

Counsel gives talk to GOP women, 1C



Basketball playoff, 1B

Local cable TV guide inside Monday's paper

Farmington Observer

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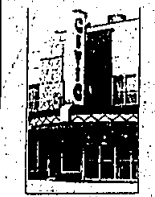
Thursday, March 5, 1992

Farmington, Michigan

68 Pages

Fifty Cents

FARMINGTON



FOCUS

MET FARMINGTON'S Neighborhood House, says Phyllis Howard, acting director of the organization, which helps the area's needy.

Neighborhood House has a new address (in the Ten Mile School, 30415 Shawwassee) and a new phone number (474-7880), but the goal is still the same.

"Our goal is to meet the community's needs efficiently and effectively without duplicating services," Howard said.

A meeting, which will "re-introduce" Neighborhood House to the community, in Howard's words, will be at 8 a.m. Wednesday, March 11, at the Farmington Hills City Hall, 11 Mile and Orchard Lake Road.

THE BLOOD will be flowing — at least the American Red Cross hopes it will — when the Bloodmobile comes to the Farmington area for two blood drives in the near future.

On Saturday, March 7, the Bloodmobile will be at the Anloch Lutheran church, 4300 W. 13 Mile Road, Farmington Hills from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. For an appointment, call Marge Glynshaw at 553-2916.

Two weeks later, on Saturday, March 21, the bloodletting will shift to the American Legion Post No. 346, 31775 Grand River, Farmington, from 1-7 p.m. Denny Musselman is taking appointments at 626-8605.

SUZANNE SCHMIDT, who was Susanne McPeak when she graduated from Farmington High School in 1972, has been making quite a name for herself in Ohio as assistant prosecutor in Greene County. Schmidt was recently honored by the Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association for her work in prosecuting the high-profile Novaferron securities fraud case. An investigation led by Schmidt resulted in multiple convictions in 1990 of two Ohio men for their roles in the investment scheme, which involved nearly 400 people and about \$8 million.

Schmidt has been assistant prosecutor in Greene County since 1980. She received a Journalism degree from Marquette University in Milwaukee in 1976 and a law degree from the University of Dayton in 1978. She lives in Xenia, Ohio, with her husband, James W. Schmidt, and their daughter.

She is the daughter of Eugene McPeak of Farmington Hills.

MEMORY LANE — From the March 13, 1992 Farmington Enterprise.

A spectacular fire destroyed a barn and 50 tons of hay in Farmington township, fire chief Leo Hendry said. Fire fighters were hampered by a huge crowd that gathered at the barn on 11 Mile Road, east of Middlebelt. It was owned by T. F. Brown, Detroit nurseryman.

Charles Stuart, chairman of the Farmington Red Cross Drive, announced that \$403.04 had been collected during the first week of the annual campaign.

Arthur Mann and James Warner were named co-chairmen of the 1992 Fire to Dandy variety show, presented annually by the Farmington Jaycees.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 2188 Farmington Road, Farmington, 48336, or dropped off at the newspaper office.

Opinions vary on impact of closings

By Casey Hans and Joanne Maliszewski staff writers

The downsizing of General Motors, including the recent announcement of the loss of 9,100 Michigan jobs due to plant closings, may appear to have little direct impact on the Farmington area.

But business people, economists and others say the cuts are bound to trickle down to everyone. They disagree, however, on just how bad the impact will be.

"It's kind of like a snowfall or rain effect," said Sen. Jack Faxon, D-Farmington Hills. "When it rains upstream, you get it down here."

But he doesn't believe the impact will be as

bad here as in more heavily blue collar communities.

"People in our area tend to be stockholders. People in our area tend to be business people. They view the decision in terms of what's best for business. They want the company to survive," Faxon continued.

"They won't second-guess what the head of the company wants to do to keep the company going."

ECONOMICS PROFESSOR at Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge Campus and Farmington Hills resident C.J. Austermeier disagrees. He believes the impact could be "tremendous" on this area in the long run.

"If there are fewer jobs, there's a smaller market for people to sell their goods and services," he said. "It's what they call the multiplier effect — it rolls out and snowballs."

He added: "I'm not suggesting we're going

to return to the Great Depression, but the news is not good for Michigan."

In December, General Motors announced a downsizing which would close 21 plants in the next several years, and plans to cut their white collar workforce through retirement incentives and attrition.

