

Young entrepreneurs gear up for golf, 3B



Piston star at camp, 1C

Gourmet goodies for backpackers, 1B



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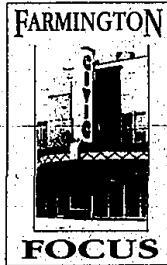
Monday, July 29, 1991

Farmington, Michigan

32 Pages

Fifty Cents

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## Dentist wins suit against Blues

By Greg Kowalski  
staff writer

A West Bloomfield Township dentist won a \$1.275 million lawsuit Thursday against Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Michigan, charging that he was maliciously accused of fraud.

Dr. Robert Matthews, who lives in Farmington Hills, was charged in 1986 with five felony counts, including three charges of violation of the Michigan Health Care False Claims act and two counts of obtaining mon-

### He's awarded \$1.2 million, insurance giant to appeal

ey under false pretenses.

The charges carried penalties of up to \$10,000 fine each and five to 10 years in prison.

Dr. Matthews was charged for performing the procedures at Sinal Hospital in Detroit. He was acquitted of the charges in 1989 and filed a

suit against Blue Cross saying the Blues withheld material information from the prosecution and the defense "which would have prevented his being charged," said his lawyer, Fred Bellamy.

BLUE CROSS spokesman Rude

DiFazio said the company plans to appeal the judgment.

"Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Michigan does not believe the decision was justified," DiFazio said. "We don't think we're wrong." He added that if the decision stands, it will discourage persons from reporting allegations against health care professionals who may be acting illegally.

He added that the decision to prosecute was made as a result of an "independent investigation," by various

law enforcement agencies, not by Blue Cross.

"We don't think we were liable," DeFazio said.

The issue was Dr. Matthews' work with Sinal hospital as a "technical surgical adviser."

Matthews said he had inkling of potential trouble when the hospital's in-house surgical consultant said Dr. Matthews might not qualify for the procedure. But, he said, "I'd been doing this for six years (without

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**H**EAR YES! Hear ye! Residents with concerns or questions about the recent power outages are urged to attend a public hearing on the issue 7-9 p.m. Monday, July 29, in the main floor auditorium of the Livonia City Hall, 33000 Civic Center Avenue.

Another public hearing is scheduled 2-4 p.m. Monday in the Troy Public Library, Big Beaver Road (16 Mile) and I-75.

Residents also may provide comments to the state Public Service Commission, Department of Commerce, Lansing 48913.

Detroit Edison, the utility that provides electric service in the Detroit area, has come under fire from residents and officials following the Sunday, July 7, thunderstorms that left three-quarters of a million residents without power.

Farmington Hills seems to have frequent power interruptions, local officials have said.

**G**OOD FOR A LAUGH: A bumper sticker on the rear of an old Ford Escort said on Farmington Road near Freedom Road, "Hunk if You've Been Married to Mickey Rooney."

Another sticker on the back of a battered pickup truck on 12 Mile read: "America was built with God, guns and guts — we need more of all three."

**T**HEY'VE LOST weight and they want to tell the world.

They're doing just that in "The Personal Road to Success" contest sponsored by the Weight Watchers International, the Farmington Hills-based firm which sometimes helps people shed unwanted pounds.

Local entries were judged Friday at reception and light breakfast at Weight Watcher headquarters on Orchard Lake Road.

Subjects of the essays varied, but most had to do with weight loss. "It can be anything from being able to walk up a flight of stairs without getting winded to being able to get into a favorite dress," said Kathy Kowal, public relations coordinator.

Florine Mark, area director of Weight Watchers and one of the most successful women business owners in the U.S., is a contest judge. She's been with the company 25 years.

**T**HE EVENT isn't happening until September, but true gourmets like to plan well in advance.

The ninth-annual Taste of Farmington is slated for Sept. 25, a Wednesday, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Farmington Community Center, 24705 Farmington Road.

"Restaurants from our area will be dining up their specialties," said Jody Soronen, director of the sponsoring Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce.

