

Farmington Observer

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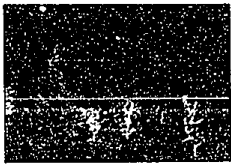
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Lighting up



STAFF PHOTO BY ELIZABETH CARLISLE

Wow! Take a drive past Farmington Hills City Hall and see the holiday lights.

Letters to Santa

Attention, girls and boys! Christmas is almost here and you know what that means. Santa Claus is up at the North Pole waiting for letters and double checking his list to find who's been naughty or nice. The Farmington Observer is asking children to send us their letters to Santa Claus, along with their school picture. The deadline is Dec. 11. The letters and photos will be printed in the Dec. 24th issue, having forwarded the letters to Santa in plenty of time. Children of all ages are encouraged to send their letters to:

Letters to Santa
Farmington Observer
33411 Grand River
Farmington, MI 48335

THE WEEK AHEAD

MONDAY

Meet: The Farmington City Council will meet at 8 p.m.

INDEX

Obituaries	B6
Classified Index	E6
Real Estate	E1
Crossword	E7
Jobs	H1
Automotive	J1
Home & Service	J4
Taste	B1
Arts & Leisure	C1
Malls	C8
Sports & Recreation	D1

Jack Demmer buys dealership



BY TIM SMITH
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Almost as fast as you can say Dusseau-to-Demmer, it didn't take very long to consummate an ownership change of the Lincoln-Mercury car

Well-known auto dealership owners, Jack Demmer of Wayne, will take over the longtime Bob Dusseau Lincoln-Mercury dealership on Grand River.

dealership on Grand River in Farmington.

Jack Demmer Ford owners Jack, Bill and Jim Demmer - who operate a successful dealership in Wayne - bought the longtime Bob Dusseau Lincoln-Mercury in a deal that Bill Demmer said "came together in less than 30

days." The switch took effect Monday, Nov. 30.

"An opportunity arose," said Bill Demmer, president of both Jack Demmer Ford and the new Jack Demmer Lincoln-Mercury, at 31625 Grand River. He would not disclose the amount of the purchase, due to a confidentiality agreement.

The Demmer organization has long coveted the growing Farmington-Farmington Hills area for a second dealership.

"You have an extensive amount of residential people here that have a need for a good automobile dealership that's (in) close proximity to their homes," Demmer said. "... And, we see a resurgence of people coming into the area."

The same qualities that have made Jack Demmer Ford in Wayne successful will be brought to Farmington, he added. Already begun is a free shuttle service for customers living within six

Please see DEALER, A6

CAROLERS GIVE VOICE TO HOLIDAY SPIRIT

BY BETH SUNDRIA JACHMAN
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Nikki Madias of Livonia and her family have a long tradition of holiday caroling.

But one Christmas Day more than 20 years ago - despite a snowstorm, below-zero temperatures and an estranged brother in a distant city - caroling brought them especially close.

The storm had knocked out phone service, so they headed to a pay phone to continue their yearly practice of calling friends and neighbors and singing carols to them.

They called many people, including a cousin who was dying of cancer. "The hell call they made - somewhat reluctantly - was to a brother, Michael, in Washington, D.C., who, unbeknownst to them, was alone because his wife had just left him.

"When we started to sing, he started to sing, too," Madias said. In the cold, their hearts melted.

When Madias was a child and living in Detroit, her huge, close-knit family would go out caroling from house to house. But as the family branched out and moved to the suburbs, including Farmington, Livonia, Westland and Plymouth, the phone tradition developed. Some years, they would call 30 to 40 people, and it would take most of the day, Madias said.

Bringing good tidings

Lawrence Stach of Redford Township also has a heart-touching memory of caroling. It is a story of his father, Joseph Stach, who died recently.

Joseph Stach had emigrated from Poland years ago. After dinner on Christmas Eve each year, he and his family would go next door to sing carols to his sponsor, who had helped him come to the United States.

Diane Allen of Redford Township has more recent memories of caroling.

"Three years ago I was my daughter's Girl Scout leader, Troop 63 from Stuckey Elementary School," Allen writes.

"We decided to go caroling at the

Please see CAROLERS, A8



Pa-la-la: Young voices unite in song during Christmas caroling last week.

