

You can eat away on your birthday, 6D



Marlins try for title, 1C

Sandwich ideas for bag lunch, 1B



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## Recycling fee called Headlee dodge

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

As far as Farmington Hills resident Ken Perrin is concerned, tax is spelled F-E-E.

He's got some concerns about plans by cities, such as Farmington Hills, to charge single-family homeowners and condominium owners a quarterly fee — like a utility fee — for curbside recycling.

"Anytime fee is mentioned rather than tax, I'm concerned," Perrin said.

Come July 1, Farmington and Farmington Hills residents will be mandated to recycling their refuse at their curbside when Waste Management of Michigan, the garbage collector for the cities, comes along on garbage pickup day.

But Perrin would much rather see that fee as a tax. "If I pay an extra \$54 a year for recycling, then that's

## Hills man prefers tax

Farmington Hills homeowners and condo owners. The Farmington City Council will nail down the fee they expect to charge tonight at their regular council meeting.

But Perrin would much rather see that fee as a tax. "If I pay an extra \$54 a year for recycling, then that's

\$54 of disposable income I can't use myself."

He believes that if recycling was part of the city tax rate, taxpayers could — like their other property taxes — take it off their state taxes.

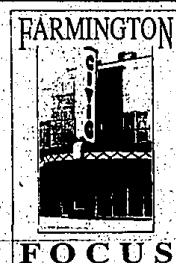
"They're providing an additional service, but they're calling it a fee,"

Perrin said. "Morally, it's going against the Headlee Amendment."

PERRIN SAID it appears that with a fee, as opposed to a tax, cities can avoid the effects of the Headlee Tax Limitation Amendment.

Under the Headlee Amendment, authorized millage levied by taxing entities must be decreased if money

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### FOCUS

**B**REAK OUT the noisemakers and funny hats... Farmington (city of) will be hitting the big one-two-five next year. It'll be the 150th anniversary of the incorporation of Farmington as a village in 1867.

A meeting to plan for the celebration will be held at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 23, at the Farmington City Hall, 3300 Liberty. All interested residents are invited to attend.

"We're looking for ideas, suggestions and enthusiasm," said Mayor Shirley Richardson.

**S**ENIOR CITIZENS who have attended oil painting classes since last fall will show the fruits of their labors in an exhibit at the Farmington branch of the Community Library through June 30.

The seniors studied under members of the Farmington Artists Club in the Senior Adult Center. The classes were sponsored by the Farmington Arts Foundation.

**T**HERE WERE a lot of happy-looking Jaycees at the service group's year-end banquet Friday at the Knights of Columbus Hall. And one of the happiest was Matt Ratliff, outgoing president.

Ratliff, a partner in Pool Maid, a swimming pool maintenance company, and a 30-year resident of the Farmington area, was named one of the top 10 Jaycee presidents in Michigan.

The Farmington chapter was cited for its many community-involvement projects. Kirk Bagg will be the next Farmington Jaycee president.

**T**AKE A good look... the three Farmington Board of Education hopefuls — incumbents Susan Rennels and challenger Laura Myers and Richard DeVries — will appear at two candidate forums this week.

Monday, May 20, the Farmington League of Women Voters and the American Association of University Women will co-sponsor a forum at 7:30 p.m. at Dunckel Middle School, 32800 W. 12 Mile. The program will be taped and televised on cable Channel 12 before the election.

Wednesday, May 22, the Farmington Area Republican Club will host a forum at 7 p.m. at the Farmington Hills City Hall, 11 Mile and Orchard Lake roads. It will be broadcast live on cable Channel 18.

The public is invited to attend both forums. The school election is Monday, June 10.

**M**EMORY LANE — From the May 24, 1951, edition of the Farmington Enterprise:

James Bates was the recipient of the Special Citizenship and Leadership Award for 1951 at Farmington High School.

Sybil Lange of Maple Street was taken to Grace Hospital for an emergency appendix operation.

Howard L. Richards announced in an advertisement that his law office would be moved from the Cadillac Tower in Detroit to Grand River Avenue in Farmington.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21898 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, or dropped off at the newspaper office.



### Spring hayride

Residents of the Community Living Centers' Farmington-Freedom group home enjoy an early May hayride in Heritage Park, which offered them 20 minutes of nature viewing. The Farmington Hills Special Services Department, Recreation Division, hosted tractor-pulled hayrides throughout May, and plans

more in the fall. Here, parks and recreation employee Jenny Geiger rides in the wagon with 4-year-old daughter Roseanna in her arms. Roseanne plugs her ears to block the noise of the engine. For more photos and a story, see Page 3A.

