 350 today, he said.

The proposed club would have had a kitchen and a sandwich menu to satisfy the city ordinance regulating liquor-by-the-glass operations. "Certainly, we qualify as a 'bona fide restaurant' under a legal, narrow, myo-

do not serve food, have no menu. Our community was not endangered by that exception. Nor would it be by this exception."

No food or drink would be served outside evening show hours and there would be a cover charge, he said. One show is planned Mondays through Thursdays, two shows Fridays and three shows Saturdays.

"It would not be a place where people will come and have a full-menu restaurant. It's entertainment. It's good entertainment. It's fun entertainment. It's humor," he said.

ON JAN. 16, the city council unanimously denied B.G. Bones' first liquor license request because no food service was planned. B.G. Bones then added a kitchen and a menu to its plans and reapplied for a class C

license to the Michigan Liquor Control Commission. Oldham said.

Even if the club didn't qualify, he said, "there are exceptions in this town where bars are operating that still Commission, which requires local approval."

McGregor runs other comedy clubs in St. Louis and Kansas City, Mo., and Wichita, Kan. Another is planned for Washington.

"This is the kind of a business we'd like to have in the city," Farmington Hills councilman Aldo Vagnorzi said, although concerned whether it indeed was a "bona fide restaurant."

Farmington Hills council watcher Vernon Kieplinski opposed granting the license. "I cannot advocate adding any more places when we have

too many problems now with liquor," he said.

But Mayor Terry Sever noted a police department check showed that Slapstix had a "pretty good" record in not violating liquor laws. He said the club would be a plus for the city.

Robert Schostak, vice president of Southfield-based Schostak Brothers & Co., Tally Hall managing agent, said, "We've satisfied ourselves they'll be good citizens. They have a good reputation. They know what they're doing."

"We've worked very diligently to bring to the city, to this community, a better life for that building (Tally Hall) — a better future," he added. He called Slapstix "a step in the right direction."

Tech seminar expands to aid career selection

By Casey Hans
staff writer

A seminar that previously focused on girls learning about math and science has expanded to include boys, more grade levels and parents.

Called "Your Future's Bright" — a seminar on math, science, computer and business careers, the March 7 evening program at Farmington High School will include students in grades three through eight who will explore careers in math and science. Interested parents can also attend.

"We want to emphasize all careers are open to boys and girls," said Corky Parrott, coordinator of career development for the Farmington school district. "It will also give parents ideas to help their kids at keeping the options open."

The seminar is co-sponsored by Farmington Public Schools and the American Association of University Women, Farmington branch.

Coordination is being handled through the district's Career Development and DELTA departments. "The Future's Bright" theme comes from a multi-year national effort by the AAUW to help students focus on their future.

"It fits right into what we've been

'It will also give parents ideas to help their kids at keeping the options open.'

— Corky Parrott
coordinator

trying to do," Parrott added.

AAUW MEMBER Emma Makinen, a former school trustee, said her group "just wants to make sure we start these children thinking in terms of math and science earlier."

Involving parents is important because they help form career choices throughout a child's life, and need to be aware of choices too, organizers say. "We are trying to get the family — the parent and child — getting the same message," said Joette Kunze, a coordinator in the Farmington schools DELTA department.

Keynote speaker for this year's seminar will be Molly Brennan, a General Motors engineer, driver of GM's solar-powered Sunracer car, and a Rhodes Scholar.

Students will then attend a workshop where they can explore math and science options. An information-

al panel will also be part of the evening for parents and will include:

• Marie Arstari, math teacher at Farmington High School.

• Kathy McAdaragh, science coordinator for the Farmington district.

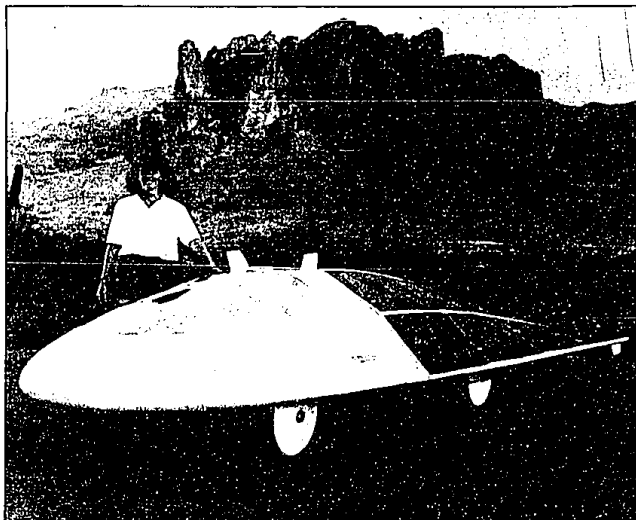
• Norm Luebke, currently of the staff development department and former high school math teacher.

• Hollanne Heldeman of Westland, a high school senior who participated in a special internship science and technology program with Ford Motor Co. and currently works 12 hours per week at the Ford engineering and research division.

THE SEMINAR will begin promptly at 7 p.m. at Farmington High School, following refreshments being served. Donations of \$3 per family are being suggested, with proceeds to go the AAUW Scholarship Fund.

This is the third year of the seminar, which previously focused on sixth and ninth grade girls in the Farmington district. The seminar was expanded when others showed an interest in attending, Parrott said.

Further information can be obtained by calling 471-6429.



Molly Brennan, a General Motors engineer, will be the keynote speaker at the March 7 career seminar for Farmington students in grades three through eight. Here, Brennan poses with the GM Sunracer, a solar-powered car.

Invent America! program aims to 'teach' creativity

Invent America, which focuses on student inventions nationally, is offered this year in Farmington schools as an enrichment for all students.

