

# Farmington Observer

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FIFTY CENTS

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## IN THE PAPER TODAY

**Never say die:** Why is Oakland County taking another look at including an incinerator in its trash disposal plans?/5A

**Boating mishap:** Two Detroit Country Day students lost their lives in an accident on Gilbert Lake on Thursday./2A

## TRAVEL

**Road to Rio:** Brazil's Rio de Janeiro has been spruced up for the Earth Summit./8A

## TASTE

**Strawberry picking:** Area farmers say the pickens will be good when Michigan strawberry season starts June 10. There are lots of U-pick farms nearby where you can get the pick of the crop./1B

**Winner Dinner:** Anne Albertus of Rochester Hills shares her cold tuna pasta salad and cool side dish recipes./1B

## STREET SCENE



**On a fence:** Dulci Fence performs a shimmering brand of guitar pop, using the broadest strokes and the simplest melodies. But it is a problem. The Chapel Hill, N.C. band has the sound, but its music isn't getting played on the radio./4B

## SPORTS

**League inductee:** Jack Herberholz of Farmington Hills will be inducted into the Catholic League Hall of Fame tonight./1C

**All-area track:** The best in Oberverland boys track and field includes a number of Farmington athletes./3C

## CABLE TV WEEKLY

**Local access:** "Speakers Row" will be presented on Channel 12. Check your cable guide for time and date.

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Recording the find: Cathy Bean holds up a bucket with a specimen so that zoologist Rick Usher and Farmington Hills naturalist Joe Derek can see it. Usher advises and Derek sits on the Peltz-MDOT committee.

## Site is wildlife haven



A variety of wildlife can be found on the Peltz-MDOT property, located in the middle of urban Farmington Hills. In a recent survey, zoologists recently found raccoons, mink, badger, white tail deer, hawks, owls and several kinds of snakes.

By JOANNE MALINZESKI  
STAFF WRITER

While humans have battled over the future of the Peltz-MDOT acreage in Farmington Hills, there's plenty of wildlife and fish that have settled into the property and call it home.

"Typically, we have a very healthy habitat," said Rick Usher, a zoologist who is working with Todd Holloway, a consultant with the city and Peltz-MDOT ad hoc committee.

Holloway has developed plans for the current replacement of wetlands from the 12 Mile boulevard project to the northwestern section of the MDOT land, south of I-696, between Farmington and Drake roads.

"There's too much here not to protect the backbone of the site ecology," Holloway said of the acreage.

Ron Spitzer, district fisheries biologist for the state Department of Natural Resources agreed. "We have to address the whole Rouge River system as valuable," he said.

Spitzer has that opinion despite discouraging efforts lately to locate two threatened or endangered fish species in the larger of two creeks traversing the Peltz-MDOT property.

Spitzer, as well as Cathy Bean, who works in surface water quality for the DNR, and Jennifer Bean, of the DNR's Land and Water Management Division, conducted a survey of fish species in the creek by what is called electrofishing. A measured amount of electrical current is put in the water that stuns the fish long enough for the DNR representatives to determine the species.

"For as low as the flow was, we saw an abundance of fish," Spitzer said. But they didn't find the Red Side Dace or the Northern Mad-Tom, both

fish that are either threatened or endangered but believed to be on Peltz-MDOT.

"It's discouraging. But it doesn't mean the fish aren't in the system," Spitzer said.

In his surveys, Usher, however, includes both fish as ones he has seen in the creek.

Usher offered his services to conduct what he calls a short overview of the property. As far as mammals go, Usher has found raccoons, mink, badger, striped skunk, white-tailed deer, eastern cottontail, snowshoe hare, woodchuck, eastern chipmunk, southern flying squirrel, fox and red squirrel, red-tail hawk, birds included cooper's hawk, eastern screech owl, and great horned owl.

That's not to mention the northern water snake, massasauga (or timber rattlesnake), eastern garter snake and northern ribbon snake. In the fish category, Usher found the tailspot mud minnow, spoonhead mottled sculpin, northern silverside, creek chub, common shiner, central mud minnow and log perch.

See HAVEN, 6A

## Probation given for assault of teen

By CASEY HANS  
STAFF WRITER

The co-owner of a Farmington Hills eatery has pleaded guilty and will serve probation time for two felony counts, one reduced from the original charge, in a case involving the sexual assault of a

## SENTENCING

15-year-old female employee in July of last year.

