

Farmington Observer

Volume 92 Number 42

Monday, March 9, 1981

Farmington, Michigan

32 Pages

Twenty-five cents

Murder suspect released after legal mixup

By CRAIG PIECHURA

Thursday's release of a murder suspect in the June 16 slaying of Farmington Hills gas station owner Pincus "Pete" Reif outraged both police and prosecution officials.

Circuit Judge Robert B. Webster ruled last week that prosecutors failed to bring co-defendants Herbert Crosby, 26, of Detroit and Daryl D. McMillion, 23, of Detroit, to trial within 180 days of their arrest.

Under state supreme court rules guaranteeing a speedy trial, defendants must be released on personal bond if the court finds the trial wasn't delayed by the defense or unavoidable legal reasons.

Crosby was released on personal bond pending a scheduled appearance Tuesday in 47th District Court. McMillion is being held in Oakland County Jail on an old warrant for escaping from a prison work farm.

Webster remanded both cases back to Farmington district court because the suspects were charged with first-degree murder under a felony murder statute that was found unconstitutional after their arrest. Both men were bound over for trial in circuit court on first-degree murder charges by 47th District Judge Michael Hand July 14 on grounds they committed another crime — car theft.

On Nov. 24, the Michigan Supreme Court unanimously decided in the case

of People vs. Aaron that defendants must show "malice of forethought" before they are charged with first-degree murder.

On Tuesday, Judge Hand must decide if evidence exists that Crosby or McMillion intended to kill Reif to get his car, or didn't care if they killed him to get the car.

OAKLAND COUNTY Prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson called Judge Webster's ruling that released Crosby "an astute decision."

"I can't even dignify it by calling it a release on a technicality," Patterson said.

"It was a frivolous ruling without any basis in fact or rules. The people in

Farmington have an absolute right to be incensed about it."

What drew Patterson's and special prosecutor Frank Mandelbaum's ire is their belief the trial was delayed because of a defense motion filed Dec. 15 by William Waterman, McMillion's attorney. Dec. 23 marked the 120th day after both defendant's arrest.

Waterman did not follow up his motion by pressing for a hearing on the motion.

Defense attorneys claim the prosecutor should've brought a motion to set a trial date before the 180-day deadline expired. They add that a change in special prosecutors, caused by former prosecutor Frank McGuire's move to Boston, helped postpone the trial date.

'It was a frivolous ruling without any basis in fact or rules. The people in Farmington have an absolute right to be incensed about it.'

— Brooks Patterson

"As defense counsel, we don't take any affirmative action to go to trial," said Gary Ladue, Crosby's attorney.

"We don't want to ever go to trial because we have the chance of losing. They're the ones bringing the charges against us."

The accused murderer, Crosby, reported back to the probation department Friday, his attorney said. He was

ordered to report to Farmington Hills Police over the weekend.

"I'M NOT promising anything," Ladue said, "because it's not up to me, it's up to my client. But my best guess is he'll be there (in district court) Tuesday."

(Continued on Page 4A)

Dissent clouds plans for activities club

By STEVE BARNABY

Farmington editor
A non-profit organization created to provide activities for parents and their children has come under attack by some parents in the Farmington School District.

Adults for Kids was founded in January of 1980 by Farmington teacher Brian Sprague. Among other things, it provides discount tickets to various activities around the metropolitan Detroit area.

To publicize itself, the group distributes flyers through district schools.

"It concerns us that our public school are putting these flyers into our kids' hands and lending the school's authority to the organization with no further explanation," said James Patrick in a letter to Supt. Lewis Schulman.

Patrick has children in both Longacre and Power schools.

"It seems to us that Farmington schools are encouraging using this captive market, K-5. The children cannot help but believe that they are supposed to be taken to these events — after all, their teacher gave it to them," said Patrick.

Recently, the group distributed a flyer promoting tickets to the Ice Capades

at Joe Louis Arena.

"THIS FAR his (Sprague's) organization has done a masterful job promoting Joe Louis Arena, several businesses that need kids to keep their doors open and the professional entertainment industry," said Patrick.

