

Orchard Lake work finally comes to halt

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

After nearly three years, business owners and drivers along a stretch of Orchard Lake have found the road to happiness.

And it's one with no orange barricades or construction workers in sight.

The widening of Orchard Lake Road, between 10 Mile and Grand River, was completed June 15 after several delays. With little fanfare, the barricades were brought down and the road opened for two way traffic.

Some cleanup and signal work at Grand River and Orchard Lake is all that remains, according to an inspector for the Road Commission for Oakland County at the site Friday.

"As far as I know the work is complete," said commission spokesman John Joy. "There will be some conversation with the local community for additional landscaping (planting grass)." "Isn't that something," said Dan McPhail, who owns Dan's Sub Shop on the east side of Orchard Lake, near Grand River. "We have a road again."

Dan's Sub Shop was one of the businesses hit hardest by the construction. Dan McPhail, who owns the restaurant with his wife, Sandy, said they lost two-thirds

of the customers during the brunt of the construction. The restaurant was shut down several times, including a time when there was no street access.

Only faithful customers saw them through the ordeal, according to Dan McPhail.

"All we were seeing were familiar faces," Dan McPhail said. "Now we're starting to see some new ones."

Contaminated soil found under the road was one of the major causes of the delays. Construction had to be stopped as state and federal environmental officials were summoned.

Farmington city manager Frank Laubhoff said a new water main was put in during the spring and Consumer's Power worked on a gas line.

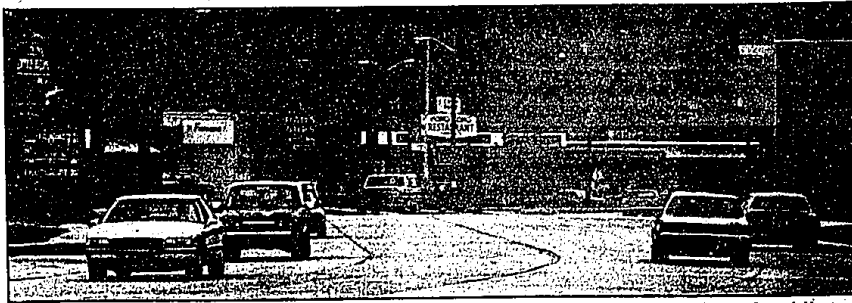
Farmington shared costs with Oakland County on the project.

"We're happy the traffic is back to normal. We're happy for the business owners," Laubhoff said. "I think it looks good. I think it's going to be an improvement for businesses down there."

Some 17,500 people travel the route in a 24-hour period. An un-congested road should bring more people through.

That's just what businesses like to hear.

John Reed, co-owner of Farm-



STAFF PHOTOS BY SHARON LAMIER

Open road: Drivers on Orchard Lake, between Shiawassee and Grand River, are delighted to find construction crews gone after three years of detours and inconvenience.

'All we were seeing (during construction) were familiar faces. Now we're starting to see some new ones.'

Dan McPhail
Dan's Sub Shop

ington Bike Shop on the north side of Orchard Lake, said construction put a dent in business.

"When I did have customers, nine to 10 would say, 'Holy smokes, when is it going to be done? It's difficult to get here.'"

Flower Express, which is next to the Farmington Bike Shop, closed during the construction. A sign on the marquee, though, said "See ya soon."

Jack Terry Sr. and Jack Terry Jr. of Andrew's Home Center on

the east side of Orchard Lake said the constant road construction hurt them, too.

"This pretty much killed us for three years," said Jack Jr. He predicts it will take three to six months for business to get back to normal.

Drivers who regularly travel down Orchard Lake were seeing the immediate benefits, though.

Nan Cappel, who lives in Farmington, hadn't been down Orchard Lake since school let out. She was surprised to see it open.

Cappel said, "I didn't even notice it."

Another Farmington resident, Kathleen Thompson, won't have to make a right turn out of the Towne Tub Laundry anymore. She could make a left turn and proceed south to her residence on Grand River.

"And it's a little less confusing, too," Thompson said.



Easier access: Nan Cappel of Farmington found the drive a bit easier to Farmington Bike Shop on Orchard Lake.

Local girls receive top Scout honor

Farmington Hills Girl Scouts Randi Ellsworth, Ellen Moran, Caroline Rioridan and Samantha Rowland have been honored to receive the highest award in Girl Scouting, the Gold Award.

To receive this award, girls must learn about themselves, ex-

plore careers, build on their talents and skills, develop leadership and conduct a service project in the community. The Gold Award reflects a personal dedication and commitment to oneself, the community, the world and the future.

Randi, Caroline and Samantha are members of Senior Girl Scout Troop 541. As a service project, they designed and created a float which represented the accomplishments of the 15 elementary schools in the Farmington School District in the Farmington Found-

ers Day parade. Ellen is a member of Senior Girl Scout Troop 3108. As a service project, she designed a multi-age, multi-level patch program for the Detroit Institute of Arts.

The girls received their awards at a recent honor reception.



Randi Ellsworth Ellen Moran Caroline Rioridan Samantha Rowland



STAFF PHOTOS BY SHARON LAMIER

Behind bars: Geri Zawachi (left) of Livonia has her father, Will Neumann (on telephone), "arrested" and "jailed" at the Community Center last week. Zawachi and her sons, Nicky and T.J., are jailed with their grandfather as he tries to raise "bail" for the American Heart Association.

Volunteers go to slammer to benefit heart association

A number of Farmington area residents spent June 17 in an unusual place — jail.

Although there were real bars on the jail and these people were actual prisoners, the situation was staged by the American Heart Association as its Cardiac Arrest fund-raising event.

Twenty-eight surrendered to the American Heart Association and were charged with "crimes against the heart." In order to win release each prisoner solicited donations from friends which they used as bail at The Community Center.

The prisoners raised an estimated \$10,000 between noon and 9 p.m.

The ball will be used by the American Heart Association to support research, education, and community service programs locally, regionally and nationwide.

A committee of volunteers in-

cluding Thomas Booth, Kimberly Evola, Judy DeSmedt, Diane Gallagher, David Ramirez and Rosalie DeGregorio worked together to plan the fundraiser.

Several local businesses contributed products/services to the event. They are American Speedy Printing, CellularOne, Uptown Deli, Grapevine Party Shoppe and Greek Boy Restaurant.

Jailbirds for the event included: Judy Antishin, Ed Barter, Tom Booth, Jim Brady, Russa Buyars, Chuck Cozler, Greg Curry, Donna Degennaro, Dawn Dlesing, Judy DeSmedt, Kim Evola, Barbara Frey, Diane Gallagher, Meghan Gorman, Richard Headlee, Hollyday Chevrolet, Tom Kimbro, Kelly Kuhn, Jo Anne McShane, Linda Mondoux, Bill Neumann, Will Neumann, Don Page, Ted Picano, David Ramirez, Daryl Rollins, Christie Woycik and Lauri Woycik.



Please, your honor: Donna Degennaro, who works at Mass Mutual in Farmington Hills, begs the judge not to raise her bail.



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