

Hills couple to see Grand Prix up close

By Susan Buck
staff writer

Bob and Louise Siegmund of Farmington Hills go back to the Detroit Grand Prix race track this weekend.

The Siegmunds are members of the Sports Car Club of America (SCCA), one of the largest, most active competition organizations in the world, said Beth Kish of the Detroit Grand Prix Race Committee.

Locally, the Detroit Region of SCCA is involved in all areas of the sport. The Detroit Grand Prix, in its

eight year, is the largest. The SCCA also conducts several club races, driver schools, autocross events and rallies.

Bob Siegmund, an announcer with 35 years' experience, is active with public relations for the event. He is a partner with the All Michigan Underwriters Agency, an independent insurance agency in Livonia.

Louise, a 15-year member of SCCA, is a nationally licensed timer and scorer. She works as a part-time biology and math teacher for the Whitman Center in Livonia as well as teaching pregnant teenagers part

time at Marillac Hall in Farmington Hills.

"You might have five or six cars going by at once, so there's quite a bit of juggling," said Louise of the weekend event.

THE DETROIT Grand Prix track is 2 1/2 miles long. The cars whoosh past at a 90 mph average, climbing to 120 to 130 mph on the Start/Finish straight, according to Bob.

Former Livonia residents for 22 years, the Siegmunds moved to Farmington Hills last September.

When the Siegmunds' two sons, Bob, a chef in California, and Jim, a

student at Michigan State University, were growing up, the amateur auto racing circuit served as a wholesome family activity, said Bob. "When our boys were 10 and 12 years old, all four of us would pile into the car and go out to Waterford and everybody was involved. That's the nice thing about amateur racing, it's good fun," he said.

The Oakland County Sportsman Club is in Waterford.

Detroit Renaissance Inc. is the promoter and sponsor of the Grand Prix race. It has the responsibility for all of the business and promo-

tional aspects of the race. The Detroit Grand Prix Association is a volunteer arm of DRI, whose members are responsible for things such as ushering, crowd control, hospitality, media center and transportation.

The Detroit Region of SCCA is the race organization and is responsible for all the functions directly related to the race.

IN EFFECT, on Thursday of race week, DRI hands over the keys to the track. Everything that happens for the next four days falls into the bailiwick of the Detroit SCCA.

On Sunday night, the keys are given back.

The SCCA workers perform the technical inspection, called scrutineering, on all of the Trans Am and Corvette Challenge cars, both of which are SCCA professional races.

The group also provides all of the timing and scoring people; corner workers, called turn marshals; the pit, paddock and grid marshals and the emergency service doctors, nurses and paramedics as well as the starters for the Trans Am and Corvette races.

In previous years, SCCA scrutineered the Formula 1 cars, but the Championship Auto Racing Team called CART, which oversees the Grand Prix race this year, works a little differently and does its own scrutineering. They will have their own starter for the feature race Sunday.

During race week, 700 volunteers work. SCCA is involved in all varieties of racing and without volunteers, the show couldn't go on.

Workers come from across the country, said Louise.

Non-union bid awards draw criticism

By Casey Hens
staff writer

The hiring of a non-union electrician for a Farmington Hills renovation project has drawn criticism from several area union members, while two school trustees voted against other non-union bid awards at a recent meeting.

Six letters against using non-union contractors and one in favor were received by the board secretary at the regular June 6 meeting.

At that same meeting, where 15 bids were let, another four non-union contractors were hired to do a variety of work in the district. All were low bidders for the various projects, according to project manager Bill McCarthy.

THE PROJECTS approved June 6 which involve non-union firms include:

- site utility work at the new elementary school on 11 Mile for \$82,500. The contractor is Gerlach

Landscaping, Fraser.

- masonry work at Cloverdale Center, Fairview Center, North Farmington High School and Farmington Community School for \$32,500. The contractor is Mid-West Building Co., Inc., Livonia.

- aluminum windows, storefront, glass and glazing project at Farmington Community School for \$107,453. The contractor is Curtis Glass Co., Ferndale.
- heating, ventilation, air conditioning and plumbing projects for

\$115,600. The contractor is Long Mechanical, Northville.

THE SCHOOL board voted 4-2 in favor of hiring all four non-union firms, with trustees Susan Rennels and Helen Ditzhazy dissenting.

Trustee Jack Inch, who at an earlier meeting had advocated a board policy against using non-union con-

tractors, was absent for the bid award votes. The board decided to continue its previous procedure of looking at each project and each bidder individually.

Ben Chambers of Local 58, Brotherhood of Electrical Workers based in Detroit, wrote a letter to the board representing his union. He did not respond to calls from the Observer to comment on his position.

Parent suggests new ideas for board to communicate

By Casey Hens
staff writer

A suggestion that the Farmington Hills school board adopt better communication tactics received criticism and little support.

Suggesting a plan of attack at the June 6 board meeting, parent Lorne Leon said he felt trustees needed to upgrade their overall communications with the public.

His suggestions included:

- cablecasting of regular board meetings,
- videotaping board meetings for future viewing, and keeping the tapes in the library,
- putting minutes and other documents in the library for public viewing, and
- adopting regular evening and weekend hours when the superintendent and other central office administrators be made available to

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— Janice Rolnick,
school board trustee

the public,

- a town meeting every 3-6 months where residents could speak to issues of concern.

Leon has recently been in court with the district and Superintendent Graham Lewis over his son, a fifth grader at Forest Elementary in the

special education program. His suit was filed in January in the Oakland County Circuit Court and later dismissed.

THE STRONGEST response to Leon's suggestions came from trustee Janice Rolnick, who defended what she said was a solid record of openness.

"I've never seen a board . . . more accessible than this board," she said. "We respond to any question asked of this board . . . every day of the week."

Rolnick accused Leon of carrying a grudge because of his recent litigation with the district.

Board president Jack Cotton, re-elected to the board Monday, noted that the same suggestions were raised at a recent candidates night. He agreed that they should be considered.

No other trustees commented on the suggestions.

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