SHARON LAMIEUX/staff photographer

## Fighting the noise

### Hills woman wants to tune out I-275 disruptions

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Joan Barber lives with plugs in her ears. And the windows of her two-story historic house remain shut regardless of the weather.

She's not trying to tune out the world, just her neighbor — I-275. The Farmington Hills resident does want the world to know she's angry about the noise from the freeway and the disruption it creates in her life.

"I yell and I scream and I get nothing," Barber said. "I don't know what to do anymore. I'm angry."

Barber has waged a one-woman war with transportation officials since construction of the freeway in the early 1970s. Her 167-year-old Greek Revival house sits about 130 feet from I-275, immediately north of Nine Mile.

Driving north on I-275, motorists are informed how Barber feels about the freeway on which they are traveling. A big sign stands on a fence outside Barber's home facing the freeway.

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Joan Barber meant business when she put up this sign facing I-275. Barber, who lives north of Nine Mile and about 130 feet from the freeway

SHARON LAMIEUX/staff photographer

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Your Observer Carrier will be stopping by this week to collect for the month. Please have the money ready and be sure to get your receipt. It's worth a \$2.00 discount on the next classified advertisement you place in your hometown newspaper.

## Former editor Levinson dies

By Tom Beer  
staff writer

H.Y. Levinson, editor and publisher of the Farmington Enterprise newspaper for about 10 years beginning in the late 1930s, died of cancer May 14 at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak. He was 91.

Mr. Levinson, a longtime resident of Birmingham, purchased the Enterprise weekly — forerunner of today's Farmington Observer — in May of 1927 from William and Nellie Miller, according to newspaper records.

Mr. Levinson ran the paper until about 1937, said his daughter Brenda Seligson, of White Stone, Vir., and then started radio station WCAR in Pontiac.

Jean Fox, local historian, writing in a 1988 Observer special section celebrating the centennial of the Enterprise, said of Levinson: "Main issue during his years was a proposal for widening Grand River through the village to 100 feet. Levinson opposed this, although it would be good for business. Instead, he offered a bypass around town, which took

another 40 years to attain. Fortunately for posterity, and with the aid of the Enterprise, this widening for 'progress' failed, due either to an avid editor or lack of money for the 'improvement.'"

FARMINGTON in Mr. Levinson's day was very much the small town surrounded by farms and orchards, remembered Brenda Seligson.

"Farmington was this tiny town of about 700 people," she said. "It was a great place to live."

Mr. Levinson guided the newspaper through the Great Depression of the 1930s, and at times a few economic adjustments were needed.

"I remember my father telling me that during the Depression farmers would pay him for subscriptions and ads with produce and chickens," Seligson said. There were a lot of notices of foreclosure in the paper in those days and I guess that's kept it going."

Mr. Levinson also supported the arts in the community, according to Dan Burnett, longtime resident.

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## 8-Mile project takes trees

By Todd Schneider  
staff writer

Greenmead Historical Village will lose about a dozen trees — some thought to be 150 years old — and 15 feet will be trimmed from its northern boundary under the current plan to widen Eight Mile.

The stone wall fronting the complex also will be relocated.

A last-ditch effort to spare the Greenmead right-of-way by swerving the road slightly doesn't look like it will win the support of Farmington Hills officials, supporters conceded Thursday.

CONSTRUCTION WORK on the joint two-city, two-county project could begin by the end of the year, Livonia Mayor Robert Bennett said.

The road will be widened to five lanes from Newburgh to the approach to the I-275 expressway.

No cost estimate was available Thursday for either the widening or the Greenmead work. Seventy-five percent of the road construction costs will be paid for with federal money and the remainder will be split evenly between Livonia, Farmington Hills, Oakland and Wayne counties.

Bennett said redesigning the planned road expansion to eliminate the Greenmead changes was "not a viable option."

The redesign would need approval by a majority of the Farmington Hills City Council, not likely because a subdivision on the north side of Eight Mile would be adversely affected by any changes, Bennett said. "I think we've done a good job negotiating to get it down to 15 feet (of right-of-way), which is 50 percent of what the original proposal called for," Bennett said.

THE CURRENT PLAN calls for moving the wall 15 feet south and replacing any uprooted trees on a one-for-one basis, said Suzanne Daniel, chairwoman of the Livonia Historical Commission.

Daniel said moving the 70-year-old wall won't present a problem and Bennett said the project would

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