

Hills dedicates new youth sports park

By Bob Sklar
staff writer

Pioneer Park in Farmington Hills creates "an environment to cause our children to be in the right place at the right time" — off the streets and among their peers, participating in sports.

So said Mayor Terry Sever in dedication ceremonies Sunday at Pioneer Park, a 15-acre youth sports complex of two soccer fields and two baseball fields on the west side of Farmington Road, north of 13 Mile.

"We're not here to dedicate a four-walled structure, but the ground on which we stand — for our children and our grandchildren who grow up in this city," said the Rev. Ralph Rebert of Oakland Hills Community Church, Farmington Hills.

Sever called Pioneer Park, in development 2 1/2 years, a "showcase" for the city's "aggressiveness in providing recreation."

"Myself and the council feel real strongly about acquiring additional property for parks," Sever said. "We're ever so serious about providing more parkland."

"Good parks, like good schools, are an investment in the youth of the community and pay dividends far in excess of their cost," said Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Commission member Jerry Ellis.

THE BULK of Pioneer Park's \$500,000 cost was paid through the .05-mill Farmington Hills voters approved in 1988 exclusively for parks and recreation development.

About \$155,100 of the park's cost was paid through a federal Land and Water Conservation Fund grant administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

In the past 15 years, the city has received \$3.8 million in government grants for parks and recreation development — one of the highest per-capita community totals in the state.

"Voter willingness to be taxed exclusively for parks and recreation development has a lot to do with that," said Michael McDonald, DNR Recreation Division grants coordinator, who was among those who gathered under sunny skies to dedicate Pioneer Park.

"The people of Farmington Hills have a strong commitment to recreation and they back it up with their funds," he said.

The park's two baseball fields were named in memory of two local youth sports leaders: Jim Ellis, who died in 1985 at 63, and Sandy Friedman, who died in 1988 at 41. Their families were on hand for the naming of the fields.

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Parks and Recreation Commission member

Ellis' commitment to kids ranged from Boys Republic board president and Farmington Elks Lodge scholarship committee chairman to South Farmington Youth Baseball commissioner and Farmington Rockets Youth Football assistant athletic director. He was Farmington-Farmington Hills Citizen of the Year in 1984.

Dennis Fitzgerald, Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Commission chairman, said Ellis "gave much of himself to the people and to his community. His impact on kids is a great benchmark for the community."

"He was supportive of kids in every imaginable way," Fitzgerald said. "He was clearly an example of what you can do for kids when you support them."

Friedman was to be president of the North Farmington/West Bloomfield Baseball and Softball for Youth the year he died. This year, team rosters sport 1,400 players.

"He cared and stepped forward with his time and money to put together a quality baseball program for the kids," said Jerry Ellis of the parks and recreation commission.

"Sandy recognized the true value of youth athletic programs — not to develop major leagues but to give a lot of children an opportunity to develop both socially and physically."

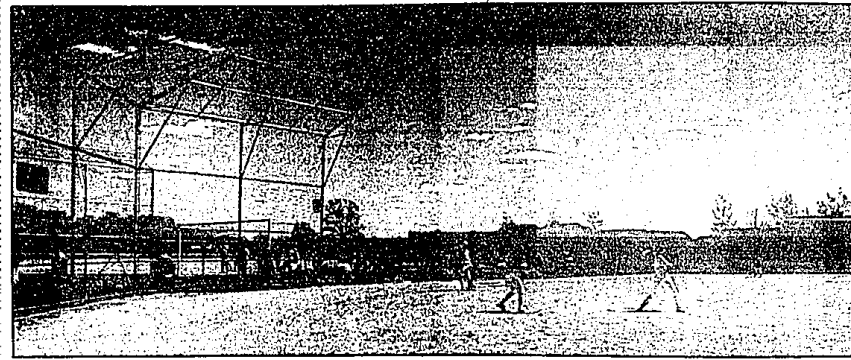
we had been using for seven years at 12 Mile and Drake would no longer be available," said Bailey, parks and recreation commission vice chairman.

"But the city and the schools worked together to improve school fields for soccer use in the interim. And now we have Pioneer Park."