Tickets at \$10 each will be available soon at the Chamber of Commerce office on Grand River in downtown Farmington, she added.

**M**EMORY LANE — From the Aug. 2, 1991, Farmington Enterprise: The Clarencville High School marching band was invited to perform at the 1951 Michigan State Fair, according to Joseph Markell, director.



Three children of Korean descent — Soo Jin Chang (left), Ashley Hokin and Min Ah Song — perform a colorful dance as part of the entertainment at a May multicultural night in Farmington Hills. The annual event is designed to celebrate the many cultures of the area.

SHARON LAMBUK/West photographer

## Ethnic blend

### New cultures offer opportunity, challenge

First of a series

By Casey Hens  
staff writer

A growing population of varying cultures and ethnic groups is putting down firm roots in the established communities of Farmington and Farmington Hills.

This new cultural tree is branching out, covering the community with diversity.

Information provided by Farmington Public Schools

show that there are more than 60 different cultural groups represented in the Farmington area and that bilingual services are offered for at least 27 language groups. The largest influence appears to be from the Japanese, Chaldean, Arabic and Albanian cultures, with smatterings of Indian, Chinese, and Russian among others.

"People should learn another language, but not lose their own," explained Haroune Alameddine, bilingual coordinator for the school district and a key figure in

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## The natural way

### Hills woman gets into recycling biz with wood bin

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Margaret Prucha is simply letting Mother Nature take its course.

And she wants Mother Nature to do her thing — with Prucha's help — in everyone's backyard.

The help Prucha, 61, is offering is a wood recycling bin through a new mail order business she's started.

No. It's not the kind of bin the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills have distributed for the recycling of plastics, newspapers and glass. And it's really not a composting bin.

"It came to me — it's not a composting bin. You take a weed, it decomposes, you use it again," said Prucha, who is disabled with a lung illness.

*'It came to me — it's not a composting bin. You take a weed, it decomposes, you use it again.'*

— Margaret Prucha  
new entrepreneur

Prucha uses the bin — her son-in-law built her the original one last year — for weeds, leaves, fireplace ashes, vegetable and fruit scraps, eggs shells and coffee grounds. You can put grass

clippings in the lidless bin, but decomposition takes a bit longer. And grass can make it smell.

"It's like a perpetual waste can. You're taking the waste and recycling into your gardens," said Prucha, who provided in-home child day care until her illness last year.

IN THE PAST week, Prucha has been testing her new mail order business. She targeted her approximately 400-home neighborhood, Westbrooke Manor subdivision, as a test market. With the help of her grandchildren, Prucha has stopped at just about everyone's house.

"Everybody liked the idea," said the mother of six grown children.

It's strictly a mail order business. People interested in buying a bin — made of treated wood and sized at 30 inches by 60 inches by 11 inches — fill in the coupon and Prucha does the rest.

H.A. Smith Lumber, Farmington Hills, is working with Prucha, a widow. "We're supplying the materials," said general manager Gary Kurmas.

"People who buy the bin will assemble it themselves. It's pre-drilled. It's easy to put together."

Prucha came up with the idea of a mail order business for her recycling bin when she had to

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## Heart attack claims Stockel

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Dennis Stockel would get a look in his eyes, a smile on his face, and you just knew he had something up his sleeve.

"He had a very deceptive sense of humor," said his friend, Don Fradette, a traffic safety officer with the Farmington Hills Police Department.

Mr. Stockel, 48, manager of the Farmington Hills Police Department's 20-member auxiliary unit, died unexpectedly Tuesday of a heart attack at his Farmington Hills home. He also was a credit financial supervisor for Ford Motor Credit for 23 years.

As friends and co-workers at the police department spoke of the man who managed the 20 reserve officers since 1983, Fradette recalled Stockel's sense of humor.

About six months ago, Fradette told Mr. Stockel to get a bank ac-

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Dennis Stockel

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