

# Farmington Observer

Volume 100 Number 22

Monday, December 19, 1988

Farmington, Michigan

50 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

© 1988 Suburban Communications Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

## farmington FOCUS

To write the Observer: 33023 Grand River, Farmington 48024. To call: news line, 477-5450; sports line, 591-2312; home delivery, 591-0500; classified ads, 591-0900; display ads, 591-2300; fax line, 477-9722.

**T**WO projects that showed up in the December expenses approved by the school board for Farmington Public Schools are ones residents have been watching. More than \$35,800 was spent in renovating the on-site school at Boys Republic on Nine Mile, near Inkster, in Farmington Hills.

Another \$46,596 was spent for light ballast replacements in district buildings to avoid PCB contamination from leakage.

**CHANGING** roles. Farmington Hills councilman-elect Philip Arnold will be sworn in at the start of the Jan. 9 city council meeting. By charter, he must resign his position on the planning commission.

## Memory lane

25 years ago:

The Farmington Goodfellows announced they hope to raise \$3,500 so needy families could share the blessings of a Merry Christmas. The Farmington Board of Education learned that the county dashed hopes of more rigid speed controls and more signs and signals along Middlebelt, near the new East Junior High. The county suggested sidewalks to improve safety for students who walk to school.

## what's inside

Around Farmington . . . 7B  
Carrier of the Month . . . 4A  
Classifieds . . . Secs. C, E, F  
Index . . . 8E  
Auto . . . Secs. C, F  
Real estate . . . 1E  
Employment . . . Secs. E, F  
Creative living . . . Sec. E  
Crossword puzzle . . . 2E  
Entertainment . . . 5, 7D  
Obituaries . . . 6C  
Police/fire calls . . . 4A  
Sports . . . Sec. C  
Street scene . . . Sec. D  
Taste . . . Sec. B

HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

CREATIVE LIVING

NOW IN EVERY MONDAY AND THURSDAY ISSUE

## Marks to fight Faxon's day-care bill

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Farmington Hills city councilman Ben Marks is preparing to fight Democratic Sen. Jack Faxon of Farmington Hills' attempt to reintroduce a bill overriding local zoning controls and allowing child home day care in residential areas.

"I've called all the cities," Marks said. Letters are being sent to cities in the area "expressing our utmost disappointment" in Faxon's bill and attempts to reintroduce it.

Senate Bill 687, which would apply to cities, such as Farmington Hills, lost by one vote in the state House in its marathon session more than a week ago. Companion bills, 688 and 689, which apply to counties and townships, passed and are on their way to Gov. James Blanchard for signature.

"We'll pass it, no problem," Faxon said.

He said the bill failed because "one guy was off the floor and the Detroit representative didn't like one of the sentences that affected only Detroit."

Marks, who feels the bill "was snuck through," sees the one-vote defeat as a new opportunity to get the word out to cities and possible other opponents of the zoning controls override.

"THE WHOLE key is circumvention of local authority," Marks said. "The bill does not give a city the ability to react to problems in their city. It's an insult against every city in the state where they're playing Big Brother."

The councilman maintains that city officials were not properly informed of hearings on the bill in either the Senate or the House. Marks and a city manager from a non-Oakland County city were the only ones at the latest hearing in the state House opposing the bill.

"No one knew about it. Something as critical as local authority should flash a red light," he said.

With a new opportunity, Marks said he will fight to protect the city's 1987 ordinance allowing state-licensed family day-care homes for up to six children in residential areas. State-licensed group day-care homes for a maximum 12 children are allowed only on major or secondary roads and not in neighborhoods.

"We're not against addressing the problem (day care). We are addressing it in Farmington Hills," Marks said. The family day-care homes, he continued, serve a social need. Anything larger is a business. "That's not fair to folks who bought homes in a residential area."

In August 1987, the Farmington Hills City Council agreed to give the city's two state-licensed operators of the larger group day-care homes in residential areas a two-year extension to continue operating despite the city's ordinance prohibiting such homes in neighborhoods. The two cases are expected to be reviewed in August 1989.

Darlene Feldman, one of the group day-care home operators who brought the issue of child day-care to light in Farmington Hills, could not be reached for comment.

**UNDER FAXON'S bill, licensed**  
Please turn to Page 2



Ben Marks  
"They're playing Big Brother"

## Police say ride offer innocent

By Casey Hans  
and Bob Sklar  
staff writers

An incident in which an elderly man offered two fifth graders from William Grace Elementary a ride to school last week snowballed into a media event by Friday, with fears of attempted kidnapping.

"It is a suspicious circumstance we have investigated. To the best of our knowledge, there was no known attempt to kidnap a child," said Sgt. Charles Nebus, Farmington Hills Police Department Detective Section supervisor.

"There's no reason to think the man wanted anything other than to give the kids a ride to school and get them out of the cold," Lt. Gordon Ross added.

Police who interviewed the man attributed the situation to a misunderstanding, Nebus said.

The Farmington Hills man, who lives in the area, had offered two 11-year-olds, one boy and one girl, a ride to school after he warmed up his car Tuesday. It was an exceptionally cold morning. The children declined and the girl reported the inci-

dent to her school principal, Richard Close. The children gave Close the car's license plate number.

