

## Streak ends with robbery

BY JONI HUBBED

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A record five-month streak without a single armed robbery in Farmington Hills ended Wednesday night, at McDonald's on Grand River and Middlebelt.

Police Chief Bill Dwyer said two black males wearing masks ran into the restaurant at 11:06 p.m., brandishing shotguns. They forced three employees to the floor.

One was kicked several times, while the manager was forced to surrender money from the registers and the safe, Dwyer said. The victim refused medical treatment.

As officers arrived, witnesses saw the suspects running into a wooded

Please see ROBBERY, A5

## DEAR READERS:

On Thursday, June 1, a new At Home section will debut in your Farmington Observer. The new section is a broadsheet like the other sections in your HomeTown Observer. This means more local news about gardening, home decorating, home improvement and landscaping. Many features that our readers look forward to each week such as "The Appliance Doctor" and "Marketplace" continue.

At Home is designed for people who enjoy and care for their home, who like to entertain friends and family and who have hobbies such as gardening, cooking, home electronics, photography and decorating. The mission of At Home - with its beautiful color cover photographs and inviting design - is to help our readers enjoy the good life in their hometown.

Look for the redesigned At Home in the Thursday, June 1, issue of your HomeTown Observer and let me know what you think. I welcome your comments and your suggestions.

I can be reached at (734) 953-2100 or by e-mail at srosiek@oe.hometown.net.

Sincerely,

*Susan Rosiek*  
Susan Rosiek  
Publisher

## HomeTown Classifieds WORK!

"We're very pleased with the results from our Observer & Eccentric ad. We tried advertising with two other publications and we weren't happy. We're going to continue to use the O&E."

—Diane L.  
Livonia

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## Students can expect longer hours

■ To meet state requirements, Farmington Public Schools officials recently announced they will increase instructional hours in the next academic year by 51 hours. The hours must be added to continue to qualify for state aid without penalty.

BY TIM SMITH  
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In the fall, Nancy Gaughan's children will go to school a few minutes sooner and end their classes slightly

later than in 1999-2000.

And while the longer educational day for students in Farmington Public Schools might not be all that overwhelming, when taken at face value parents across the district such as

Gaughan know the issue isn't all that cut and dry.

"Eight minutes in the morning and eight minutes in the afternoon doesn't seem like much to me," Gaughan said. "But I can see both sides of the coin."

Farmington schools recently announced that the district will increase total instructional time by 51 hours, to meet state requirements. The increase, as mandated by the Michigan Department of Education Revised

■ See Thursday's paper for building-by-building school hour comparisons

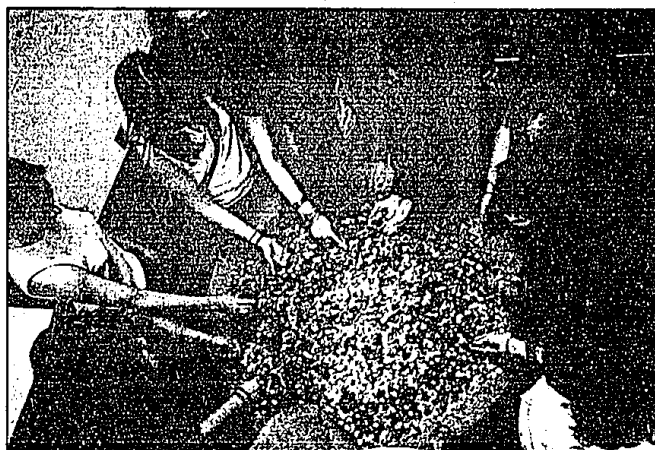
School Code, must be implemented in order to qualify for state aid without a penalty.

Statewide, the minimum number of instruction hours will increase next

Please see HOURS, A5



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BAKER  
Deep: The pennies (above) cover a table several inches deep. At right, students count the approximately 62,000 pennies.



