

# Farmington Observer

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VOLUME 141 NUMBER 66

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN 480 PAGES • <http://observer@centric.com>

SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

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## IN THE PAPER TODAY

**Diamond march:** South Farmington Baseball players trekked through town last week - and honored a coach who died last year./A10

## COMMUNITY LIFE

**Title try:** This year's crown-holder for Miss Farmington/Farmington Hills hopes to add a state crown to her collection next month in Muskegon, on the way to Atlantic City./B1

## SPORTS

**Lucky 7:** Mercy High School golfers captured the Catholic League Championship for the seventh year in a row./C1

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## Fees, permits for carnivals spiral upward

Send in the clowns, but make sure they're packing a few more bucks. A license to run a carnival will rise to \$120 from \$25 under an overall fee adjustment passed by Farmington Hills City Council at Monday's meeting. Several service fees will go up in planning, zoning and city clerk offices. Along with carnival permits, business licenses increase from \$30-\$50 to \$165; Christmas tree selling permits from \$10 to \$75, and special events \$25 to \$120. An increase for carnival permits didn't have an easy ride, though. City staff initially proposed that the carnival license fee be bumped up to \$50, which would offset part of the estimated \$234 cost involved in inspecting rides and other certification. The fee overhaul is an attempt to "apply business numbers" for some government services, City Manager Dan Hobbs said. "The issue is not about right or wrong... The issue is who pays and what is fair," Hobbs said. Councilman Jon Grant, obviously chucking any endorsement from the amusement ride industry, wanted to the fee raised to \$235 to stage a carnival. "They make a lot of money," Grant said. "There is no reason why taxpayers should have to subsidize these events." Although churches and non-profit groups use carnivals for fund raising, the amusement company would like.

Please see FEES, A3



Sought: Police are looking for James Field Summerville Jr., pictured at right, for information in relation to the murder.

## Murder called crime of passion

**A Farmington Hills man found dead Monday was stabbed almost 40 times - with two knives.**

The 32-year-old Farmington Hills man found dead in his apartment likely knew his murderer, police say. That may explain why someone stabbed the Wayne County Probate Court worker nearly 40 times, possibly using more than one knife to do so. A tip of a knife was found broken off in the victim's back. On Monday morning, Farmington Hills police discovered the partially decomposed body of Mikhail P. Ellis in a bedroom at Independence Green Apartments. The victim's friend notified police after not hearing from the man for more than a week. Police believe the man had been dead at least a week to 10 days. A broken vase and overturned items in the bedroom indicated there had been a struggle. "The motive was some type of rage," said Bill Dwyer, Farmington Hills police chief. "The person responsible stabbed him multiple times in the back and then turned him over and stabbed him in the chest 25 times, which would lead us to believe it was a crime of passion." Investigators found a knife with a 5-inch blade laying on top of the victim's wrist. A blade and broken parts of another knife were on the bed.



The scene: Farmington Hills police Sgt. Timothy Swanson and Detective Matt Koehn stop in the doorway of the apartment where a week's worth of newspapers had accumulated.

Police have ruled out robbery, even though the victim's 1998 green must Jeep Cherokee is missing as well as a personal planner, computer and jewelry. On Tuesday, investigators were still looking for a suspect. The name of a man was found on numerous greeting cards in a file folder at the scene. The name matched one on a bloodied shirt that was found in a washing machine at the apartment. Police wanted to talk to an acquaintance, James Field Summerville Jr., who may have information. Police believe Summerville, who hasn't been seen in several days, may also have the victim's Jeep Cherokee with Michigan license plate number JCGF25. No warrants have been issued for Summerville's arrest. He is described as a thin, light-skinned black male, 5-foot 9-inches tall and weighing 140 pounds. The homicide was the first in Farmington Hills since November 1996 when an ATM service worker was gunned down at the Comerica bank on 13 Mile and Northwestern Highway. After a year-and-a-half investigation, a man was charged in April in that case. Michigan State and Farmington Hills police spent six hours investigating the scene at Independence Green. Blood was found in the bathroom and living room as well as the bedroom.

