

78RPM puts new spin on music scene, 5B

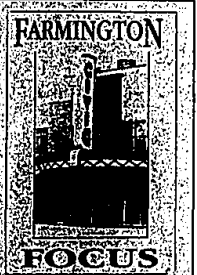


Hoop outlook, 3B

Congregations mark Festival of Lights, 3A

Farmington Observer

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FOCUS

STRIFE A match and light the candle mothers are giving MADD again this year.

The annual candlelight vigil, sponsored by the combined Oakland and Macomb county chapters of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), will be held at 7 tonight, Dec. 9, at Nardin Park Methodist Church, 11 Mile road west of Middlebelt, Farmington Hills.

The commemorative service is important to people who have lost friends and loved ones in accidents involving drunk drivers.

The ceremony, though often surrounded by feelings of tremendous loss, is meant not as a time for sorrow, but as a time for recalling the joy that the lost loved ones brought to those who remember them.

The service is part of National Drunk Driving Week. People are asked to be aware of what's happening on the highways, and to give a message to themselves and others to make the upcoming holidays safe.

The service is open to the public. People who have lost a loved one to drunk driving are invited to read aloud. Call the MADD office 252-1700 to make arrangements.

MAKE MERRY this season with the Farmington Community Chorus providing the traditional music.

The 18-piece chorus will present its annual concert — "Make We Merry" — at 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Dec. 13-14, in the auditorium of Farmington High School, 32000 Shilawase, Farmington.

Many familiar favorites along with some not-so-well-known holiday music will be presented. The Perfect Blend, formerly the Farmington, a 14-piece group, also will perform. A few comic selections will be part of the evening.

Tickets at \$9 for adults and \$4 for senior citizens may be purchased at the door. There will be no charge for children under 10.

Tickets are also available from any chorus member or from the Farmington Hills Department of Social Services at 31015 11 Mile Road during business hours. For further information, call Kathy Hall, chorus manager, at 471-4914.

MEMORY LANE — From the Dec. 13, 1991, Farmington Enterprise.

An application has been received for the position of Farmington city manager and others are being solicited, said Mayor Keen Loomis. The position fell open when Angus Leitch resigned.

The Farmington Jaycees were putting the final touches on a sleigh and reindeer float that was to carry Santa Claus from the western edge of the city to the Town Hall Park for his annual last-minute visit with area children.

Herschell Childress was elected worshipful master of the Farmington Lodge 151 F. & M.

A record Christmas rush was expected at the new Farmington Post Office, according to Mrs. Harry Schoenberger, assistant postmaster.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21888 Farmington Road, Farmington 48334, or dropped off at the newspaper office.



JOHN STORIMZAND/staff photographer

A class-act guy

Farmington Hills Mercy coach Larry Baker, holding a cup of cola and the runner-up trophy, leads winning coach William Winfield of Detroit Martin Luther King following the

girls basketball Class A championship game Saturday. The Marlins finished second in state after losing 52-38. See details on Page 1B.

Laws gobble city powers, say 2 towns

By Casey Hans staff writer

Farmington and Farmington Hills have both taken stands against pending state legislation city council members say will encroach on local control — commonly called "home rule."

The Farmington City Council voted unanimously Dec. 1 to object to what it said is state interference in locally governed matters. The Farmington Hills council adopted a similar measure on Nov. 18.

"I certainly think the state is trying to have its cake and eat it too," said Farmington councilman Richard Tupper. "They're trying to take home rule away from us. I don't think it's right."

The two bills in question were sponsored by state Sen. Jack Faxon, D-Farmington Hills, and were passed by the Senate Nov. 21. They were sent to the state House Joint Committee on Towns and Counties for consideration, where officials say they are not likely to be discussed until after Jan. 1.

"A local ordinance cannot prevent it from operating on the basis that it is inconsistent with a residential use of the home," Faxon said in a prepared statement.

Faxon introduced a similar measure several years ago on behalf of home day care providers. It was never passed, but got similar negative reaction from local governments on the home rule issue.

The other bill, SB 532, says that under zoning laws, cities could not prohibit a person from giving or receiving private piano lessons in a residential house.

"You would think that this type of legislation would not be necessary," Faxon added. He contends neighbors are using such home lessons as "an excuse to complain to the local units of government" about other neighborhood disputes.

Local officials say the bill was a reaction to an isolated incident in one community.

Local council action was prompted by Hills councilman Ben Marks, who has taken an active role in opposing similar legislation since home day care became an issue in the Hills in 1987.

SENATE BILL 486, stipulates that a registered family day care home be considered a residential use.

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Residents rap suit settlements

By Joanne Maliszewski staff writer

Some Woodcreek subdivision residents are just glad two lawsuits over property near their neighborhood are over. But they continue to be concerned about office buildings encroaching on their homes.

"Both of these developers sought to overturn existing residential zoning in favor of office zoning," said Hank Murawski, president of the Woodcreek Civic Association. "We're not extremely happy with the results that came out."

Murawski and two fellow Woodcreek residents — Jack Holmes and

John Hutchinson — expressed their feelings about the two lawsuits before the Farmington Hills City Council in late November.

The longest-standing lawsuit, Northridge Associates versus the city of Farmington Hills, has hung over Woodcreek residents' heads for 10 years. The second suit, Providence Hospital versus the city, has been active for three years.

Both suits are now resolved by consent agreement. The city council is expected to approve a stipulated order to approve the negotiated settlement for dismissal of the Northridge

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Farmington puts strings on transit backing

Farmington city officials want a solid plan of action before helping a financially troubled tri-county transportation authority.

"We obviously need a lot more information before we take any action," Mayor William Hartssock said Monday, suggesting the city keep the issue on a back burner while requesting a formal plan.

"I agree there has to be a plan in place before we take any action on funding."

The city council will make their request of SMART — the Suburban

Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation which operates a regional bus system in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties.

SMART officials have said that, without help from local governments, the bus lines in Oakland, Wayne and Macomb counties could shut down as early as April.

They also have requested their suburban system be merged with the Detroit transportation system.

"THE AUTHORITY is reportedly \$7.7 million in debt this year, and projecting a \$19.3 million debt over

'We obviously need a lot more information before we take any action.'
— William Hartssock
Farmington mayor

the next three years.

Although they wrote to local communities requesting support, SMART officials did not specify exactly how they want local cities to help, according to Farmington City Manager Robert Deadman.

SMART's problems come at a time when cities are watching their own coffers carefully, with most facing revenue decreases because of property tax freezes and other declining sources.

SMART has at least two routes through Farmington and helps to subsidize a taxi program for seniors and handicappers here which could be affected by changes. One route begins at Drake and Grand River and runs east on Grand River then south of Middlebelt to Metro Airport. The other begins at 12 Oaks Mall and runs along Grand River through Farmington ending at Grandview near Seven Mile Road.

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Lighting the way

Maureen Schiffman gets 6-year-old Michael Jurawicz of West Bloomfield to help light the first candle on the menorah during a Hanukkah celebration at the Farmington/Farmington Hills Community Center Wednesday. For more about the Jewish Festival of Lights, please see page 3A.

SHARON LAHELUX/staff photographer