

Farmington Observer

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IN THE PAPER TODAY

Take this sidewalk: And shovel it! That's the requirement for businesses and residents when it snows. Otherwise, you'll risk getting a ticket. /A3

COMMUNITY LIFE

The three M's: A bookstore on Grand River specializes in the macabre with offerings for all ages. /B1

BUSINESS

Spinning a web: Building your own web page is easy to learn. Let Emory Daniels get you started in O&E Online. /B5

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Music: Folk musicians find sanctuary at the Raven Gallery and Acoustic Cafe located in an old church in Northville. /E1

Art: Printmaking exhibition at the University of Michigan Museum of Art offers a peek at peasant life in France during the late 1700s, 1800s and early 1900s. /E1

RELIGION

Holiday helpers: Hundreds of volunteers from the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit gave several social service workers time to spend with their families Christmas day. /B6

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Sting snares 6 for serving teens



BY WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

The Farmington Hills Police Department's Dec. 28-29 liquor sting came with a twist — no warning this time.

Police used an underage couple, a

man, 19, and a girl, 17, as decoys during the department's 19th sting. Out of the 50 establishments licensed to serve alcohol by the glass, six were cited for serving to an underage customer.

"That's a little higher in the past," said Hills Police Chief Bill Dwyer. "I'm a little disappointed."

The department conducts one liquor enforcement operation in the spring, targeting party stores and other businesses that sell alcohol.

The effort is designed to discourage sales to underage drinkers during proms and graduations, typically a time when violations are more likely.

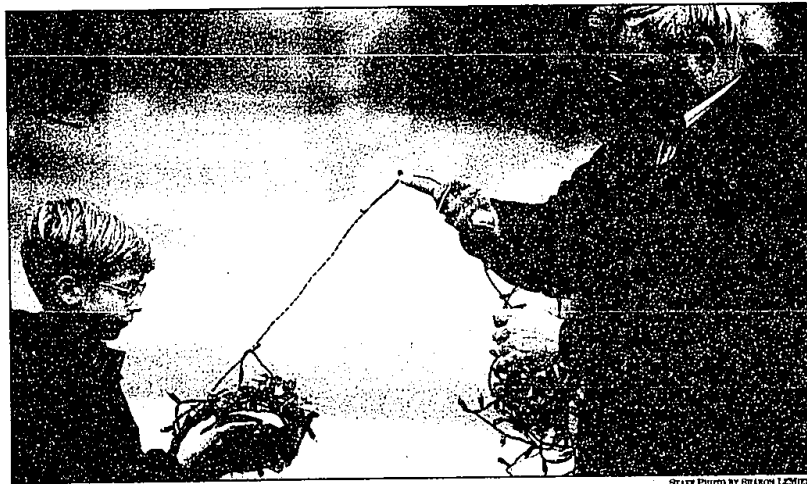
Last week's sting comes during the holidays, when restaurants and

taverns are especially busy, and when high school and college students are more likely to be in their home towns.

Six establishments were cited for serving underage customers: Steamer's Seafood at 30685 12 Mile, the Pony Express Saloon at 31650 Eight Mile, the Copper Creek Inn at 27025 Golf Pointe Blvd., the Sitar of India restaurant at 29550 Grand River, Cafe Cortina at 30716 10 Mile and

See STING, A4

Strings of the season



Yule cleanup: Taking advantage of time off work and some milder weather, Tim Fino of Farmington takes down his Christmas lights with the help of his second youngest of seven children, Kerry, 10. The family placed about 25 strands of tiny white lights on their trees and bushes.

STAFF PHOTO BY SHARON LAMBERT

Raczkowski readies to rock Lansing

BY WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Newly elected state Rep. Andrew Raczkowski will face a different kind of challenge early on in Lansing.

The 37th District Republican, who just celebrated his 28th birthday, will start his term in the minority party since the Democrats gained a four-member majority in November.

But Raczkowski is undaunted by the challenge.

"I've already talked with a lot of the Democrats and I'll think we'll

work well together, especially the freshmen," he said.

Raczkowski, who has praised his predecessor Jan Dolan, spent three days in November at "Representative University" in Lansing, learning the procedures and House rules before he takes office on Jan. 8 after a noon swearing-in ceremony.

■ 'I think you can be in a leadership position for four of the six years.'

Andrew Raczkowski
—state representative

Raczkowski has hired his administrative assistant, Marsha Andrews, who served with former state Rep. John Damiata, and a legislative assistant, Mindy Bowen.

"We plan to stay in constant contact with the constituents," he said. "The staff is a very good, and experienced one."

Raczkowski said he will keep his promise to be accessible. In addition to his home number in Farmington Hills, 476-3525, he will have an 800 number and plans to open a district office.

