

# Farmington Observer

VOLUME 103 NUMBER 67

THURSDAY, MAY 21, 1992 • FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN • 80 PAGES

FIFTY CENTS

© 1992 Suburban Communications Corporation

## IN THE PAPER TODAY

**Not too young:** They are the littlest victims, but children often must testify in court. A regional program helps ease their fears. /7A

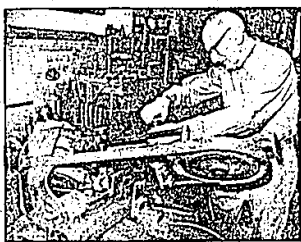
**Group formed:** Some Farmington-area people have formed a group to combat the bashing of public education. /15A

## SPORTS

**District soccer:** The process of determining a state champion in girls soccer began this week with district tournament play. All four of the Farmington teams were in semifinal action Wednesday. /1B

**League finals:** The Western Lakes Activities Association and the Catholic League determined their champions in girls track and field Tuesday. /1B

## BUSINESS



**Second career:** Don't mention the word retirement to the 92-year-old saw operator of an area company. He tried it once but finds work more rewarding — and he rarely misses a day. /12B

**Financial focus:** A couple faces scaling back their retirement expectations unless they can trim impulse buying and start a strict savings plan. /12B

## SUBURBAN LIFE

**Being neighborly:** Farmington Hills neighbors and Farmington woman tell what it takes to be a good neighbor. /1C

## ENTERTAINMENT

**Theater:** Avon Players present funny, fast-paced production of "Dames at Sea." /7B

## INDEX

Building Scene Sec. G Employment Sec. E, F  
Business . . . 12B Creative living . . . 1D  
Cable Connection 10B Crossword puzzle . . 4F  
Classifieds Secs. D-G Entertainment . . 7-9H  
Auto . . . Sec. F, G Opinion . . . 16A  
Real estate Secs. D, E Police, fire calls . . 6A

## OUR PHONE NUMBERS

Newsroom: 477-5450  
Newsroom Fax: 477-3722  
Sports: 953-2141  
Reader Comment Line: 953-2042  
Classified Advertising: 591-0900  
Display Advertising: 591-2300  
Home Delivery: 591-0500  
Cable/TV Weekly: 953-2189



On the lookout: Joe Derek (left) and Roy Lindhardt, members of a local naturalists club, keep a sharp eye out for bluebirds in Heritage Park.

## They're back in a flap

After a long absence, bluebirds are making their nests in the Farmington area, according to some amateur naturalists. You might catch a glimpse of one in Heritage Park. People are urged not to tamper with the distinctive little birds, however.

BY JOANNE MALINZEWSKI  
STAFF WRITER

"They're rrrrrre back. Bluebirds, that is. They are as blue as the sky. It is just wonderful to have them back," said Jenn Fox, a member of the Farmington Naturalists Club.

It's been awhile — like since the 1920s — since the small, insect-eating bluebirds (not to be confused with bluejays) have called the Farmington area home.

Some of the rare birds have now returned to Heritage Park thanks to the Farmington Naturalists Club, whose members put up 16 boxes March 1 to attract the birds with blue feathers and orange-red breasts.

"The benefit is the excitement you feel of going out and watching these marvelous little birds," said Don Trevis, owner of Backyard Birds, Farmington. "They haven't been seen in Michigan for years. They declined 90 percent in a very short time."

That's because of development which took over farmlands and with

it old or dead trees where bluebirds nested. Farmers also no longer use wooden fence posts, another favorite nesting spot. Pesticides haven't helped either.

"I had never seen a bluebird in Michigan until about three years ago," said Farmington Hills naturalist Joe Derek, a club member. "This is the first documented nesting of bluebirds in Farmington since 1923."

Plentiful house sparrows — which are not native to North America and are not protected — haven't helped the bluebird population. They are a natural enemy. "They will kill a whole family to take over a nest," Trevis said.

The club's project began after 85-year-old Alan Bolton — a former Farmington native — talked to members about bluebirds. Bolton, who now lives in Fenton, makes bluebird boxes, which Trevis stores.

See BLUEBIRDS, 11A



Blrd's-eye view: A bluebird perches atop a bush in Heritage Park.

## Some are feeling left out

BY JOANNE MALINZEWSKI  
STAFF WRITER

Some Springland-LaMueria subdivision residents feel left out.

"Our biggest complaint is that we have been left out of the process. We are most affected by this. We have insights

## REZONING

that were not presented at trial," said Michael Fabian, homeowners association president.

Some subdivision residents — particularly those adjoining 9.08 acres of property, north of Springland and east of Orchard Lake Road — are unhappy with a proposed consent judgment the city council is considering for the property, which is zoned single-family residential.

