

A self-indulging seasonal tune-up, 1D



Area's best matmen, 3C

Porky gives kids tips on proper eating, 3A

Farmington Observer

Volume 100 Number 48

Monday, March 20, 1989

Farmington, Michigan

64 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

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WHAT'S the most popular dog breed in the Farmington area?

Poodle, says Dr. John Richardson, a Farmington veterinarian who recently computerized office records. Other popular breeds are golden retriever, Labrador retriever, cocker spaniel, German shepherd, schnauzer, Lhasa apso, shi tun, beagle and Brittany spaniel. The top five mixed dog breeds are German shepherd mix, cockapoo, terrier mix, Labrador retriever mix and poodle mix.

JOB swap

Farmington Hills police sergeants James Whitcomb and Dennis Green changed positions last Monday. Whitcomb, with the department 16 years, is the new Crime Prevention Section supervisor. Green, a 14-year department veteran, is now a road patrol supervisor. He also assumes Whitcomb's responsibilities as head of the field officers training program.

Memory lane

50 years ago:
 • Sixteen Farmington Township property owners signed a petition asking the township to issue \$10,000 in bonds to build a town hall. The petition makes it mandatory for the township board to call a special election within 30 days.
 • A model showing how Farmington High's new gymnasium-auditorium will look when completed is shown in a window at Hatton's Farmington Hardware.
 — Farmington Enterprise, March 23, 1939

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Reminders

Your Observer Carrier will be stopping by this week to collect for the month. Please have the money ready and be sure to get your receipt. It's worth a \$2.00 discount on the next classified advertisement you place in your hometown newspaper.

Man arraigned in girlfriend's death

By Carolyn DeMarco
staff writer

A 17-year-old Farmington Hills man was arraigned in Oakland County Circuit Court Saturday on an open murder charge in the drowning death of his 17-year-old Farmington Hills girlfriend.

The girl's body was pulled from Orchard Lake Friday morning, and an innocent plea was entered for him in the drowning death Friday of Kristina Marie Fracchia, a Farmington Hills Mercy High 11th-grade student and former glee club member.

Bonelli is a former North Farmington High junior currently attending the Farmington Training Center for emotionally impaired students.

Magistrate Daniel Desmet ordered Bonelli held without bail in the Oakland County Jail until a preliminary examination in 48th District Court, Bloomfield Township. No date has been set.

Sgt. David Sims of the Orchard Lake Police Department said Fracchia's body was found at 9:30 a.m. Friday by Oakland County Drain Commission workers. The workers were inspecting a water-level control pump on the north shore of Orchard Lake, off Commerce Road, west of Indian Trail.

FRACCHIA'S BODY was found fully clothed, face down in shallow water, 50 feet from shore. A white Beretta belonging to the Fracchia family was found at the scene, the keys and the woman's identification inside.

Kristina's mother reported her missing at 11:50 p.m. Thursday. The autopsy showed death by drowning.

The Tri-City Fire Department and the Oakland County Sheriff's Department Marine Division responded to the report of a body found in Orchard Lake and declared Fracchia dead at the scene.

Bonelli was arrested by Orchard Lake police.

Magistrate Desmet said Bonelli was read his Miranda rights and then confessed to his "involvement in her death."

BONELLI, CLEAN-CUT and dressed in a black leather jacket, sat slumped forward in the courtroom before the arraignment, his face in

his hands. Four members of Bonelli's family were present in the courtroom and wept during the brief arraignment. He apparently lives with an aunt and uncle in Farmington Hills.

No member of the Fracchia family was at the arraignment. Contacted afterward, a spokeswoman said the family didn't want to comment.

A former student in Canada, where his mother had lived, Bonelli came to North Farmington about January 1988. He was placed in the Farmington Public Schools-run Farmington Training Center about the end of January.

A Mass will be celebrated in Kristina Fracchia's memory at 11 a.m. today at St. Fabian Catholic Church,

12 Mile between Farmington and Orchard Lake roads, Farmington Hills. The Rev. Edward Belczak will officiate. The Mercyaire's choral group will sing. Burial will be in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Southfield.

Survivors include her parents, Sandra and Robert Fracchia; one brother, Anthony; and two grandmothers, Angelina Fracchia and Santina Hetmanski.

The family asks that memorials be made to Mercy High School, 29300 11 Mile, Farmington Hills.

McCabe Funeral Home of Farmington Hills handled arrangements. Staff writer Bob Sklar contributed to this report.



At Jon Vermeulen's trial Thursday, assistant Oakland County prosecutor John Slevin (right) listens to the proceedings. Evidence includes the .44 Magnum revolver (foreground) that police believe was used in the shooting death of Urime "Renae" Lewis, Vermeulen's second wife.



