

# Farmington Observer

Serving Farmington and Farmington Hills for 111 years

HomeTown  
Putting you in touch  
with your world

VOLUME 44 NUMBER 87

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN • 66 PAGES • <http://observer.escentric.com>

SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS  
© 1998 HomeTown Communications Network, Inc.

## THE WEEK AHEAD

### MONDAY

**Listen:** The last of a series of Regional Town Hall meetings hosted by the Oakland County Board of Commissioners is this week, beginning with one in the Farmington Hills City Council chambers at 7-9 p.m. Speakers include representatives from the road commission, health department and sheriff's department.

### TUESDAY

**Fun learning:** Grab the kids for a fun afternoon at the Farmington Hills Library at 2 p.m. when Dave Chrisko will be on hand with his antique fire truck for the weekly. Tuesdays are Terrific!

### WEDNESDAY

**Serles:** The Farmington Downtown Development Authority hosts "The Monster That Ate Your Garden" at 10:30 a.m. and noon under the tent on Grand River, east of Farmington Road.

### INDEX

- Cable Connection B6
- Taste B1
- Classified Index B3
- Autos J1
- Home & Service J3
- Jobs H1
- Rentals E9
- Arts & Leisure C1
- Sports & Recreation D1
- Real Estate E1

## Molin has designs on commission

Meet JoAnne Molin: She's an interior decorator who wants to become an Oakland County commissioner.

What does choosing pastel or floral wallpaper have to do with politics? Quite a bit, according to the Farmington Hills resident who is running for the Republican nomination in the Aug. 4 primary.

Molin is running against Ben Marks and Terry Sever in the GOP runoff for the 19th District seat, which includes the southern part of Farmington Hills and all of Farmington. She has designs on the seat held by Donn Wolf, who is stepping down.

"It's very interesting: You get a couple in there. She likes it; He doesn't," Molin said. "You have to get these two people together and have to come to a good agreement."

"Working with differences of opinion and getting everybody to be happy is the bottom line. It's sort of what politics is about."

Molin doesn't come from a political background. She's never held elected office. She tried running for the 19th District seat two years ago but bowed out because of surgery. She did vote, however.

She's running a self-described low-key

Please see MOLIN, A4



6 53174 10005 4

## Crash courses

### 12 Mile-Orchard Lake intersection ranks

The 12 Mile-Orchard Lake intersection has been ranked as one of the top 10 for number of crashes in southeastern Michigan. It's also Farmington Hills' busiest cross-roads.



When people on Orchard Lake and 12 Mile talk about the crash, they're not referring to the stock market of 1929. More than likely, they're chatting about current events.

Traffic accidents are a large part of the landscape in Farmington Hills' busiest intersection, which ranked in the top 10 for number of crashes in southeastern Michigan.

Orchard Lake and 12 Mile averaged 72 traffic crack-ups annually during a five-year period, according to Southeastern Michigan Council of Governments. That put the intersection at No. 10 on SEMCOG's hit parade.

That doesn't surprise an employee at Bolla's Marathon, which sits on the southwest corner of 12 and Orchard Lake.

"I just saw one today," said Pete Fitzpatrick, who attributes the high accident rate to the closeness of I-696.

SEMCOG compiles the traffic information for cities, using Michigan State Police accidents reports. However, the statistics don't factor in the traffic volumes of a particular intersection.

And, just because there's a lot of fender benders, don't call an intersection dangerous, said an engineer with the Oakland County Traffic Improvement Association. Other factors — such as the severity of accidents and traffic volumes — need to be considered.

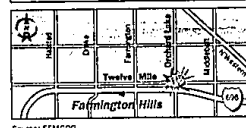
"We may have 100 accidents. If they are all property damage accidents, it's not as dangerous as an intersection that may have half as many but where many of those accidents might be serious," said Bob DeCorte, engineer with Oakland TIA.

Please see CRASH, A2

### Crash course

High Frequency Intersection Crash Locations for Southeast Michigan Region

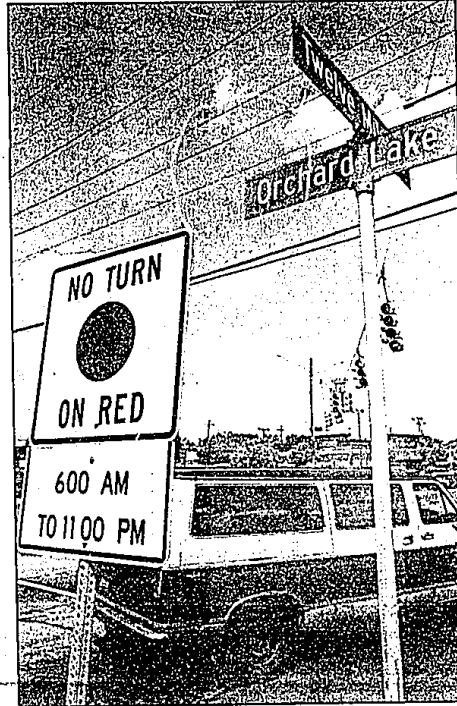
RANKING	PRIMARY STREET	INTERSECTING STREET	COUNTY	5-YEAR AVERAGE
1	Van Dyke	EB I-696 Serv. Dr.	Macomb	113
2	Greenfield	7 Mile	Wayne	95
3	Van Dyke	Hall	Macomb	69
4	McNichols	Schaefer	Wayne	88
5	Southfield	WB I-696 Serv. Dr.	Oakland	82
6	M-53	7 Mile	Wayne	84
7	7 Mile	Outer Dr.	Wayne	80
8	Big Beaver	Rochester	Oakland	75
9	McNichols	Llvennots	Wayne	74
10	Orchard Lake	12 Mile	Oakland	72



Breakdown of 5-year average

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
	65	82	90	67	65

Source: SEMCOG



Busy: The congested intersection of 12 Mile and Orchard Lake Road is one of the most accident-ridden intersections in southeastern Michigan. But that doesn't mean it's the most dangerous.

