

Rally 'round the flag,
against the war, 1D



Basketball
results, 1C

Top science teacher
a special sparker, 3A



Farmington Observer

Volume 102 Number 38

Monday, February 11, 1991

Farmington, Michigan

48 Pages

Fifty Cents



FUNNY MAN, that Aldo Vagnozzi, mayor of Farmington Hills. His stand-up comedy routine drew laughs galore recently at a reception celebrating the 65th birthday of the neighboring city of Farmington.

At the reception, Farmington Mayor Shirley Richardson explained that the city had taken on a "strong" mayor form of government in 1928 before changing to a "weak" mayor setup with a city manager in 1951.

Quipped Hills' Vagnozzi, in presenting a proclamation to his sister city: "In Farmington Hills we have a feeble mayor form of government. If you're not weak when you go in, you are when you come out."

HAS PAPA Hemingway returned to life to perform skits at the Farmington Community Center.

You might think so if you come to the Community Center on Farmington Road at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 13, to see actor John Saunders play author Ernest Hemingway.

Saunders, a Franklin resident who writes advertising and acts in industrial and educational films, will perform six vignettes on the life and loves of the famous American author.

Saunders, who will be made up to look like Hemingway, then will give a short lecture.

"My interest in Ernest Hemingway goes way back to my college days at Miami in Ohio," said Saunders, who said "sixty-ish" when asked his age. "I've put in a very intensive couple of years studying him."

Tickets at \$8 per person may be purchased at the door.

DONN WOLF, county commissioner from the Farmington area, spoke recently to a service club on "The Mystery Government."

There's no mystery, however, about how to reach the Republican commissioner from the 27th District, which includes Farmington and most of Farmington Hills.

Wolf has established local office hours on the first Saturday of each month. He'll be at the Farmington City Hall (8-10 a.m.) and at the Farmington Hills City Hall (10-15 a.m. to noon). He can be reached at his office at 858-0100.

Wolf, former mayor of Farmington Hills, spoke recently to the Farmington Area Lions' Club about the duties and problems of a county commissioner.

Wolf explained the workings of the county commission and outlines four major areas of concern: solid waste, law enforcement, roads and a code of ethics.

MEMORY LANE — From the Feb. 15, 1991, Farmington Enterprise:

Farmington firefighters braved strong winds and below-zero temperatures as they battled a blaze that destroyed an apple storage barn on the Don Batten farm.

Farmington Township Supervisor Ernest V. Blanchard faced a challenge from Richard Priebe on the Republican ticket in the township primary on Feb. 19, 1991.

Fire caused by a floor oil furnace damaged James Youngblood's house on Jacksonville.

Livonia woman's body found in field

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

One of the two men who found the decomposed body of a Livonia woman on Goldsmith in Farmington Hills Thursday morning said it didn't look like there was any attempt to conceal the body in the underbrush on the vacant lot where she was found.

"You could see her from the car. It looked like possibly a deer was lying back there," said longtime Goldsmith resident Joel Lindman.

The dead woman, Kristine M. Albert, 30, had been reported missing Dec. 21 by her father, Ronald Bekkala of Livonia. Identification found on the body lists the missing woman's

name, police said.

"It's unknown how long she was in the vacant lot," said deputy police chief Mirl Spencer.

An autopsy on the badly decomposed body was performed Thursday by the Oakland County Medical Examiner.

Police don't know the cause of death but are treating it as a homicide, according to Farmington Hills Police Chief William Dwyer.

Officials are waiting for toxicology tests to confirm the cause of death.

Dwyer said the woman was not killed in Farmington Hills.

"The body had been removed from where the death took place. We have determined the

woman died or was killed in a different location and was taken to the field where she was found," Dwyer said.

Lindman said he immediately thought of foul play when he walked up and discovered that what he and another resident saw from the muddy road was a woman whose white dress was not completely covering her.

Lindman said it's amazing no one saw the woman lying there because even before the thaw there wasn't enough snow to make seeing to body from the road difficult.

Albert, who police said was blond and dressed in a white dress, white boots and a

light-colored coat, was also found with her purse, containing money and identification.

The Goldsmith resident who was the first to see something lying in the vacant lot some 20 to 40 feet immediately west of the gravel road, was on his way to work about 9 a.m. Thursday morning, Lindman, also on his way to work, was in the car behind him.