"This is more than just about kids playing sports," Bailey said. In the benediction, the Rev. Rebert said: "Let this be a constant reminder of the importance of our children."



North Farmington High School students Scott Friedman (left) and his sister, Lisa, unveil the sign naming one of the Pioneer Park baseball fields in memory of their father, Sandy.



This overall view shows the Sandy Friedman Memorial Field at Pioneer Park in Farmington Hills.

police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police incidents, fire calls and court cases reported during the past week:

- **SMASH AND GRAB**
Three pieces of computer equipment valued at \$1,325 were reported stolen Saturday from Heath-Zenith Computers & Electronics Centers, 29435 Orchard Lake.
- **OFFICERS RESPONDING TO AN ALARM**
At 10:35 p.m. found the front-door glass smashed. In addition to the stolen computer equipment, a monitor valued at \$500 was found damaged on the showroom floor, according to a Farmington Hills police report.
- **FIREWORKS SEIZED**
Fireworks were confiscated from three students in a stairwell at East Middle School, 25090 Middlebelt, Friday afternoon.
- **STUDENTS TURNED OVER TO PARENTS**
The students were turned over to their parents-guardians. The school plans to discipline the youths, according to a Farmington Hills police report.
- **SMASH AND GRAB**
Officers responding to an alarm at the Grapevine Party Store, 29970 12 Mile, at 12:12 a.m. May 13 reported that the front door was broken and more than \$1,800 in cash, cigarettes, lottery tickets and scotch was missing from the store.
- **ASSAULT REPORTED**
A 13-year-old boy required emergency reconstructive surgery on his nose after an apparent fight on the lacrosse field at Our Lady of Sorrows School, 33915 Power, May 4.
- **FARMINGTON DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS ARE INVESTIGATING THE INCIDENT, WHICH OCCURRED AT 5:30 p.m. DURING A GAME.**
- **BREAK-IN PROBES**
Officers responding to a residential alarm on Hidden Valley at 3 a.m. Monday found a rear window smashed and the front door kicked in. It was not immediately known what, if anything, was taken.
- **MONEY TAKEN**
About \$5,000 was reported stolen from a house on Clear Lake Road May 22.
- **WHEN A FRIEND OF THE HOMEOWNER ARRIVED THERE AT 11:30 p.m., HE SAW A MAN LURKING. THE FRIEND FOUND THE GARAGE BAY DOOR OPEN A FOOT AND THE GARAGE DOOR TO THE HOUSE PROPPED OPEN. INSIDE, BEDROOMS AND AN OFFICE WERE PARTIALLY RANSACKED.**
A drawer from the office, contain-

- ing rolled coins, was found in grass one house away.
- **A NEIGHBOR SAID TWO MEN SEEN IN HIS YARD RAN INTO THE WOODS WHEN HIS DOG BARKED.**
- **WEAPONS CHARGE**
A 50-year-old Farmington Hills man is charged with carrying a concealed weapon in a motor vehicle in connection with the discovery of a .38 caliber revolver in his car during a traffic stop on 12 Mile May 16.
- **ARRAIGNED MAY 17 BEFORE VISITING DISTRICT JUDGE CHARLES McDONALD OF FARMINGTON. HENRY TURNER JR. PLEADED NOT GUILTY. HE WAS RELEASED ON \$7,000 CASH OR SURETY BOND PENDING A PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION IN 47th DISTRICT COURT. HE FACES UP TO FIVE YEARS IN PRISON IF CONVICTED.**
- **THE LOADED GUN WAS FOUND IN HOLSTER UNDER THE DRIVER'S SEAT, ACCORDING TO A FARMINGTON HILLS POLICE REPORT.**
- **THEFTS REPORTED**
Two color television sets, a video cassette recorder, a microwave oven, a semiautomatic rifle and four bottles of beer, valued at \$1,778, were reported stolen from a house on Inkster, Farmington Hills, May 12.
- **AN EXOTIC BIRD, A BLUE FRONT AMAZON, VALUED AT \$600 WAS REPORTED STOLEN DURING A BREAK-IN AT EVERGLADES PET SHOP, 24027 ORCHARD LAKE, FARMINGTON, MAY 14. AN ESTIMATED \$1,500 IN DAMAGE WAS DONE TO THE BUSINESS.**
- **A CAMERA AND CASH VALUED AT \$260 WERE REPORTED STOLEN FROM CORDOBA APARTMENTS ON 12 MILE, FARMINGTON HILLS, MAY 17.**
- **GOLF CLUBS, BAGS, SHOES AND LUGGAGE VALUED AT \$1,670 WERE REPORTED STOLEN FROM A CAR PARKED AT THE RAM'S HORN RESTAURANT, 32435 GRAND RIVER, FARMINGTON, MAY 17. DAMAGE OF \$125 WAS ALSO REPORTED IN**

