

Student painters  
have lots of work. 1B



The sandlot  
scene, 2D

Judge under fire from  
council members, 4A

# Farmington Observer

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## farmington FOCUS

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**W**ORK continues on construction of a new median on I-695 from I-275 to Telegraph through Farmington Hills.

Eastbound traffic continues on the freeway's southernmost two new lanes. Westbound traffic continues on the northernmost two existing lanes.

The freeway's temporary 45 mph speed limit is seldom observed, forcing the Michigan Department of Transportation to keep cars as far away as possible from median workers.

Once the new median is done, westbound traffic will move temporarily to the south side so four new westbound lanes can be added.

The new eight-lane freeway, as well as a redesigned Orchard Lake Road interchange, is targeted to open in late November, if the weather cooperates.

**ON board.** Farmington Hills City Council has appointed Springfield resident Leslie Wasek to fill an unexpired term on the beautification commission. She will serve to Feb. 1, 1991.

**QUOTE of the week**

They should give her a lifesaving medal. If they want a witness, they've got me.

— Novi police Chief Lee BeGole, who assisted Trooper Judy Anderson in rescuing a man dangling from a freeway overpass (Story: 6A).

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## 1 dead, 1 hurt in car-trailer accident

By Bob Sklar  
staff writer

A Detroit man died and his fiancée was critically hurt when a trailer that broke free from a truck hurtled into their car on 12 Mile, in front of Harrison High School, Saturday night, Farmington Hills police said.

Chrysler Corp. Insurance Department employee Paul Hans Otfedahl, 39, was pronounced dead at the scene. He died of multiple injuries, according to an Oakland County medical examiner's spokeswoman.

His fiancée, Vita Sinacori, 28, of Detroit, also in Chrysler's insurance department in Highland Park, was listed in critical condition Wednesday at Botsford General Hospital, Farmington Hills.

No one else was hurt in the freak accident, on 12 Mile at Rollcrest. Everyone involved was wearing a seat belt, police said.

**'The county road commission is surveying the area for speed and for site distances.'**

— Farmington Hills Sgt. Ray Cranston

Farmington Hills firefighters used the Jaws of Life to free Otfedahl from the wreckage.

Otfedahl apparently saw the trailer coming his way and braked. But police Sgt. Ray Cranston said he didn't think Otfedahl had time to avoid it. "What are the odds of a load going across the center lane when it breaks free?"

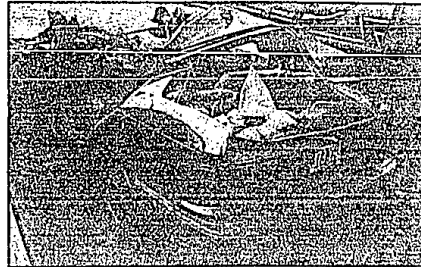
POLICE WILL not identify the truck driver, a 33-year-old Lathrup Village man who digs sprinkler system trenches, until their investigation is complete. "There are a lot of irregularities with regard to the

trailer and the way it was being towed," said Cranston, adding that police are focusing on the hitch.

The box truck was eastbound on 12 Mile at 6:45 p.m. Saturday when the two-wheeled trailer jumped the hitch and crossed the center line. The trailer rode up the driver's side of Otfedahl's westbound 1989 Plymouth, peeling back and crushing the roof before falling to the pavement.

"We don't know at this point if the trailer had been properly secured,"

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SHARON LAMIEUX/staff photographer

The roof was peeled back when a trailer that had broken loose from a box truck crashed into this 1989 Plymouth on 12 Mile in Farmington Hills Saturday night.

## 2 face charges in robbery at McDonald's

By Bob Sklar  
staff writer

An employee and a friend await felony charges in the "well planned" armed robbery of a McDonald's restaurant, where a shot narrowly missed an employee behind the counter Monday morning, Farmington Hills police said.

A tip from a local citizen who saw a TV news broadcast describing the getaway car Tuesday led police to the suspects, arrested without incident and slated to be arraigned today.