Sprague defended his group, saying it provides an outlet for families to participate in activities they otherwise may have avoided because of the price.

"We also have done a lot of other things which I don't talk about," said Sprague, who denies the groups' motive is to create business for local entertainment outlets.

He cited a drug seminar last year in Wixom which his group sponsored.

"This is a good organization. We aren't ripping off people. We are truly a non-profit organization involved with 27 communities around Detroit," said Sprague.

Sprague is able to obtain discount tickets through contributions from local businesses and by purchasing tickets en masse to various activities.

Presently, the group has a membership of more than 1,000 families and is registered by the state as a non-profit organization. Families are charged a

\$5 annual membership fee.

Although he is supportive of the group, Schulman says the school has been inundated with Adults for Kids literature since being allowed to distribute flyers.

"WE TRY TO BE fair in not cobbling up the kids' time from instructional fare," said Schulman.

Other groups, such as the YMCA, distribute literature in the schools, said Schulman, but with far less frequency than does Adults for Kids.

Under state guidelines, commercial enterprises are discouraged from being allowed to distribute literature or address students on business activities.

In the Farmington district this also applies to military recruiters.

Schulman hopes to work out a compromise. But Sprague expressed concern over school district officials' attitudes.

"I'm not going to lose any sleep over this. We can function without the schools. But I'm going to feel bad if that happens," said Sprague.

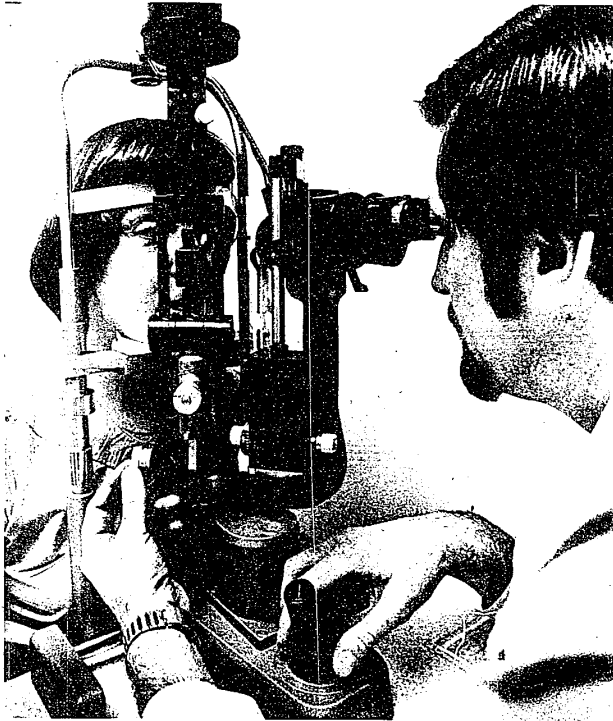
The school district, said Sprague, has been reluctant to participate in some activities sponsored by the group. Only recently has it allowed Adults for Kids to distribute its literature in schools.

Last year the district refused to support "Kids Day." But the group went to Our Lady of Sorrows Roman Catholic Church where it did receive support.

Although some have reservations about the group at least one school board trustee, Helen Prutow, supports it.

"IN SOME WAY or another I've supported the group since the beginning. I think it's a fine organization," she said.

"The organization won't go down the tube if it isn't allowed to distribute its literature in the schools. It has too many sponsors," she said, noting that two other board members make financial contributions to the organization.



Medical mystery?

Not really. This is one of the many instruments used in the Boitsford Hospital emergency room by Dr. Ronald Lagerfeld and his colleagues. This machine is used to examine eye injuries. To read more about emergency headquarters in the Farmington area, turn to Page 3A. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

Ross joins ranks opposing casinos to help Detroit

By STEVE BARNABY

Farmington editor
State Sen. Doug Ross, D-Southfield, has joined the ranks of those state lawmakers opposing legislation which would permit casino gambling.

The bill, sponsored by State Rep. Casmer Ogonowski, D-Detroit, was introduced last week. Ogonowski has been a perennial casino gambling supporter but has lost out twice previously in his attempts to see it become reality.