## Kids make 'cents' out of Vietnam

BY TIM SMITH  
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To most people, 59,000 is just a number. But Farmington High School students are looking at that number in a much different way now than they might have before starting a history class unit about the Vietnam War in March.

Students in three U.S. history classes taught by Kim Smith discovered that about 59,000 American men

and women died during the Vietnam conflict. One of those was 1967 Farmington High School graduate Roy Kenneth "Kenny" Williams Jr., who died when the helicopter he was piloting was shot down in June 1969. The memory of Kenny and other area Vietnam veterans will be honored during a brief ceremony following Monday's annual Memorial Day Parade in Farmington. During the parade, which starts at 10 a.m., the spotlight will be on the 50th anniversary of the Korean War.

So, to get a better understanding about just how large a number 59,000 is, the FHS students set out to collect one penny for each casualty.

They went out to 17 Farmington businesses and placed buckets and jars, asking for customers to drop in their pennies. The plea, led by sophomore Kate Williams (no relation to Kenny Williams) and Elizabeth Nellums, worked beyond expectations. On Wednesday morning, one large table in the mediated classroom was

covered with a blanket of shiny copper.

And, to cap off a very successful project - in which the actual penny count reached approximately 62,000 - students and Smith presented a check to Mike Harris, of the Paralyzed Veterans of America-Michigan Chapter.

Making it seem real

"I've never seen this before," said

Please see PENNIES, A5

## Finding its way



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BAKER  
Lost: This opossum was photographed by the Village Mall at Grand River and Farmington roads last week. Public safety officers were called to help the little guy or gal find its way home.

## Pedophile investigation becomes a daunting task

BY JONI HUBBED  
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Detective Rose Mackie rifled through a box of videotapes perched near her desk in the Farmington Hills Police Department.

They represent only part of the evidence against Jim Thompson, who was sentenced last month to a year in the Oakland County Jail and is now a registered sex offender, after pleading "no contest" to charges that he fondled two brothers in Farmington Hills. Mackie has already seen more than 200 of the 700 tapes police seized when they raided Thompson's Southfield home.

"Somebody's gotta do it," she said wearily as she hit the stop button on yet another professional wrestling match.

From the time she got the case - on Valentine's Day - until mid-April, Mackie has poured hundreds of hours into an investigation of a man who admits he's been obsessed for the past 35 years with young boys. Mackie said

Thompson, formerly a sports statistician and wrestling columnist for The Detroit News, is a "preferential pedophile," choosing his victims from a type and age range of his liking.

Thompson's attorney, Thomas Warshaw, has repeatedly refused to talk to the press about his client or the investigation.

## Investigation

Based on the evidence and his own admissions, Thompson focused his attention on young men between the ages of 13 and 21, paying them to do everything from posing for photos to covering him with syrup and cornflakes.

Along with the videos, Mackie and other detectives have had to sift through more than 10,000 cassette tapes, over a thousand names on a computer data base, thousands of photographs and reams of written records scrupulously kept in Thompson's apartment, which authorities have described

Please see INVESTIGATE, A5

## 10 students suspended for misbehaving on trip

BY TIM SMITH  
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Whether Farmington school district students are participating on a field trip in Canton or California, the same rules governing their behavior apply, remind school officials.

A group of eighth graders from O.E. Duncel Middle School prompted that reminder, with 10 receiving one-day

■ 'What we expect at school is what we expect of students if they go to Greenfield Village, Toronto or just across the street.'

Pam O'Malley  
—Duncel principal

suspensions for violating the district student code of conduct. They engaged in unspecified unruly behavior on a

bus, while on their recent field trip to Toronto, Ontario.

Duncel Principal Pam O'Malley and

James Myers, the district's executive director for K-12 school and student services, emphasized that the same rules that apply to student behavior in school buildings also extend to school-sponsored field trips.

"What we expect at school is what we expect of students if they go to Greenfield Village, Toronto or just across the street," O'Malley said Wednesday.

Please see SUSPENSE, A4