



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BECKLER

**Hopeful:** Robert Hageman, who, lives on Orchard Lake Road, looks forward to a better road.



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BECKLER

**Down:** Business has been down at Farmer John's, says Darrell Youngquist.

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manager Darrell Youngquist. The construction project pretty much cut off all his business west of Haggerty. "We're down 16-20 percent," he said.

Two prominent road projects remain: The widening of Orchard Lake Road from Ten Mile Road to I-696 to a four-lane boulevard; and the widening of Farmington Road on the Farmington-Farmington Hills border to five lanes, between Eight and Nine Mile Roads. Both are scheduled for completion this fall.

### At city hall

Farmington Hills City Hall said residents have been enduring slowdowns at the city offices at 11 Mile and Orchard Lake Roads since spring. That's when work started to accommodate the widening of Orchard Lake from two to four lanes.

"They (residents) ask how long it is going to go on," said Sue Clinton, with the city clerk's office. "Or they ask, 'Is there another way to get out of here?'"

"Every morning I complain," said Lee Miller, recording secretary with the clerk's office. Miller punctuates her comments with a smile, but she recalls once waiting through 11 traffic light changes, to get through the Orchard Lake 11 Mile intersection. "We are looking forward to the final product. Orchard Lake

Road will be nice when completed," she said.

Paving is scheduled for completion in late November. Boulevard landscaping is scheduled for spring.

City Manager Steve Brock said he's kept city hall staff informed on road construction through e-mails. "They're generally understanding," he said.

### Cutting through

Colleen Carrier works at Sal-lan, Nemes, Lyman & Strakovsky, kitty-corner from city hall. "The clients call and say, 'Is the construction still going on?'"

"A lot of people are cutting through our lot. If the windows are open you hear a lot of yelling; people driving and construction crews," Carrier said. Her typical 20-minute drive home to Livonia is now easily 45 minutes.

"The worst is getting out at 5," said Robert Hagemann, who lives on Orchard Lake Road just east of the CPA office.

"Outside of the dirt blowing out here and the congestion of traffic it doesn't bother me too much," he added, smiling. "They (construction workers) wake us up sometimes at 7:30, sometimes they go to midnight."

But Hagemann said the finished four-lane boulevard "will help handling the traffic."

Skip Ottwell, Farmington Hills city engineer, said area road work will continue next year on Northwestern Highway from Inkster to 14 Mile Road, to add acceleration-deceleration lanes.

The Farmington Road widening project is also scheduled to continue from Nine Mile Road to Grand River.

Road resurfacing is slated for September and October on Colfax Street from Gill to Farmington Roads; Freedom Road from Nine Mile to Orchard Lake; and Shiloh Road from Middlebelt to Inkster Road.

The Haggerty Road bridges project was under the direction of the state of Michigan. "We need to complete some substructure work, but the bridges are open and that's welcome news for commuters and business owners," said Mike Eustice, manager of the Michigan Department of Transportation Oakland County transportation service center.

The substructure work will not affect Haggerty Road traffic, MDOT said. Motorists at times will face lane closures below the bridges on the freeways during non-peak traffic hours. The substructure work is to be completed in mid-September.

The Farmington and Orchard Lake Road projects are administered by Oakland County.

## Chase ends in crash on Colfax

BY MATT JACHMAN  
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Police from two departments are investigating a Saturday traffic accident involving an on-duty officer that sent a couple to the hospital.

Livonia Officer Jeff Powers was heading east on Colfax Street in Farmington Hills, trying to catch up to a pickup truck that had been driven recklessly in Livonia, when his patrol car collided with an eastbound 1995 Geo.

Powers was about to pass the car on the left, said Lt. Ben McDermott, Livonia Police Department spokesman, but its driver apparently didn't see the patrol car and started to turn left into a driveway when the crash occurred.

The patrol car's flashing lights and siren were not on, McDermott said. Powers was not in a chase, he said, but was trying to catch up to the truck.

The injured couple remained at Botsford Hospital in Farmington Hills, where they were in stable condition Wednesday, said Farmington Hills Police Chief Bill Dwyer. Powers, who was also treated at Botsford, returned to duty Wednesday.

While police in Farmington Hills investigate the accident, Livonia command officers and the department's accident review board will study whether Powers violated any departmental procedures regarding the incident.

Powers' report indicates he first saw the pickup near Seven Mile and Wayne Road, McDermott said. The driver was squealing the tires, sending up clouds of rubber smoke, he said.

The officer followed the vehicle, which was being driven at high speed, north on Gary Lane, losing it in a residential area, McDermott said. Two pedestrians pointed out its direction, and Powers ended up heading north on Gill.

