

Farmington Observer

HomeTown COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK
Putting you in touch with your world

Thursday
January 13, 2000

Serving Farmington and Farmington Hills for 113 years

VOLUME 113 NUMBER 32

Farmington, Michigan • 86 PAGES • <http://observer.cenrtr.com>

SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

© 2000 HomeTown Communications Network, Inc.

IN THE PAPER TODAY

Hurt: Two men were injured Tuesday night in an accident on Orchard Lake Road in Farmington. /A2

Tests: A Farmington man charged in his sister's death will undergo psychiatric testing. /A2

Holidays: The Farmington DDA will have a new program for the winter holidays this year. /A8

OPINION

Thoughtful: Martin Luther King's birthday Monday should give us pause to consider our attitudes. /A14

COMMUNITY LIFE

On board: The new Farmington area cultural arts coordinator has a busy agenda for 2000. /B1

New direction: Suzanne Paul, longtime Farmington Unitarian Church minister, has retired and is taking on several new roles. /B1

INDEX

□ At Home	D
□ Classified Index	C4
Autos	H10
Home & Service Guide	H9
Jobs	H2
Real Estate	C4
Rentals	G0
■ Community Life	B1
■ Crossword	G0
■ Entertainment	E1
■ Obituaries	A12
■ Opinions	A14-15
■ Sports	C1

Don't feed the Canada geese

Some Farmington Hills residents don't want the geese and other birds fed, others think nothing of it. But as of next month, you will violate a city ordinance if you feed geese, pigeons or gulls.

BY JONI HUBBARD
STAFF WRITER
jhubbard@oe.homecomm.net

According to Farmington Hills naturalist Joe Derek, the average Canada goose poops about 25 times a day.

No wonder that Hills City Council members have struggled with the daunting task of deciding how much is too much bird feeding, in a community where thousands of people enjoy the seemingly innocuous hobby.

When they first proposed an ordinance, based on complaints from several neighborhoods, officials found themselves bombarded with responses from avian aficionados.

"While the sentiments and fundamen-

mentals of such an issue are easily understood," wrote Gary Porhola, "the foundation on which this particular proposal was originated is not meritorious of such a harsh law - one that will surely have a negative impact on many families, including my own."

Describing himself as the "evil duck feeder" in the Pinos of Farmington Hills, Porhola told officials Monday that not all residents of his subdivision support a proposed ordinance to restrict feeding pigeons, ducks, gulls and Canada geese within the city. He went to 16 homes and got 13 signatures from neighbors who opposed it.

"Some didn't even know about the

Please see **GEESSE**, A7



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BARBER

Nimble: Liz Rosenfeld and Neil Patel play bass in the high school "Fiddlin' Orchestra during Saturday's "Day for Strings" at North Farmington High School.

Strings Giving a day for it

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
tsmith@oe.homecomm.net

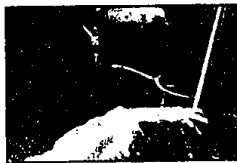
Young musicians and seasoned professionals again rubbed elbows during Saturday's "Day for Strings" program at North Farmington High School.

Mixing it up musically were 473 students from throughout the Farmington district, members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Michigan Opera Theatre as well as other professional musicians who live in the area. Participating students attend grades 5-12, said Paul Barber, music coordinator for Farmington Public Schools.

Workshops during the first part of the day, in the high school's new music performance wing, provided students a chance to learn about their particular instrument from accomplished professionals.

Capping off "Day for Strings" was a mid-afternoon performance before an audience estimated by Barber at 1,000.

"All of the (music) faculty and guest musicians also formed a chamber group and played," said Barber. "That's so the kids can see there's a lifelong benefit, that they can continue playing after school."



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BARBER

Perform: Elise Lladis fiddles along with the High School "Fiddlin' Orchestra.

Barber emphasized that witnessing growth potential is one benefit of the program. For example, a fifth grader could watch how an older student might perform on an instrument.