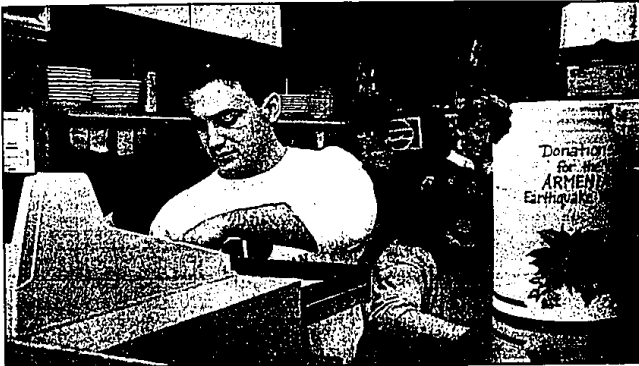
The incident occurred at 8:20 a.m. on Liberty, between Albion and Purdue. Investigators determined it had been an innocent gesture. The Farmington Hills school is on Shilawassee, east of Middlebelt.

BUT THAT did not come out before radio and television stations had reported the incident Friday on their morning and noon newscasts, without the police explanation. There was also a short article in Friday's Detroit News, which did not include comments from police.

"That (the police explanation) finally came out," Close said Friday afternoon. "This got blown way out of proportion."

As a precaution, Close had advised parents in writing about the situation while the police did their investigation mid-week. His letter informed parents about the incident and advised them to make their children aware of possible danger.

Friday, officers called Close to explain the results of their investigation.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Orchard Family Restaurant owner Mike Halagian (left) is doing his part to aid Soviet Armenian earthquake victims by donating a portion of

his business receipts to the relief effort. He also keeps a collection jug near his register so customers can donate cash to the fund.

## Armenian relief Restaurant owner pledges to help

By Bob Sklar  
staff writer

He's American and he doesn't have any relatives in Soviet Armenia, at least anyone he knows.

But all four of his grandparents grew up in Armenia before seeking out a new life in the United States after the Turkish massacre of 1915.

So Mike Halagian, owner of Orchard Family Restaurant in Farmington Hills, has a special feeling for the 500,000 left homeless by an earthquake that killed 55,000 and destroyed 48 villages in Soviet Ar-

menia Dec. 7.

"It's not over for the survivors. They're the ones suffering now," the Farmington Hills resident said.

"They're suffering the loss of relatives, their home and their belongings. They're going to need a lot of support over there."

To help provide shelter, food and clothing to the victims, Halagian has pledged to donate 10 percent of his restaurant proceeds between Dec. 14 and 21 to the Armenian relief effort. A collection jug also sits atop the deli counter.

"Customers think it's a good idea," he said. "They seem to support us."

People realize it's not over, that they have to rebuild over there."

Halagian said he'll donate the money to relief efforts coordinated by St. John Armenian Church in Southfield, St. Sarkis Armenian Church in Dearborn or the nationally based Armenian Relief Fund.

If the restaurant raises at least \$500 by Wednesday, Halagian said he'll extend the fund-raising drive. "I'd like to continue it for as long as possible," he said.

Orchard Family Restaurant is at 3084 Orchard Lake Road, in the same shopping center as K mart.

## Oil, gas drilling to require \$40,000 in escrow account

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

A new Farmington Hills ordinance regulating oil and gas leasing and drilling will require a minimum \$40,000 escrow account to plug and restore abandoned wells.

The latest provision included in the ordinance adopted by the city council Dec. 13 makes it what some feel to be one of the toughest in communities that have adopted similar regulations. The ordinance takes effect Monday, Jan. 2.

"I think it's as much as you can possibly do because of state Department of Natural Resources authority. You can't deny oil and gas development," said Farmington Square resident Peggy DuPont, who suggested provisions for the city ordinance.

Now that the city has an ordinance regulating gas and oil leasing and drilling, DuPont said it wouldn't be a bad idea if the state would consider legislation governing gas and oil ventures in densely populated areas.

Traditionally, DuPont said, the state hasn't "had the question of the densely populated areas and problems it can pose to residents."

DuPont lives in one of the several neighborhoods in southwest Farmington Hills targeted by at least two companies seeking mineral rights leases in the fall.

MICHAEL O'CONNOR of M. J. O'Connor & Associates of Marjorie City, one of the leasing companies, said he could not comment on whether his company is continuing to seek leases in Farmington Hills neighborhoods. He also said he was unaware of the new Farmington Hills ordinance.

The newest provision covering well restoration was included to cover city costs that might be incurred if a company fails to plug and re-

store a well site. The city will accept a \$40,000 cash bond or a letter of credit.

The city ordinance is an attempt to gain some measure of control and regulation over leasing and drilling for gas or oil in the city.

The ordinance prohibits both leasing and drilling in residential areas, including multiple-family districts. The city's light industrial district is the only area in which drilling would be allowed.

If a company drills diagonally under a Farmington Hills neighbor hood from a site outside the city, for example, the city's residential leasing prohibition would not prevent homeowners from receiving oil or gas production royalties. With or without leases, DNR regulations allow homeowners to be entitled to royalties from production.

The ordinance requires that a



staff photo by BOB SKLAR

## Christmas cheer

Farmington Hills firefighters staged a Christmas party for their children Dec. 11 at fire headquarters on Drake. Above, Santa, alias firefighter Rich Levine, gives 4-year-old Laura Atkins her Christmas present. Laura is the daughter of firefighter Dennis Atkins. Firefighter Denny Hughes coordinated the party, which included a hot dog dinner and a magic show in addition to Santa's appearance.

Please turn to Page 2