

'Soapy' left fond memories, 9A, 14A



Big win for Mercy, 1D

Meetings try to allay fears after rapes, 3A

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TOP newsmaker. Mike Hlitch, president of Farmington Hills-based Little Caesar Enterprises and owner of the Detroit Red Wings, was named Crain's Detroit Business 1987 Newsmaker of the Year.

Hlitch plans to revitalize the historic Fox Theatre building in downtown Detroit. The theater building will become home to his 250 corporate employees. It also will feature live entertainment acts.

His other community endeavors include support of amateur sports, better lighting for downtown Detroit and a national restaurant on wheels for the needy.

Hlitch "has gained his laurels by doing what others have been reluctant or unable to do — rebuild a foundering hockey franchise and make a substantial commitment to an area of downtown that sorely needs it," a Crain's editorial comment said.

HILLS liaison. Jean Fox was appointed the Farmington Hills City Council's liaison to the historical commission and the historic district commission. She has a long background in historical preservation and is a local historian.

HE'S honored. Detroit Tigers broadcaster Ernie Harwell was named a winner in the National Sportscasters and Sportswriters Association 1987 awards program.

The Farmington Hills resident has broadcast Tiger games since 1960.

FOOTNOTES: One year ago this week — Parents concerned with possible changes in Farmington kindergarten class locations will ask the school board to delay a decision for 120 days.

Farmington Hills Crime Statistics

CRIME	1986	1987	%
Homicide	0	1	+
Criminal Sexual Conduct	12	15	+25%
Robbery	48	28	-42%
Aggravated Assault	107	94	-12%
Burglary	841	745	-11%
Larceny	1,756	1,941	+11%
Motor vehicle theft	437	437	—
Arson	26	19	-27%
Vandalism	1,212	1,281	+6%
Narcotics	46	76	+65%
Liquor	219	134	-39%
Drunk driving	247	209	-15%
Fraud	246	196	-20%

Major crime rate slows; Daily stat review cited

By Joanne Maliszewski staff writer

The population might be growing, but serious crime in Farmington Hills is increasing at a slower rate. In 1987, serious crimes increased 1.6 percent over 1986, which increased 1.7 percent over the previous year, according to the Farmington Hills Police Department year-end crime statistics.

"We are pleased to report that while the city is growing in population, the department has been able to make significant decreases in crimes against persons — auto theft, robberies, which we consider crimes

Residential, commercial crime statistics charts, 2A

Crime prevention expansion planned, 2A

against people," Police Chief William Dwyer said.

In 1987, criminal incidents and complaints totaled 22,865. That's a 7.2-percent increase over 1986 when police responded to 28,943 complaints — a 2.7-percent increase over 1985.

Arrests in 1987 also increased from 1986 but the increase was not as great as be-

tween 1985 and 1986. Last year, police made a total 2,818 arrests compared to 2,639 in 1986 and 2,187 in 1985.

Decreases in robbery, aggravated assault and burglary helped slow down the serious crime increase. For the first time in years, the number of motor vehicle thefts remained static.

ROBBERY TOOK a nose dive in 1987 to 28 reported incidents compared to 48 the previous year. Burglary followed suit with a 11.4 percent decrease from 745 incidents reported in 1987 compared to 841 in 1986.

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A gift of life

The North Farmington High School Student Council hosted an American Red Cross bloodmobile Tuesday to help ease a serious blood shortage in southeast Michigan. Above, Andy Dudley (lying down) donates blood while being videotaped by fellow senior Jennifer Kaniisto from cable Channel 10. Registered nurse Geraldine Kerrigan supervised the donation, often called "a gift of life." For the story and more pictures, please turn to Page 3A.

Ambulance rerouting is health-care reality

By Joanne Maliszewski staff writer

Botsford General Hospital isn't alone in the increasing rerouting of ambulances to other hospitals.

From July to November, the Farmington Hills osteopathic hospital closed its emergency room to incoming ambulances 52 times for 534 hours, according to the Oakland County Council for Emergency Medical Services.

Botsford trailed behind William Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak, which led in hours closed among the 10 Oakland hospitals in the county EMS system. Providence Hospital of Southfield ranked second with 70 closings for 1,353 hours.

Botsford taking steps to curtail its rerouting, 12A

"Closing is not exactly what happens. Our emergency room never closes," said William Scheuber, Botsford's administrator of professional and support services. "There are times when we have to reroute ambulances because we are too busy to handle patients."