He sees it as a panacea for Detroit's economic woes.

But Ross, who also represents Farmington and Farmington Hills, sees it otherwise.

"It has a hustler value — something for nothing," said Ross. "If we create casino gambling, the public will want it regulated and the casino interests will be investing heavily in politics."

"I don't want their money in politics," he said.

Gambling, he noted, changes the tone of a community, a tone which he would rather avoid.

"With casinos comes prostitution which would have to be legalized and regulated. When society says it's all right to legalize prostitution, it makes a statement about women and I'm not prepared to make that statement."

ALTHOUGH MILLIONS of dollars in lobbying efforts will be spent by hotel and restaurant interests, Ross believes substantial opposition will surface to oppose casino gambling.

"This could be like a good Japanese B film — Godzilla versus the Smog People," said Ross, noting that the state's race track industry will be one of the big opponents.

"The race tracks will oppose this because there are only a limited amount of gambling dollars to go around," he said.

Race track interests will be aided in their efforts by James Karoub, one of the most powerful lobbyists in Lansing, according to Ross.

Admitting that Detroit was in need of financial aid, Ross said he would rather provide state funds to provide city services rather than legalize casino gambling.

"There are a disproportionate number of persons who need help in Detroit. We've got to remember we're all part of the same area. If they've got to have services, I'm prepared to help them with state funds," he said.

Last week State Rep. Sandy Brotherton, R-Farmington, who also represents Southfield, came out in opposition to legalized gambling.

Reality of the day

Mayor tells Dems to tighten belts

By STEVE BARNABY

Farmington editor
Economic belt-tightening will be the order of the day for Farmington Hills for the remainder of 1981.

That's the word from Mayor Donn Wolf who addressed the Farmington Area Democratic Club last Thursday evening.

"This will be a year of restraint. We must sit down and decide what we need," he said.

Efforts by President Ronald Reagan to cut federal spending will have an effect on how money is spent in local municipalities but will have less of an impact in Farmington Hills than in other communities.

"Farmington Hills didn't incorporate CETA funds into the budget. Cities that did are in big trouble," he said.

The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, enacted to provide unemployed persons with new job skills is being terminated by the Reagan administration.

Farmington Hills has 29 CETA employees who will be laid off in October.

"Those with essential jobs will be incorporated into the city's budget," said Wolf.

Although the economy is in an adverse posture, Wolf says the city will be doing a number of things to improve governmental functions.

"WE WILL BE looking to change some department functions," he said.

The council and administration will make a study of various city departments to see if functions can't be combined or if other services can be provided through private enterprise.

Another of Wolf's goals is to provide better communication with residents.

"I'm not just talking about a newsletter. That's always the easy fix. We're examining the idea of flextime hours for city hall so persons who work from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. can get to city hall to take care of business," he said.

Revision of some zoning and building

codes also could be in order.

"We must look at the codes so as to allow more energy efficient homes," he said.

Recently, Councilwoman Jan Dolan has proposed codes be changed to allow basement-type housing which is less expensive to construct and more efficiently heated.

Although reluctant to elaborate,

Wolf said plans were being investigated to implement a senior citizen housing program. Wolf was opposed to senior citizen housing programs proposed by previous city councils.

But unlike previous plans those to be considered in the future will be without federal assistance which he objected to in earlier years.

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644-1070

Band festival planned

Farmington Public Schools will be hosting the District 4 Band and Orchestra Festival this March 14 and 21 at North Farmington, O.E. Dunckel, Harrison, and Farmington, District 4 con-

sists of Livingston County and Oakland County, west of I-75. Approximately 100 school bands and orchestras will be competing for ratings during these two days.

Petitions available

Nominating petitions for persons interested in serving on the Walled Lake Board of Education are available at the district's administrative office Monday-Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Any qualified elector who lives in the Walled Lake School District may run for the school board.

Nominating petitions must be signed by 20 registered voters in the district and filed with school officials no later than 4 p.m. April 6.