

Farmington Observer & Eccentric

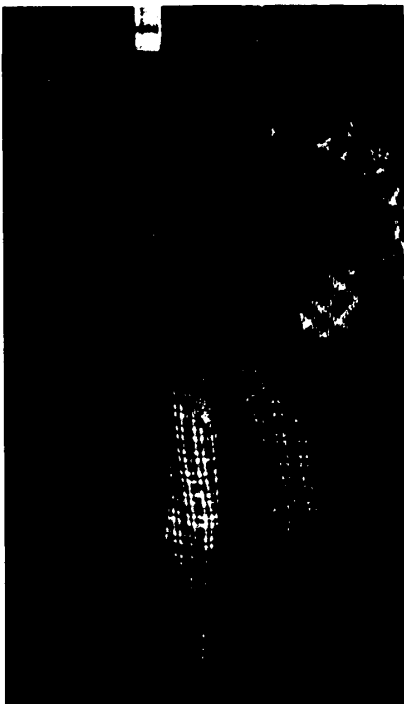
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Fifteen Cents



George Onifer is brought to 47th District Court for arraignment on first degree murder charges. (Photo by Craig Newman)

Ex-con arraigned for murder

Parole reform demanded

FARMINGTON HILLS—As police continue investigation into the slaying of an 11-year-old Detroit girl, Oakland County Prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson renewed his call for parole reform.

The arrest March 21 of George Onifer, 36, of Brooklyn, Mich., in connection with the rape and murder of Kelly Curley whose body was found floating in a pond near Halstead Road, prompted Patterson's remarks. Onifer had been paroled in 1972 from Southern Michigan Prison in Jackson for good behavior. He had been sentenced in 1968 to serve a 30- to 36-year term for the rape of a 15-year-old Hamtramck girl in Warren. That sentence was later reduced to five to 10 years upon recommendation from prison officials.

He was released after serving four and one-half years of that sentence.

ON MARCH 23 Onifer stood mute to a charge of first degree murder before 47th District Court Judge Michael J. Hand. He is being held in Oakland County Jail to await pretrial examination Friday before Hand.

Meanwhile, Patterson has called for "serious parole reform to be undertaken in Lansing."

"How many times will we have to be raped, robbed and murdered by the same hardcore criminals over and over again before there is change," he said.

Kelly's "senseless death" was the result of the "same stupid error" that has been made before, Patterson said.

POLICE ARE investigating an alibi

that Onifer had. Laboratory tests on evidence are being conducted.

Although the child left her home March 18 reportedly to spend the night with a friend, a missing person report was not filed with Detroit police until Wednesday afternoon when it was learned that she had not attended school that day.

A neighbor later reported having seen a child get into a truck. It was

the description of the truck and man that provided police with a lead in the case.

Onifer was arrested March 21 after his truck was spotted parked outside a motel in Brooklyn. He was held in the Farmington Hills lockup and shuttled back and forth between Farmington Hills and the Oakland County Prosecutor's office and the sheriff's department in Pontiac for questioning.

The child was fully clothed with the exception of underclothing when she was found by three young men walking through the area.

Police had the pond drained in their search for clues.

Two police helicopters joined the search to aid in spotting roadways leading into the desolate area where the child's body was found.

Hills a dumping ground?

FARMINGTON HILLS—The vacant area where the body of 11-year-old Kelly Curley was found March 20 has been a source of problems to nearby residents.

The Detroit child's body was found floating in a pond about 300 yards east of Halstead between Twelve and Thirteen Mile Roads.

Bruce Robinson, 3335 Halstead Road, attended the city council meeting Monday night to recount problems which he said had been prevalent for the last 13 years.

"I'm talking about crime prevention," he said. "We'll have a similar problem to Romania if we don't take action. Romania is being used as a dumping ground for bodies."

Robinson, a three-year resident, lives about one-quarter mile south of the area where the child's body was found.

HIS COMPLAINTS were aimed at property which lies between that site and his home.

At one time, the property was a gravel pit.

The gravel operation was abandoned, but a large hole and high piles of gravel remain at the site.

Two years ago, the city agreed to fill the pit but that project has not yet been completed, said zoning inspector Hal Rowe. Dirt from the city's ditching projects was to be used as fill material.

At one time, the site was popular with motorists. However, a five-page motorcycle ordinance passed by the council has all but eliminated the problem.

Robinson asked that the vacant property be posted. "We've asked that for eight years. The land is used as a dumping ground."

He also asked that the area be fenced.

Robinson requested faster response time from the police department. He said that police were called Sunday after his son was approached by two men. It was one hour before police responded, he said.

"We can correct this situation if we're all aware of it," Robinson said.

New presentation aimed at 'coffee' questions

By SUSAN AVERILL

FARMINGTON—Principals and other administrators in the school district have put together an evening presentation in an attempt to answer the questions raised in the PTA's coffee and comments program.

Last week, they went through a trial run of the presentation, with an audience of PTA members.

