

Portraits: a glimpse
of 4 young artists, 1D



All-Area
hoopla, 1C

Friends pay tribute to
Power's memory, 3A

Farmington Observer

Volume 98 Number 50

Monday, March 30, 1987

Farmington, Michigan

48 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

Farmington FOCUS

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BAGS top honors. Farmington Hills resident Larry Hayden took first place in Michigan's 1987 waterfowl stamp design competition sponsored by the Department of Natural Resources. His prize winner was a painting of a pair of green-winged teal. Hayden won a steel engraving of his winning design. He'll receive 100 of the first issue of the 1987 waterfowl stamps. Nearly 80 waterfowl paintings were entered. Hayden, a full-time wildlife artist since 1979, has won many awards. He specializes in waterfowl painting, draws from a background in decoy carving and has won 13 consecutive national "best of show" contests for decorative decoy carving. Limited edition prints of his winning design will be available at wildlife art galleries this fall. A portion of print sales will be returned to the state for wetlands acquisition and for fisheries management.

BACK on board. The Farmington Hills City Council reappointed two board members last week. Robert Plummer was reappointed to a four-year term on the Farmington Community Library Board of Trustees. Robert Clarke was reappointed to a one-year term on the Oakland County Community Growth Alliance.

WIDER. That's what Orchard Lake Road eventually will be. County and local officials continue with efforts to obtain right-of-way for the widening project. Two alternatives are being considered, said Farmington City Manager Robert Deadman. The preferred alternative shows a five-lane roadway from eastbound Shilawassee north to I-496. South from eastbound Shilawassee shows a four-lane cross section; the curve on Orchard Lake Road near Grand River would be improved, not realigned. There would be no residential or commercial displacement. The other alternative shows a five-lane road from 11 Mile, south to Grand River. Construction is expected to start as early as fiscal year 1988.

KEEP these numbers handy for reference when calling the Farmington Observer: News line, 477-5450; sports line, 591-2312; home delivery, 591-0900; classified ads, 591-0900; display ads, 591-2300.

FOOTNOTES: One year ago this week — Although the Farmington Hills Fire Department responded to almost 3,500 incidents in 1985, only 483 were actual fires — eight less than the previous year, said the department's 1985 annual report.

Parents unite for better schools

'We will use every means we can to assist you.'
— Trustee Susan Rennels

By Casey Hans
staff writer

Concerned parents were assured Tuesday they would have school board support for forming community/parent groups in Farmington Public Schools. More than 70 people attended a meeting of the Farmington schools community relations committee at the Dunkel Middle School cafeteria,

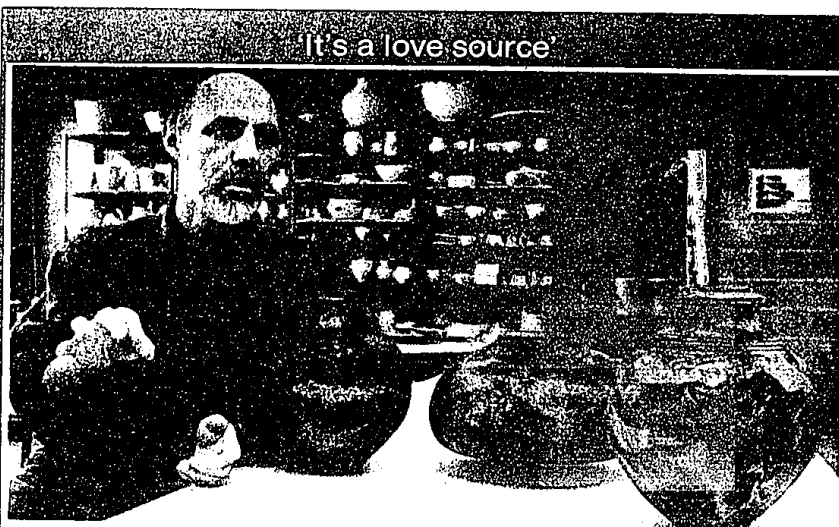
speaking in support of a community/parent council that would have a voice in school policy. Forming similar groups at individual schools was also discussed. Several parents said they had no voice, even at the school building level, because of lack of acceptance of parent groups from principals and administrators. Eleven administrators present at the meeting did not comment, but listened as parents

took the floor. "We will use every means we can to assist you," Susan Rennels, trustee and committee chairwoman, told the parents. "It's like turning over a new leaf — we want to see it happen."

ONLY SIX of the district's 11 elementary have active Parent/Teacher Association groups affiliated with the national PTA. Other

elementaries have Parent/Teachers Organizations and band boosters at the high school level, but such groups are noticeably missing at the four middle schools, parents said. There is no districtwide parent/community council in place, although the Farmington PTA Council represents the active PTA schools. "I don't think this should be what

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Robert Piepenburg, OCC ceramics instructor, describes the raku-style of pottery that the Orchard Ridge Campus specializes in. Pictured are three of Piepenburg's pieces.