Attorney asks lesser penalty for Vermeulen

By Janice Brunson
staff writer

Accused murderer Jon Vermeulen — who maintains the shooting death of his second wife, Urime "Renae" Lewis, more than three years ago in Farmington Hills was a tragic accident in a bungled suicide attempt — is expected to take the stand in his defense today.

Vermeulen, held without bail since Dec. 26, 1985, is being tried on charges of first-degree murder and felony firearms possession in Oakland County Circuit Court before Judge Fred Mester.

"Jon feels responsible for the death," argued defense attorney Lawrence Kaluzny of Birmingham in opening arguments Thursday, during the first day of the trial.

"He does not ask you to find him innocent, but to judge him on a lesser count, the careless and reckless discharge of a firearm. Do not compound this tragedy (by convicting him)," Kaluzny said.

Oakland County assistant prosecutor John Slevin maintains that Lewis' death was premeditated murder, resulting from an attempted murder-suicide planned by Vermeulen when Lewis left him after less than six weeks of marriage and told him she was planning to file for divorce.

A decorated Vietnam veteran, Vermeulen, 43, shot Lewis with a .44 Magnum issued to him by the U.S. Army. A single bullet passed vertically through her chest, "abating" her heart and killing her instantly. Vermeulen also shot himself twice in the chest and was hospitalized three months.

'He does not ask you to find him innocent, but to judge him on a lesser count, the careless and reckless discharge of a firearm. Do not compound this tragedy (by convicting him).'

— Lawrence Kaluzny
defense attorney

"HE COMMITTED murder. He thought about it and planned it ahead of time," Slevin said during opening comments.

Thursday's testimony left unanswered certain questions, including whether or not the wound Lewis sustained accounted for splattered blood on her face and smeared blood on her stomach.

The bullet entered Lewis' right side, several inches below the armpit, and passed through both lungs and the heart before exiting the left side. The exit wound was one-half inch higher than the entry wound and one-half inch closer to the front of her body.

"It's very peculiar how the blood from the wound got on her stomach," said Oakland County medical examiner Bill G. Brooks. Nor, he continued, do "I see how it could have splattered so high in such volume" onto her face.

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Sibling priority policy angers parents

By Casey Hans
staff writer

Parents from across the Farmington school district are angry about a new enrollment policy for Highmeadow Common Campus students. They plan to attend Tuesday's school board meeting.

The parents are concerned because the district is scheduled to make enrollment selections for the alternative magnet school's first grade sometime this week.

The new policy for the 1989-90 school year offers 30 first grade slots to siblings of students already enrolled. The remaining 22 slots will be filled by a lottery system of applicants from Longacre, Larkshire, Flanders and Wood Creek elementary schools, which school officials said are the most overcrowded.

The policy was introduced after an organized group of parents asked the school board to set a sibling priority policy to keep families together. School administrators had recommended an open lottery selection process.

"As far as I'm concerned, inherited birth rights went out with the Revolution," said Dan Kozicki, parent of a kindergartner at Fairview Early Childhood Center, who spoke against the policy during last Tuesday's meeting. "I've already made application (for Highmeadow) based on the terms and conditions of the lottery."

KOZICKI AND other parents of kindergartners received a letter from the district several weeks ago inviting them to submit appli-

cations for an open lottery that would determine who would fill the one first-grade slot. They made application the week of March 6, the same week the request for sibling preference was brought to the school board.

The board voted unanimously March 14 to approve the Highmeadow sibling priority and to target four overcrowded schools in the coming year. Trustee James Abernethy was absent.

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Marks maps day-care fight

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

The battle begins again as Farmington Hills city councilman Ben Marks plots strategy to defeat a bill allowing child day care in residential areas.

"I've got 33 cities sending representatives," Marks said. "They will be at the hearings (on the bill)." Marks is preparing strategy to op-

pose Senate bill 177, sponsored by state Sen. Jack Faxon, D-Farmington Hills. The bill, now in the Senate human resources committee for discussion, is similar to a former bill that died unexpectedly late last year.

Faxon reintroduced the bill approximately two weeks ago. It is part of a package of bills overriding local zoning controls and allowing

child home day care in residential areas.

The predecessor of SB177, applying to cities and villages, lost by one vote in the state House in a marathon session in mid-December. Companion bills 688 and 689, which apply to counties and townships, passed.

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Candidates for Alkateeb seat to be interviewed

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Eleven candidates are seeking appointment to the Farmington Hills City Council to fill a vacancy left by former councilman Joe Alkateeb, who resigned Feb. 30.

The applicants will be publicly

interviewed by the city council at 6 p.m. Monday, March 20, in the council chambers, 31555 11 Mile. If necessary, the interviews will extend into the regularly scheduled 7:30 p.m. council meeting, Mayor Terry Sever said.

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