The patrol car's lights and siren were turned on, and Powers crossed Eight Mile, McDermott said. But he lost sight of the truck again, and turned the emergency equipment off.

Dwyer said his department's investigation should be completed by the end of the week. The results will be submitted to the Oakland County prosecutor's office.

## Close replaces Akouri in Knollenberg's office

BY KEVIN BROWN  
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Chris Close, a Chicago native, has been named to replace John Akouri as U.S. Rep. Joe Knollenberg's communications director.

Akouri left the position with Knollenberg, R-Bloomfield Hills, last month to run for the Michigan Senate. "He just said 'We have a great team here, take advantage of that,'" Close recalled.

Akouri will continue to serve as the co-host with Knollenberg on the cable TV program "Window to Washington."

Does Close similarly plan to run for public office someday? "Right now I think probably not. I see the sacrifice that everybody makes; that would be something way down the line," he said.

Close, 26, grew up in Glenview, Ill., near Chicago. He attended American University in Washington D.C., majoring in political science and economics.

"I was always interested in those two things," he said. Close said he was drawn to Republican politics because he favors limited government.

He worked as communications director for Illinois Congresswoman Judy Biggert's campaign in 1998, and continued when Biggert was elected to that state's 13th U.S. House district.

Close said he likes the communications director job because "you have a hand in everything. It's always a challenge, there's always something new."

"Basically you're dealing with issues of the day. It can involve writing press releases, writing

speeches; there really is no average day," he said.

What does he find most satisfying about the job? "When you see your work pay off for your boss," Close said.

He began working for Knollenberg July 2. "They were looking for a new communications director and I was looking for something a little different," he said.

Close was drawn also by Knollenberg's position as House Appropriations Subcommittee chairman on the District of Columbia.

He will see Knollenberg's district for the first time this month, as he joins the congressman for a series of speaking engagements. He will mainly work out of the congressman's Washington D.C. office.

## Farmington from page A1

mission.

It's going to be a long four months for folks like Sam Rafou. "My business is down 50 percent," said Rafou, owner of the Big Boy Restaurant on Farmington Road. With traffic shifted to the west, it's difficult for people to turn left, he said.

"As for seniors, older people don't want to go through construction, so we lose," Rafou said.

### Morning shift

At the 7-Eleven store on the west side of Farmington Road where construction is under way, franchisee David Chehade said the morning shift takes the brunt of the construction, followed by the afternoon shift.

"We sell a lot of coffee and breakfast items," Chehade said. "People have limited time in the morning."

Customers have about five minutes to run in and purchase items in the morning, he said. If they are stuck in traffic a half mile down, they may not decide to get out and stop in, he said.

"Neighborhood business is still here," Chehade said. "They walk here or drive here."

Construction has reduced his business 26 percent, Chehade said. Goyle Smarjesse, an employee of Bonnie's Hallmark at Nine Mile and Farmington Road, said the road work has slowed business. Other factors may play a part, too, she said.

"It might also be this time of

year, she said. "It's kind of hard to tell. We can't tell if it's the weather, too. Everybody is cranky about it."

Smarjesse wonders what will happen when construction switches to the east side of Farmington Road.

### Streets close

Residents also are hurting. Diane Peeling, who lives on Maplelun between Colfax and Nine Mile roads, is concerned because she heard some streets will close.

She's right, according to Bryson. As of Friday, closings of Kirby, Arnold, Stockton, Cadillac and Longwood were planned for the west side. When the traffic shifts to the east side of Farmington Road in mid- to late September, Meadowlark, Kirby and Tall Oaks will close.

Peeling feels the county has handled the inevitable delays pretty well.

"They are good at not holding up traffic," she said. "The flow is good, better than expected."

She thought a sign more to the south to announce the upcoming construction area would help. But the county has rules to follow.

"There's national guidelines we follow for signs about where they are placed and what they should say," Bryson said.

Peeling, who works as a Farmington school district bus driver, said drivers were hoping Farmington Road would be finished by the start of school Aug. 27.

It's not uncommon for one sus-

pect to rob several banks in one area, said Booth.

"Serial bank robbers are fairly common," he said. "Usually, the bank robbers in this area rob more than one bank and keep

### Costs incurred

The Farmington City Council approved a cost participation agreement Aug. 6, which was provided by Thomas Blust, director of engineering for the Road Commission of Oakland County.

The agreement for the widening and repaving of Farmington Road from Grand River to Eight Mile lists payment responsibilities for the communities involved. This includes Farmington, Farmington Hills, Oakland County and the federal government.