"We're trying to have that office set up sometime in January," he said.

That office will be paid with either campaign money or from personal income, Raczkowski said.

See RACZKOWSKI, A2

Board tunes in its big bond proposal Saturday morning

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

While many children are watching cartoons and eating cereal, Farmington school board members will chew on how to ask their parents and other adults for more money to pay for computers and remodeled classrooms for them.

A workshop 9 a.m. to noon Saturday is designed to answer any lingering questions board members have about a proposed \$110 million bond issue. They'll officially decide whether to pull the trigger at Tuesday's regular meeting.

Talk is cheap, but not when it comes asking taxpayers to approve millions of dollars, trustees said.

"We're trying to make it as palatable as possible," said Trustee Linda Enberg, who has raised questions about certain aspects of the proposal.

"We're trying to make it as clear as possible," added Trustee Priscilla Brouillette. "The board has to ask the questions the community wants answered."

I'm looking for us on Saturday to ask the questions that need to be answered.

Public response has been minimal to the proposal that would pay for \$90 million in renovations and building improvements and \$20 million in technology.

If approved by voters, the bond would increase taxes by 2.2 mills. That means a person who owns a \$165,000 home can expect to pay an additional \$182 a year in taxes.

The board would likely go for a millage renewal at the same time as the bond issue.

See BOND, A2

Observer's smilin' Rose bloomed here for decades

BY MARY RODRIGUE
STAFF WRITER

She is the Brooklyn accent behind customer calls to the "Fah-mington Observer-vah," the smiling face that greets the daily stream of humanity that walks through our doors in downtown Farmington.

She is Rose Butler, receptionist extraordinaire.

On Jan. 2, 1997, Butler will trade in her editorial skills for the golf links, a dull Michigan winter for greener pastures out west. She's retiring after a 20-year career here.

"I was hired in 1974 by (then editor) Nick Sharkey," said Rose.

At the time, the Farmington Observer office was located in the Plum Hollow office complex in Southfield.

From there, she transferred to the Observer office in Livonia in 1979, where she was the editorial recep-

tionist for the western Wayne county communities of Livonia, Westland, Garden City and Redford. But not for long.

"Steve Barnaby hired me back in Farmington in 1980 and I've been here ever since," she said.

"Ironically, Rose and I were nearly neighbors in Farmington Hills as well as co-workers," recalled Bob Sklar, managing editor of the Economic News-Paper. "But she moved into Farmington just as we were moving to the Hills."

"She's been a joy to work with over the years," he added. "I thought of her as much more than our receptionist during the years I was editor of the Farmington Observer from 1986 to 1990. She was a confident and friend as well. She had a knack for putting a happy spin on even the

See ROSE, A2



STAFF PHOTO BY SHARON LAMBERT

A rose is a Rose: Farmington Observer receptionist Rose Butler retires today, after 22 years with the O&E and two decades in town.

Penny pinchers

Several classes at Beechview Elementary banded together to raise \$350 for Farmington area Meals on Wheels. Students saved their pennies and brought them into school where the copper was counted. Money raised was used for special holiday treats for Meals on Wheels recipients.

Beat it broccoli

Rick's Puppet Theater will present, "No Veggie for Me," 1 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 11, at the Civic Theatre, Grand River, east of Farmington Road. Puppetry kicks off the six-week Winter Fun Series at the Civic, sponsored by the Farmington Downtown Development Authority.

Admission is \$2. Each performance is 45 minutes and is suitable for all age groups, organiz-

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ers say. Other shows planned include: Mary Ellen "The Clown," Jan. 18; Chautauqua Express, Jan. 25; "Sheer Magic & Comedy," Feb. 1; Ellen Clark, Feb. 6; and The Pippin Puppets, Feb. 15. "No Veggie for Me" is co-sponsored by Three Oaks Furniture and the "Sheer Magic Comedy" is sponsored by Clothes Encounters.

Call the DDA hotline 473-7253 for information.

Shiver and shoot

A group of friends and family will gather for the 10th Annual Bill Brown Memorial Winter

Golf Coney Dog Invitational Classic Sunday, Jan. 5. Tee-off is noon, just off the fairway of the 15th hole at Independence. Green in Farmington Hills. Golfers are urged to bring layers of clothing, boots conducive to snow, ice, mud, and goose droppings, and one club, a 7-iron is recommended.

The outing is in honor of Bill Brown, a friend of organizers Len and Mark McCulloch, who died in an automobile accident in August 1987. Brown used to golf in the winter with the brothers McCulloch at Independence Green. The coney dog in the title refers to Brown's love of the chili-laced delicacy, which will be cooked and served Sunday.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 33411 Grand River, Farmington 49335; faxed to 477-9722; or dropped off at the newspaper office.