"He flagged me down. He was a little apprehensive about going in and seeing what it was," Lindman said. After Lindman saw the body, he and the other resident waited until Farmington Hills police arrived.

Please turn to Page 6



George Roberts, who lives on Ontaga Street, is all smiles as he watches workers improve the water pipes in his southeast Farmington Hills neighborhood. Hopefully, he'll no longer need his emergency bucket of water.

SHARON LEMIEUX/staff photographer

Getting the breaks

Olde Town folks glad to see water lines fixed

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

George Roberts can toss out the bucket of water he keeps in his laundry tub in case of a water main break in his Olde Town neighborhood.

And for that he thanks Farmington Hills officials and Oakland County water and sewer staff.

"It would be joyous to get the bucket the hell out of our utility sink. They (officials) have made a lot of people down here a helluva lot happier than they were 10 days

"It would be joyous to get the bucket the hell out of our utility sink."

— George Roberts,
Ontaga resident

ago," said the 18-year Ontaga street resident.

Improvements are making Roberts and other residents happy. The underground improvements at Ontaga and Independence and

water mains in that area," said Jim Porter, division manager of Oakland County water and sewer operations. "We wouldn't have had to put a lot of people out of water if we had connections down there. They (improvements) probably should have been done 30 years ago."

COUNTY CREWS have been making connections in Roberts' neighborhood that extend dead-end water pipes.

Please turn to Page 2

Baby's arrival beats EMS crew to home

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Ashley missed her expected arrival into the world by 61 minutes. But she made up for lost time.

When Ashley finally decided to make her debut in the middle of the night, she left no time for her parents, Connie and Larry Hutchinson of Farmington Hills, to get into the car and make it to the hospital.

"It was a very short, intense labor. I realized I was not going to make it to the hospital, so I called the EMS," said Connie Hutchinson.

At 1:09 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 31, emergency medical technicians with the Farmington Hills Fire Department as well as Community Emergency Medical Services of Novi, arrived at the Hutchinsons' home.

But Ashley — "with lots of dark hair, with

light brown highlights" — made her arrival minutes before the emergency crews arrived.

"The baby was super. Mom was super. Everyone was in good spirits," said Bob Hebtzy, assistant to the Farmington Hills fire chief.

EMERGENCY personnel checked the baby — who was fine and weighed in at seven pounds, 14 ounces — and transported mother and child to Providence Hospital, Southfield.

Ashley's arrival at home was a surprise. But Hutchinson said she had faith that her husband, Larry, knew what to do. Ashley is the couple's second child. Her big brother, 3-year-old Christopher made his debut after "a long, drawn-out labor," Hutchinson said.

The evening began quietly. The Hutchinsons attended a program at the Farmington Com-

Please turn to Page 2



SHARON LEMIEUX/staff photographer

Twelve-day-old Ashley surprised everyone with an early debut on Jan. 31. She's with mom Connie and big brother Christopher, 3.

Law updated to save trees

By Casey Hans
staff writer

An updated Farmington law will offer more protection to city-owned trees in the public right-of-way, and guidelines for city employees and residents on removing such trees.

The law also gives parameters and a rating system for identifying "landmark" trees in the city which are to be protected.

Addressing these concerns about updating these laws is just one of several issues facing Farmington as the city continues to age, said city manager Robert Deadman.

"Many trees in the right-of-way have reached the peak of their life cycle and are heading downhill," said Deadman, at whose suggestion the city's beautification committee took on the study and revision as a project. "We've got a series of trees in several areas . . . reaching maturity or struggling to survive because of disease."

A beautification subcommittee's study took one year, and ended last October. The Farmington City Council introduced the ordinance amendment in January and adopted it Feb. 4. The changes amend the city's vegetation law, which had not been reviewed for 30 years, according to city officials.

Please turn to Page 4

what's inside

Building scene	1F
Classifieds	Sec. C, E, F
Index	2F
Auto	Sec. C, E, F
Real estate	Sec. F
Employment	Sec. F
Creative living	1E
Crossword puzzle	6D
Entertainment	5D
On the agenda	3C
Police, fire calls	2A
Sports	Sec. C
Street Scene	Sec. D
Taste	Sec. B

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