

Farmington Observer

VOLUME 105 NUMBER 99

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 1994 • FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN • 82 PAGES

FIFTY CENTS

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LET'S GO!

Get ready, Farmington Observer readers. Today your hometown coverage of restaurants, music, movies, travel, theater and concerts will expand.

Let's Go! is a new section designed to make your entertainment planning convenient and fun. This colorful, contemporary section covers the suburban entertainment scene.

The premiere section includes stories about local symphony orchestras and highlights of the upcoming local community theater season. Read about new and/or improved area restaurants and a new travel page.

In addition to Let's Go!, our community life material — weddings, engagements, births and local features normally found in Section C — will move up so the material is easier to find.

Please feel free to think what you think about our changes. Call me at 933-2100 or drop me a note at the Observer, 30251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, Mich. 48150.

I look forward to hearing from you.

— Steve Barnaby, publisher

IN THE PAPER

TODAY

Cheers to Chris: A Farmington policewoman is shaping up the cheerleaders at Farmington High School. /3A

Firefighting, anyone?: They volunteered for the Farmington Hills Fire Department — with no regrets. /6A

Corvettes head south: Some Farmington-area folks are involved in that Corvette caravan from Michigan to Kentucky where the expensive autos are made. /17A

OPINION

Numbers game: Can parents believe the test scores that show their children are doing so well in the Farmington Schools? /14A

Tough questions: Ray Frederick, a Farmington Hills resident, has some questions he'd like to ask city officials and developers. /15A

SPORTS

Cross country: The always-competitive Farmington boys teams hope to have another successful run this year. /1B

COMMUNITY LIFE

Model student: Derek Nelson, a senior at Farmington High School, recently won a top modeling award in New York. Nelson is featured in the Observer's new Community Life section, which replaces Suburban Life.

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Teen shoots, kills self



A teenager . . . a loaded gun . . . a tragedy. Joseph Misch, a Farmington Hills 14-year-old who "had a passion for living," died Monday following an accidental gun shot to his head.

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Sharon Misch had a hard time describing what her son Joe was like as she looked over pictures of him spread out over the dining room table in her Farmington Hills home Tuesday.

Her 14-year-old, who died tragically from an accidental gun shot to the head, had done a lot of living in his short life.

"He did everything," she said. "Joe had a passion for living, loving and having fun."

And the pictures bore her out.

There was the picture of the Redford Catholic Central student with the deer he shot with a bow and arrow last year. There were others of him fishing, golfing, water skiing, hot dogging on the ski slopes out west, and playing hockey.

"He really had a great sense of humor," she said. "And he always helped me around the house. He'd play with his 4-year-old sister (Jenna), and carry her on his shoulders."

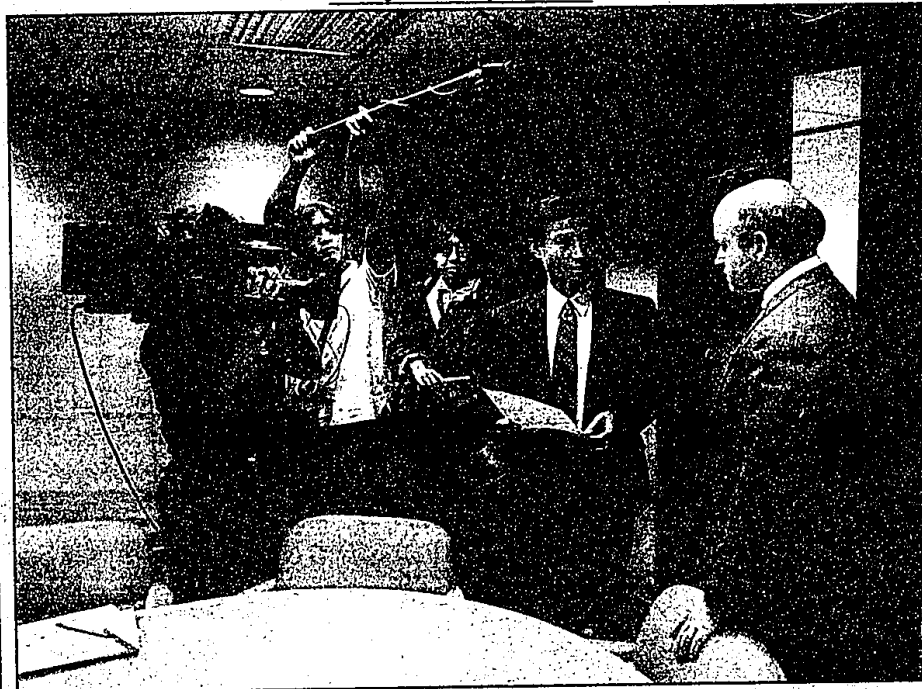
That picture of life has left the family and police at a loss as to how the teen accidentally killed himself.