After several unsuccessful attempts to rezone the property from single-family, property owner Kay McMahan of Ohio sued the city. Oakland County Circuit Judge Hilda Gage in August ruled that the property should be zoned office.

That decision concerns residents, particularly because they were not informed of the trial and had no chance to offer their opinions. But they're equally unhappy about a proposed consent judgment that offers McMahan options including office, multiple-family, single-family and elderly housing.

The proposed judgment offers incentives for the owner or a developer on the residential options such as a waiver of the city's tree ordinance, smaller setbacks than usually required and taller than usually allowed buildings.

## A 'scary judgment'

After residents, including Janet Rose, a board member, told the council May 11 that the proposed consent judgment was inappropriate, the council postponed action. Members met in closed session early Tues. lay morning to discuss the matter.

City Manager William Costick said neighbors will be invited to a closed session tentatively scheduled for June 1, providing McMahan's attorney, Joe Galvin, of Detroit extends his June 1 deadline.

"There were so many things that were scary about the consent judgment," said Rose, who believes the city should appeal Judge Gage's August ruling.

See SUBDIVISION, 1A

## 2 cities turn up nose at county plan

BY CASEY HANS  
STAFF WRITER

Both Farmington and Farmington Hills have turned thumbs down to an inter-governmental agreement for solid waste proposed by Oakland County, saying the county needs to go back to the drawing board.

The city council decisions weren't surprising, since the regional recycling authority to which the two cities belong had already recommended the action.

But city officials say they want the county to continue an active role in solid waste and not just leave it to local communities. "They are the only agency that can do it regionally," said Farmington Hills City Manager William Costick. "For over a decade, the county

■ But city officials say they want the county to continue an active role in solid waste and not just leave it to local communities.

has been involved in solid waste planning. I hope that the county continues to maintain its role."

Roger Smith, deputy director of Oakland County's waste management division, has said he will recommend continued county involvement, but will offer other options which include having the county abandon its operating role,

leaving it to local municipalities.

Farmington City Manager Robert Deadman, who chairs the regional Resource Recovery and Recycling Authority of Southwest Oakland County (RRRASOC) of which Farmington and Farmington Hills are members, explained that the county "plan, as it stands, represents an unknown. He said the county program "is rather diminished" because of the proposed incinerator project, which is in shambles, and the lack of viable landfill space for long-term use.

RRRASOC represents Farmington, Farmington Hills, Southfield, Novi, Walled Lake, Wixom, South Lyon and Lyon Township.

"We won't enter into it (the program)

until their program is better defined," Deadman said. "We don't know what we're buying into."

Costick said he would like to see Oakland County continue to take a leadership role and "work towards recycling and a long-term landfill facility. I appreciate what the county's done, but it's time to re-examine where we are."

Farmington and Farmington Hills have joined other communities such as Southfield, West Bloomfield and Troy which "in saying "no" to the county plan, which asks all its communities to commit to using Oakland County as its agency for garbage handling, recycling, and composting programs.

See COUNTY, 2A

## Minutes brought home

Now brittle and yellowed, the original minutes of the first 20 years of the village of Farmington — dating to May 6, 1867 — have been returned to the people of Farmington, the rightful owner.

For more than 100 years, the bound minutes, taken in the script of the day, have been in safekeeping in the possession of Farmington's founding family, the Powers.

At the recent kickoff reception for Farmington's 125th anniversary celebration of a village, the Power family presented the minutes to the Farmington Historical Society.

Copies will be made available for public viewing in the History Room of the Farmington Community Library's downtown Farmington branch, Liberty and State streets.

## FARMINGTON FOCUS

The kickoff reception was held May 6 at the Farmington Historical Museum exactly 125 years from the day of the town's incorporation as a village.

Robert Power, a Marshall resident and the Power family historian, was unable to attend the reception. He's a great-great-grandson of Farmington's founder, Arthur Power, who came here with family members from Farmington, N.Y., in 1824.

Robert Power's cousin, Farmington Observer publisher Phil Power, was master of ceremonies at the reception.

## Rap, Rock and Read' planned

The Farmington Community Library's summer reading program for youngsters will be kicked off at 7 p.m. Monday, June 1, with an open house at the Farmington Hills branch, 32757 W. 12 Mile Road.

The event will feature Margaret Schmidt of Maplewoods Farm who will play her assortment of exotic musical instruments. She'll also bring along a live goat.

The summer reading program, known as "Rap, Rock and Read," is open to children of all ages. For more information, call the library at 553-0300.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21888 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, or dropped off at the newspaper office.