

Pet python reported missing

A Farmington man's pet python may be on the loose, but police and the experts they've contacted don't think the snake has gone very far. Public Safety Director Gary Goss said Wednesday morning the missing snake was reported to police on Monday, but it had disappeared over the weekend from an apartment in Kensington Manor. The 44-year-old brown and tan reptile is described as being eight feet long and weighing about 20 pounds. It apparently escaped through a torn doorwall screen, Goss said. "We've talked to the zoo. They said it probably didn't go far," he reported. "But if you've got small animals, you might want to keep them inside for a while." Zoo experts believe the animal may be holed up in the basement, somewhere in the building's ductwork. Because snakes are cold-blooded, if the temperature of its surroundings is cool, the python may go dormant, Goss said. Anyone who spots the snake is asked to call the Farmington Police Department, 248-474-4700.

PLANNING AGENDA

City of Farmington Hills Planning Commission Public Hearing Council Chambers April 27 7:30 p.m.
Special Approval
 Location: 24630 Hathaway, lot 11 of Supervisor's Plat No. 11.
 Request: Rust and paint remover facility in LI-1, light-industrial district.
Special Approval
 Location: 35700 West 12 Mile Road.

Request: Addition to existing William Tyndale College, RA-1, single-family residential district.
Planned Unit Development
 Request: Proposal to control a Walgreen's Drug Store in B-3, general business district; P-1, vehicular parking district; and RC-3, multiple-family residential district.
 Location: North side of Grand River abutting Colwell and St. Francis Avenues.

Planned Unit Development Option Qualification
 Location: North side of Grand River Avenue, east and west of Waldron Avenue.
Request: Qualifications of property to construct a neighborhood shopping center.
Site Condominium Plan
 Location: West side of Goldsmith, north of Eight Mile Road.
 Request: Single-family residential housing (4 lots) in RA-1, single-family residential district. 3.091 acres.

Parents: You don't have to let your children see videos

By TRACEY BRUKENHAUER
STAFF WRITER

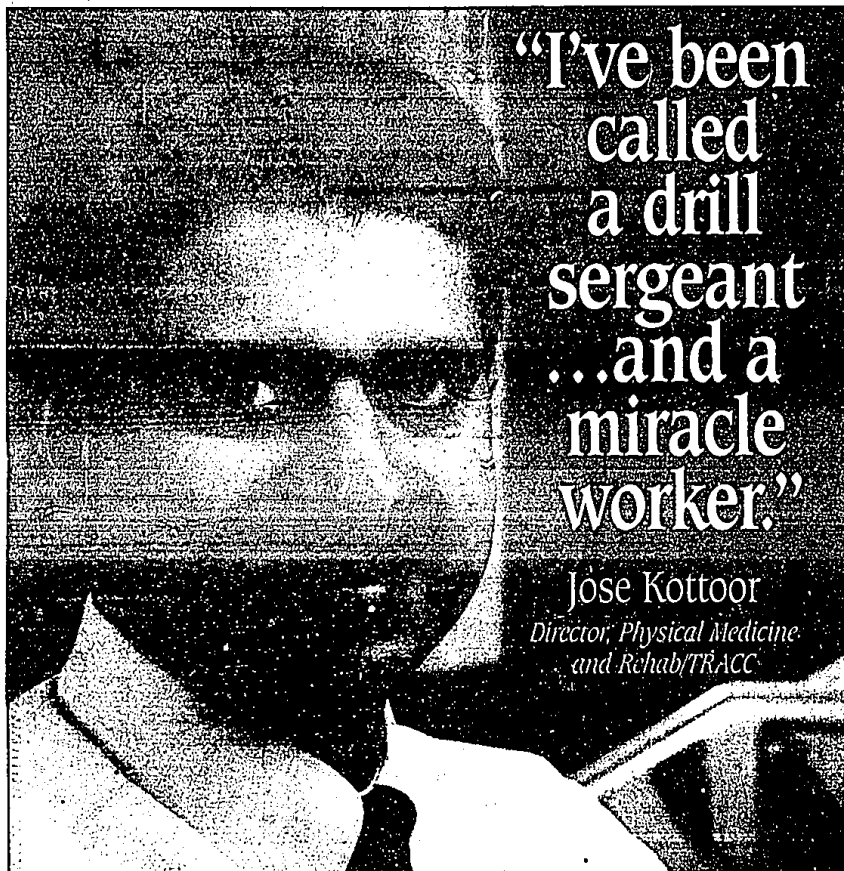
Hillside Elementary fifth graders won't see a controversial sexual harassment video. Farmington schools are showing two videos to students, "What to Do," for first and second graders, and "When You Should Tell," for fifth graders. The films are part of a board of education-supported and state-mandated "Respecting Myself and Others" health curriculum. While they won't see the video, Hillside fifth graders will learn curriculum material through books and teacher instruction. The remaining Farmington elementary schools will continue showing the fifth-grade video. At its April 11 meeting, the Farmington Board of Education reminded parents they can keep their children from seeing the video if they're uncomfortable with the subject matter. The board reiterated that the decision to show the video rests with the individual schools, not the school board.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

"I decided for my school that the grade-five video will not be shown," said Hillside Principal Janice Colliton. "There were a few concerns, so we decided to not go ahead with it." Since parents approved of the first- and second-grade video, the school will show it. Colliton said a couple of Hillside parents don't want the curriculum taught at all regardless of the video's contents. Claudia Taffe is one of those parents.

She has two children enrolled at Hillside Elementary where parents were invited to preview the two 15-minute videos. Taffe doesn't approve of either tape. The mother of four said she is concerned for all children enrolled in Farmington's public schools, calling the fifth-grade video outrageous. "You all need to publicly approve of these videos," she told the school board at its meeting. "You can't tell me that 6- and 7-year-old children are ready to see this. If these aren't superior videos, I think we need to think about that."


She asked if any board members had viewed the videos. Gary Sharp said he had. "I would elect to withhold my child from the fifth-grade video," he said. "But I don't want to be part of a board that starts banning books, banning choice." Sharp's opinion represented the majority view of the board, with members saying they approved the curriculum and left it to the experts to administer the program. "We regret it's necessary to have such a program," said board president Priscilla Brouillette. "I have received many calls from parents who support the videos. Sometimes it opens a discussion - there are a lot of reasons why it might be helpful." Board member Linda Enberg agreed. "We have differing opinions on what's appropriate," she told Taffe. "Some elementary students are already having problems with that. I really think it's a local decision at the schools ... and I support that."



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Jose Kottoor
 Director, Physical Medicine and Rehab/TRACC

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