

'Shooting the curl'
— halpipe style, 1D



Mercy is
champ, 1C

Hills has its first
kosher bakery, 3A

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OVERTIME OK'D.
Contractors were given the nod for Saturday overtime at the Hillside Elementary site, if Farmington Public Schools administrators deem it necessary to complete construction by fall.
Although officials believe an Aug. 17 completion date will be met, some construction time was lost during exceptionally cold days in December.
The school board is receiving regular progress updates on the new westside school, on 11 Mile, between Drake and Halsted.

Local man hurt when sign falls

By Joe Bauman
staff writer

A Farmington man and his female passenger were injured Friday when their car struck a sign that fell from a support pole on the Southfield Freeway in Dearborn.

A 41-year-old Detroit woman was killed in the same accident when the sign crushed the top of the car in which she was riding.

Dearborn police refused to identify the 22-year-old Farmington man who was driving the second vehicle, or his passenger, a 22-year-old Southgate woman.

The man was taken to Garden City Hospital where he was treated and released later that night. His passenger was taken to Oakwood Hospital where she was reported in stable condition Sunday.

Larry Topik, 42, of Westland, said he plans to file a lawsuit against the state Department of Transportation to force the agency to make safety improvements.

Topik was driving when the road sign crashed on top of the car, killing his ex-wife, Martha Topik of Detroit. He was unhurt.

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Reminder
Your Observer Carrier will be stopping by this week to collect for the month. Please have the money ready and be sure to get your receipt. It's worth a \$2.00 discount on the next classified advertisement you place in your hometown newspaper.

Sewer bond vote expected this spring

By Casey Hans
staff writer

The Farmington City Council is expected tonight to call for a special bond election to ask voters pay to \$11.2 million for a sewer separation project already approved by the council.
If approved, the bond election would likely be this spring.

The project is expected to cost every household more than \$100 a year.

It's something we have to do — we just have to decide how to do the project," said Mayor Shirley Richardson. "We feel our residents should be given an opportunity to tell us how to pay for it. It's going to be their choice."

SCHEDULED TO start this fall, the project will separate older, combined sewers, improve other parts of the sewer system citywide and build a retention tank to hold sewage until it can be sent to Detroit for treatment. It is expected to take 1 1/2 years to complete.

Voter will decide how to pay for the project — not whether. If bonds are not approved, consumer water and sewer rates will rise. "Not doing the project is not an option," city manager Robert Deadman said.

The project, the largest in the city's history, will cost each household \$120 to \$212 per year for the next 20 years depending on:

• Whether the sale of bonds is approved by voters,

• Whether the city receives a low-interest loan from the state, or

• How much water each household uses if the bonds are not approved and a user fee is tacked onto water and sewer rates.

A PUBLIC hearing for the project has been scheduled for 8 p.m. March 6. The project plans can be reviewed at the city manager's office, city clerk's counter and at the Farmington branch of the Farmington Community Library prior to the hearing.

At the hearing, city engineers will offer details about the project and its effect.

"It is going to inconvenience a number of our citizens. We want them to understand what

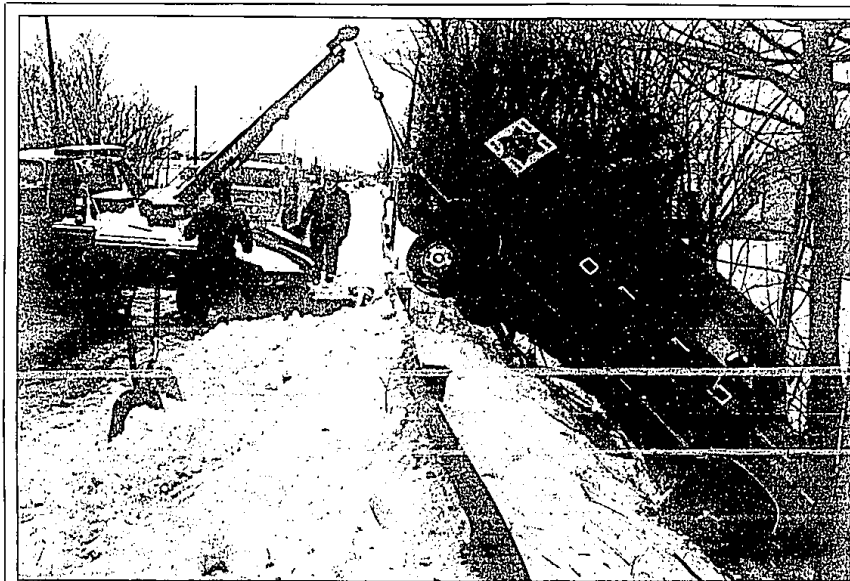
the project is all about," Richardson said.

