

A&P spokesman shelves rumors of store's closing

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Contrary to rumors, an A&P spokesman said there are no plans to close its supermarket in the Farmington Downtown Center.

"It's business as usual," said a woman in a statement from the office of Michael Rourke, vice president of corporate affairs for A&P. "There are no plans to close that store."

The denial comes amid rumblings A&P plans to leave the Downtown Center, which includes commercial property on the southeast part of Grand River and Farmington roads. Farmington City Council members expressed their concerns about the situation at their May 16 meeting.

A&P is the only full-service grocery store downtown and is within walking distance for many residents, including those from Farmington Place, a senior apartment complex on Grand River.

Council drafted a letter offering assistance to Dayton, Ohio-based Kinco Realty, which owns the retail space.

"I have received nothing yet in writing that A&P is leaving," said

'I have received nothing yet in writing that A&P is leaving. . . . We're looking to the owner of the property to advise us in writing.'

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Farmington city manager

Farmington City Manager Frank Lauhoff. . . . We're looking to advise us in writing." Nadine Rafferty of Kinco Realty said discussions with A&P have been limited to whether they want to extend their lease. A&P has three to four years remaining on its lease agreement, Rafferty said.

"They're still operating in there as far as we're concerned," Rafferty said. "Nothing has been decided on their side."

"It's natural to get a little antsy when you start hearing those things. You don't know until you know."

Councilwoman JoAnne McShane suggested the city work with the DDA in finding another food store for that space if A&P should leave.

The city is touchy when it comes to grocery stores. In 1991, Kroger left the Grand River-Halsted shopping center in Farmington to open a new 43,000-square foot supermarket at 12 Mile and Halsted. Many residents were upset, especially those who walked there from nearby Jamestown Apartments. McShane started a petition drive with other residents, urging Kroger to allow another food store to lease space. Kiddle Land operated in the store Kroger vacated.

A&P also owns Farmer Jack in the Crossroads Shopping Center on Farmington and Nine Mile roads.

"The city of Farmington has a history of working with business," Lauhoff said. "If you work with someone, most of the time, they will work with you."

FARMINGTON FOCUS

One for the books

Parents of students in teacher Leslie La-Cose's first-grade class at Larkshire Elementary School contributed about \$65 for a party for the youngsters.

But Gayla Norris and Fran Walsh, volunteer room mothers in the class, had a better idea: They paid for the party themselves and donated the \$65 to the Farmington branch of the Community Library "for the purchase of books."

"We said, 'Let's use it (the money) for something better,'" said Norris. A field trip to the library is planned for Thursday, June 2, so the youngsters can visit their money.

"We're hoping we can get a list of the books purchased with our money," Norris said. "Maybe the kids will want to read some of them."

Prix still coming

Remember that Mini Prix, a race for go-carts that was supposed to wind its way through the streets of downtown Farmington?

Well, the race is still on, but the date has been moved ahead to Sunday, Aug. 14, because it fits better into the plans of the sponsoring FM radio station, WOMC.

People looking forward to the event should check The Farmington Observer and listen to

WOMC (104.3) In August for information on times and other activities.

In addition to the go-cart races, a classic car show and sidewalk sales are planned, said an official from the Farmington Downtown Development Authority.

There are a limited number of corporate sponsorships for the race available. Representatives of interested companies should call Gelman & Grant at 615-4345 during normal business hours.

Bloodletting planned

Red Cross blood drive will be 2-8 p.m. Monday, June 13, at Hope Lutheran Church, 39200 W. 12 Mile Road, east of Haggerty Road, Farmington Hills.

For more information or an appointment, call the church at 553-7170.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21838 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, faxed to 477-9722 or dropped off at the newspaper office.

Parade to reign on Memorial Day

If organizers of the Memorial Day Parade seem to be especially high on the event this year . . . well, remember, this is the year to honor the U.S. Air Force, the Air Force Reserve and the National Guard.

Farmington's annual Memorial Day Parade will begin at 10 a.m. Monday, May 30, at the Uptown Plaza on Grand River. The parade route extends northwest along Grand River through downtown Farmington to the War Memorial just west of Farmington Road.

The parade will feature a flyover by a vintage B-25 bomber. Four local high school bands will

march and play in the parade. The Harrison High band will lead the way.

As in past parades, veterans from several wars, including World War II, will march, as will ROTC groups from Livonia Churchill and Detroit Redford high schools.

Special guests will include Cadet Lt. Col. Charles Richard Haag of the Churchill ROTC and Technical Sgt. Dennis R. Borman, who has 18 years of duty with the Air Force and Air Force Reserve.

Representatives of federal, state and local governments, including school trustees and the

mayors of Farmington and Farmington Hills, will be on hand. There will be floats, carousels, Scouts, Campfire Girls, YMCA Indian Guides, fire trucks, EMS units, and a special section for classic and antique cars.

Parade organizers still need convertibles or open vehicles. Anyone with one such vehicle to offer should call Walter Christensen, parade chairman, at 474-8554.

The Farmington Exchange Club will distribute more than 1,500 small American flags along the parade route.

Volunteers to rescue Rouge June 4

Get out the rubber boots, the work gloves and the determination to save a stream. Rouge Rescue '94 is coming up.

The Farmington Hills portion of Rouge Rescue '94 will be 8-11:30 a.m. Saturday, June 4, at the corner of Belfast and Westminster in the southeastern section of the city.

The location is west of Middle-

belt Road and north of Eight Mile. A tributary of the Rouge flows through the area.

The volunteers will help remove debris and logjams that have accumulated over the past few years.

City crews will be on hand with their machinery to handle the heavy work.

As in past years, lunch will be

provided by the city.

For more information, call Jean Barrett of the city's Department of Public Services at 473-9520.

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