

Affordable child care with foreign flair, 4B

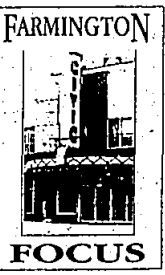


Swimming's best, 1B

Hills music business covers the scale, 3A

Farmington Observer

Volume 103 Number 27 Thursday, January 2, 1992 Farmington, Michigan C44 Pages Fifty Cents



THEY MAY HAVE BEEN "in their cups" (it was a holiday party after all, but that was the whole idea. Members of the Farmington Democratic Club have picked U.S. Sen. Tom Harkin of Iowa from among the party's presidential hopefuls to top the field with 41 percent of the vote in what has come to be known as the "Cup Poll."

The quadrennial survey was taken at the club's recent holiday party at member Barry Brickner's home. Members showed their preference by drinking from a cup labeled with a candidate's name.

"Now you understand this was just coffee and pop we were drinking," said member Aldo Vagnorzi with a laugh.

A similar "cup poll" in 1988 predicted accurately that Michael Dukakis would win that year's Democratic presidential nomination.

This year, New York Gov. Mario Cuomo finished second with a surprising 28 percent as a write-in. The party was held after he announced that he was not a candidate for the nomination. Those who wrote-in Cuomo's name expressed hope that he would enter the race later.

U.S. Sen. Bob Kerrey of Nebraska came in third with 16 percent, followed by Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton with 7 percent, Virginia Gov. Doug Wilder (5), former U.S. Sen. Paul Tsongas (3) and former California Gov. Jerry Brown (0).

Farmington-area Democrats are gearing up for the March 17 presidential primary. Mike Breshbold, club chairman, urged Democratic voters to make sure they qualify to vote in the primary by registering their party preference at the city clerk's office by Feb. 17.

SMILE. SENIOR citizens of the Farmington area, An Oakland-Livingston Human Services Agency wants to snap your photographs.

The photographer will be at the Farmington Hills Senior Center, 28600 11 Mile Road, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday, Jan. 17. Call 478-9147 for a reservation.

Photographs will be used for identification cards needed for participation in the OLIISA senior discount program.

County residents at least 60 years of age may apply for the cards, which show photograph, address, birth date, Social Security number and signature. The laminated cards also carry the Oakland County seal.

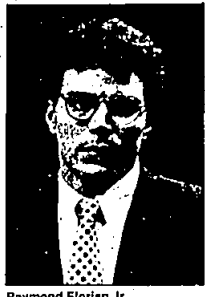
The cards can be used for discounts offered both locally and nationwide. Discounts are available on prescription drugs, eyeglasses, auto parts, rustproofing, cleaners, hair care, clothing and restaurants.

Additional camera locations are being sought by the OLIISA. People interested in having their site considered should call 858-1589. Additional information may be obtained by calling OLIISA's toll-free number, 1-800-482-9250.

MEMORY LANE
From the Jan. 2, 1992 Farmington Observer.

From the Around the Block column: "Farmington's newest business establishment is the Gambles Store located on Grand Street next to the Oak Pharmacy. James Boomer, the store manager, urges all Farmington area residents to watch for the Grand Opening."

Man sentenced in roommate's murder



Raymond Florian Jr. headed for prison

By Casey Hans staff writer

The book on Daniel Magon's life was closed Monday.

Family members of the murdered 40-year-old man headed to his graveside, where they planned to release balloons in Magon's memory and begin their lives anew.

Magon's killer, a 28-year-old ex-Marine named Raymond Joseph Florian Jr., was on his way to prison after being sentenced to an 8-30-year term by Oakland Circuit Judge John O'Brien.

Florian shot and killed Magon at their Newport Creek apartment on Eight Mile in Farmington Hills last July.

Monday's sentencing followed a Dec. 13 jury verdict of second-degree murder and recommendations from the court's probation department.

Florian also received a mandatory two-year prison term for felony firearms charges. The second-degree conviction offers Florian a chance for parole.

'I don't think it (the sentence) was long enough. He'll (Florian) be out before he hits 40. My husband didn't ever get to be 41. What is the justice?'

—Kathleen Magon victim's ex-wife

of Magon's family said they did not feel the punishment fit the crime.

"I don't think it (the sentence) was long enough," said Magon's ex-wife, Kathleen Magon. "He'll (Florian) be out before he hits 40. My husband didn't ever get to be 41. What is the justice? "I think the judge was being easy on him."

Magon's 20-year-old son Jason said that the sentence "doesn't compensate for our loss. If they would have hung him; it would have compensated us."

Joel Jason and his sister Sarah addressed the

court before Florian was sentenced, with Jason saying he felt "cheated and robbed" because of his father's death and Sarah saying she was "confused and hurt" by what had happened.

"Raymond, Florian stripped me of a father who's never going to see me graduate from high school . . . or see his future grandchildren," the tearful teenage daughter told the court. "I respectfully request you impose a sentence equivalent to my loss."

