

## The suspect who wasn't

By JONI HUBERD  
STAFF WRITER  
jhuberd@co.hometownnews.net

Parents and school officials in Farmington Hills breathed a sigh of relief Friday after police found a man thought to be accosting young children was only looking to help.

According to Assistant Chief Charles Nebus, two 10-year-old boys waiting at a bus stop were approached by the man, who asked whether they needed a ride. As their bus arrived, he pulled away.

"The kids, of course, interpreted that as he was scared off by the bus," Nebus said.

They reported the incident at their schools, and that afternoon, a flier went home warning parents about the potential danger.

"As a result (of the report), we had a detective in an unmarked vehicle at the bus stop," Nebus said.

The suspect vehicle was spotted and the detective followed it until a marked patrol car pulled the driver over. A background check showed no criminal history, and the driver's statement led police to believe the whole incident was a simple misunderstanding.

"His explanation was he saw one of the children put out the thumb ... He

Please see SUSPECT, A6



Brick by brick: The construction of Comerica Park is not just a job to baseball fan Rand Harder.

## Designs on a park

By TRACY BURKHARDT  
STAFF WRITER

If you're one of the lucky Tiger fans who scored tickets for the April 11 season opener against the Seattle Mariners, you'll not only enjoy a push new ballpark, you'll also enjoy a taste of home.

JFRA Architects of Farmington Hills designed many of the stadium's highlights, including The Tiger Club, The Tiger Den and the Beer Garden. The architectural and design planning firm is known for its large-scale projects abroad, but locals will recognize the company's credits to the Detroit area, including the Somerset Collection, Great Lakes Crossing and the refurbishing of the Detroit Athletic Club.

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The firm specializes in retail, entertainment and restaurants. In recent years, the firm has melded its three specialties, such as with Great Lakes Crossing, to create

Please see PARK, A4

## Better days ahead promised for family fest

Despite a start along a bumpy road with some bad feelings and a lack of communication, merchants, vendors and the Farmington Area Family Fest board of directors are trying to work together to make the summer event a success.

By TIM SMITH  
STAFF WRITER  
tsmith@co.hometownnews.net

There's no "I" in FAFF. The notion of teamwork -- with the goal of energizing and improving the new-name Farmington Area Family Fest -- led the topics of discussion during Wednesday night's "town hall" meeting at the Farmington Training Center.

About 15 downtown Farmington merchants and crafters joined Farmington Area Founders Fest board members and other community leaders for a mostly upbeat 90-minute exchange of ideas and information.

"I think it was very positive," said Deb Watson, the owner of Deb's Crafts. "I think a lot of good things are happening with the festival and that the communication is really good now. (The board) is really taking in our input."

Please see related story page A6

Concurring was Clothes Encounters owner Larry Sallen, who described the confab as "very effective. We need to communicate."

And communication was what the meeting was all about.

Board president Jim Stark and festival manager-promoter Mike Watts, of Watts-Up Inc., emphasized to the attentive gathering that the best recipe for the festival being viable over the long haul is for all citizens and merchants to become committed to the event, now entering its 37th year and second under Watts.

Some of the issues

Before extending an invitation to merchants and the community to begin

Please see FEST, A5

## Volunteers unhappy with reorganization

By TIM SMITH  
STAFF WRITER  
tsmith@co.hometownnews.net

For about 30 years, hard-working volunteers such as Eunice Lubinski have put in their own time to operate Botsford General Hospital's gift shop. And then, suddenly, according to some, they were told their services at the shop were no longer needed.

Imagine that, said Farmington Hills resident Lubinski, volunteers being fired. Hospital officials, meanwhile, defend how the situation was handled.

"He could have had a meeting to tell us," said Lubinski, a nine-year volunteer at the gift shop. "But the way he did it was like a slap in the face. They just changed the locks."

And, chimed in nine-year gift shop volunteer Sally Abdo, notification was kind of shocking. ... I think we should have been warned or had a meeting to let us know this was going to happen."

