

# Farmington Observer

Thursday  
February 20, 1997

VOLUME 110 NUMBER 42

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN • 88 PAGES • <http://www.ocoonline.com>

SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

© 1997 Suburban Communications Corporation

## IN THE PAPER TODAY

**Quick freeze:** After a grant is rejected, Farmington council members decide to spend city money to fix a parking lot used as an ice rink at Shiawassee Park. /A2

**Celebrate:** The First United Methodist Church building turns 75 this year and members want help showing how it once served as a community center. /A4

## COUNTY

**Digest is back:** Oakland Digest, a roundup of items making news around the county during the past week, resumes today. /A8

**Trying again:** As the Legislature takes up another try at revising the drug lifer law, we look at the impact the legislation now in force has had. /A13

## ENTERTAINMENT

**Theater:** Jerry Lewis, the king of comedy, discusses his career, and role in "Damn Yankees," now playing at the Fisher Theatre. /E1

## INDEX

At Home	D	Pets	I7
Brides	B4	Real Estate	G7
Beliefs, Values	B9-10	Crossword	G8
Calendar	C6	Entertainment	E
Classifieds	G-1	Movie Guide	E2
Autos	I7	Obituaries	A12
Employment	I4	Police, fire reports	A4
Service Guide	I2	Sports & Rec.	C1



Lifesaving run: Community Emergency Medical Services Inc. and Farmington Hills Firefighters put the patient, who was complaining of chest pains, into the ambulance for transportation to Botsford.

## Life, death & CEMS

### Ride with parameds: fast lane, slow times

BY WILLIAM COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

Dan Przeworski and Scott Hufnagel know their way around Farmington Hills.

And as they speed along bumpy Eight Mile on their way to what could be a heart attack, it's a good thing that the two paramedics know where to go.

Arriving just behind Farmington Hills firefighters from nearby Station 1, they make their way into an apartment at the Newport Creek complex where a woman is complaining of chest pains.

"We've been here before," says Przeworski, who with Hufnagel is one of the crews assigned to the Farmington Hills dedicated car.

"She has had seizures, but she doesn't usually complain about chest pains," says Hufnagel.

So with the help of Hills firefighter Mike Kash, they use a special chair to load the woman into their ambulance. Przeworski, a Farmington Hills resident who also volunteers as a firefighter at Station 2, can now drive at a more reasonable speed without the lights and sirens while his partner talks, questions and begins some precautionary treatment of the woman.

The two men, who have been friends since their early days in Grand Ledge, are paramedics for Community Emergency Medical Service Inc. They're both experienced and have been specially selected for the Farmington Hills assignment.

"This is the only dedicated car we have," says Hufnagel, 27. "They city has control over who is

selected for this crew."

It also means the two men do not do any transporting of patients from hospital to nursing home or other non-emergency tasks.

But being a paramedic in Farmington Hills has its highs and lows.

"This makes four out of five runs that are people we've seen before," says Przeworski, 26.

"That happens a lot."

And although the less routine runs are the most exciting for paramedics, they can also be the most difficult, as the two men found a couple hours later on their Tuesday shift.

At about 10 p.m., they respond to a call from a man having chest pains.

"He had been eating and he wasn't having any pain when we arrived," Hufnagel says.

"He thought maybe it was indigestion and didn't want to go to the hospital. We talked him into going."

But the effort was not enough; the man suffered a massive heart attack on route and died.

"If you let it get to you, you couldn't do this job," Hufnagel says.

But the two men are clearly buoyed a few days later when Przeworski delivers a healthy baby in the ambulance as Huf-



Service: Scott Hufnagel tends to the patient as the ambulance prepares to leave.

nagel drives it to the hospital.

"That sort of made up for the other one," Przeworski says.

The two work a 24-hour shift three days a week. For Przeworski, who is single, it has not been a hardship. Hufnagel's wife Wendy works as a nurse in Lansing.

See EMS, A6

## Cash, service driving EMS debate



BY WILLIAM COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills officials want more control over the city's emergency medical service and EMS debate.

At a study session last week, council members heard a reports from Fire Chief Rich Marinucci and representatives from Community Emergency Medical Service Inc., the current advanced life support service used by the city.

Over the past few years, emergency medical runs handled initially by the fire department have increased even faster than the increase of all runs. They account for 55-60 percent of department runs.

"You can make money, but not enough to cover the cost of doing it the right way,"

Rich Marinucci  
—fire chief

The fire department provides basic emergency medical technician training for its firefighters while CEMS provides paramedics and responds to all medical emergencies.

"We have a good long term relationship with CEMS," Marinucci said, adding that the company began working in the city 14 years ago because there had been problems with other private ambulance companies.

The city council directed Marinucci to look into the idea of the city providing its own advanced life support service, aiming to improve service while making money.

"EMS is an important life or death service," City Manager Dan Hobbs said. "But EMS revenues would not be sufficient to cover expenses."

That may have surprised some, but not Marinucci.