The contract also utilizes the city's tri-party program funding in which Oakland County, the Oakland County Road Commission, and the City of Farmington participate.

The whole project includes the repaving with a center left turn lane from Slocum Street south to Eight Mile, and repaving of Nine Mile west of Farmington Road to the exit from M5.

The project also includes decorative curbs for the Grand River and Farmington Road intersection.

The total project cost is \$7,575,260, with \$6,140,462 in federal funding. The City of Farmington's total estimated share is \$500,760. Funds were budgeted for 2001-2002 and are available from the highway fund, water and sewer fund, and capital improvement fund, according to Farmington City Manager Frank Lauhoff.

"It's a joint effort," Booth said. Any tips or information relating to the case may be left with Det. Alan Patterson at the Farmington Hills Police Department, (248) 473-9687 or the FBI Detroit field office at (313) 965-2323.

Booth said most suspects are drug addicts and some are compulsive gamblers. He said there have been 160 bank robberies in Michigan as of the end of July, so far this year. In 2000, there were 328 bank robberies statewide for the entire year.

The FBI works with the local police agencies on the cases and the FBI prosecutes most of the cases.

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## Stem cells from page A1

ham Temple-goers generally support such research. He said that while Bush speaks of a culture of life, the president's support for the death penalty goes in an opposite direction. "That's a contradiction many people have," he said.

Chalmers said he found it disappointing that Bush limited research to existing stem cell lines, as more embryos will be destroyed over time. "It's missed possibilities; He wants to pretend it's not happening. It's sort of silly not to use it."

"I guess he's constricted by his own sense of right and wrong. But if he's already using what's already produced, what's the sense of not using something that is being produced anyway?"

The Rev. Kathleen Groff is associate pastor of Nardin Park

United Methodist Church in Farmington Hills. "My husband and I sat down and listened to" she said of Bush's address on Aug. 9. "I didn't totally disagree. My concern is with the direction it could take. I'm concerned what would happen if the research goes any further."

"There are a lot of ethical decisions to be made and a lot of soul searching," Groff said. "I'm glad he was cautious about it. I'm glad he limited it to already existing lines."

Groff said she's unsure if her church will take a stand on the issue.

U.S. Rep. Joe Knollenberg, R-Bloomfield, responded to Bush's announcement, saying, "I am pleased that President Bush has decided to prohibit federal funding of any new harmful embry-

onic stem cell research."

"I strongly support current funding of medical research utilizing alternatives such as adult and umbilical stem cells," Knollenberg said.

The president's decision, he said, "will allow scientists to explore the potential of this research to benefit the lives of millions of people who suffer from life-threatening diseases."

"However, we must be clear that this should not be the first step toward federal funding of a new generation of embryonic stem cell research," he said; adding the research "raises serious ethical questions and federal funding should not be used to condone what many taxpayers feel is morally wrong."

## "It's a New Day at Crittenton!"



Lyle Perna  
Crittenton Maintenance Technician

"Crittenton's new administration has been very receptive to the employees' concerns, questions and ideas. They have done many things to benefit the staff, which has helped a great deal to improve attitudes and working conditions."

"Crittenton has been my community hospital for many years. I got my first job there when I was 16, had my children there and spent 12 days in intensive care while they saved my life. We are so fortunate to have such an excellent medical facility in our backyard!"



Melinda Conway Callahan  
Executive Director  
Rochester Community Schools Foundation

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## Robberies from page A1

eral of Michigan, inside the Kroger store at Telegraph and W. Chicago for about 15 minutes before making his move.

According to the police report, he handed a teller, who was new at the branch, a note that read: "I have a gun, give me the 100s, 50s and 20s only."

The teller handed the note to another teller, who complied with the demand. No weapon was actually seen.

After getting about \$6,000 in \$20-bills, the man turned around and casually walked out of the Kroger. The incident occurred at 3:20 p.m. on Monday. The suspect was wearing a light-colored baseball cap, a white T-shirt and blue jeans and is believed to be

in his 20s.

Police and Federal Bureau of Investigation agents compared the photos from the bank surveillance tapes and determined the suspect is the same.

The man is suspected of robbing a Standard Federal branch, a Franklin Bank branch and a Michigan National Bank branch, all in Southfield, in mid-July and a Standard Federal at Eleven Mile and Middlebelt in Farmington Hills on July 27.

It's not uncommon for one suspect to rob several banks in one area, said Booth.

"Serial bank robbers are fairly common," he said. "Usually, the bank robbers in this area rob more than one bank and keep

robbing until they get caught."

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