In addition, a team of Farmington teachers and consultants have created a "teacher friendly" package of Invent America materials that is being used across the country.

Mary Joyce Reader, Joan Armistead, Mary Ellen Tolwin and Dean Cobb put together the program, which is being used in more than 10 states.

The invention program was a pilot in several schools last year, when Wooddale Elementary student Mark Porter was named a state winner for his portable toboggan.

"I believe creativity can be taught," said Joette Kunze, a consultant in the district's DELTA program, which is active in coordinating the Invent America concept. "We can all get out of our mode and be creative."

THE INVENT America program allows children in grades kindergarten through eight to apply what they've learned in physical science and mathematics. Originally launched in January 1987 and sponsored this year by the Troy-based K mart Corp., the program focuses on problem-solving skills and idea development. It is administered by the non-profit U. S. Patent Model Foundation in Washington, D.C.

The deadline for entering the national Invent America is March 5. State winners will be announced June 2, regional winners June 23 and national winners July 27.

Some of the inventions named national winners last year included:

• sur-footer — helps small children determine which shoe goes on which foot. Created by a kindergarten.

• puppy finder — a lighted collar which protects a dog from traffic at night, and allows him to be seen. Created by a first grader.

• puddle detecting cane — a cane that beeps when the tip touches a puddle of water, helping blind people. Created by a second grader.

• orphan kitten feeder for three — a device used for orphaned kittens or other baby animals that have no mother. Created by a third grader.

• handicap helper — prevents able people from using handicapped parking spaces. A special card must be used to deactivate a meter or a buzzer will sound. Created by a fourth grader.

• puppy finder — a lighted collar which protects a dog from traffic at night, and allows him to be seen. Created by a first grader.

Patient's death probed

By Casey Hans
staff writer

Farmington detectives and the Oakland County medical examiner are investigating the sudden death of a 37-year-old Oak Hill Care Center resident after he apparently choked on a piece of meat Sunday.

"We're still investigating," said Farmington public safety director Frank Laubhoff. "From the standpoint of nursing homes . . . it (the investigation) is not out of the ordinary."

"We don't suspect anything at this point, but we want to investigate it thoroughly."

Oak Hill is a nursing care center just west of downtown Farmington on Grand River.

Employees trying to resuscitate the victim, John F. McGraw, were performing CPR on him when paramedics arrived Sunday afternoon. He was taken to Botsford General Hospital where additional resuscitation efforts failed. He was pronounced dead at 3:55 p.m.

Botsford physicians notified the Oakland County medical examiner, who, in turn, called police.

ACCORDING TO information from a Farmington Department of Public Safety report, the victim had

eaten lunch with the help of an aide, as required. He was discovered in an "unresponsive" state by a second aide 15 minutes after the meal tray was removed. Paramedics discovered a three-inch piece of meat lodged in the man's trachea.

An autopsy was performed on the victim early this week; results are expected later this week.

McGraw had been a resident at Oak Hill since Dec. 5, according to the public safety report. He suffered from blindness and diabetes complications and was dependent on staff aides and orderlies to help him move about and eat his meals, according to police.

Common Campus lottery planned

A lottery to select Highmeadow Common Campus first grade students for the 1989-90 school year will be held the week of March 20, according to information from the Farmington district.

Parents with kindergarten-age children interested in Highmeadow should fill out applications at the school during the week of March 6, assistant superintendent Mary Lou Ankle said.

Parents with students already attending Farmington Public Schools should have received a letter detailing the process.

Highmeadow is an alternative elementary school with students from

grades 1-5, which offers basic academics plus elective and advanced classes. Students attending the school come from throughout the district.

THE LOTTERY will be open-ended, without giving consideration to areas of the district as it did during the school's initial lottery. The initial lottery took into account overcrowded conditions at several elementary schools, giving students from these schools more slots.

There will be 50 first grade slots open for the coming school year, Ankle said. On March 14, the school board will

decide whether to give preference to siblings of students already enrolled at Highmeadow.

Parents with questions are being asked to either:

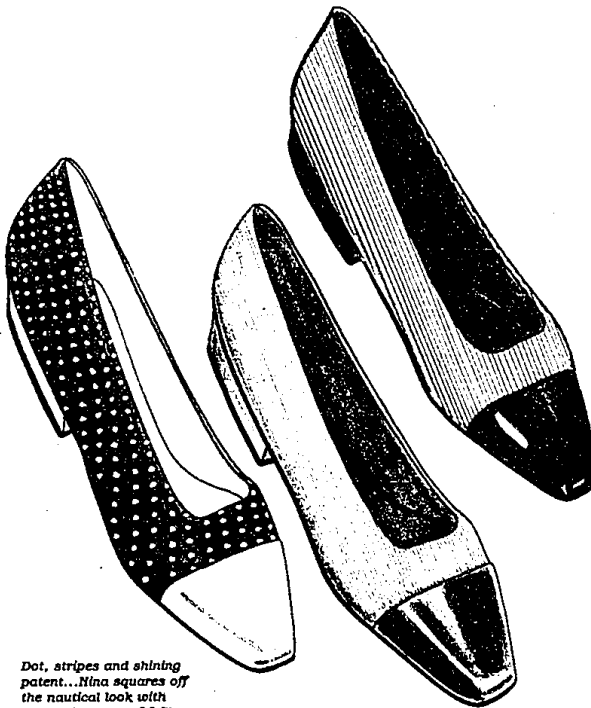
• drop name, address and phone number into a box at the school.

• call 741-6375 and leave a name and phone number.

A representative from the district will return the calls to answer all questions.

Highmeadow principal Jan Colliton is surveying parents of current students to determine if there will be vacancies at higher grade levels, due to family moves or school changes.

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