"When the council requested this study a year ago, it was based on a management audit that concluded, we were missing out on money."

"We've taken a look at it. You can make money, but not enough to cover the cost of doing it the right way."

The fire department figures

See CEMS, A6

## 2 signs get close look, rejection

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Farmington City Council 2, sign variances 0. Representatives of Shell Gas Station and Craftsique Mall asked for special exceptions in posting signs outside their businesses at Monday's council meeting.

Council politely — but firmly — denied both requests. "It's setting a precedent and increasing the number of signs," Mayor Joe McShane said after denying Craftsique Mall's proposed sign. "And that's something we are trying not to do."

Sign variances have been sticky issues in the past with the council. Former city Councilman Dick Tupper was particularly known for his close, pointed scrutiny of such requests.

This time, council members offered suggestions to both proponents.

Shell Oil on Grand River and Halsted asked for a second sign to allow motorists on Halsted to see its posted gas prices. North and southbound traffic cannot view the existing sign designed for west and eastbound Grand River, especially in the congested area known as the "dysfunction junction."

A second sign — 8 feet by 3 1/2 feet — would've been put on the west side of the station, which is undergoing extensive remodeling.

"If you're familiar with that intersection, you try to avoid it," said Joe Nushar, who is the dealer. "It's a very hectic intersection."

By granting a second sign, it would open the door to similar requests from other service station owners, City Manager Frank Lauboff said. Seven service stations at intersections in the city operate with one sign.

Councilman Bill Hartsock proposed that Shell to follow the lead of the Mobil station on the northeast corner on Eight Mile and Farmington roads, which has its sign on an angle.

McShane jokingly suggested Shell consider a revolving sign since motorists are usually stuck at the light and would see posted gas prices eventually. She added she often drives in that area.

"I've never had a problem seeing your sign," McShane said.

Bill Nagy's Craftsique Mall business sits back from Farmington Road on Slocum. First-time customers have a difficult time finding the building, Nagy said.

He wanted to put a ground sign along Farmington Road, which would've been placed on the planting area of Lowen Chiropractic.

Craftsique Mall is in the former building that housed Ray's Interiors. More than 200 vendors selling crafts and antiques operate in the mall.

The sign would've been 36-inches high by 66-inches wide.

"It will be durable, safe and cute," Nagy said to council.

Council members weren't sold. The ground sign

See SIGNS, A2

## Towns OK plan to primp roadway

BY GARY WOBONICK  
STAFF WRITER

The Farmington Road Improvement Project has received the endorsements of city councils in Farmington and Farmington Hills.

A joint project of both cities' beautification commissions, it proposes functional and aesthetic improvements to a 1.5-mile stretch of Farmington Road, from Eight Mile to Slocum. The roadway is the joint border for the cities between Eight

and Nine Mile.

Farmington council members endorsed the project's plans for adding trees, connecting pedestrian paths and creating a gateway to the cities at Eight Mile after hearing a report on Monday. The Farmington Hills City Council heard the presentation a week earlier.

The project is a long-range complement to the planned widening of Farmington Road and the renovation of the M-5 bridge. It requires involvement, including funding,

from three levels of government — the cities, the state and Oakland County — plus the support of the businesses and residents directly affected along the road.

"The report is still conceptual," said Marie Donigan, an employee of the Farmington Hills planning department and staff liaison to the beautification commission. She hopes the state and county will be supportive and is encouraged by the warm reception the project has gotten from the cities.

The project could take 2-4 years to be fully implemented, she said, but city officials have indicated they want to begin putting parts of it in place soon.

Reurfacing of the M-5 bridge and a new guardrail are planned for this spring, Donigan said, so the Michigan Department of Transportation is being contacted to see if it will add parts of the local plan such as painting the underside green, plant-

See PLAN, A6

### Students fast to raise money

Farmington high school students will go without food for 30 hours next week in order to identify with hungry people and to raise money for World Vision, a Christian relief organization committed to feeding hungry children.

The annual 30-hour famine program, sponsored locally by Grace Chapel, a Farmington Hills church, is expected to be observed by more than 60 area students. They will fast from 8 a.m. Friday, Feb. 28 until 2 p.m. Saturday, March 1.

Participating teens have people sponsor them as they go without food for the 30 hours, and

### FARMINGTON FOCUS

during the fast will do community service work at Detroit Rescue Mission, packing food and clothing and helping feed the hungry. Last year, Farmington students raised nearly \$4,000.

### Family diversity potluck

With heightened cultural awareness and the change of gender roles, the concept of "family" has taken on varied definitions.

Acknowledging this diversity, the Farmington YMCA, 28100 Farmington Rd., will celebrate the multi-racial and multi-cultural family unit with a potluck dinner on Sunday from 3-6 p.m.

This free event will bring like families together to discuss both the joys and challenges of being "different" and provide networking opportunities.

For information or to register, call Glenn Haley by today at 313-257-5300. Participants are asked to bring their favorite dish, enough for eight people. Beverages and dessert will be provided.