FLORIAN COULD have received up to life in prison for the second-degree murder conviction. Florian said little during the sentencing, telling the judge "I think I've said everything" referring to his taking the stand in his own defense.

Florian's father, Ray Florian Sr., said the jury's verdict, which discounted any premeditation in the murder, "made sense" and said he was not surprised by the sentence.

"He's going to serve his time," said the senior Florian, a retired military major who called the

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photos by SHARON LAMIE/Staff photographer

Ginopolis waitress John Kastrar (right) talks with Marion and Jennifer Ginopolis and family friend Lou Vahantones during a recent lunch hour rush at the Farmington Hills eatery. Kastrar said tough new alcohol laws are hurting all establishments that serve booze, although many groups of patrons are selecting a "designated driver" when they visit. To counter lower alcohol sales, he said, the restaurant offers more appetizers and desserts.



Ginopolis waitress Pat "Sam" Dillon wears a button prominently on her suspenders indicating who will not serve underage patrons at the Farmington Hills restaurant. She said the button is a "good conversation starter when she needs to cut someone off who's had enough to drink."

Former official free on bond

By Susan Buck staff writer

The former treasurer for Nardin Park United Methodist Church in Farmington Hills isn't saying much to police about why she might have embezzled almost \$150,000 from the church, said Hills Detective Sgt. Charles Nebus.

Barbara Esler, a 56-year-old Royal Oak resident, will be arraigned Jan. 14 before Judge Robert Tempin, Oakland County Circuit Court on four counts of embezzlement involving 78 checks totalling \$145,000-\$150,000.

She's free on \$10,000 bond because she has no previous criminal record, Nebus said. Her telephone number is unpublished, and she could not be reached.

On Dec. 30, Farmington Hills Detective Darrell Krause talked to Esler's 28-year-old alleged boyfriend, who lives in Florida.

"We've talked to a man who claims to be her boyfriend," Nebus said. "He acknowledged receiving large sums of money but denied knowledge that it was stolen."

Esler apparently wrote the checks to herself as loans to the boyfriend whose name police wouldn't confirm Monday because he hasn't been charged. He's due up in Michigan for a police interview within a week, Nebus said.

She (Esler) cashed the checks and deposited them in her own checking account," Nebus said.

HOWARD ARNHOFF, Esler's attorney, did not return phone calls Monday.

However, in another interview, Arnhoff said Esler loaned her boyfriend the money to finance his "business dealings."

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Tough new law Drunk drivers face quicker, stiffer penalties

See Community Corner, 4A

By Casey Hans staff writer

It won't be a happy new year for people who drive drunk in Michigan.

Beginning this week, drunk drivers face an immediate suspension of driving privileges and stiff fines, if convicted, and a swift ride through the court system.

That includes first-time offenders who face a mandatory six-month license suspension, with no restricted license for the first 30 days. A driver's license will be revoked on a second offense.

'The thrust of all these laws is to make punishment quick and sure and speed this through the courts. They're treating this as the serious crime that it is.'

—Frank Leuhoff public safety chief

The new law, passed by the state Legislature last July and which became effective Jan. 1, also creates new felony laws for those who drink and drive and kill someone in an auto accident.

Citizen groups like Mothers Against Drunk Driving, prosecutors, traffic safety agencies and police associations lobbied hard for the legislation, which ensures the state will receive federal alcohol incentive money.

"The thrust of all these laws is to make punishment quick and sure and speed this through the courts," said Farmington Department of Public Safety director Frank Leuhoff, who added that he is pleased with the tough new law despite extra pressure on police and courts to handle the cases quickly.

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Farmington students push up college entrance exam scores

By Casey Hans staff writer

Student scores on two nationally accepted college entrance tests rose this year in the Farmington Public Schools.

Improved scores were logged for 1991 in both the Scholastic Aptitude Test (the SAT) and the American College Test (the ACT). Both test verbal and math skills and are used by college-bound students to gain entry into colleges and universities.

High school juniors, plus a few seniors, usually take the tests.

District scores were released during a testing report in December.

Scores were not released for individual high schools.

On the average, Farmington students beat last year's scores from the district and also were above both state and national averages.

District director of assessment and evaluation, Frederica Frost, warned that because the SAT and ACT tests are elective, the group being tested is a "potentially biased sample." Because of that, she said, the college entrance tests should not be followed in the same light as skill tests like the Michigan Educational Assessment Program, or MEAP, which tests the skills of all students in various grade levels.

Also, about 75 percent of students in the district's three high schools take the test, including students with all levels of academic ability, because counselors encourage it. That compares with about 33 percent of students who take the tests nationally.

FROST SAID that can sometimes skew the figures, "when other districts have a smaller percentage of students being tested and show higher results."

On the ACT, Farmington students had composite scores of 22.1 in 1991

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