

Farmington Observer

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Special announcements

Starting today, local wedding and engagement notices are part of your Farmington Suburban Life section. The move is an effort to better serve our readers by getting these important personal announcements into the Farmington Observer in a more timely manner. Farmington and Farmington Hills residents should send their wedding and engagement information along with a photograph to Diane Gale, suburban life editor, at 21899 Farmington Road, Farmington, Mich. 48336. Preprinted forms that outline the information needed for your announcement are available in the Farmington office. If you have questions regarding your announcement, call Diane Gale at 477-5450.

4 counts dropped in age lawsuit



Norman Dickson's lawsuit against the Farmington School District is four counts lighter thanks to a Tuesday ruling by Circuit Court Judge Robert Anderson. Dickson filed the suit after being passed over for a promotion.

By LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Four of six counts of a lawsuit filed by a Harrison High assistant principal have been granted a summary disposition, in effect throwing them out of court.

Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Robert Anderson ruled in favor of the school district's request to throw out four charges in a hearing Tuesday on an age discrimination suit filed by Norman Dickson. Dickson, 55, filed the suit in July

after being passed over for the principal's job at Harrison. The district hired Rande Horn, 41, to replace Clayton Graham, who retired in June.

The count charging age discrimination remains. Dickson has asked for the court to appoint him principal.

The suit was amended March 22 to include a count against the Farmington Association of School Administrators, charging breach of duty of fair representation. FASA is the school administrators' union. No hearing date has been set as of yet in the charge against the union.

"We're going to fight it," said FASA president Ken Dean, an assistant principal at Farmington High. "We feel we represent all of the membership appropriately."

A trial date has been set for May 31 on the age discrimination count.

Douglass Witters, attorney for the school district, said he'll ask for a summary disposition on the count of age discrimination in an attempt to get it thrown out as well.

See LAWSUIT, 4A

IN THE PAPER

TODAY

Arena talk: After lengthy public discussion, it looks like the voters will have the last word on the proposed ice arena for Farmington Hills. /2A

Royal treatment: Although she has links to royalty, Dee Arthamas is hoping she can succeed in the competitive restaurant business in Farmington Hills. /11A

OPINION

A bad sign: Is that garish green sign at Grand River and Farmington Road announcing the Masonic Temple or Camp Swampy? /16A

Just hanging around: Farmington Observer reporter Bill Coutant takes on the mountain climber's wall at Benchmark. /17A

SPORTS

Boys track: The Farmington and North Farmington teams will rely heavily on their distance runners this year. /1B

Soccer outlook: First-year coach Bob Neff is counting a strong defense to make the Farmington girls team competitive. /1B

SUBURBAN LIFE

Stitch by stitch: A Farmington woman and her partner take their needles and thread to a new Livonia shop. /1C

Dropping anchor: Center acts as stabilizing force for women who need a helping hand. /1C

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What they're saying about the sign



SHARON LAMBERT/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A thumb's up: Lester Weismiller of Farmington Hills took time out from his bike ride to tell the Observer that he likes the new sign downtown.

Opinions on new temple sign: doom and bloom

By LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

They rub their chins and scratch their heads. One person's ill-conceived paint blotch is another's Picasso.

One thing can be interpreted from the new sign on the northwest corner of Grand River and Farmington Road: Everyone is a critic.

There are opinions aplenty when it comes to the green plank designed to call attention to the historic Masonic Temple. And the sign does, though some say it has the visual loudness quotient of an Anthrax

concert behind a revving 747.

A butterfly, grasshopper and frog are depicted in a marsh setting in an Irish kelly green. The mural portion of the sign is sometimes covered to highlight specific events at the Masonic Temple.

The sign is part of the Downtown Development Authority's renovation of the corner. The price tag on the sign: \$3,200.

Mike LaFever sees it every day. He cuts hair across the street at the Korner Barber Shop. He can't help but take a few snips at the board.

"The green is a little too vivid,"

LaFever said. "Personally, myself, I don't understand how the grasshopper, the butterfly and the frog . . . how it fits in with Farmington."

"It looks like something that belongs in front of a nature center. It looks out of place in front of the Masonic Temple."

DDA board member Bill Ray, of Ray's Interiors, was more direct at a March 1 meeting: "It seems to me to be garish."

See SIGN, 4A

Give us a sign

What's your opinion of the new green sign near the Masonic Temple at Grand River and Farmington Road?

Call 953-2033



ROTARY DIAL MAY BE USED

Back-to-basics school candidate backs out of race

By LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

The back-to-basics candidate is dropping out. So, the Farmington Board of Education race is back to two incumbents.

Doug Swiatkowski, 28, said he's bowing out for personal reasons. At the core of his decision is a possible

job relocation, which he said has 40-60 odds.

"I'm going to have to," Swiatkowski said. "It's not fair for me to take contributions or use volunteer time."

That leaves board members Cathy Webb and Jack Inch in what would be an uncontested race. Swiatkowski

has until April 14 to withdraw officially. He did not withdraw as of Tuesday.

"If petitions are in and verified, they simply need to bring a letter to my office saying that they do not wish to have their name on the ballot," said Betsy Rothrock in the district business office.

Deadline to file is April 11. The election is June 13. Webb and Inch have not turned in their nominating petitions yet, though both publicly announced they are seeking re-election.

"I would anticipate seeing them

See CANDIDATE, 2A

Making her Mark

Fiorline Mark, president and CEO of The W Group Inc., the largest franchise of the Farmington Hills-based Weight Watchers International, has received an award from the National Association of Women Business Owners recognizing her as one of the top 25 women business owners in Michigan.

Gov. John Engler recently presented the awards at a dinner held at the Marriott Hotel in Southfield. Mark, a Farmington Hills resident, was out of town on business. Her daughter, Sheri Mark, accepted on her mother's behalf.

Since Mark began her franchise more than 27 years ago, it has grown to become the sixth largest woman-owned business in the country with more than 2,500 employees.

FARMINGTON FOCUS

Women-owned companies in Michigan generate more than \$760 million within the economy of the state and employ thousands of Michigan residents.

Wanted: Raymond DeYoung

P aging Raymond DeYoung . . . some people from your old Army unit want to know your whereabouts.

DeYoung, who lived in the Farmington area at some point, served in the 103rd Division Signal Company.

"Our company is planning a reunion to com-

memorate the 50th anniversary of our landing in France and we are trying to locate all the members," said Harold Rorem.

Anyone with information about DeYoung should write Rorem at 4112 Janet Lane, Brooklyn Center, Minn. 55429.

Memory Lane

From the April 1, 1954, edition of the Farmington Enterprise:

■ Voters in the Farmington Township School District approved a \$1.5 million building plan with about 14 percent of the registered voters turning out. The money will pay for about 40 new elementary classrooms and an auditorium at the new Farmington High School.

■ Attraction at the Civic Theater was "Miss Sadie Thompson" starring Rita Hayworth.