See DEATH, 3A



Joseph Misch

A subject for Japanese TV



STEVEN CAMERON/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Camera rolling: Mike Yamada talks with Consumers Power's Dennis Marvin, as Japanese TV people Katsuyuki Hasegawa (left), Hajime Komazaki and Keizo Shiram record the event.

Businessman can, will, go home again

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

It's no surprise to Mike Yamada that the Japanese people often view the United States as a violent country where random killings seem to be commonplace.

But Yamada, a Japanese national and Farmington Hills resident, has found that image to be flawed. As he

returned to his hometown of Osaka this week, Yamada will be conveying a much different picture.

"They (Japanese) need education about America," he said before flying to his homeland to help dedicate Osaka's new airport. "They see these images on TV, but they don't see what this country is like."

Yamada, 35, is a marketing spe-

cialist with the commercial real estate firm of Trivice Tosto in Birmingham. He is one of seven transplanted Japanese being profiled by Kansai-TV, a national network based in Osaka.

A U.S. resident for the past seven years, Yamada will also make some business calls during his 10-day visit, promoting Michigan as a great place to invest and live.

Michigan is not that hard to sell, he said.

"The education level in Michigan is very high," he says in accented but precise English. "The climate is similar to Japan. You don't even see a fence in Farmington Hills. People just don't have to worry about being safe."

See JAPAN, 5A

Honigman disputes challenger, negative poll

BY PAT MURPHY
AND LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITERS

A Democratic challenger to state Sen. David Honigman said many voters in the 15th District are dissatisfied with the incumbent's job performance.

Challenger Vicki Barnett of Farmington Hills said a June telephone poll indicated 40 percent of those responding were dissatisfied with Honigman's performance, while 30 percent said they were satisfied.

Asked to respond Tuesday, Honigman said he doesn't believe the poll — or anything — his Democratic opponent might say, for that matter.

"She's lied before," Honigman said, "and she'll lie again. I'm afraid this signals the start of a dirty campaign."

Honigman, who was elected to the state House of Representatives in 1984 and the state Senate in 1990, declined to discuss the poll — or his opponent.

See SENATE, 2A

About child safety

Anyone interested in keeping children safe in dangerous situations might want to mark 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 13, on his/her calendar.

That's the day that Jeff Anderson, a Farmington Hills police officer, will speak on child safety at the Farmington Hills Senior Center, 28000 11 Mile Road, east of Middlebelt. The talk is open to the public.

Very important pets

Uppies and kitties from the Michigan Humane Center and Farmington-area senior citizens will get together at 12:45 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 13, at the Farmington Hills Senior Center, 28000 11 Mile Road.

All senior citizens are welcome to come and visit

FARMINGTON FOCUS

the animals. Enter the center through Gate 4, Door C. For more information, call Jennifer at 479-1850.

Homeowners to meet

Farmington Hills councilwoman Nancy Bates will speak at the general membership meeting of the Council of Homeowners Association at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 13, in the low-dustroom of the Hills branch of the Community Library on 12 Mile Road.

Bates will speak on the city request for a .5-mill tax increase for property acquisition. Also, committee reports will be given on the fol-

lowing subjects: beautification; the ice arena; schools and bus stop safety; Commission on Children, Youth and Families; cellular towers; traffic; parks and recreation and bike paths; and development.

The meeting is open to the public.

Memory Lane

From the Sept. 9, 1964 edition of the Farmington Enterprise: Farmington-area residents, suffering through a long spell of dry weather, were warned by officials about the dangers of grass fires.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21508 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336; faxed to 477-9722; or dropped off at the newspaper office.