Officials at both Community EMS and Paramed, the two major ambulance companies serving the Farmington area, acknowledge rerouting as a growing problem.

"This is an up-and-coming problem. I think we are going to have to seriously face it in the future," said a

spokeswoman for Novi-based CEMS, which made 21,000 emergency and non-emergency runs in 1987.

"IT'S BECOMING a critical situation. We're rerouting on a regular basis now," said Thomas Gahan, president of Paramed, which operates four private ambulance companies in the county and makes 40,000 emergency runs a year.

Botsford reroutes ambulances when its 30 critical care and 16 telemetry beds are full. Critical care offers patients constant monitoring by staff and telemetry. Patients who don't need as careful watch as critical care patients, but still require monitoring, are put in telemetry beds, Scheuber said.

"This is an up-and-coming problem. I think we are going to have to seriously face it in the future."

— spokeswoman for Novi-based CEMS

No single factor has led to increasing rerouting in the past 1½-2 years. Lack of enough critical care beds, a shortage of nurses and understaffed emergency rooms play a role in rerouting when emergency rooms become full, according to members of the Southeast Michigan Hospital Council of the Michigan Hospital Association, which is studying rerouting.

"When they (patients) do come into emergency, they're more severely ill, often requiring being placed in a monitored bed for at least 24 hours," council vice president Jane Eckels said.

Because of the "malpractice environment," physicians are doing everything possible to assess a pa-

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School proposal offers educational choices

By Casey Hays staff writer

Elementary students would be given a choice of programs under a proposal offered Tuesday by Farmington Public Schools superintendent Graham Lewis.

A new school on the west side of Farmington Hills was also recommended. His remarks drew unanimous support from the Farmington school board, Tuesday, and applause from more than 250 parents attending the board meeting.

The plan offers an alternative to massive redistricting options suggested by a board-appointed citizens panel last week, as the district looks at ways to alleviate crowding at some elementary schools. School officials say they have received upwards of 60 letters per day opposing

Voters asked to renew levy, 12A

boundary changes since the boundary issue surfaced two weeks ago.

"I find the proposed boundary (changes) unacceptable, at this time," Lewis said. "The changes would not ensure long-term stability, or be receptive to the greater number of parents."

Although trustees are not expected to officially vote on a boundary and facilities plan until March 1, each board member voiced support Tuesday for the plan developed by the superintendent.

IN A written report read to the board and parents, Lewis said, "allowing parents to choose between specialized programs or attendance at their home school" may offer re-

lief to the overcrowding situation without changing boundaries.

"While crowded conditions . . . may not be totally alleviated," he said, "if we pursue . . . a variety of program choices . . . it is predictable there will be a relief of enrollment at many schools."

Lewis is expected to bring more details on his proposed "choices" to the March 1 meeting for board consideration. Such choices would be offered "using existing vacant classrooms, in school-owned buildings including the Shawasssee Center, Highmeadow School and Ten Mile School, which are used for alternative education, community education and administrative offices.

Although no changes in either facilities or boundaries at secondary schools were recommended, Lewis did comment on his view of the future, which will include more "flex" programming: "We have to look at

our buildings as we would look at a college campus," he said, including "facilities and how they lend themselves to the best possible instruction."

TUESDAY, PARENTS reiterated their opposition to any boundary changes and some commented favorably about Lewis' suggestions. But concern was also aimed at next Tuesday's millage renewal election, which some parents have linked to the boundary issue.

Resident Carol Lee demanded a board vote on the boundary issues Tuesday, threatening if trustees did not, "you'll see a turnout for the millage renewal that you've never seen." Another resident, Kevin Clark, made similar threats and called on the board to hold a special meeting before the election to vote on the boundary and facility issue. Trustee James Abernethy warned residents against a "protest no

vote," saying, "I can think of no action that would be more counterproductive."

"Rather than planning time for this new facility, which seems to have wide support, planning would be diverted . . . because the house is coming down."

School officials have said that a failed millage renewal Tuesday would cut the district's budget by \$8 million or 12 percent and would most likely affect staffing. "Everything we do . . . would be up for review," added deputy superintendent Michael Flanagan.

Other millage-related comments were made by residents in light of reports of expected property value and tax increases in Farmington Hills. Flanagan said although property values may increase, bringing up the value of a mill, the Headlee Tax Limitation Amendment will help keep that in check.

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