Presentations will be offered in each of the elementary schools

throughout April, some in connection with open houses and curriculum sessions, said Mrs. Vivian Jurasek, president of the PTA.

Using an overhead projector for graphs and figures, labor relations director Robert Coleman showed Farmington's relationship to other districts in money spent per pupil, millage, state aid problems and tax rates.

"Forty-nine school districts in the state are spending more money per

child than we are," he said. Farmington spends \$4,182 per pupil, 18th in Oakland County. Bloomfield Hills spends \$1,274, Birmingham \$1,317 and Oak Park ranks highest with \$1,899 per pupil.

The district ranks 15th in money spent per child for administrative purposes (\$1.61).

The district will lose 300 students this year, adding to the loss of more than 1,200 in the past five years. Coleman said.

The increasing state equalized valuation—\$12,576 in 1970 to \$21,726 in 1974—has partially made up for the loss.

But as the tax base goes up, the state aid goes down in an attempt to equalize state funding between the richer and poorer districts.

In 1970-71, 56 per cent of the district's revenue was generated locally and 42 per cent came from the state. Currently, Farmington taxpayers pay

67 per cent of the total revenue, with only 29 per cent coming from the state.

Revenues, Coleman said, come from two main sources: the state, which pays per pupil, transportation and special education and local taxes, particularly through property assessment.

A recently published study has shown Farmington's total tax rate as one of the lowest in the county.

In response to a suggestion to raise revenue by sale of one of the district's buildings, Superintendent Marius Van Ameroye said, "Removing a building from the ownership of the district is not contemplated."

Legally, money generated by the sale would be allocated to the district's building and site accounts, and could not be used for school operating expenses.

Besides, he said, the buildings may be needed for future programs.

Donald Cowan, Fairview Elementary School principal, said two extra mills would give the elementary new texts and maintain the programs now offered.

Fairview is one of four elementary schools the board must decide between, should an elementary school have to be closed. Other schools include Eagle, Highmound and Middlebelt, all at the eastern end of the district, where enrollment decline is greatest.

Robert Brown, Power Junior High School principal, said an additional two mills would keep all secondary schools open for the 1975-76 school year.

No extra mills would mean the transfer of 80 students and nearly 30 staff members, reconstruction of school boundaries, three students per locker, a 15-minute nutrition break, no study hall and a five-period day.

Storm sewer restudied

FARMINGTON HILLS—City council members will be studying a two-year-old report to decide whether to undertake a \$26-million storm sewer program.

Mayor pro-tem Earl Oppertusauer asked that the council take another look at the report which was prepared by Larry Pate in March 1973.

A special millage might have to be assessed to permit the city to undertake the project which might take as long as 20 years to complete, Oppertusauer said.

Pate's report indicated that the storm sewers would eliminate the need for retention basins. The basins

are being used in new developments to reduce water runoff.

THE COUNCIL will be taking a close look at the southeast area of the city from Nine Mile to Eleven Mile and Inlander to Middle Belt.

That part of the city is a flat area. (See STORM SEWER, next page)

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Grow your own food as OCC 'tenant farmer'

FARMINGTON HILLS—Given some rain and sunshine, the community gardens project on the Orchard Ridge campus of Oakland Community College should be growing like all outdoors by May.

The college through the office of science faculty member, Bill McNaughton, is offering 15 by 15 foot plots on campus to all who apply.

McNaughton is sure that with the number of apartment and condominium dwellers in the area, the project will serve a real need.

The tenant farmers will pay \$15 per plot to cover getting the ground ready for planting. Those interested may call or write to him at the college.

When the application is made and the fee paid, a map of the area, plot number and location will be sent by return mail.

Included will be a short list of

ground rules, one of which will ban the use of commercial fertilizers. McNaughton, who has been manually plowing the ground for the project for close to a year, is an ecologist and a strong believer in the use of natural and organic materials.

Plenty of water will be available close to the gardens, which will be between the campus and I-480. McNaughton's students are building a windmill to pump water from the stream in the garden area. It will take a 10 mile an hour wind to start the windmill and a seven mile an hour one to keep it going.

A CLASS in organic gardening will be organized if enough interested people request it, McNaughton said. It would be formed this spring and be open to those who participate in the community gardens project and those who farm their backyards.

Another class which ties in with the food problem and increasing costs of living is McNaughton's "Wild Foods."

"Just make sure," McNaughton said, "people understand this is not a survival class, but a true gourmet wild foods class. After we forage and find the wild foods, we'll go back to the college kitchens and cook some delicious meals."

He mentioned some of the items to be included on the wild foods menu: stinging nettles with butter sauce, soup of plantains, soup of wild clover, castor bean salad and a variety of salads including dandelions, burdock, lamb's quarters and purslane.

The class meets five hours a week for six weeks during the day. Class members may bring their young children, McNaughton said, quickly learn to hunt wild foods with the best.



Bill McNaughton has been pushing gardening at OCC. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)