It's beginning to sound a lot like Christmas

Good tidings they bring to you and your kin.

And they're bringing it through holiday music.

Local and nearby holiday concerts are planned from now until Christmas.

Here's a listing:

■ Holiday concert: The Schoolcraft College Community Choir

holiday concert is at 4 p.m. today, Sunday, Dec. 6, at First Presbyterian Church of Plymouth, 701 W. Church St., at Main Street, Plymouth. \$4. (734) 462-4435.

■ Livonia Symphony: A holiday concert with Alexander Zongit and Ervin Monroe performing "Piper's Holiday," is planned for 7 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 12, at Church Hill

High School's Carli Auditorium, 8900 Newburgh Road, Livonia. \$15, \$8 for children ages 12 and younger. (734) 421-1111/(734) 464-2741.

■ Farmington Community Chorus: "Once Upon a December" program, 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday,

Please see CHRISTMAS, A8

Want to ring a few bells?

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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All that's required is a few flicks of the wrist, a warm smile and a couple of hours.

The Salvation Army is in need of a few more bell-ringers for its annual holiday drive. The Farmington/Farmington Hills branch tries to have ringers at its familiar red kettles 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily in 20 locations throughout the area.

SALVATION ARMY

The Salvation Army's goal is to raise \$95,000 from the bell-ringing campaign, which started Nov. 27 and runs through Dec. 24.

Money raised accounts for 24 to 35 percent of the Salvation Army's income, which pays for activities to help people who are less fortunate during the year.

"We're just asking for at least two hours to stand in front of a location to ring the bell and greet people and wish them a happy holiday," said the Salvation Army's Lt. Andrew Stouder.

Bell-ringing activity is not limited to seniors, either. All people can take part.

Please see BELLS, A7

Accused duck beheaders plead guilty

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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Two men have pleaded guilty rather than face trial in the beheading of a duck before horrified onlookers at Independence Green Apartments Sept. 1.

The pair should receive a jail sentence, a Michigan Anti-Cruelty spokeswoman said. The prosecuting attorney agreed.

On Thursday, Michael Gregory

Prasher of Ann Arbor pleaded guilty to one count of killing and torturing animals before Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Barry Howard. The other man charged, Bradley Jon Woons of Grand Rapids, pleaded guilty Nov. 23.

Woons is set for sentencing 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 6; Prasher 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 13.

Animal cruelty is a felony that carries a four-year jail term, \$5,000 or 600 community service. A person convicted

of the crime is also forbidden to own a pet.

"We're of the opinion ... as far as the penalty goes it should be the maximum," said Linda Tuttle, Michigan Anti-Cruelty Society president. "That was just a blatant, mean, cruel thing to do, abusing an animal for fun."

"Studies have shown that some people who abuse animals eventually graduate to human beings."

Under a plea agreement, the pair

could receive up to a year in jail with probation and possibly boot camp. Woons and Prasher are 22.

"One thing we've made very clear, we wanted mental health counseling also," said Joe Lavigne, Oakland County assistant prosecutor.

Around 6:30 p.m. Sept. 1, witnesses said three men appeared to be feeding ducks near a pond at Independence Green. The tranquil moment turned to

Please see DUCK, A7

Happy, happy:
Jacob blows out a candle with his mom, Sharon McGladdery, who requested that party-goers make contributions to the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America, CCFA, in honor of Jacob's birthday.



STAFF PHOTO BY SHARON LAMUEX

Finding a cure

Party raises cash, awareness

BY TIM SMITH
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Jacob McGladdery's recent birthday party was as typical as they come. There were balloons and streamers, plus kids enjoying pizza, cake, ice cream and bumper bowling at Langan's Northwest Lanes in Farmington Hills.

But there weren't any toys or other gifts brought to the party on Saturday, Nov. 28. Instead, friends of the youngster - who suffers from ulcerative colitis - were asked to give the "gift of

health" to celebrate his seventh birthday (which actually was Thursday, Nov. 26).

His parents, Marty and Sharon McGladdery of Farmington Hills, requested that party-goers make contributions to the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America, CCFA, in honor of Jacob's birthday. They hope the amount of money and awareness raised can help find a cure for anyone

Please see PARTY, A4