"All the way up to (high school seniors) they get a glimpse of the future and motivation to stay in the program because good things happen," Barber said.

Among those helping out at the eighth annual event was Larry Hutchinsan of Farmington Hills, a

Please see **STRINGS**, A10



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BARBER

Celebrate: Bright lights, an auction, a vintage auto, 1940s haute couture and movie prices, and plenty to eat, marked the Grand Re-Opening of the Civic Theatre.

Nostalgia warms Civic Re-Opening

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
tsmith@oe.homecomm.net

For more on the Civic, please turn to pages A3, C8

During an evening that was as fun and entertaining as it was nostalgic, swirling cigarette smoke was the only thing missing from Saturday's "Grand Re-Opening" of the Civic Theatre.

Otherwise, it indeed seemed as though 1940 - a time when everybody smoked in public and was proud of it - had made a glorious return.

Saturday night's gala was the culminating event of weekend-long festivities, which also included a live auction earlier Saturday and Sunday. Many party-goers, some wearing vintage attire from that decade, enthusiastically helped usher in the new era of the Civic, which was purchased last summer by the Farmington City Council and subsequently renovated and modernized.

Without a doubt, the best costume belonged to Nancy Leonard of the Farmington Historical Commission, who portrayed Charlie Chaplin. And quips and sharp-witted comments accompanied the pill box hats, slicked back hair and wing tips.

"A fourth term for F D R," said one of 208 people who attended the gala, a reference to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the American president in office when the Civic originally opened in 1940. "We're going for it."

The evening's sold-out festivities began with a catered pre-reception next door at Legato, a salon owned by Mike and Kelley Nowak.

"We share a wall with the Civic," said Mike Nowak. "It made way too much sense" to open up the salon for the reception.

Kelley Nowak added that she and her husband strive to "help out the community. One of our goals is to see Farmington come alive, and it is."

Civic leaders from Farmington and Farmington Hills and other guests mingled, without cigarette smoke, of course, while awaiting the main attraction.

Y2K wordplay

Soon, they walked over to the theater, sneaked a peek at the just-unveiled official wall mural in the lobby and proceeded into the completely revamped lower auditori-

'Safe Schools' policy gives emergency steps

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
tsmith@oe.homecomm.net

One of the "lessons of Littleton," as Farmington schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield put it, was an ineffective means of communicating a school crisis to the general community. That kind of a problem isn't entirely avoidable. But chances of it happening now are reduced thanks to a newly adopted "Safe Schools and Crisis Management" policy, which the school board approved Tuesday night.

The policy includes a media communications plan "to let people know" about any emergency that threatens the safety of students and school employees, including an armed intruder, such as what occurred last April at Columbine High School.

The policy includes a media communications plan 'to let people know' about any emergency that threatens the safety of students and school employees.

But Maxfield said it also includes "very specific" steps about what actions school personnel must take during emergencies (such as evacuations), as well as preventive measures such as making sure all visitors wear name tags and locking all but primary school entrances.

Please see **SAFE**, A11

Police search for suspect mistakenly released

BY JONI HUBBARD
STAFF WRITER
jhubbard@oe.homecomm.net

Farmington Hills police launched a manhunt Wednesday after the accidental release of a suspect Chief William Dwyer described as a "violent criminal."

Authorities say he is one of two men who held a motel clerk at gunpoint during a New Year's Eve robbery at a Farmington Hills motel and may be responsible for a string of similar thefts that occurred between Dec. 30 and Jan. 1.

Dwyer said South Oakland Narcotics Intelligence Consortium (SONIC) officers, assisted by uniformed officers from the Detroit Police Department's Second Precinct, arrested the 27-year-old Detroit man late Tuesday afternoon. He was scheduled to be arraigned Wednesday, along with a second suspect, a 26-year-old Detroit man.

"One of the detectives went back to release a prisoner originally being

Please see **SEARCH**, A11