When engineering plans were reviewed last fall, the estimated cost was \$9.6 million. But a detailed review of the system showed the city would have to move the sewage retention tank and add an odor control system, which increased the cost.

If the city waits for a federally mandated plan, the \$11.2 million for sewer separation could more than triple, Deadman said.

ALTHOUGH SOME sewers in the city are already separated, the combined area becomes a citywide problem because sewage and storm water from those areas flow into the

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Hits tree

Mike Liess of Hadleys Towing and Recovery lifts a Guardian Armored Security truck from the embankment near the Valley View Condominiums on Grand River in Farmington, after it

swerved to avoid a snowbank Thursday morning. Police spent a lot of time during last week's storm helping drivers get their vehicles out of ditches and clogged driveways.

Cops' search was proper — court

By Tim Richard
staff writer

The state Court of Appeals ruled two Farmington Hills police officers conducted a proper search of Frank Sinistaj's car on March 30, 1988 when they found a pistol, cocaine and alcohol.

The panel last week upheld Sinistaj's conviction and Oakland Circuit Judge Richard Kuhn's sentencing of 10 to 20 years in prison for cocaine possession and three to five years on the weapon charge.

"Once defendant and his passenger were arrested,

ed, the police officers were empowered to conduct a warrantless search of the entire passenger compartment of defendant's car and any containers found in the compartment," said the appeals court.

As for the search of the trunk, where officers Brad Schwartz and Ed Wozniak found a brown box with 106 grams of cocaine and a package of baking soda, the court said: "(A) police officer who has probable cause to believe there is contraband somewhere in the automobile may search the entire vehicle and any containers found therein without first obtaining a warrant."

THE APPEALS judges — Maureen P. Reilly, Walter P. Cynar and Thomas M. Burns — upheld Kuhn's minimum 10-year sentence.

Sinistaj said the Legislature reduced the minimum term for the cocaine charge to five years on March 30, 1988. That was two years after the crime but prior to the sentencing. The appeals court, however, said, "Generally a criminal defendant is sentenced according to the statute in force at the time he committed the crime. . . . An amendment to a criminal statute which concerns sentences or punishment is not retroactive."

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BUT FARMINGTON Hills police Chief William Dwyer has no intention of stopping the undercover stings or sending officers into establishments without notice to check for sales to minors.

"I take offense to anyone suggesting that. We don't have the luxury to assign officers to go into 80-90 establishments. That is not a viable program because we do not have the manpower," Dwyer said.

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Lanigan marks 25 years as Larkshire principal

By Loraine McClellan
staff writer

BEFORE MARCH is out, Larkshire Elementary School will be accredited by the North Central Association as an effective model school.

It will be the first elementary school in Farmington — and the second elementary school in the state — to attain the distinction.

"When that happens, I am going to raise the flag here in celebration," said Al Lanigan, who is already celebrating Larkshire's 25th anniversary year and his 25th year as principal of the school.

"I hear a lot of people in the Grosse Pointe schools are working for the accreditation, but they are running about a year behind me."

"WHEN THE school opened (in 1965), this was a transient area. We could lose up to 150 kids from the Fourth Friday count. We were a Chapter 1 School, which means we were entitled to a lot of

people

privileges for a low economic area. About 10 years ago, we started to stabilize. Now we're a constant population, and we can expect a gain or loss of about two to three kids.

"When I make a prediction about population now, I am dead-on, and the population that qualified for Chapter 1 is declining."

Lanigan's entire adult career has been in the Farmington school district. He and his wife, Barbara, now a media specialist in Beechview Elementary, graduated from University of Detroit together. They moved here in 1960 when he was a teacher in Woodale Elementary School.

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Al Lanigan, principal at Larkshire Elementary in Farmington Hills, shares a typical day with his students.