

Families on Medicaid get free checkup, 1B



Regional track, 1D

Awards presented for Law Day, 5B

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Farmington FOCUS

If you have a news item or an idea for a feature story or an action picture with a Farmington-area connection, send a note to our downtown office at 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

MEMORIAL Day will mean several closings. Both the Farmington and Farmington Hills city halls will be closed Monday, May 28. Trash collection will be one day later than usual next week. The Farmington Community Library will be closed Saturday through Monday. Both the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce and the Farmington Observer will be closed Monday. All banks and savings and loan associations will be closed Monday as well. Regular hours will resume for all Tuesday, May 27.

WILLING to serve. Farmington City Council made several appointments Monday night. Incumbents William Burke, William Ingalls and Harry Lapham Jr. will each serve a three-year term on the Farmington Planning Commission. Incumbents Thomas Carr, John Washburn and Councilman Alton Bennett will each serve a three-year term on the Board of Zoning Appeals. Bennett will serve as an alternate for three years or until his council term ends. Incumbents Nellie Young and Geraldine Dielenhelm will each serve a three-year term on the Farmington Area Commission on Aging. Incumbent Ellen Wallis will serve a three-year term on the Farmington Area Arts Commission. Incumbent William Ingalls will serve a three-year term on the Farmington Building Authority. Incumbent Carol Kurth, Elizabeth Meredith and Rick Hatfield will each serve a two-year term on the Farmington Beautification Committee.

DRUG screening of employees and job applicants is the topic of a new brochure published by Metric Medical Labs, Southfield. Entitled "Drug Screening: Questions and Answers," the brochure covers screening methods, test accuracy, detectable drugs and drug abuse. It focuses on questions commonly asked by employers considering a drug screening program. For a free copy, write Metric Medical Labs, 21705 Evergreen, Southfield 48075.

REMINDER: Next week, June 1-7, is National Safe Boating Week. Capsize is a major cause of boating fatalities. So when in a small boat, keep the lead light and evenly distributed, reminds the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

FOOTNOTES: One year ago this week — A Michigan Department of Transportation study of possible interchanges off the I-96 corridor must be completed before Farmington Hills officials can consider moving forward with a proposed financing scheme for improvements along the 12 Mile Road office strip.

Park land — focal point of Hills election

By Joanno Maliszewski
staff writer

"Say Yes to Parks." That's the name of a relatively new committee formed to promote passage of a special 0.5-mill levy for five years to pay for development of parks and recreation facilities in Farmington Hills.

Mayors exchange hot seats

By Joanno Maliszewski
staff writer

If officials in Rochester Hills and Farmington Hills have their way, the annual Mayor's Exchange program has served as only the start of a longlasting relationship between the two cities.

"I made a promise with (Rochester Hills Mayor) Billie (Ireland) that we will get back together probably in July," Farmington Hills Mayor George Alkateeb said. "It (exchange) is probably the best choice we have ever made."

Ireland expressed similar sentiments about her city's exchange with Farmington Hills. "We were extremely pleased that Mayor's Exchange went as it did. We really felt comfortable with each other. There was a good exchange of information."

Similarities between the two growing cities served as the basis for Rochester Hills and Farmington Hills officials to exchange with each other in this year's Mayor's Exchange program.

"The two communities are closely aligned in terms of growth and problems," Farmington Hills City Manager William Costick said. "This trading of information helps build ideas."

AND FOR the first time in its history of participating in the Greater Michigan Foundation-sponsored exchange program, Farmington Hills staff was also involved. Both Alkateeb and Ireland lauded the involvement of city staff in the exchange program.

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and promote the millage, which is expected to yield in excess of \$3 million over five years for parks and recreation.

"It's an effort to communicate to residents what the 0.5 mill means," said Dennis Fitzgerald, chairman of the promotion committee and the Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Commission. Committee members — some are members of the parks and recreation commission — also are promoting the city's master parks and recreation plan, adopted in March by the Farmington Hills City Council. The master plan includes development plans for the 212-acre Heritage Park on the west side of Farmington Road, north of 10 Mile.

THE PLAN offers a comprehensive review of the area's existing recreation services and facilities, plus an assessment of recreational opportunities and deficiencies. A \$7 million list of improvements proposed over the next five years completes the plan.

