

Detroit's musicians remember Tyner, 4B



Volleyball update, 1B

Simple, hearty Finnish fare, 1C

Farmington Observer

Volume 103 Number 40

Monday, February 17, 1992

Farmington, Michigan

48 Pages

Fifty Cents



WHO SAYS that snow and ice and cold weather must close a golf course? Certainly not the 19 golf enthusiasts who participated in the inaugural Chili-Golf Open Feb. 1 at San Marino Golf Course in Farmington Hills.

The dedicated duffers bundled up and played the modified 1,493-yard nine-hole layout (normal layout plays about 1,900 yards) with a tournament par of 36 strokes for men and women.

Temporary greens were set up and the snow was blown off. The balls used were "pink, purple, orange and optic yellow, any color they wanted to use," said Eric Wurminger, assistant director of the sponsoring Farmington Hills Recreation Division.

Ralph Eagle captured the men's division title with a score of 44, while Nancy Gressler shot a 47 to win the women's division. The champions received trophies and \$20 gift certificates.

After savoring through a round of golf, participants enjoyed a hot bowl of chili and hot dogs at the adjacent On the Tee restaurant.

DON'T BOTHER checking for the mail today. There won't be any. It's President's Day, a holiday for federal employees.

Mark Bate, officer in charge for the Farmington-area post offices, said there will be no regular residential or business delivery. Special delivery, Empress Mail, and Post Office box service will be provided.

Limited caller service will be available between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. only for customers who regularly pick up mail at the Farmington Post Office on Slocum or the Farmington Hills Post Office on 12 Mile Road. There will be no financial transactions. Normal mail service will resume Tuesday.

SEMINAR on "Personal and Family Management" will be held from 9:15 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 29, at the Faith Covenant Church, 35415 W. 14 Mile Road, Farmington Hills. Leading the seminar will be Russ Jones, of Financial Stewardship of Troy. A small registration fee will cover the cost of resource materials and will support the community education center of the Covenant Center.

For more information, call 788-1555 or 681-9191.

MEMORY LANE — From the Feb. 21, 1952 Farmington Enterprise:

Farmington Township voters overwhelmingly approved a zoning ordinance at a special election. Some 1,428 votes were cast in favor of proposal and 415 against.

Work was started on the marking and drilling of holes for the installation of parking meters in downtown Farmington. The meters were to be ready for the coins in about a week, said City Manager James Tennant.

Farmington High School's debate team — Lee Barbel, Charles Tulp, Lou Dowling and June Turner — and its coach, Lloyd Smith, traveled to Albion for the Smith County District Elimination Tournament.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21888 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, or dropped off at the newspaper office.



Newlyweds Gary Arnold and Peggy Wilson laugh at Judge Fred Harris' jokes during their wedding in 47th District Court.

Marryin' Margaret

Judge has done 2,000 weddings

By Tom Beer
staff writer

Just call her Marryin' Margaret, that knot-tying judge.

Margaret G. Schaeffer, judge of the 47th District Court in Farmington, figures she's provided the legal niceties for maybe 2,000 marriages during her 18 years on the bench. And there'll be a few more weddings before she retires in December.

"It (marrying people) has become one of my favorite things," Schaeffer said last Friday — Valentine's Day, appropriately — while eight couples waited to have their marriage vows heard by a district judge.

"When I first did it, I thought, 'This can't be legal. I was accustomed to church weddings. But Judge (Michael) Hand (longtime Farmington judge) told me, 'Do it. It's your judicial responsibility.'"

On this particular Valentine's Day, Schaeffer split the matrimonial workload with colleague Fred Harris, the court's other judge.

FIRST ON Schaeffer's docket were Farmington Hills resident

'When I first did it, I thought, 'This can't be legal.' I was accustomed to church weddings. But Judge (Michael) Hand (longtime Farmington judge) told me, 'Do it. It's your judicial responsibility.''

— Margaret G. Schaeffer
district judge

Debbie Dwyer and Detroit Jeffrey Mullins, and it took just 2 minutes and 32 seconds from the first "How do you do, I'm Judge Schaeffer" to the last "Congratulations, you may kiss the bride" for them to become husband and wife.

Jeffrey is a machine operator and Debbie does wiring and production work. Any honeymoon planned? "Kinda, sorta," said Jeffrey.

Couple No. 2 — Ann Nazareth and George Manning — were married by Judge Schaeffer in 2 minutes and 39 seconds.

"Which one takes the plaintiff and which the defendant? I joked a member of their wedding party who noted the courtroom setting. Ann and George, both white col-

lar Ford employees, had a special reason for picking Feb. 14. The groom's parents, George and Dorothy Manning, were hitched on that date 39 years ago.

ANN AND George plan a church wedding in May.

Across the hall, in Judge Harris' courtroom, Gary Arnold and Peg Wilson made a fashion statement with the clothes they wore — western hats, boots and trimmings. Gary even wore the hat during the ceremony.

"For us, there are just two kinds of music: country and western," said Peg, Judge's currently laid off friend from the Detroit Police Depart-

Please turn to Page 3

Judge's ban on notetaking a rare move

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

When a Detroit Recorder's Court judge ordered news reporters to stop taking notes in the highly publicized Freedom Festival beating case Thursday, five Wayne County Sheriff's deputies stepped forward into the courtroom gallery to ensure that reporters put their pens and notebooks down or leave the courtroom.

