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Schools say the bus stops here



Sounding an alarm over safety for students at the school bus stops has become part of the back-to-school ritual in the Farmington area.

By LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

School starts Tuesday in Farmington. The ringing heard is not the morning bell, though. It's a group of parents sounding an alarm over where the bus will pick up their children.

Residents of the Rolling Oaks West subdivision in northern Farmington

Hills are the latest to lodge a bus stop complaint with the Board of Education.

They want their children who attend Warner Middle School to be picked up and dropped off on Huntman and Drake roads, south of the scheduled stop on Forestville and Bycroft, off 14 Mile Road.

Residents say speeders make their

subdivision streets unsafe, especially for kids walking in the dark during the winter.

District transportation officials have twice rejected the request. One reason is it would add extra time to the route, Transportation director Bev Hausman said.

"We don't feel they are being asked to walk too far," Hausman said. "Middle school students should be capable of walking along subdivision streets."

Sanford Kaplan took his association's concerns to the board. "I don't know what the next step is," said Kaplan, who is president of

the Rolling Oaks West homeowners association. "That's why we're here."

The board's safety committee agreed to look into it further.

Farmington Public Schools instituted main road busing for middle and high school students in 1992. The move netted \$1 million in savings after the district lost \$5 million to state-aid recapture.

At the time, critics contended those savings came at the expense of safety. No accidents involving students at bus stops have occurred since the policy was adopted.

See BUS, 2A

Going to the Korner for a clip



JOHN HEALEY/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A wary eye: James Coyle of Farmington Hills keeps an eye on barber John Petro at the Korner Barber Shop in downtown Farmington.

Barber shop talk cut above

By LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

It's all there at the Korner Barber.

The hum of a razor as it meets a unshorn neck, a furious symphony of scissors snipping away, the medicinal aroma of aftershave wafting above the din, dog-eared copies of Sports Illustrated, Car & Driver and Popular Mechanics in the rack, and even an antiquated push-button register that actually rings up a \$12 haircut.

These could be mere props, of course. It's a common 1990s marketing ploy: Present a fair sense of nostalgia and they will come.

Authenticity at the storefront barbershop on Farmington and Grand River is measured in a less tangible way: Talk.

Something about a barber's chair and an attentive hair cutter leads one to assume it's a throne for public opinion. Those waiting for a trim weigh in with theirs from the gallery.

"It doesn't really change much," said Mike LeFever, a barber for 18 years. "People are concerned about taxes, money, which way the economy is going, home life . . . That kind of thing."

"This is such a strong Republican neighborhood. Sometimes you have to play devil's advocate."

All politics is local. Last year's proposed and disposed downtown clock tower was a hot topic. So, too, was the Masonic Temple sign that popped up across the street this year.

In small rural communities, the barbershop was the unsanctioned town hall.

Such places were sites of boisterous debates, but views expressed were their own. They weren't meant to be held up for ridicule and dissected for political correctness.

That appears to hold true today.

See BARBER, 2A

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

Brooks Brothers: The Ivy League look is here to stay, but the 175-year-old clothier is taking a new approach to classic dressing at Twelve Oaks. /11A

Be their guest: Two new Disney Stores are getting set for grand openings in Livonia and Troy. /11A

STREET SCENE

Their own legend: With members who are children of classic rock legends, Bloodline gets a lot of attention. /6A

TASTE

School lunches: Soon it will be time to join the brown bag lunch brigade. Make lunches your kids will eat. /1B

Jewish New Year: Of all the special foods which grace the new year table, none is more common yet distinctive than challah. /1B

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Hotels happy to give crime suspects the hook

By BILL COVATY
STAFF WRITER

As one hotel executive puts it, "Farmington Hills is a hub" for business people coming to metropolitan Detroit.

And as the old saying goes, "location, location, location" are the three most important things in business. But Farmington Hills police will tell you that formula works two ways.

When Hills police, with the help of Michigan State Police, Detroit police, the Internal Revenue Service and other area police agencies, busted a

large-scale prostitution ring Aug. 12, they realized just how convenient the city was for that trade.

"It was much bigger and went much further than we had thought," said Hills police Chief Bill Dwyer.

About three months ago, police started an investigation of prostitution activities at several area hotels, in part due to the vigilance of hotel managers who saw something they didn't like.

"There was a lot of suspicious activity," said Dale Gannon, director of operations for the Clarion Inn at 12

Mile and Orchard Lake roads. "We saw groups of people checking in, males checking in at 3 p.m. and checking out at 6 p.m."

Ernest Gossens, a spokesman for Motel 6, said the last thing his business needs is a bad reputation.

"We are a mainstream business offering a family oriented consumer product," he said.

Staff from the Clarion, the Comfort Inn, Knights Inn, Motel 6 and Red Roof Inn helped police capture 12 suspected prostitutes and nine others suspected of providing prostitutes for

customers at the hotels.

In addition to the hotels, eight escort services in the Detroit area were struck. None of them were in Farmington Hills.

Computers, records of credit card and cash transactions, money, and narcotics were confiscated in the raid. Those credit card transactions could lead to additional arrests of customers, said Dwyer, who worked in vice for the Detroit Police Department for nine years.

See HOTELS, 2A

Residents golf for charity

Two Farmington Hills residents, Brian McGrath and Gene Milosavljevic, were among the 45 finalists who participated in the 5th-Christie Hole-In-One Shootout Aug. 21 at Willow Creek Golf and Sports Center in Lake Orion.

The finalists, who brought a strong wind that Sunday, were in the running for the top prize of \$1 million and a \$300,000 Pulte Home bonus. Neither Hills resident came close in the final, although both won prizes for their efforts in qualifying rounds.

For landing 174 inches from the pin, McGrath earned a \$100 Leaps and Bounds birthday party. Star Theatre passes and Bogo game past. Milosavljevic, whose best shot was 114 inches from the pin, received 16 holes of golf for two at Bogus Lost Re-

FARMINGTON FOCUS

sort and \$100 cash. About \$75,000 was raised for Ronald McDonald Children's Charities.

Memory Lane

From the Aug. 26, 1964 edition, of the Farmington Enterprise:

■ A record 850 students had been enrolled in Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic school in Farmington.

■ A five-pound bag of Domino cane sugar was selling for 45 cents at Farmington Meats on Grand River.

■ A wave of bicycle thefts plagued the Farmington area, according to city and township police.

Death penalty to have hearing

The Smith Theatre on the Orchard Ridge campus of Oakland Community College in Farmington Hills will be the site of a Thursday, Sept. 8, state hearing on establishing the death penalty in Michigan.

The hearing, sponsored by the Senate Judiciary Committee, will begin at 7 p.m. The committee is chaired by state Rep. William Van Regenmortel, R-Jenison.

The hearing is open to the public. The Orchard Ridge campus is west of Orchard Lake Road, just south of I-696.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 31808 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336; faxed to 477-9722; or dropped off at the newspaper office.