Art forms: Pottery — It helps to spur meditation

By Casey Hans
staff writer

CERAMICS INSTRUCTOR Robert Piepenburg has watched beginning ceramics students molded into professional potters, and what was once considered a craft develop into an art. Tucked into a comfortable niche at Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge campus in Farmington Hills, where he has taught

people

since 1969, Piepenburg has formed his career as teacher and artist into a life of watching people grow and change. "It says there's a sort of magic to the OCC studio. 'You think you're going to change the clay — and it changes

you,' he said, surveying partially finished student works which line the walls of the OCC studio. "Pots are a meditative process." Most of the ceramics students at OCC learn raku pottery, which involves a shorter firing time in a smaller kiln and can leave a copper look to the finished glaze, Piepenburg said. ALTHOUGH RAKU pottery cannot be used in the kitchen, "it functions on a more aesthetic, spiritual

level," which Piepenburg believes is important. Raku — which began in Japan 400 years ago — was westernized in Colorado 25 years ago. He is proud that the Farmington Hills campus of OCC has evolved as one of the raku specialists in the region. Not only is he helping students to perfect the raku form, but the Ann Arbor resident is earning accolades

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Nurses' ranks to grow at hospital

A deeper look at nurses' shortage: 4A.

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

The ads tell the story. Page after page, the boxed ads clamor for nurses of all experience and skill levels. And the smaller print boasts benefits and incentives — flexible hours, weekend differential, day care, tuition reimbursement. The ads are a sign of the times — a deepening shortage of nurses that most metro Detroit hospitals are experiencing. Botsford General Hospital in Farmington Hills is one of many hospitals — both small and large — that has been hit by the reported industrywide pinch. Of the hospital's 450 nursing positions, 62 are vacant (13 percent). Hospital officials, however, expect the positions to be filled from the ranks of graduating nurses before summer. "It happens every year. But it's not been quite this high," said Denise Fanelli, Botsford's administrator of nursing services. "Botsford has been affected, too. In talking with my colleagues, they are having the same problem. We're doing better than some, worse than others."

Nursing and hospital officials offer a variety of reasons for the shortage. Industry shortages tend to be cyclical. Nursing is still a female-dominated profession. Shortages occur

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Unprecedented County road commissioner visits

By Bob Sklar
staff writer

The newest member of the Oakland County Board of Road Commissioners, paid a visit to the Farmington Hills City Council last week to introduce himself and open a direct line of communication. "I guess all you'd really be interested in hearing is, 'I have a \$100 million check. Where would you like to spend it?'" Larry Littman said in jest after being introduced by County Commissioner David Moffitt, R-Birmingham, whose district includes Farmington Hills. Littman, a management consultant and an executive recruiter, was appointed to the three-member road board in December. His visit was the first time a road commissioner has addressed the city council. He said he has watched Troy "go from a city of cornfields and cow pastures to a city of significant growth and, like Farmington Hills, some problems."

Although a Troy resident since 1968, Littman underscored that he wants to develop a rapport with western Oakland County communities and a feel for their problems and concerns. "I need to represent and serve and work with all people of Oakland County," he said. "And that's exactly what I plan to do."

LITTMAN DOESN'T have any quick remedies to the county's widespread traffic snarls. "I'm trying to do what I can to bring some business world experience... to learn as quickly as possible," he said. The top challenge facing the road commission is funding the myriad road projects needed to keep pace with the county's booming growth. As Littman put it: "Everybody is trying to deal with funding problems — city managers, state Sen. Richard Fessler (through a 10-bill road funding package), the county,

the road commission. I'm trying to come up with ideas that aren't going to cost people a lot of money — or that at least can alleviate some of the cost. "I can't offer anything at this point more than empathy and a desire to want to help, to be available and to listen to problems as best I can," he said. Councilman Joe Alkateeb reminded Littman that Farmington Hills is Michigan's 50th largest city — yet the only top 50 city with a freeway accessible by just one interchange. "We're going to get another, provide we can do something about 12 Mile Road," Alkateeb said. "We're really boxed in with our interchange." The state's promise of two additional I-496 interchanges in Farmington Hills hinges on the county and the city coordinating a widening plan for 12 Mile Road, which would handle much of the traffic headed to and from the interchanges.

Woman charged in felony

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

After eluding police for more than two weeks, a third suspect was apprehended and charged with murder and conspiracy in the slaying and robbery of a 61-year-old chauffeur at Hunters Ridge Apartments in Farmington Hills Feb. 28. Nellie Lee McInnis, 46, of Detroit was arraigned Wednesday before Judge Margaret Schaeffer of 47th District Court in Farmington on one count of first-degree murder and one count of conspiracy to commit armed robbery. She stood mute to the charges and innocent pleas were entered in her behalf. Conviction of first-degree murder would bring a penalty of life in prison. The conspiracy charge carries a penalty of two years to life in prison or a \$10,000 fine, or both. Schaeffer ordered McInnis held

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