A five-year action plan included in the master plan lists 21 proposed projects an improvement for parks and recreation. The first nine are considered priority projects — totaling approximately \$3 million — that would be started if voters approve the special levy.

"I can't imagine a community that was so responsive to buying the (Heritage Park) property and being so involved in what to do with it, that they wouldn't support this," Fitzgerald said.

Committee members sent letters in early May to parks and recreation backers asking for their support either financially — to help pay for brochures and pamphlets — or their time in working on the parks campaign.

"As you may know, Farmington Hills has at best, meager existing park facilities. We use school grounds, open fields and common areas as our park system. In 1985, the city of Farmington Hills acquired the Spicer property, 212 acres of prime land, and 15 acres near 13 Mile and Farmington roads for park development," the letter stated.

WORK AT both sites is included in a list of five proposed projects (the first five of the nine priority items in the plan) that "should be initiated immediately so the quality of recreation facilities does not decline," according to the letter.

The first five projects include de-



Matt Dix (left), 9, sets up a rocket model of from club co-leader George Sertic. Both are the Space Shuttle Columbia, with a little help from Farmington.

Model rockets light up skies

Ten solid fuel model rockets were launched Saturday during a Larikable Elementary Young Astronauts Club field trip at Our Lady of Sorrows Athletic Field, Farmington.

About 25 youngsters ages 7-11 took part in the launch, during which rockets soared 1,000 feet into the air and parachuted to earth. The largest was the five-foot-long Thunder Roc.

"The project was intended for kids to not only build rockets, but fly them," said George Sertic, who, with his wife, Elizabeth, leads the PTA-sponsored club.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration furnishes materials and recommends projects.

"Our purpose? To teach children about the space program and the future of space," Sertic said.



Unlike other youngsters who used club-furnished rockets, Charity Albright, 9, of Farmington Hills sets up her own rocket engine, readying it for launch.



Robert Boams, 9, of Farmington Hills loads a rocket engine, readying it for launch.

Man headed to trial in woman's death

By Casey Hane
staff writer

Accused killer John Allen Vermeulen will not be divorced from his wife of 21 years when he married Urime "Rene" Lewis last November in Las Vegas, according to testimony this week in 47th District Court in Farmington.

Vermeulen is charged in Lewis' fatal shooting at the Mulrow Apartments and Townhouses in Farmington Hills on Dec. 26, 1985.

The defendant's 17-year-old son, subpoenaed to testify for the prosecution, told the court his parents were not divorced until Feb. 7, 1986, and his father had visited the family's Dearborn Heights home on Christmas Eve night.

The defendant told his son that Lewis had left him and invited the son and now ex-wife to move to his Farmington Hills apartment, the son testified. Vermeulen also has a son, 18, and a daughter, 21, from his first marriage.

The defendant's ex-wife, Sharon Vermeulen of Dearborn Heights, also testified to similar facts. Following a plea from court-appointed defense attorney David Wilson, Dis-

trict Judge Michael Hand disallowed any testimony of husband/wife communication under a state statute protecting such testimony.

AFTER THE three-day preliminary examination in district court, Hand ordered Vermeulen, a 38-year-old Farmington Hills resident, to stand trial for Lewis' Dec. 26 murder.

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Memorial Day events slated

All four local high school marching bands will participate in the annual Memorial Day parade Monday, May 26.

The Clarenceville band will be joined by tunesmiths from Harrison, North Farmington and Farmington senior high.

The lead band in this year's parade, Farmington High, recently returned from a triumphant trip to Washington, D.C., where it represented Michigan in the National Festival of Music competition. Competing in Division A, the Falcons were

rated excellent in their performance and finished fourth.

The parade begins at 10 a.m. at the Farmington Plaza on Grand River, just west of Orchard Lake Road. Participants may meet at 8:30 a.m. for coffee and doughnuts at the Grove-Walker Post prior to lineup.

THE AIR Force will be the honored branch of service. It will be joined by other armed forces units, veterans organization groups and civilian groups.

The Farmington Area Veterans Club will sponsor the parade. This committee is comprised of representatives of the three local veterans service organizations.

Memorial services to pay respect to the war dead will follow the parade at the downtown monument, just west of Farmington Road.

Following memorial services, all may attend an open house for refreshments at the VFW Post 2269, 23414 Orchard Lake.

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