

## Working wordsmith

# Ad man chronicles everyday life in new journal

BY MARY RODRIGUE  
STAFF WRITER

In the Riverside Journal, Norman Prady has found a safe format for venting against the absurdities and injustices of everyday life in America.

The Farmington Hills ad man has a journalistic background stretching back to working as a reporter for the old Detroit Times.

"Those of us connected with journalism can't keep our mouths shut," said Prady, 62. "Reporting brings a vividness to life. Name a subject and I have a point of view."

Prady is currently targeting his fledgling journal to about 250 local media, friends and family. The first issue debuted last June. Eventually, he'd like to turn it into a twice or three times a week syndicated column.

"I was sort of inspired by a publication of the 1950s called the Carolina Tarheelite written by Harry Golden," said Prady. "He did this on a much larger scale. He had paid subscriptions."

"He came out of the generation of H.L. Mencken and Walter Winchell. So it's written in that vein."

A recent edition features "The Hazards of Driving Down Thersby Lane," a tome focusing on the angry, lead-footed motorists who terrorize law-abiding freeway drivers.

Another article exposes the senselessness of a pricey valet parking service adjacent to a busy metro area hospital, while cheaper parking is relegated to the back 40 acres. Prady was inspired to write "The Hospital Parking Lot Can Make You Ill" after watching an elderly couple make their way to the hospital entrance from the distant lot during a driving rainstorm.

In "Have We Missed The Point About Knives?" Prady examines fear of flying in a humorous way. He ends by asking those responsible



SHARON LEAHUE/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

for the safety of the airline industry. "Why don't you take care of me the way you take care of the black box?"

"My topics are wide-ranging," he said. "I'm proud of the work I do as a writer. I love language, its rhythm."

He chose the name Riverside Journal for its general geographical appeal.

"I didn't want anything with Farmington or Oakland in the title," he said.

Prady has thus far published five issues of the journal. It doesn't follow a scheduled publication plan.

"It's not a monthly, it's more a God willing thing," he said.

He's currently working on the next edition, specifically an article about a teenage girl who has had two unsuccessful liver transplants and thus has been denied a third (to be called "Two Strikes and You're Out, perhaps").

After the Detroit Times folded,

Prady went to work in the public relations field, first at Oakland University and later for Sinai Hospital. He then landed a job as a copywriter at Stone, August & Co. and later moved into creative director positions at Stone, August and then at Campbell Ewald.

All the while he continued to sell freelance feature articles to local newspapers and magazines. A graduate of Detroit Central High School and Wayne State University, he has lived in Farm-

ington Hills for a year and a half. Because of frustrations with advertising "you spend three hours talking about what would take 10 minutes to do" he left to strike out on his own a decade ago.

"Ten years ago I started my own marketing consulting company," he said. "So I'm still involved with advertising."

He has various local accounts through the Norman Prady Co. Retirement is not in the cards yet.

He likens the Riverside Journal to a personal newspaper. Topics covered include "whatever comes into my awareness."

Prady leaves the straightlaced reporting to local newspapers.

"These contributions I make for my own sanity," he said.

To obtain a copy of the Riverside Journal, call 478-2286, or write Norman Prady, 35526 Grand River, Suite 314, Farmington Hills, 48335.

## Little public interest shown for drug information meeting

BY BILL COULTANT  
STAFF WRITER

A program billed as a town meeting brought together a lot of police and drug enforcement expertise, but apparently little public interest.

Organized by former Farmington Hills City Councilman Ben Marks, the cabaret town hall meeting of Oct. 10 in the Farmington High School auditorium included an impressive panel of 16 law enforcement professionals. Among those were Wayne County Sheriff Robert Picano, Oakland County Sheriff John Nichols, and representatives from many other departments, including the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency.

But the meeting, scheduled as part of Drug Awareness Month, only drew 16 residents. One of them, Milton Rose, was very disappointed by what he saw.

"I was shocked," said the 82-

year-old volunteer tutor. "Is there anyone interested in this?"

Rose said with all the expertise available and the outcry over drug abuse, he found it hard to believe so few showed up for the event.

But Farmington Hills police Chief Bill Dwyer said he did not think it was because of apathy over the drug issue.

"I don't think (the poor attendance) was because people aren't concerned," Dwyer said. "Drug abuse is epidemic in this country."

Dwyer said law enforcement professionals differ over what direction the federal government should take. But accepting the problem is not an option.

"Of those in prison, 93 percent of their crimes are either directly or indirectly attributable to drug use," said the former Detroit vice officer. "Accepting the fact that illegal drugs will always be a

problem, I still believe that we can stop the flow into this country."

Marks, who hosts "Let's Talk," a one-on-one talk show on local access cable TV, said he was surprised at the low turnout, but thought the show was otherwise a success.

"We had one young lady come forward who had been a drug addict," he said. "And we've already had requests for the show from other areas."

Marks said with so much discussion of drug awareness, there may be some overskill.

"It points out that part of the problem is apathy," he said. "What I was trying to do was generate some discussion."

Rose said he was disappointed that more parents did not show interest.

"I think some parents might have learned something," he said.

## Grocery not likely at old Kroger site

BY MARY RODRIGUE  
STAFF WRITER

Kiddleland has closed its Farmington store at Grand River and Halsted, raising the hopes of some area residents that a supermarket might move back into the former Kroger store.

But a spokesman for Kroger says that is not to be the case.

"Quite honestly, I don't think that would work. We're looking for 60,000 square foot buildings, that one is only 30,000 square feet. But we will keep evaluating the possibilities. There's no room to expand on that site."

"Conversations are ongoing with several prospective tenants. But there is no deal as yet."

That is sure to disappoint area residents.

"We certainly would like to see a food store go in there," said Frank Laubhoff, Farmington city manager.

"There has been so much recent development in southern Farmington Hills and Farmington that it would make it a very attractive location again."

Laubhoff said the neighborhood has changed considerably since Kroger closed its doors five years ago. Originally built on that site in 1976, Kroger was "a premier store, state of the art for its time," according to Laubhoff.

Kroger moved two miles north, to a location at Twelve Mile and

Halsted, but continues to hold the lease on the building on Grand River.

"It's unfortunate, but the trend in our society is to build, vacate and move on. We can't continue to do that," said Laubhoff.

"Farmington is an older community. But it stays vibrant and there is a lot of demand for services right here."

Stan Cohen, building manager for Standard Construction, which overruns the lease, doesn't know what's coming next at the Grand River and Halsted site.

"I don't have the slightest idea. Kroger controls the lease, they own the building," said Cohen.

## Newest park to open this Saturday in Hills

The newest park in Farmington Hills will be open to the public Saturday.

At 10:30 a.m., Woodland Hills, with 1.7 miles of rustic trails on 76 acres, will be opened. The park, now complete with signs to keep nature lovers from getting lost, is on the west side of Farmington Road, across from the Orchard Ridge campus of Oakland Community College south of I-696.

The park will be open from dawn to dusk and have a gravel parking lot.

"We're probably going to modify that because we don't want people in there at dusk when we lock the gate," said Dan Potter, director of special services. "There is no driving in the park, so we want people to make their way out before dusk."

There are no dogs or other pets allowed, and visitors will not be allowed to remove plants or flowers, Potter said.

"The fall colors will be tremendous in the park now," Potter said. "The wildlife is plentiful."

For information on the park, call 473-9573.

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