"I apologize to those reporters who have been doing their job and doing it properly," Judge Vera Massey Jones said. "The order to my officers is there will be no more note taking."

Reporters, including one from the Observer, put down their notebooks, picked up their coats and were calmly ushered out of the courtroom. Massey Jones said reporters could stay and cover the trial — without taking notes.

Massey Jones made the unprecedented ruling after informing the court that the 14 jurors in the assault case against Cassandra Rutherford, 17, were distracted and potentially intimidated by the media attention to the case.

Massey Jones also banned still photography in the courtroom. Courtroom Television Network, which is providing coverage to a local television station, and had a monitor in the hallway that reporters can watch, remains.

"Judge Jones' conduct demonstrates a major misconception of First Amendment rights in America. Her actions contribute to the demise of that very important right," said Steve Barnaby, Observer & Eccentric managing editor. "This is nothing more than what happens in a totalitarian government."

MASSEY JONES' ruling — together with a motion by Rutherford's defense attorneys to ban photography in the courtroom — was the pinnacle of brewing tension between the court, defense attorneys, the judge and the media throughout the week.

Rutherford is charged with assault with intent to commit great bodily harm in connection with the beating

'I apologize to those reporters who have been doing their job and doing it properly. The order to my officers is there will be no more note taking.'

— Judge Vera Massey Jones

of Farmington Hills resident Joanne Was 43, in front of the Omni Hotel following the Freedom Festival fireworks, June 26, 1991.

The 2 p.m. ruling Thursday followed Massey Jones removal of Associated Press reporter Sandra Svoboda earlier in the morning when she noticed the reporter taking notes about the racial composition of the jury.

When a sheriff's deputy confiscated Svoboda's whole notebook, the reporter stood in the doorway refusing to leave. "Those are my notes from another trial," she shouted as the deputy leafed through her notebook, which was later returned.

Since the trial began Tuesday, Massey Jones has admonished the media for his alleged poor behavior. But Massey Jones also admonished court watchers whom she felt were distracting to the proceedings either by talking or eating.

Despite Massey Jones' complaints, the Observer did not witness poor behavior from reporters sitting in the courtroom taking notes. Requests were made throughout the week, however, from various media sources to have cameras in the courtroom. "That has not subsided," Massey Jones said, adding that many news agencies were making requests improperly and on short notice.

THE OBSERVER was unable to make a formal request to have a camera in the courtroom. The Observer's photographer was turned away at the courthouse's front doors Tuesday morning when security

Please turn to Page 2

City vs. suburb tensions evident

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Strains of Detroit versus the suburbs rang through defense attorneys' cross-examinations of suburban witnesses in the 1991 Freedom Festival assault case Wednesday and Thursday.

"They didn't pay much attention to it. It wasn't until it became public," said Debra Sweeney about the Detroit Police Department's reaction to a report by Sweeney and her friends that six black women had ha-

ressed, chased and assaulted them following the Freedom Festival fireworks June 28, 1991.

Attorney Cornelius Pitts and his associate John Royal represent Cassandra Rutherford, 17, who is charged with assault with intent to commit great bodily harm in connection with the beating of Farmington resident Joanne Was 43.

Despite objections from Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor Lisa Lindsey and Recorder's Court Judge

Please turn to Page 2

what's inside

- Around Farmington - 10A
- Classifieds - Socs. B-D
- Index - 6B
- Auto - Soc. D
- Real estate - Soc. B,C
- Employment - Soc. C,D
- Crossword - 7B
- Entertainment - 5B
- Obituaries - 6A
- On the agenda - 6A
- Police, fire calls - 6A
- Sports - Soc. B
- Street Scene - 4B
- Travel - 8A
- CLASSIFIEDS - 591-0900
- CIRCULATION - 591-0500
- NEWS LINE - 477-5450
- SPORTS LINE - 953-2139

SOLD!

Jonathan Busch
"got tons of calls"
and sold his car
by the week's end.

O & E Classifieds
Work!

Observer & Eccentric
CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING
591-0900

Attorneys eye judge post

By Casey Hans
staff writer

A number of local attorneys said they want to run for a judicial seat in the Farmington 47th District Court this year, but most are waiting to see whether the state approves a first judgeship for the court.

One of the two current seats on the local bench will open this year when district Judge Margaret Schaeffer retires. The state Supreme Court has recommended to the state Legislature that a third judgeship be approved for the local court. That has yet to be acted upon by legislators, but it is expected to be approved with other budget matters, according to

State Rep. Jan Dolan, R-Farmington Hills.

The city councils of Farmington and Farmington Hills — the two cities which make up the 47th district court control unit — must give final approval.

Farmington Hills attorney Barry Dickson is the only candidate who has begun actively campaigning and the only one who has filed a statement of organization with the Secretary of State elections division. In Lansing, according to a spokesman there, Brickner, who announced his intentions on Feb. 6, said he would prefer to run for the new seat if it is approved.

BRICKNER IS a general practice

attorney who specializes in landlord-tenant disputes, and is interested in better automating the courthouse for efficiency and maintaining a caring and friendly demeanor for the court. He said, if elected, he would remember his roots.

"I'm not a real high/altin' guy," he added. "I will never forget where I came from."

Others who say they plan to run for the local bench this year include former Oakland County Commissioner Jack McDonald, former Farmington Hills city attorney Richard Poehlman, 47th District Court magistrate James Brady and assistant

Please turn to Page 4