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Farmington Observer

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IN THE PAPER

TODAY

Power problem: An 11-year-old Power Middle School student has been suspended pending a review after the "jabbing" of another student with a paring knife. /2A

Here's to Aldo! Aldo Vagnozzi, a Democrat in rock-ribbed Republican territory, was honored recently for his many years of public service. /3A

On trial: One teen has been found innocent and another will be tried Monday for negligent homicide in the traffic death of a 16-year-old last year. /3A

Quite a crowd: More than 2,000 packed Adat Shalom in Farmington Hills Monday to hear Thomas Keneally, author of "Schindler's List." /3A

OPINION

A hectic time: The month of May is full of opportunities for those who want to get to know their community better. /18A

Write on! Letters, we get letters... on a variety of subjects from Farmington-area readers. /18A

SPORTS

Soccer duel: North Farmington tried to win supremacy among public school teams Wednesday in a game against Farmington. /1B

Track event: The 24th Annual Observerland Relays for area boys track teams will take place Saturday. /1B

ENTERTAINMENT

Theater: Find out what critics have to say about shows now playing in your community. /8B

SUBURBAN LIFE

Hair raising: Get some tips from the experts on what to do on those bad hair days. /1C

Gotta dance: Longtime dance teacher Barbara Hatch has opened a new dance theater in downtown Farmington. /1C

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Cops: Gang up on graffiti



"Here's where we're at: We can't ignore this," says Gary Goss, Farmington's public safety director, after gang graffiti was discovered spray painted in the Meadows subdivision Saturday morning.

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Farmington police are investigating after a rash of vandalism where gang graffiti was spray painted in the Meadows subdivision in the city's south end.

Many residents awoke Saturday morning to find gang symbols and

profanity painted on vehicles, garage doors, sidewalks and lamp posts.

Some 22 incidents were reported April 30 and May 1. Damage is estimated to be more than \$3,000. Police believe the vandals are in their early teens and live in the subdivision.

A Neighborhood Watch meeting for the area has been called for 7 p.m.

Tuesday, May 10, at Flanders Elementary. Gangs will be the topic.

"Here's where we're at: We can't ignore this," said Farmington Public Safety Director Gary Goss. "The subculture is out there."

Gang graffiti has been appearing in Farmington and Farmington Hills recently. In Farmington, most of it has been found behind businesses along Grand River Avenue.

This is the first major incident reported in a neighborhood, though.

Crudely painted symbols were

See GRAFFITI, 4A



Gary Goss

Hanging in there



SHARON LEMMEL/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Spring cleaning: When spring arrives, a window washer's thoughts turn to... soapy water and a good, stout rope. That may have been what was on Jaime Leos' mind recently as he cleaned the third-story windows of the Gateway office complex.

City gets lesson in historical districts

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

To rework Santayana's philosophy, those who don't know the historical commission's authority are sometimes made to repeat it.

Just ask Farmington city attorney John Donahue.

At Monday's City Council meeting, Donahue admitted he was wrong when he said previously that the Farmington Historical Commission did not have the authority to designate supplemental historic districts. They do, according to the city ordinance.

"I'm not saying that's wise," Donahue said.

Historical commission member Nancy Leonard said she couldn't hear Donahue. The attorney spoke a little louder.

"I just wanted to hear you say it," Leonard said.

The ordinance has worked so far, Donahue said. He doesn't suggest changing it.

City officials were seemingly caught by surprise with the historical commission's authority. In fact, the commission has four supplemental districts already designated.

Those include the house on the south side of Oakland Street, west of Thayer-Rock Funeral Home; and houses at 23609 and 23605 Warner owned by Roy Miller and the estate of Ed Thayer, respectively; and a home at 32604 Grand River owned by Anne Samborski.

The four supplemental districts are in addition to the historic district, which runs roughly from the First Methodist Church to Oakwood Cemetery along Grand River and Shiawassee.

"When did these become supplemental districts?" asked Councilman William Hartsock.

The ordinance gives the commission a say, albeit a small one. If a designated historical structure is being altered, in addition to getting a building permit, the plan must also go before the historical commission for review.

See HISTORY, 2A

Hills ice arena proposal hits slippery spot: money

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

There seems to be a crack in the ice arena proposal Farmington Hills City Council members are asking voters to approve.

Although the plan to design and

ask voters to approve bonding for a \$6 million multi-purpose ice arena is on schedule, council members and parks and recreation commissioners were divided about how to pay for it.

A memo to council members from Mayor Larry Lichtman and com-

ments from Dennis Fitzgerald, who just finished a term as chairman of the parks and recreation commission, got too personal for several council members at Monday's joint council and parks and recreation commission study session.

Councilwoman Cheryl Oliverio characterized Lichtman's memo, which criticized her proposal to ask voters to extend the parks millage to cover a possible shortfall for the arena.

See ARENA, 7A

Curtain up at FHSI

Farmington High's actors and actresses will stage "Father of the Bride" Friday-Saturday, May 6-7, in the auditorium of the high school on Shiawassee west of Orchard Lake Road. The curtain goes up at 8 p.m. both dates. Tickets at \$4 for students and \$6 for adults may be bought at the door. Senior citizens with the proper ID are admitted at no charge.

Anyone for golf?

You need a golf break... and a little Mike Ridley humor! That's the line they're using to promote the annual Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce Golf Outing to be held Thursday, May 26, at Glen Oaks Golf Course on 13 Mile Road in Farmington Hills.

FARMINGTON FOCUS

The first tee time will be 8 a.m. and dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m.

Ridley, a comedian and author of "Attitude Check," will entertain at the dinner portion of the event. A scramble format will be used for the golf, and there will be closest-to-the-pin, longest-drive, best-dressed and putting contests, as well as door prizes.

Cost is \$99 per person for golf and dinner or \$39 for dinner only. The chamber and the Farmington Area Goodwillers will benefit. Call the chamber at 474-3440 for more information.

Memory Lane

From the May 6, 1954, edition of the Farmington Enterprise:

■ Relief from dusty conditions around Ten Mile School was in sight with the announcement that the County Road Commission planned to pave Ten Mile Road from Orchard Lake to Farmington roads.

■ Warren Piche, a teacher and coach at Farmington High School, was named director of the Farmington Area Recreation Commission.

■ Jesse Stevens came to Farmington and Kenneth Loomis traveled to Paw Paw in the annual Mayor Exchange Day during Michigan Week.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21888 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, faxed to 477-9723 or dropped off at the newspaper office.