

Posh spa focus
is on good health, 1B



Grid coach
lauded, 1D

Community Corner —
our newest feature, 4A

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Truck-car crash leaves 3 hurt

By Bob Sklar
staff writer

Three family members were hospitalized when their car was broadsided by an 18-wheeler that apparently ran a red light in Farmington Hills Tuesday, police said.

On Wednesday, the driver of the car, Mary Ann Bommarito, 40, of Farmington, was listed in stable condition in the intensive care unit at Oakwood Hospital, Dearborn, where her husband, James, is a staff physi-

cian. She manages his Dearborn medical office.

"She suffered three fractured ribs, which resulted in overnight surgery for a ruptured spleen and a collapsed lung," said Dr. Bommarito, an allergist and immunologist.

Their 18-year-old daughter, Mara, a back-seat passenger, was listed in stable condition in the intensive care unit at Botsford General Hospital, Farmington Hills. She's a freshman aerospace engineering major at the University of Michigan.

"She suffered a closed head injury but is making very good progress," Dr. Bommarito said.

Mary Ann's mother, Charlotte Eisbrenner, 80, of Livonia, a front-seat passenger, was listed in guarded condition at Botsford. She also suffered a head injury.

The truck driver, Marcus A. White, 27, of Roseville, wasn't hurt. He was released pending completion of the police investigation.

"THE PROGNOSIS is guardedly

optimistic for everybody," Dr. Bommarito said.

He complimented everyone involved in the rescue — Community EMS, Farmington Hills police and firefighters, the emergency room staffs.

He said the hospital care was "just outstanding. And I don't think it was medical camaraderie. It was true concern for injured people. I'm truly in debt, knowing how well all three were taken care of."

Three witnesses told police a semi-

tractor-trailer was northbound on Orchard Lake Road at 1:15 p.m. Tuesday when it went through a red light and hit a 1987 Oldsmobile Cutlass, westbound on Freedom Road, on the driver's side. The car entered the intersection on a green light. The road was dry, police said.

The truck driver was wearing a seat belt. It was not immediately known if the car's occupants were. Drugs or alcohol were not factors in

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farmington FOCUS

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QUIET on the road. Police emphasized road patrol and kept a watchful eye on traffic but produced just two drunk-driving arrests in Farmington Hills and none in Farmington on New Year's Eve.

The count in Farmington Hills was similar to that of any weekend night. Sgt. Dennis Green said, even though bars got to stay open until 4 a.m., two hours longer than usual.

Slippery roads, a Sunday night holiday, MADD-arranged rides for revelers who had too much to drink, drink-limiting restaurants and party hosts, and increased public concern about drinking and driving all played a part.

BACK on board. Kathleen Furlong was re-elected to a two-year term on the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan board of trustees. She's Kidney Center coordinator at Mt. Carmel Mercy Hospital, Detroit.

QUOTE of the week

Hopefully, we can help them if they have any self-esteem left. Some of them have been raped repeatedly and told they are garbage.

— Darlene Feldman, the Blanket Lady, talking about the women she hopes to help in her new Cass Corridor shelter, 1A.



Sonja Hall, 25 and homeless, stands in line at the Greyhound bus terminal on Lafayette in downtown Detroit with Darlene Feldman, the Farmington Hills-based Blanket Lady. Feldman wrote a check for Hall's bus ticket to Lansing.

SHARON LEMIEUX/staff photographer

New shelter to aid women, children

By Susan Buck
staff writer

Detroit Cover-Up's Learning Center for Homeless Women and Children, the Blanket Lady's Place, is concrete proof of Darlene Feldman's commitment to the poor.

The non-profit center, at 3752 Cass in Detroit's Cass Corridor, is just a shell now. But in about a month, it will be a hub where the hands of volunteers will spread out like tentacles to tackle the femin-

ization of poverty. Feldman, a Farmington Hills single mother of two, who has earned her title of the Blanket Lady in metro Detroit, is taking her hands-on crusade one step further by transforming a rundown former car dealership into a daytime activity center for women and children.

