

# Farmington Observer

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VOLUME 106 NUMBER 102

## IN THE PAPER TODAY

**A 'grand' project:** A plan to spruce up the Grand River corridor in Farmington Hills has business, resident support. /3A

**They tried money:** Farmington Downtown Development Authority officials are stepping up marketing efforts to attract new business. /3A

**OCC battle:** The group seeking to oust five Oakland Community College trustees was expected to file a second set of recall petitions with county officials. /7A

## TASTE

**Sweet event:** Cranbrook's Honey and Apples Festival, a sweet taste of fall. /1B

**Wine column:** Act now or you'll miss the 1993 red Burgundies. /1B

## MALLS & MAINSTREETS

**Complicating casual:** What is it about dressing down on Fridays that has businesses and employees so confused? Retailers think they have the answers. /7B

**Gifts of time:** A report on the latest wristwatches available for shoppers who like to make their holiday lists early. /7B

## SPORTS

**City champs:** The North Farmington boys and Farmington High girls won titles Thursday in the annual city cross country meets. /1C

**Hoop winners:** In need of a win, Harrison gave North Farmington its first loss Thursday in girls basketball. /1C

## LOTTERY

The Michigan lottery numbers for Saturday, Sept. 16, are:

**DAILY 3:**  
251

**DAILY 4:**  
9460

**LOTTO:** 45, 42, 41, 13, 11, 2

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## 'Showgirl' causes stir



BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Hollywood has cast its eye on Farmington Hills and North Farmington High, trying to uncover more about an actress whose lack of cover is causing a stir.

Media inquiries have reached fever pitch as insiders want to find out

more about former North Farmington High School student Elizabeth Berkley, an actress who is starring in the NC-17 rated film "Showgirls."

The film, which focuses on the life of an exotic dancer, opens Sept. 22, but is generating pre-release hype for its nudity and sexual content.

North teacher Barbara Dubb, who

taught Berkley's public speaking class, was interviewed for nearly a half-hour by the TV entertainment show "Extra." Dubb recalled Berkley as being determined and focused as a student.

The segment was scheduled to air Friday. Her interview will probably end up on the cutting room floor, Dubb joked.

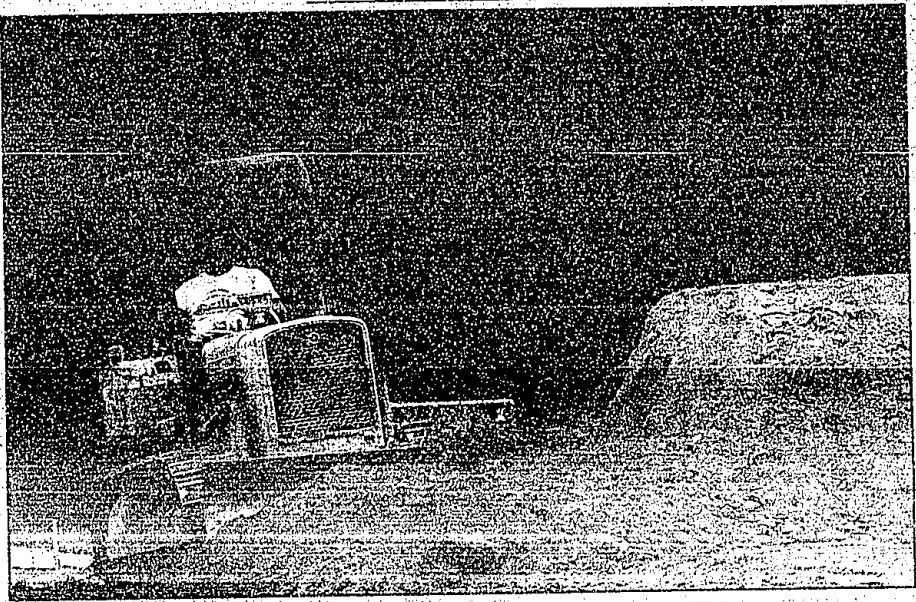
"When I was being filmed, I was told by them ('Extra' crew) that she wanted to know how people would react in Farmington," Dubb said. "It's a controversial film."