After posting a record \$4.5 billion loss last month, GM marked four Michigan plants and 11 nationwide, for closing. The move is expected to idle 9,100 workers here and 15,000 across the country beginning this year through 1995.

The GM loss was the largest yearly deficit in U.S. corporate history.

Barbara Weber, a corporate travel agent with the Uniglobe Agency in Farmington Hills said business there is being affected twofold: both by area layoffs and airfares. Many regional business travelers are opting to drive to places like Dayton instead of fly in order to

save a buck, she said. She believes the GM cuts are a big part of the problem.

"It's definitely affected the whole economy," she said. "I think it's the whole auto thing. If we don't take care of ourselves (by buying American cars), we're all going to be in trouble. It falls all the way down the line."

THE FARMINGTON area won't be affected in the same way as Ypsilanti or other cities where a closing GM plant is located.

But the area will be affected. Revenue losses at in-formula school districts will be made up by out-of-formula districts, such as Farmington, said Republican state Rep. Jan Dolan of Farmington Hills.

"And that puts the problem on the out-of-formula districts who will get caught," Dolan said.

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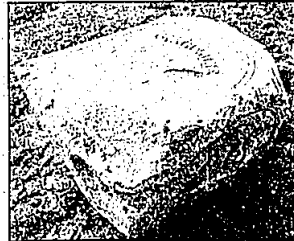
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Remarkable marker



This is the face of the portion of tombstone found in Bridle Hills subdivision. The carved letters partially spell the name Catherine Dohany who was the wife of William Dohany, the owner of a large farm where the subdivision now stands.

Old stone unearths family's history

By Joanne Maliszewski staff writer

Today it looks out of place sitting amid the colonial houses in Bridle Hills subdivision. But the large tombstone is sure to remind homeowners they aren't the first to grace the acreage on Inkster Road, between Nine Mile and 10 Mile.

"This is a historical record," said Charles Martinez, an archaeologist and operations manager for the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society. "It's nice to go back to once upon a time and the way it was."

While digging up part of the subdivision's commons area for drainage work late last year, workers unearthed a portion of what's believed to have been a very large, possibly marble, tombstone.

"Whether or not it is displaced or that is its original place, we don't know," said Tom Blasell, Farmington Hills public services director, adding that the land has been tilled and torn up so much since it was a farm.

Still, there's a lot that makes sense about finding a tombstone bearing the name of Catherine Dohany, who died in 1883.

The name should be recognizable. Her great-grandson is Hugh Dohany, Oakland County treasurer. And the land where the monument was accidentally exhumed is the former more than 200-acre



photos by SHARON LEMIEUX/staff photographer

Archaeologist Charles Martinez, operations manager for the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society, dusts off the carved lettering of a tombstone unearthed in the commons area of Bridle Hills subdivision.

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Freeze to put chill on appeals

By Joanne Maliszewski staff writer

It's that time of year when Farmington and Farmington Hills property owners usually feel a little empty — especially when they think of their property tax assessments.

But that empty feeling this year could be because you're probably part of the majority that has not received the usual property tax assessment notice. No need to worry. That's the result of the one-year assessment freeze now in effect.

"Whatever your assessment was last year it will be this year," said Dean Babb, Farmington Hills assessor. "Some of you are one of the excepted classes, you're frozen."

Some of you, however, may have gotten your notice. That means you are in one of the excepted classes that aren't affected by the freeze. Included are property splits or property combinations, property changes with a new construction, such as adding a deck or swimming pool, and property changes with losses, such as fire or filling in a swimming pool.

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Downtown development turns new corner

By Casey Hans staff writer

Farmington's Downtown Development Authority will begin its fiscal year with new faces, different leadership and a new set of challenges.

Metrobank president Robert Heinrich takes the reins as president of the DDA, a role he said he would willingly accept for one year. The citizen representative on the DDA board, Robert Fitzpa-

trick, will serve as the board's vice president and City Manager Robert Deadman will continue to serve in the role of board secretary.

The DDA board elected officers Tuesday during its annual meeting.

"I feel very grateful to be in this position," Heinrich said. He also lauded the work of outgoing DDA president Harry Wingerter and vice president Greg Hoibler, both of whom resigned their seats on the DDA in the past month but attended

Tuesday's meeting. "We will equally miss both of you — we certainly look for your input," Heinrich added.

Hoibler warned the board that it faced an uphill struggle in the coming years.

"It's not business as usual out there anymore," said Hoibler, the owner of the Civic Theatre, who resigned his seat to pay close attention to his struggling business.

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