## Homeowner is safe after electrical jolt

A household project the morning of July 20 almost turned deadly for Farmington resident Albert Kenneth Birdsall.

Shortly before 10:30 a.m. Monday, July 20, the 66-year-old Birdsall climbed up on a ladder to prop up flailing cable and telephone wires. Those

were drooping down onto the roof of a wooden shed behind his house in the 23000 block of Drake, between Freedom Road and Grand River.

Birdsall then got the shock of his life. "His cable lines and phone lines were touching the (shed) roof," said Farmington Fire Marshal Joseph Schornack.

"He wanted to lift up the wires and put a board beneath them. He bent down to pick them up and when he did he backed up into an Edison (pole-to-pole) electrical line."

But Bob Plummer, the president of the Farmington Community Library Board of Trustees, isn't phased by the "Modify the Millage" ad on page A6.

According to the ad, which was not attributed to an individual or group, taxpayers should vote against the proposal during Tuesday, Aug. 4 primary election. It emphasized that the library board should follow the lead of the Farmington Hills Ice Arena, which is repaying a \$6 million bond issue through revenues solely generated by users at the Eight Mile Road facility.

"The Farmington and Farmington Hills voters should consider whether or not to approve the millage in its present form and continue the upward millage spiral," stated the ad, "or should we as residents vote no on the library millage proposal and send it back ... as unacceptable, force the proponents and backers to apply business principles to the library expansion just as they have been successfully applied to the ice arena and let the library patrons pay as they play."

The ad concludes with a warning to Farmington Hills voters to expect further tax proposals, also said the library proposal win at the polls.

"If the library millage is approved, brace (yourselves) for a millage proposal to add nine holes to the city's golf course."

through his body, knocking him off the ladder.

"The electrical charge entered him from the back and it ran right out of his arm and through his hand," Schornack explained. In effect, Birdsall

was electrocuted.

Please see JOLT, A1

## Library officials respond to anti-millage advertisement

Opposition to the \$11.7 million library tax proposal surfaced in an anonymous advertisement published in Thursday's Farmington Observer.

But Bob Plummer, the president of the Farmington Community Library Board of Trustees, isn't phased by the "Modify the Millage" ad on page A6.

According to the ad, which was not attributed to an individual or group, taxpayers should vote against the proposal during Tuesday, Aug. 4 primary election. It emphasized that the library board should follow the lead of the Farmington Hills Ice Arena, which is repaying a \$6 million bond issue through revenues solely generated by users at the Eight Mile Road facility.

"The Farmington and Farmington Hills voters should consider whether or not to approve the millage in its present form and continue the upward millage spiral," stated the ad, "or should we as residents vote no on the library millage proposal and send it back ... as unacceptable, force the proponents and backers to apply business principles to the library expansion just as they have been successfully applied to the ice arena and let the library patrons pay as they play."

The ad concludes with a warning to Farmington Hills voters to expect further tax proposals, also said the library proposal win at the polls.

"If the bond issue is successful, according to the library, the owner of a \$200,000 home (with a taxable value of \$100,000) would pay an additional \$60 per year in taxes."

Plummer, on Friday, first said he didn't want to respond to the advertisement because "We don't know who we're responding to" and because it is past the deadline to legally change the millage proposal.

Later in the interview, however, he said a pay-to-use philosophy will never work in the case of American public libraries.

"The notion of pay-as-you-go is not new," Plummer said. "It's just not a workable thing with the libraries. If we did a pay-as-you-go, nobody would come because they'd go to the surrounding libraries that are free."

Plummer also questioned the timing of the ad and the fact that whoever wrote it never leveled these criticisms to the library board while it was working on putting the proposal together.

"Whoever had these thoughts, they probably should have come to a board meeting," he said. "We've been talking about this for a year."

Meanwhile, the ad was also shrugged off by Al Strasser, manager of the Farmington Hills Ice Arena.

"My own philosophy is, some things need to be spread over the entire tax base," Strasser said. "And those are things that are community resources,

Please see LIBRARY, A2



Hello: Jessica Pendergrass, Gabriella DeFlorio, Meghan Carroll, and Danielle Newton get to know Marbles, a blue merle collie at Tuesdays are Terrific at the Farmington Community Library, downtown branch.

## Marbles says hello

By JOANNE MALIJSZEWSKI  
STAFF WRITER

Everyone loves a puppy. The same goes for kids. Put the two together and you have a mutual admiration club.

Kids who attended the Farmington Community Library's "Tuesdays are Terrific" program at the downtown Farmington branch followed that simple notion. Oochs and aahs fell out of kids' mouths as Marbles, a blue merle collie, was let out of his cage by mom, owner and Farmington Hills resident Bev Cornell of wildlife rehabilitation fame.

"This is his debut and welcoming,

and you are welcoming him to the community," said Cornell, who writes about animals for the Farmington Observer.

Kids squealed with happiness when Marbles came by and rolled over for a cuddle and a belly rub. "You can tell Marbles is very comfortable around everything," Cornell said.

During her program, "Ask Bev and Animal Friends," Cornell not only introduced 11-week old Marbles, but showed about 60 kids two 10-day-old baby chipmunks, named Minnie and Mickey. Cornell also

Please see MARBLES, A2