Elizabeth Berkley

See OTTR, 2A

## Hills bicycle path pushes north



SHARON LEMJES/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Along Farmington Road, Melvin Metalar, an equipment operator for general contractor A.J. Williams, levels the area where a bicycle path eventually will lie on Farmington Road near the I-696 overpass. When finally finished, the path will connect two large parks, Heritage and Woodland Hills.

## Assistant principal enjoys his new beat



Ronald Jones

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Whether dealing with it as an educator or playing it, Ronald Jones knows all that jazz.

Jones has been hired as the new assistant principal at North Farmington High. The 20-year educator's resume is as long as the case in which he carries his musical instrument.

A longtime trombone player, Jones has played to renowned Detroit jazz bands like Baker's Keyboard Lounge with Ed Nuccilli and the Plural Circle. He's also performed with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and was a backing musician for Cab Calloway and Sammy Davis Jr.

"Some people will say to me, 'Oh, you look like a trombone player. You're tall and lanky,'" Jones said. "I don't know if there are any short and fat trombone players or not."

In terms of academic stature, Jones likes what he sees at North Farmington.

What does he see? A lot of bright students, for one. He also said there's a highly competent staff and a bevy of committed parents at North Farmington High.

All of those things, incidentally, are not foreign to him. Those traits are similar to what he encountered at Cass Technical High School, where he served as assistant principal and principal, 1988-92.

Cass Tech — like North Farmington High in 1993 — was named an exemplary school by the U.S. Department of Education.

Jones assisted on the application process. He also co-chaired Cass Tech's North Central Accreditation Committee.

He's spent the last three years as the Detroit district's assistant director of Support Staff Personnel. His experiences include serving as a guidance counselor and dean of students at Cooley High, and not surprisingly, he was music director at Redford High and River Rouge High.

After 20 years in education, Jones said he wanted some new experiences. He heard good things about the Farmington Public Schools. He turned down an assistant principal's job in one Oakland County district, opting for Farmington.

He's the second administrator hired with extensive ties to the Detroit district. New East Middle School Principal Eugene Seaborn was a longtime Detroit teacher before moving to Rochester schools.

See ASSISTANT, 4A

## Family seeks prayers for missing OU student

BY BILL COULTART  
STAFF WRITER

Bill Bigger is seeking answers and asking for prayers.

The U.S. Coast Guard commander who lives with his wife Connie in Traverse City came to Farmington Hills to talk with police and the media about his missing daughter Tina.

Missing since Aug. 24, the third-year Oakland University psychology major has been the object of an intense police search that's turned up her car, a lot of contacts and a lot of questions.

Bigger said his 23-year-old daughter typically called one or two times a week from her Farmington Hills apartment. The family began worrying when her boyfriend reported her missing and no one else had heard from her.

Although Farmington Hills police began their investigation immediately, Bigger said the family decided it was time to enlist the public's help in the

search for her.

"We thought it was time," he said Friday. "All organizations have priorities and procedures. I understand that. I have no ill will to any of the police. I think the pace has picked up (in the investigation)."

Bigger said he felt helpless about the situation.

"I failed to protect my daughter," he said.

Tina Bigger, along with professor Algen Harrison and two other OU students, were involved in a research project concerning prostitutes and AIDS. Harrison, one of the last people Tina saw at the campus, refused to talk about the case with reporters.

"I'd say she is the kind of person who can listen," Bigger said. "And her grades show that she was willing to work hard. The national Center for Disease Control was interested in this project. So I think that shows that this was important."

Bigger said he will stay in contact with police as

much as possible. The family is offering its own \$5,000 reward.

"Prayers are probably the most important thing now," he said.

Anyone with information can call the Farmington Hills police at 474-0181.

Inspector Tom Godwin, who oversees investigations, said Tina Bigger was last seen on campus Aug. 23 getting into a car. Four days later her car was found near apartments in the Nine Mile and Tuck area, about four miles from her apartment at the Mulrond Apartments at Drake and Grand River.

"All her personal possessions were still in her apartment and her car was found about four miles away," Godwin said. "This is not her lifestyle. If she'd left, she would have taken something with her. She has not contacted family and friends, which she normally did."

See MISSING, 5A