They were referring to the March 11 letter that 57 volunteers who com-

## BOTSFORD GIFT SHOP

prised the Guild received from Botsford President and CEO Gerson Cooper. The Guild is the nonprofit volunteer organization that managed the gift shop, in place years before the larger Friends of Botsford (which has about 400 volunteers) was organized in the mid-1980s.

Welcome to stay

In the letter, Cooper blamed "a lack of a unified team approach to handling the business matters of the Guild and the gift shop" for the hospital's decision to change its course. Official dissolution of the Guild began Monday, March 13, when Cooper met with and notified Guild board members about the deci-

Please see GIFT, A7

## THE WEEK AHEAD

**Collect:** The St. Vincent DePaul Society of St. Gerald Catholic Church will collect clothes and small household items for the need. A truck will be in the south parking lot at the church, 21300 Farmington road.

## WEDNESDAY

**Music:** A Spring Collage concert will be held at 7:30 p.m. at Harrison High School.

## INDEX

Apartments/EB  
Arts/CA  
Automotive/HE  
Classified/EA, H  
Classified Index/EA  
Crossword/EB  
Jobs/GJ  
Malls/CS  
Movies/CA  
New Homes/EA  
Obituaries/DT  
Real Estate/EB  
Service Guide/H4  
Sports/B1  
Taste/D1  
Travel/CS



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## Cast is hopelessly devoted to 'Grease' production

By JOANNE MALIKOWSKI  
STAFF WRITER  
jmalikow@co.hometownnews.net

Tickets are selling like "greased lightning" for North Farmington High School's spring musical, "Grease."

"We are almost out of tickets," said Sue Cobb, assistant director. Dean

Cobb is the director. "March 31st is all sold out, already."

The popular musical, set in 1959, debuts at 7:30 p.m. March 30. Other shows will be at 7:30 p.m. April 1, 7 and 8 in the North Farmington auditorium.

"Normally we would have four performances. With the success last year of 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat,' we added a fifth," Cobb said.

The Cobbs were working on adding yet more performances, but scheduling became tough considering the musical is an all-school play and cast and crew had other commitments.

"We don't have a Theatricals group," she said. "You see the Pops (Pop Pops), the football, the basketball (players) here."

The musical was open to all grade levels, as well. As it turned out, 140 students auditioned. With the orchestra, cast and crew, 95 students are involved with the production.

"You need to give kids more opportunities," Cobb said.

Cast members will bring to life the enduring romance between Danny Zuko, a greaser pretends he isn't interested in nice girl Sandy Dombrowski, a new student at Rydell High School.

"It's great. It's fun," Cobb said, referring to the story line, music and dancing.

"Grease" is rated PG. Tickets are on sale 10:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Monday through Friday in the North Farmington cafeteria. Or you may call the box



In tune: Cool guy Danny (Brian Horr) and Kenickie (Jon Lenze) sing about summer and the chicks they've met.



On stage: The cast of "Grease" begins its dress rehearsal.

office, 426-4740.

The following students are involved in the production:

### Cast of Characters

Danny Zuko (Brian Horr), Sandy Dombrowski (Lauren Fisher), Betty Rizzo (Tricia Berry), Kenickie (Jon Lenze), Doody (Isaac Kaufman), Roger (Dan Freeman), Marty (Kelly Karakashian), Jan (Mindy Silberman), Frenchy (Becca Singer), Sonny (Rob

Salter), Patty Simcox (Catherine Powell), Miss Lynch (Gretchen Pitlik), Eugene (Andrew Moll), Johnny Casano (Jimmy Walk), Teen Angel (Will Cobb), Teen Angel Back-Up Singers, (Kathy Bockli, Sutna Gheyari, Julie Maltzman, Jessica Williams, Lauren Zakalik), Vince Fontaine (Jon Vincent), Cha Cha Degregorio (Krysle Richeson) and Wolfman Movie Actors (Matt

Please see GREASE, A7