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Sunday  
June 15, 1997

VOLUME 110 NUMBER 75

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN • 68 PAGES • <http://www.ogonline.com>

SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

# Farmington Observer



## What do you want to ask L. Brooks Patterson?

We have an appointment with Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson on Tuesday, June 17, and want to ask him your questions.

So, if there's anything you want to know about county government, here's your chance to get an answer from the top.

We need your questions by noon, June 17. We'll take your questions by:

- Fax - (248) 644-1314
- Phone - (313) 953-2047
- Email - [obrienm@oconline.com](mailto:obrienm@oconline.com)
- Drop-off - Observer & Eccentric, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009.

Look for Patterson's responses June 21.

## IN THE PAPER TODAY

**Stamp of approval:** Farmington's new postmaster likes her new community. /A3

**Beacon of hope:** The Lighthouse of Oakland County has been leading the needy to a better life for 25 years. /A5

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Christmas in June: Carl Thomas, owner of Sports Image in downtown Farmington, says the jerseys are a big seller right now, with the store's biggest sales ever — including Christmas.

## Cash beneath our Wings

Cup-mania fuels 'phenomenal' sales at town's shops

BY TODD WICKS  
STAFF WRITER

Hockey season may be over for the Detroit Red Wings, but it's still in full swing at local sporting goods stores.

Even before the Wings clinched the Stanley Cup on June 7, area retailers have watched that team's red-and-white merchandise fly off the shelves as if the wings on the logo were real.

"Sales are phenomenal," said Carl Thomas, owner of Sports Image in downtown Farmington. "It's about triple what Christmas is. . . This is the first time we've ordered merchandise in the hundreds."

The store carries everything from the popular (T-shirts and jerseys with players' names lettered on the back) to the unusual (Red Wings dog leashes and rugs). There are also challenges.

"Trying to fit 'Konstantinov' on an adult small jersey is kind of a trip," said Thomas. "You have to do it just right."

Please see WINGS, A4



Big fan: Santino Mateo, 8, of Farmington Hills browses through some shirts while shopping with his mom, Rosann. He was also looking for hockey trading cards. Santino played hockey this year in the Mites Division where his team was called Red Wings.

## Attorney: Bad times, not crimes fed charges

The owner of a failed Farmington antique store that sparked more than 80 police complaints faced charges Wednesday.

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

The attorney for the owner of a failed Farmington antique store said his client is being made a scapegoat.

Donald Stuart Sivyer, 44, who operated Hickory Hill Antiques on Grand River, was arraigned on four felony counts of embezzlement of more than \$100 before 47th District Court Judge Fred Harris Wednesday. A plea of not guilty was entered. Preliminary exam is set for 8:30 a.m. Monday, June 23.

The charges stem from separate cases taken out of more than 80 police complaints from disgruntled customers and dealers, who said they left helioma — some worth thousands of dollars — to be sold on consignment or repaired at Hickory Hill but never received their money or items back.

Many complaints were made after the store closed in April. Sivyer left in March and turned

Please see CHARGES, A2

## Firm sues Hills for not rezoning land

BY TODD WICKS  
STAFF WRITER

A Farmington Hills company is suing the city over its refusal of a proposed Kroger store at Nine Mile and Haggerty roads.

The Selective Group, owners of a 17-acre site near that intersection, recently filed the lawsuit in response to two rejections from the city in its attempt to build a 63,000-square-foot Kroger store, which then would act as an anchor for a 126,000-square-foot shopping center. Kroger is not a party to the suit.

"The owners filed a suit challenging the office zoning of the property, saying basically that was not reasonable," said Farmington Hills City At-

Please see LAWSUIT, A4

## Towns combine their efforts on youth program

BY TODD WICKS  
STAFF WRITER

According to Nancy Bates, the borders separating Farmington and Farmington Hills should blur when it comes to area kids.

As Hills mayor in 1993, Bates created the Commission on Children, Youth and Families to provide recreational programs for middle schoolers. These programs would provide activities during the mischief-prone hours between when school lets out and parents return home from work.

Now, four years later, Bates is a member of the Hills city council that unanimously approved making the commission a joint venture with the city of Farmington at its meeting Monday night.

"When we started (the commission), we didn't want to exclude kids or sort kids out," said Bates. "We didn't want to tell someone, 'You can't be here because you live on the wrong side of 11 Mile.'"

The two cities already share commissions on aging and the arts, so this step was a natural one, she said.