"It will not be a flophouse. 'Kids are my passion,' said Feldman, 39. "That's where I feel there is a need. Women and chil-

dren have to be lifted out of poverty. Women's needs are different. Almost every shelter is exclusively for men. There's a lot of harassment and sexual abuse.

"It will not be a warming place. This is an activity program with job training, substance abuse guidance and motivational speakers."

THE PROGRAM is built on a prototype of a similar center called Dignity House in Philadelphia. Feldman stresses that women

need good jobs and affordable housing. They also need an address and telephone number they can put on job applications and child care while they are job hunting.

"Hopefully, we can help them if they have any self-esteem left," she said. "Some of them have been raped repeatedly and told they are garbage."

Feldman wants to prevent people from being sucked into the

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Noise trial delayed

Board member resigns, 3A
Related opinion, 6A

By Joanne Mollizowski
staff writer

Community Center of Farmington-Farmington Hills executive director Dorothy Pfaff's scheduled trial on a disturbing the peace complaint will be delayed because board member and attorney John Donohue feels it's a conflict of interest to represent her.

Donohue is special counsel to the city of Farmington Hills in its legal battle with Boys Republic, a temporary home for delinquent boys on Nine Mile, between Middlebelt and Inkster.

"I didn't think it appropriate that I am special counsel for the city on the one hand and defense attorney for a person the city is prosecuting on the other," said Donohue, Farmington city attorney. "It's not a direct conflict of interest. But it is apparent."

Pfaff's trial on the ordinance violation allegation was scheduled for today but has been postponed to allow the center's new attorney, William Brukoff of Southfield, time to prepare.

"He (Donohue) has spoken with me about the case. But I haven't really had a chance to work on the case. I don't have the file yet," Brukoff said.

DONOHUE REPRESENTED Pfaff when she was first cited for disturbing the peace Aug. 23. He also

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Holiday weather causes traffic, power problems

By Joanne Mollizowski
staff writer

Don't let the warming temperatures of the last few days fog your memory. The New Year's holiday weekend bag of freezing rain, dropping temperatures and snow showers kept fear in the hearts of motorists — and kept Farmington and Farmington Hills police and public works crews busy.

"It was an unusual weekend because we had a little of everything," Farmington Hills public works director Dan Rooney said. "Despite the blast of winter water-

day and Sunday, severe injuries and damage didn't result. Slipping and sliding, fender-benders and power outages were the weekend fare.

Between 9:30 p.m. Saturday and 12 a.m. Monday, Detroit Edison crews worked non-stop to restore electrical power to 20,000 households and businesses. Just how much of Farmington and Farmington Hills were without power is unknown.

"It would be kind of hard for me to sit down and go through the figures," said Benjamin Tallero, Edison Oakland division's director of sales

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Dave Trowbridge (left) of Farmington Hills prepares to videotape his friend, James Arnold of Detroit, during a trip down the steepest hill at Shiawassee and Farmington Road Tuesday. Snow and freezing rain last weekend provided a slick sliding surface.

RANDY BORST/staff photographer

New Year's celebrant crashes party with shotgun

No one was hurt when an intoxicated man who said he wanted to "get even" for being forced to leave a New Year's party on Pearl returned two hours later and fired a shotgun blast from the front yard, Farmington Hills police said.

Police found the spent birdshot shell on the driveway, near his pickup. The 12-gauge shotgun was found behind the driver's seat with a

live round in the chamber. Two other live rounds were found in the truck. Witnesses gave this account to police:

At 5 a.m. Monday, an intoxicated man arrived at the party. When he got into an argument, he was asked to leave. He did so reluctantly.

At 6:45 a.m., he returned, walked inside

without permission and said he was going to "get even." Party-goers then heard a shotgun blast from the front yard.

Two teenagers rushed outside. They saw the man holding a shotgun. They managed to calm him and get him to put the gun back into the truck. He never pointed the gun at them.

Robert Paul Laurin, 23, of Farmington Hills

faces charges of possessing a loaded firearm in or upon a vehicle in a non-game area, a two-year misdemeanor; reckless use of a firearm, a 90-day misdemeanor; and illegal entry, a 90-day misdemeanor.

He pleaded not guilty at his arraignment Tuesday before Magistrate James Brady of Farmington. Bond was set at \$2,500.

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