- the incident, in which a window was broken out.
- **A 12-SPEED BICYCLE VALUED AT \$600 WAS REPORTED STOLEN FROM A STORAGE AREA AT CHATEAU HILLS APARTMENTS IN FARMINGTON MAY 18-21.**
- **A COMPACT DISC PLAYER, JEWELRY, A VIDEO CASSETTE RECORDER AND A CAMERA VALUED AT \$2,300 WERE REPORTED STOLEN FROM A HOUSE ON RIVER RIDGE TRAIL IN RIVER PINES CONDOS, FARMINGTON HILLS, MAY 19.**
- **A VIDEO CASSETTE RECORDER, A REVOLVER AND BOND SAVING BONDS AND OTHER ITEMS VALUED AT \$715 WERE REPORTED STOLEN FROM A HOUSE ON FIORI, FARMINGTON, MAY 19 DURING A BREAK-IN.**
- **A VIDEO CASSETTE RECORDER, A PURSE, SOME WHISKEY AND A TV REMOTE CONTROL VALUED AT \$370 WERE REPORTED STOLEN DURING A BREAK-IN AT A HOUSE ON MAYFIELD, FARMINGTON, MAY 19-20.**
- **A PURSE WITH CASH AND OTHER ITEMS VALUED AT \$300 WAS REPORTED STOLEN FROM A HOUSE ON RHONWOOD, FARMINGTON HILLS, MAY 19-20.**
- **JEWELRY, A MINK COAT AND MONEY WERE REPORTED STOLEN FROM A HOUSE ON PARTISANE, FARMINGTON HILLS, MAY 20.**
- **A CELLULAR TELEPHONE VALUED AT \$1,200 WAS REPORTED STOLEN FROM A CAR PARKED ON OAKLAND STREET, FARMINGTON, MAY 20.**
- **A PERSONAL COMPUTER VALUED AT \$8,000 WAS REPORTED STOLEN FROM LIP-TON INC., 28104 ORCHARD LAKE ROAD, FARMINGTON HILLS, MAY 21-22.**
- **A PURSE WITH CASH AND OTHER ITEMS VALUED AT \$385 WAS REPORTED STOLEN FROM A HOUSE ON WITHERSPOON, FARMINGTON HILLS, MAY 22.**
- **SCHOOL DAMAGE**
A window at Farmington High School was smashed out May 12. Damage was estimated at \$50.

Travel agency bash will have Greek theme

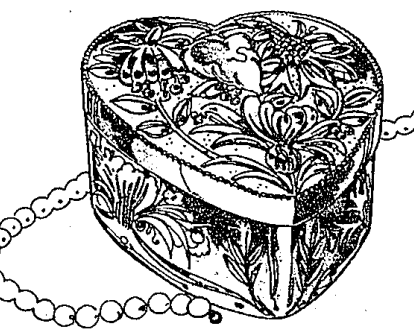
A touch of Athens and a dash of Crete will add flavor to "A Taste of Greece" program sponsored by the Farmington AAA Travel Agency 5-8 p.m. June 8, at the Kingsley Inn, 1475 N. Woodward, Bloomfield Hills.

Greek music, dancers and samples of regional cuisine will be featured. A round-trip air ticket to Athens, four-day Greek isle cruise and a sev-

en-day hotel package will be given away.

Representatives of Sun Line Cruises and Tours will answer questions, assist with summer vacation plans and offer special discounts.

Tickets are available for \$15 at the Farmington AAA Travel Agency, 33183 12 Mile, Farmington Hills.



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