

A low-cost approach
to home decor, 1D



Mustangs
top NF, 1C

Refusenik tries
to free son, 3A

Farmington Observer

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Farmington, Michigan

44 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

Bank robbery suspect nabbed

'It all came together, fortunately.'

— Joseph Jackson,
FBI spokesman

By Bob Sklar
staff writer

One of the FBI's 10 Most Wanted fugitives was arrested Wednesday near Lake Tahoe, 15 months after escaping from an Alabama prison where he was serving 60 years for bank robbery.

Since escaping from the federal correctional institution in Talladega, Ala., Feb. 4, 1986, Robert Alan

Litchfield, 39, of Quincy, Mass., is believed to have robbed four banks, including one in Farmington Hills, said James Vye, FBI special agent in Reno, Nev.

Litchfield and his wife, Donna, 36, were arrested shortly after noon Wednesday outside a \$500,000 home they were renting in Zephyr Cove, an exclusive area of the lakeshore where casinos own villas used by entertainers and special guests, said

Bill Dempsey, of the U.S. Marshal's Office.

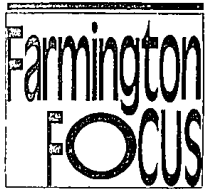
"We surrounded the house, telephoned inside and they surrendered without incident," said Joseph Jackson, FBI assistant special agent in charge of FBI Operations in Michigan. A handgun was confiscated.

The man initially denied he was Litchfield, but fingerprints confirmed his identity, Jackson said.

LITCHFIELD, OF Quincy, Mass., had been on the FBI's 10 Most Wanted fugitive list since Jan. 20. He was considered armed and dangerous.

Since his escape from prison, he is believed to have taken \$300,000 in four bank robberies in Georgia, Florida, Michigan and California, Jackson said.

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ELECTION day for one opening seat on the Farmington Board of Education is Monday, June 8.

To help introduce voters to first-term incumbent Susan Remels and challenger Jennifer Mart, two candidate nights are planned.

Farmington Democratic Club will host a debate at 8 p.m. Wednesday, May 27, at the Botsford Inn, 20000 Grand River, Farmington Hills. American Association of University Women will sponsor a debate at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 28, at O.E. Dunkel, 32800 12 Mile, Farmington Hills.

CITY council watcher William Liba of Farmington was honored at the Democratic Party's Jefferson-Jackson Day dinner in May as the 1986-87 senior citizen precinct worker. He's a veteran delegate in the 18th Congressional District. Liba recently served on a Farmington Community Library committee charged with updating the five-year planning guide.

STAYING on. Farmington City Council has reappointed William Burke as an alternate to the Board of Zoning Appeals. His second three-year term expires in 1990.

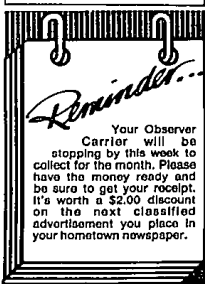
THE Drake Park tennis court will get a face lift.

Farmington City Council awarded a \$19,554 resurfacing contract to Wixom-based Rauch Brothers Paving Co., the lowest of two bidders.

FOOTNOTES: One year ago this week — Peninsular Machinery hosted 20 Farmington Public Schools vocational education students on a tour of the Farmington plant.

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Rouge River cleanup nears

By Joanno Maliszewski
staff writer

DON BOOTS and overalls and man the shovels.

Farmington and Farmington Hills volunteers are being sought to help in the annual cleanup of the Rouge River from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, June 6.

"We're asking people to volunteer and register at the site," said Dale Countegnan, assistant to the Farmington Hills public services director.

He anticipates 100-150 volunteers will turn out for the second annual river cleanup. Interested residents are asked to call Countegnan at 473-9520 for an idea of how many volunteers he can expect.

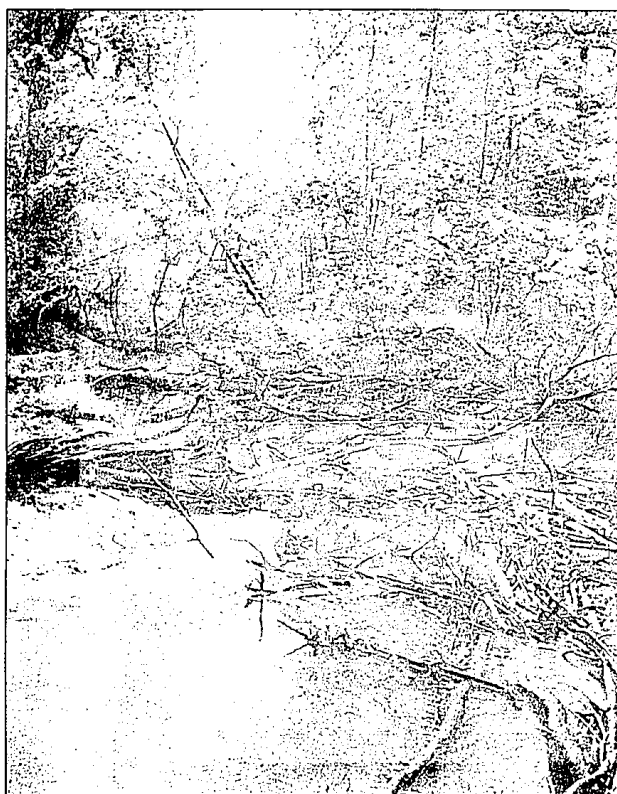
The Farmington Hills cleanup site is east of Tuck, one-half mile north of Eight Mile, south of Timberidge Apartments.