"From the beginning, it's been very collaborative. We have a wonderful relationship with Farmington, and I'm sure we'll find more ways to share."

City leaders and educators have hailed the youth program for preventing kids from getting involved in criminal activities and for providing healthy recreational and social opportunities. The program has sites at the William Costick Activities Center, the Farmington Family YMCA, the ice arena at Founders Sports Park, and a recently-opened one at Warner High School.

The commission is currently funded by a \$385,000 three-year grant that Farmington Hills obtained and matched with \$200,000 from parks and recreation millage funds. However, that grant money is expected to lapse at the end of 1998.

In anticipation, the Farmington Hills Foundation for Children, Youth and Families was created with the goal of collecting enough money before that date to provide an endowment for the youth program after the grant money runs out. The city would still provide its share of funding through the parks and recreation millage.

The foundation's biggest moneymaker is the annual Cornucopia Ball, which has taken place on a November Saturday in Farmington Hills for the past two years.

Please see YOUTH, A4

## Dad's day Kids appreciate their fathers

BY MARY RODRIGUE  
STAFF WRITER

It's not just little girls hearts that belong to daddy. Boys are rather fond of dear old dad, too.

Joe Schiavi, 11, of Farmington Hills is the winner of the Farmington Observer's essay contest for his 100-word piece on "Why My Dad is the Best Dad."

Joe, who just finished fifth grade at Highmeadow Elementary, wins a \$50 gift certificate to the Botsford Inn of Farmington Hills. Here is his essay:

"Swish, my dad helps me shoot my first jump shot when I was 4. He helped me build my first Lego set when I was missing pieces. I only have 100 words to describe how special my dad is to me, I couldn't describe how great he is in 1,000,000 words."

"On top of teaching me, cooking gourmet meals and caring for me, my dad is very involved in my after school sports. He coached my football team two seasons

and coached my soccer team about eight years. I wrote this paper for one reason, to reward my dad for being the best."

Joe's mom, Sue Schiavi, said she cried when she read his essay. Joe is the couple's only child.

Another very heartfelt essay came from Kristen Stuck, 7, of Farmington Hills. She wrote: "My dad is special because he plays with me a lot and he goes fishing with me. My dad took me to the daddy daughter dance even though his legs were hurt and he couldn't dance very well and he takes me out for dinner. He lets our friends come over a lot. He lets me help him a lot and we watch TV together."

Among the more reflective essays were those by Stacey Schroeder and Joey Stuck, both 11-year-old Farmington Hills residents.

Stacey wrote: "I think my dad is the best dad because he has given me the best

Please see DAD, A2



Sure shot: Joe Schiavi and his dad, Tom, shoot hoops in the driveway, a memory that Joe wrote about in part of his winning Father's Day contest entry.

### First one in

Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi filed petitions Tuesday seeking re-election as mayor of Farmington Hills. Voters will fill the job on Nov. 4.

Vagnozzi said he has always believed candidates should let voters know their intentions early, rather than be coy or secretive. "I hope the early filer catches the votes," Vagnozzi quipped.

### Awash with generosity

Mark and Holly Owen of Colonial Car Wash in Farmington donated 100 coupons for free car washes to Farmington police, which in turn, will pass them out to motorists wearing their seat belts July 3-5.

"It should be a boost to encourage people to wear their seat belts," said Michael Wiggins, Farmington Public Safety deputy director.

## FARMINGTON FOCUS

### More safety rewards

The Farmington Hills Police Department just recently began its Helmet Safety Incentive Program. Uniformed police officers will issue approximately 1,000 coupons to children wearing helmets while rollerblading, skateboarding or biking.

The coupons are donated by local merchants and redeemable for various food items such as ice cream, kid's meals, French fries and other fun treats.

The program was developed to promote helmet use, encourage safety and reduce injuries. It is intended to supplement existing community

policing programs, according to Chief William Dwyer.

Merchants that helped to implement this program were The Silver Dairy, 32323 Grand River; McDonalds, 24020 Orchard Lake; TCBY, 30068 Grand River; Burger King, 29206 Orchard Lake; Mr. Pita, 28853 Orchard Lake; and Southland Corporation, 7-Eleven Stores.

The program is fun for officers who "don't often get to give out tickets that encourage a smile," Dwyer said.

Additional merchants who wish to participate in the program can call the Farmington Hills Police Department Crime Prevention Section at (248) 473-9640.