Frank Blair, 30, co-owner of the Courmet To Go in the Mulwood Square shopping center in Farmington Hills, pleaded guilty to two charges of second degree criminal sexual conduct in the case, which are 15-year felonies. Oakland Circuit Judge Robert Anderson sentenced him to serve five years probation and pay court costs of \$1,200, according to information from the court.

As part of the probation term, he will not be allowed to employ minor children.

Blair was originally charged with one count of first degree and one count of second degree CSC. He had pleaded guilty to the reduced charges, then retracted his plea and was ordered to stand trial on the original charges. The final plea and sentencing came last Wednesday in Anderson's courtroom, after the judge met with those involved in the case, including the victim's family.

The incident occurred in the city of Novi in July of 1991, when Blair had reportedly taken the victim on a date and the two were discovered by a Novi police officer in the back of his truck.

The victim's father, a Farmington Hills police officer, said last week his family is happy his daughter will not have to go through a trial.

"We're not disappointed because of that," he said. "But she was disappointed he wasn't going to jail."

She has gone through extensive counseling because of the incident.

Attorney Robert Igrisan of Farmington, who represented Blair, said "the sentence is fine," but added that he was upset with news coverage of the case. He offered no further comment.

Oakland County Assistant prosecutor Lisa Green could not be reached for comment.

The victim's father had asked the judge to prevent Blair from hiring minor children at his restaurant. His daughter, now 16, at first didn't want to report the incident for fear of losing her job, he said.

## 2 school board seats at stake in today's vote

Voters in the Farmington Public School District will go to the polls today to elect two members to the board of education.

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., and voters should remember to refer to new precincts when going to the polls to vote. School precincts are different than those used in municipal, state and national elections.

There are three candidates running for two, four-year terms open on the Farmington board, which includes the city of Farmington, most of Farmington Hills and a small portion of West

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Bloomfield Township.

The two top vote-getters will win seats on the board.

Candidates, listed in alphabetical order, include:

- Richard DeVries, 42, a Ford Motor Co. engineer who is making his third

run for the board. He calls for curriculum improvement, fiscal responsibility and accountability of the district: The Farmington Hills resident lives on Chesapeake Court in Farmington Hills, is married and has three children.

- Helen Prutow, 52, is an incumbent

board member who is vying for a fifth term on the school board. She was just re-elected to another six-year term on the Oakland Intermediate board, where she currently serves as president. She lives on 13 Mile Road in Farmington Hills, is married and has two grown sons.

- Joseph Svoke, 48, a longtime board watcher who is a manager with the Deventer Corp. of Southfield, a computer and engineering consulting firm. His top issues include school financing, quality of education and accountability of the district.

## Small world, isn't it?

Small World Department, Farmington Division: Paul Zuby found a wallet with ID, credit cards and several hundred dollars in cash. Of course, he did the right thing.

And he didn't have to go far to do the right thing. Zuby, who owns and manages Northville Locksmith, found the fall wallet at the Six Mile/Haggerty Road area, miles from his Farmington home.

When Zuby showed the wallet to his next door neighbor, George Maier, what a surprise they got. It belonged to a friend of Maier's who had lost it following a round of golf at a Wayne County course.

"Apparently, he put the wallet on the bumper of his car, forgot it and drove off," said Zuby's wife, Kelly.

## Off to work they go

About 35 young people from St. Fabien Parish in

## FARMINGTON FOCUS

Farmington Hills will participate in a weeklong workcamp June 21-27 to help the people of Patton, Pa.

They will join more than 400 young people and their adult leaders from across the nation who will participate in the workcamp. They will construct, repair and weatherize houses for elderly, poor and disabled people.

"The workcamp will provide a unique opportunity for these young people to show their Christian faith by working together to help others," Harry Foster, workcamp director. "They'll feel good knowing that

their service will make a family warm and dry this winter."

## Memory Lane

From the June 12, 1952 edition of the Farmington Enterprise:

• Crystal Mae Snyder became the first Farmington traffic fatality since 1949 when she was struck by a car on Grand River near Hawthorns. The driver, a Detroit man, was arraigned on a charge of negligent homicide.

• Charles Sullivan of Farmington was in serious condition after being hit by a train after his car stalled on the track near Evergreen and Fullerton in Detroit.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21898 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, or dropped off at the newspaper office.