## Bullard, Dobb meet again in Senate race

State Sen. Bill Bullard has one crack at re-election. He plans on making it a good one. With term limits established in 1992, state senators can stay in office up to eight years. But Bullard, R-Highland Township, is restricted to just one more four-year term in the 15th Senate District, because he is currently serving more than half of David Honigman's term. The 15th District includes Farmington and Farmington Hills. "I'm just going to run a vigorous campaign," said Bullard Wednesday, after meeting Tuesday's filing deadline for the August primary election. He will square off against 39th House District Rep. Barbara Dobb, R-Commerce Township, whose district is mainly in the 15th Senate District. The GOP winner will then run against West Bloomfield Democrat S. Ruth Fuller in the November general election. Fuller is unopposed in the pri-

See more election stories  
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mary. Ironically, it is those very term limits that provided Bullard with his opponent. State representatives can only serve three two-year terms; Dobb's stint in the 39th District ends this year. Term limits or not, Dobb, on Wednesday, said she has been "considering running for this seat for a while." Dobb intends on a grassroots campaign focusing on the same issues she's fought as a House representative: roads, public education and taxes. "I know what's important to the people in the 15th Senate District," Dobb said, "and every single one of those are issues of fairness and equity." Bullard said he plans on "running on my record," particularly in the area of tax reform. "I

Please see RACE, A4

## This bonus may be a lifesaver

A team of 10 employees at Computware Corporation, based in Farmington Hills, decided not to keep their \$5,000-per-person bonus this year. Instead, the high-tech team members from the software giant made a combined gift of \$50,000 to the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute to help fight cancer. They surprised Computware chairman and CEO Peter Karmanos with the check at a dinner held in their honor last month. The group had been selected to work together on a special project. They are Jeff Ray, Jay Holmstrom, Greg Seiffert, Jim Holland, Stu Cohen, Cyndi Banaszak, Lyell Ritchie, Marie Joppich, Bill Petri and Lori Arnold. Ray, who led the group, said the group decided to use the bonus to thank Karmanos. "This is not just

## FARMINGTON FOCUS

a gift of money," he said. "This is our legacy to the community."

### Revitalize your garden

The Beautification Commissions of Farmington and Farmington Hills are hosting a plant swap 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 30, in the Farmington Hills City Hall parking lot. Participants are asked to bring a wagon, pots, gloves and plants to swap at the event. For those gardeners who can't tell a daylily from a Zebra Variegated Iris, there will be local plant

## Drivers get good, bad news

### Orange cone dance continues

There's some good news and bad news for motorists trying to get around the city of Farmington. First, the good news: most of the road projects included in this year's city paving program are concluded, including projects on Shiawassee and Mooney, and Farmington City Manager Frank Lauhoff. All that needs to be completed is replacement of Heritage Lane, near Drake Road. But motorists know there are still plenty of orange cones and barrels to deal with, as well as lane closures and expected traffic back-ups. Both Lauhoff and Department of Public Services Director Kevin Gushman maintain that city projects are not the culprit, however. After a month hiatus, work has resumed on a Michigan Department of Transportation project at Nine Mile-Farmington. Workers are again fortifying the M-5 bridge with steel on top and refinishing it underneath. Farmington Road lanes have been reduced from two-to-one in each direction, plus a

Please see ROADS, A4

## 47th District officials plead for space, security

By DAVE VAROA  
STAFF WRITER

Farmington's 47th District Court needs more space, plus better security and parking, Court Administrator David Walsh told a joint meeting of city councils from Farmington and Farmington Hills last week. In response, city officials agreed to re-establish a courthouse Building Authority, which will be a committee of representatives from both cities to begin planning for a new or expanded courthouse. "It is our position that this is an inadequate facility," Walsh said later. "It is also our belief that a new court facility can and should be created using court revenues as opposed to going to the taxpayers." But now, he said, it'll be up to the building authority to decide. Such a group will actually be renewing a Farmington committee that originally helped plan the current courthouse at a former

Please see COURT, A4

### Python piles on



At EarthFest: Bobby Adams, 8, and Kristen Johnson, 8, both of Farmington Hills hold up the middle of a Burmese Python named Zeus at Saturday's EarthFest at the Costick Center. Among the many animals that Plymouth-based Living Science brought to the event were a marsupial that hopped around the room, inspiring children to chase it.

experts on hand to answer questions, share gardening lore, and offer plant care tips. The Farmington Hills City Hall parking lot is on the southwest corner of Orchard Lake and 11 Mile Road. For details, call Marie Donigan at (248) 473-9543.

### Rosary found

The geranium seller at the downtown Farmington Farmer's Market on Grand River Saturday found a rosary dropped by a shopper. The only description he gave, according to Judy Downey, DDA director, is that it looked like it would "certainly be meaningful to somebody." If you lost it, see the man who only sells geraniums this Saturday morning at the Farmer's Market in the parking lot of the Village Commons Mall.



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