Farmington residents who want to volunteer for the city's cleanup efforts should call Earl Billing, public services department director, at 473-7250.

The Farmington cleanup site is along the river in Shiawassee Park, Power and Shiawassee.

WITH THE help of city employees, volunteers will be asked to help remove about five logjams and debris in the river near the apartment complex at the Farmington Hills site.

"We probably have more debris



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

A view of the Rouge River, south of Grand River, east of Tuck, in Farmington Hills.

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Slaying retrial delayed

By Joanno Maliszewski
staff writer

A seriously ill former Philadelphia police detective is the latest focus in the retrial of a man convicted of killing his estranged wife 20 years ago in a Farmington Township beauty shop.

But retired detective Allan Roslund won't be appearing before Oakland County Circuit Judge Fred Mester.

When Mester adjourned the retrial of John Merlo Wednesday it was expected that the prosecutor and defense attorneys would fly to Philadelphia to interview the former detective.

On Friday, however, Roslund was interviewed by telephone and video camera, said Gary Chopp, Oakland County assistant prosecutor.

"The judge will make a decision Tuesday morning" whether information gathered during the interview can be introduced as testimony, Chopp said.

Merlo was convicted in 1967 of killing his 18-year-old wife, Sharon, in the Crest Beauty Salon at Eight Mile and Inkster, in what was then Farmington Township.

On the morning of Jan. 6, 1967, Merlo, then 25, walked into the beauty shop, motioned his wife to a back room and then followed her out to her work station where he fired four shots into her as she worked on a customer, according to witnesses who testified in the first two days of the trial.

Merlo then fled — by way of Toledo — to Philadelphia, where he was apprehended when he attempted to cash stolen checks, according to police.

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She's a booster of women's rights

By Casey Hays
staff writer

From her traditional roots on a midwest farm, Anne Borg has branched out to fight women's poverty and problems in several states and many cities.

Borg came to live in Farmington Hills with her two daughters and husband after years of traveling around the country in a variety of jobs.

She is now the executive director of the Women's Survival Center of

Oakland County, in Pontiac. The walk-in facility in an old church rectory on Pike Street provides counseling and support services and community education for women in trouble.

"Survive: come through crisis and take control of your life," literature from the center says. Borg and her

staff help women survive.

"I have had a longstanding commitment . . . to helping women to whatever it is they want to do," Borg explained. She calls her current job an "incredible fit."

THE CERTIFIED teacher began working with welfare women in Gary, Ind., where her eyes were immediately opened to the plight of women and the unfairness of our economic system. She has also worked closely with Young Women's Christian Associations around the

country.

"I was naive. I felt as if I could change the world," she said about her first job. "I was judgmental — the work ethic was alive and well."

What she discovered in Gary is what she sees today in varying degrees. "I don't think the system understands poverty; they don't know how to help."

She would like to see a humanitarian view in society that would help the situation. So far, despite the help, she has seen only tiny steps.

"There are times when it gets discouraging," she said. "Sometimes, I think things aren't happening fast enough. But the energy you get back from the women — for them it's new. It keeps us going."

CONSTANTLY HELPING the underdog affects every aspect of her life, and she does physical things to alleviate the mental pressures of the job, including gardening, reading, playing tennis and escaping through her favorite television programs. Most of the diversions are things that have a start and finish.

"I'm the best closet cleaner I know," she added.

"When you work in this, you have to try and strike a balance in your own life," she said. "Sometimes, I'm



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

"I have had a longstanding commitment . . . to helping women to whatever it is they want to do," says Anne Borg.

School tax rate may drop

By Casey Hays
staff writer

Farmington school administrators have recommended a property tax reduction for 1987-88. It would effectively return \$1.2 million to district taxpayers.

The recommendation will not be considered by the board until a June 2 board meeting, when a budget for the 1987-88 fiscal year will be adopted. The Truth in Taxation hearing May 19 was held for interested voters to ask questions about the proposed \$66.5 million budget.

"We had built a budget on the basis of this, in good faith as an administrative team," said Deputy Superintendent Michael Flanagan. "This would in effect roll back 3/4 of a mill."

Although Flanagan said the extra money could certainly be spent on the district's \$10 million capital improvements "wish list," he didn't recommend it.

If the board follows the recommendation to levy 31.75 mills, taxpayers will still most likely see increases in their taxes, since state equalized values have risen in both

Farmington and Farmington Hills this year. Each mill is simply worth more.

FARMINGTON PUBLIC Schools currently levies 32.5 mills; the board is authorized to levy up to 33.48 mills this year.

Voters had approved 37.29 mills, but the effect of the Headlee Tax Limitation Amendment rolled that figure back nearly four mills this year. Flanagan said the district may face a problem in the next budget

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