"It was an outstanding piece of work, not only by the citizen who notified us but by Sgt. Charles Nebus and the officers of this department," Farmington Hills police Chief William Dwyer said at a press conference Wednesday.

Late Wednesday, police were seeking warrants charging two 18-year-old men — one from Farmington Hills, the other from Detroit —

with assault with intent to commit murder, armed robbery and possessing a firearm while committing a felony. The FBI assisted in the arrests.

The Detroit, a four-year employee of the restaurant, has had "previous problems of a minor nature" with his manager, the employee who was almost shot in the robbery. Monday was the suspect's day off. He worked as scheduled Tuesday, showing no unusual behavior, Nebus said.

Police believe the gunman "obviously knew the time the courier would be arriving," Nebus said. They believe he intended to kill the manager he fired at because he took deliberate aim at her. "She's lucky to be alive today," Dwyer said.

No one was hurt in the stickup, at 10:45 a.m. Monday at the McDonald's on Orchard Lake Road, south of 10 Mile. The suspect from

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## Schools to get new computer

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

In an age when students are being transformed into computer geniuses, Farmington school officials will carefully monitor a new mainframe computer system and security issues surrounding it.

The system is designed to eventually handle student records and other routine matters now handled on paper at each school building.

"When I see the possibility of 450 terminals going into a mainframe, I am concerned," resident Richard DeVries told the board. "I think there's going to be some abuse. I'm uncomfortable with a large main-

frame with everybody having access to it."

DeVries and some school officials are concerned with computer hackers — who could infiltrate the security of student records and obtain other information to which they aren't entitled. Trustees Susan Rennels and Helen Prutov called for "severe discipline" for any employee who misuses access codes, such as taping the secret words to the front of terminals.

"I think it's (the system) useful and needed," Rennels said of the purchase. "But I'm concerned that

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## Crowning moment

Outgoing Miss Farmington Kristen Conley crowned Kerle Colleen Dwyer, 18, as her successor at the 16th annual Miss Farmington Scholarship Pageant at Vladimir's in Farmington Hills. The 1989 North Farmington graduate is the daughter of Marilyn and

Jim Dwyer of Farmington Hills. A tap/jazz dancer, Kerle was also named "Most Talented." First runner-up was Carrie Lynn Brown, 21, of Farmington Hills. Allison Marie Ayres, 17, of West Bloomfield was second runner-up.

## Experts: Removing ventilator may set precedent

A dangerous precedent could be set if quadriplegic David Rivlin is disconnected from a life-support system according to his wishes, health and medical experts say.

Rivlin, 38, who lives at Oak Hill Care Center, Farmington, can only move his head and breathe with the help of a ventilator. He said he considers himself a burden to others and said he can't contribute to society.

In May, Rivlin petitioned Oakland County Circuit Court to be sedated and disconnected from the life-support system after his doctor, Dr. Ed Blumberg of Farmington Hills,

refused to do so without court approval.

Oakland County Circuit Judge Hilda Gage refused July 5 to rule on the petition. She noted there was no op-

position to Rivlin's petition and that he was a competent adult entitled to make the decision.

"I'm surprised I'm not scared," Rivlin said the next day. "I feel

rather peaceful. There's a little bit of fear — the fear of the unknown — but not that much. . . I'm feeling pretty good."

Rivlin, who suffered a broken neck in a 1971 surfing accident in California, is seeking a doctor to disconnect the life-support system and a place where it can be done. Paralyzed from the neck down, Rivlin said his condition worsened in 1986 when he had aneurysm and a resulting operation on his spinal cord. He was then forced to be connected to the ventilator.

OFFICIALS AT Oak Hill, his

home for two years, have demanded that Rivlin be removed from the nursing home before he is disconnected from the equipment. Rivlin said after Gage's ruling that he might go to a friend's house to die if a hospital was unwilling to accept him.

The case has alarmed some physical therapists, who say many quadriplegics and others with permanent physical injuries are leading relatively normal lives.

Rivlin's request "sends a dangerous signal to people with permanent

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