

IN THE PAPER

## TODAY

**Happenings:** For updates on area events, including the Farmington Founders Festival, the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers are offering a call-in service. Call 953-2005.

**Duly sworn:** Two new school trustees raised their hands and said "I do" at a recent Farmington Board of Education meeting. /2A

**Happy day:** Promotions and appointments were the order of the day at a recent Farmington Hills Police ceremony. /3A

### COUNTY NEWS

**Business as usual:** In a pair of stories, the prosecutor's office stands by its tough ethics code and defends its silence on the continuing investigation into the sheriff's department. /5A

### MALLS & MAINSTREETS

**Sidewalk sales:** Here's the scoop on where and when to harvest those bargains, as much a rite of summer as watering the lawn. /6A

### TASTE

**Heavenly cooks:** Members of Christ Child Society and Altar Guild of St. Hugo of the Hills Church share favorite family recipes in newly published cookbooks. /1B

**Super Suppers:** Dawn Russel of West Bloomfield offers tips for getting dinner on the table in a hurry. /1B

### SPORTS



**Summer games:** Farmington youth baseball teams continue to be successful at various levels of play. /1C

### CABLE TV WEEKLY

**Local access:** "Live & Let Live" on local access Channel 12. Check your cable guide for time and date.

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## School critic rankles officials



The Farmington Board of Education Thursday listened to a man who said he favors more "traditional" education in the district's curriculum. Some of his comments rankled school officials.

By LARRY O'CONNOR  
 STAFF WRITER

The founder of a fledgling group advocating traditional education made a second visit before the Farmington Board of Education. He wasn't greeted with open arms.

Douglas Swiatkowski, founder of

Parents for a Traditional Education, appeared before the board June 15 to voice concerns over elementary student report cards and inventive spelling.

Swiatkowski had met with assistant superintendent of staff development and curriculum Judy White.

The meeting with White was cordial, Swiatkowski said.

"I'd like to say I still have some problems," said Swiatkowski, who has children attending Wood Creek Elementary, "and I would like to make those clear."

Swiatkowski said his main concern is still elementary report cards. He'd like to see letter grading starting at third grade instead of sixth grade.

The district is revamping report cards after a pilot program last school year. They do not include letter

grades, instead marking students under three separate categories.

### Trustees rankled

Board members were rankled by some of the comments, especially those attributed to White, who was on vacation and not present at Thursday's meeting.

Swiatkowski referred to quotes published in the July 5 edition of the Farmington Observer. He also relayed a comment White supposedly made

See CRITIC, 2A

### New priest at Sorrows



SHARON LEFRIEX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The Rev. Loren O'Dea: "I don't think I'll rust out or burn out."

## New priest alters his life path at 65

By LARRY O'CONNOR  
 STAFF WRITER

Call him Father . . . but Father Time would be more like it.

When many his age are lining up Florida condos and oiling fishing reels for a life of leisure, the Rev. Loren O'Dea has decided to "retire" to the priesthood.

He's been assigned to Our Lady of Sorrows in Farmington, having been

ordained June 5 in a special ceremony at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit. He became a priest only a day before his 65th birthday.

"I said the archbishop (Adam Malda) I was going to ask for retirement," said O'Dea with a youthful giggle and a glint in his eye.

O'Dea is not under the fallacy the priesthood is a cakewalk, especially in a parish the size of Our Lady of

Sorrows. Sitting in his spartan office at Our Lady of Sorrows, though, O'Dea doesn't look out of place. He doesn't feel out of place, either.

There's good reason. The priesthood has always lingered in the back of his mind. O'Dea was in the seminary, having only a year of pastoral studies left when he decided to leave.

He was one of 11 who decided to make a foray into the secular world. "It wasn't anything really negative," he said. "Part of it was for health reasons."

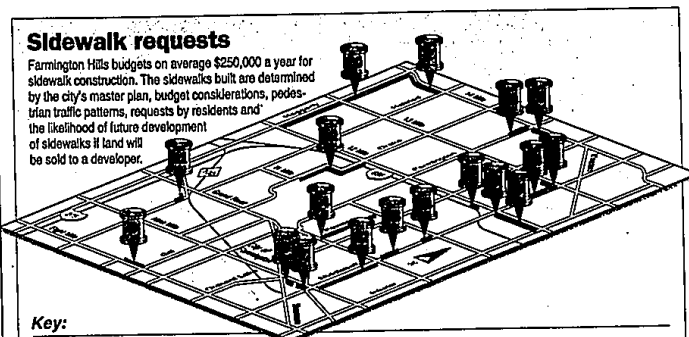
"I decided to get out into the world and see what it was like." The seed took root.

See NEW PRIEST, 8A

## Hills council seeks to close sidewalk gap

### Sidewalk requests

Farmington Hills budgets on average \$250,000 a year for sidewalk construction. The sidewalks built are determined by the city's master plan, budget considerations, pedestrian traffic patterns, requests by residents and the likelihood of future development of sidewalks if land will be sold to a developer.



Key:

- 14 Mile, east of Farmington to clubhouse (requested by resident)
- 14 Mile, Halsted to Haggerty (requested by planning comm.)
- 13 Mile, Baptist Manor to Middlebelt (requested by homeowner assoc.)
- 12 Mile, at Harrison High (requested by Farmington schools)
- 12 Mile, Greencastle to Middlebelt (requested by homeowner assoc.)
- 12 Mile, Greencastle to Inkster (requested by planning comm.)
- 9 Mile, Middlebelt to shopping center (requested by residents)
- 9 Mile, Tuck to Farmington city limits (requested by Party Shoppe)
- 8 Mile, Tapika to Gil (requested by planning comm.)
- Haggerty, 12 Mile to 14 Mile (requested by planning comm.)
- Halsted, Windwood to Knights Inn (requested by resident)
- Drake, 11 Mile to 12 Mile (requested by planning comm.)
- Farmington, Old Timber to 14 Mile (requested by resident)
- Power, 10 Mile to 11 Mile (requested by planning comm.)
- Middlebelt, French to Greencastle (requested by petition)
- Middlebelt, 11 Mile to Pandleton Club condo. (various)
- Middlebelt, 9 Mile to 10 Mile (requested by residents)
- Middlebelt, Ashford to 13 Mile (requested by homeowner assoc.)

TAMMIE GRAVES/STAFF ARTIST

By BILL COUTANT  
 STAFF WRITER

Although Farmington Hills spends about \$250,000 a year to build sidewalks, city council members have concerns over safety and the patchwork appearance of the city's walkways.

The council will consider spending a greater portion of its capital improvement fund on sidewalks during tonight's regular meeting. The council and city staff discussed sidewalks as part of a study session late last month.

Several areas in the city lack sidewalks because there are undeveloped or vacant properties, subdivisions that have their own network of sidewalks, residents who don't want sidewalks across their property and limited money.

"We've always had more requests than money," city manager Bill Costick said at the June 24 study session.

Councilman Jon Grant said the patchwork makeup of the city's sidewalk system is a safety concern for pedestrians and children riding bicycles on some streets.

"Nine Mile is broken up into little pieces of sidewalk in some parts," Grant said. "I won't let my son go

See SIDEWALK, 2A