

IN THE PAPER

TODAY

**Mall work continues:** Renovation continues on a shopping center in northern Farmington Hills./3A

**Bomb threat:** A Farmington Hills office building was evacuated after a man called in a bomb threat. No bomb was found./6A

COUNTY NEWS

**County scramble:** At least seven of retiring Oakland executive Daniel Murphy's top honchos won't be around after Jan. 1./5A

MALLS & MAINSTREETS



**Southland reopens:** A big mall also offers a chance for small retailers to move from a marketplace table to pushcarts to boutiques./8A

OPINION

**Property tax plans:** Although the two property tax cut plans on Tuesday's ballot were defeated, the matter is likely to come before the state Legislature. However, taxpayers could still end up with a big bill for education. That's James "Doc" Doyle's opinion on today's Points of View./10A

SPORTS

**Hoop finales:** Farmington finished the regular season in girls basketball last week with a last-second victory over John Glenn./1C

**Grid playoff:** Catholic Central played Troy for a Class AA regional football championship Saturday./1C

CABLE TV WEEKLY

**Local access:** "Senior Spotlight" will be presented on Channel 12. Check your cable guide for time and date.

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## Man cleared in carjacking case



Earl Bruce Williams: He wasn't the man.



Charges against a Detroit man accused in a carjacking were dropped when a car salesman testified he wasn't the man. Police said they are actively seeking another suspect.

By MARY LOU SONG  
STAFF WRITER

Charges against Earl Bruce Williams, the 19-year-old Detroit resident arrested in connection with an Oct. 9 Farmington Hills carjacking, were dropped Friday and the case was dismissed "without prejudice" after the Bill Cook Nissan salesman testified that Williams was not the robber.

During a pretrial examination Friday in 47th District Court, Daniel Wagner, the Nissan salesman, told the court that Williams was not the man who held him at gunpoint during the carjacking. Wagner said that on Oct. 9 he took a man for a test drive of a 1993 Nissan 300ZX valued at about \$40,000. During the test drive, Wagner became

suspicious of the man and attempted to leave the car with the keys.

The man then pointed a gun at Wagner's head and told him to "give the keys back, get in the car, shut the door, and we're going to go for a ride."

Wagner, who has left the dealership for a job in a bank, was eventually dropped off at Grand River and Inkster roads.

Williams turned himself in to Farmington Hills police Nov. 5 after seeing his picture on the evening news in connection with the carjack-

See CLEARED, 4A

### Blaze destroys 7 RVs



HILL HIREL/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Checking the damage: Gordon Silver of Farmington Hills surveys the charred remains of his 34-foot Honey motor home. The vehicle was one of seven destroyed by fire Nov. 11 in a storage facility on Crestview Court in the city. Silver, who owned the RV for three years, said he hoped insurance would cover the loss. Hills Fire Marshal Stephen Hume estimated the total loss at about \$250,000. There were no signs of breaking and entering, added Hume, and the investigation continues. Anyone with information about the blaze should call the fire department at 553-0744.

## Vacant Hills site contaminated — state

By SUE BUCK  
STAFF WRITER

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources announced last week that a former manufacturing site in Farmington Hills is contaminated with chemicals.

The site, located at 23800 Research Drive in the southwest part of the city, has been vacant for two years, according to Sue Weishuhn, Hills commercial appraiser.

Microdot Aerospace Fastenings Systems Group, a California firm, is the taxpayer. The land and building are assessed at \$640,500, she said. The DNR files list IMT Limited Partnership in Chicago as the owner.

"We're in the process of getting a cleanup done," said Jim Thomas, of the Livonia-based DNR office. "The company has been cooperating."

The site was among 11 new locations that were released in a list last

week. The Hills site was scored at 35 on a scale from 0-48, with 48 being the most contaminated. Scores below 35 are not considered a state priority.

The DNR sent a Sept. 23 letter to Dennis O'Neill, an attorney for IMT Ltd partnership, informing that the list would be released in early November.

"There's no threat to the public water supply," said David O'Neill, who with his brother, Dennis, serves

as attorneys for IMT. He said that it will take at least a year to clean up.

The site is contaminated with trichloroethene, a solvent sometimes used in dry cleaning, and other chemicals, the DNR said.

"A potential buyer backed out when he learned about it (the contamination)," David O'Neill said.

See SITE, 3A

## State historical group cites Fox

By MARY LOU SONG  
STAFF WRITER

Jean Fox is making history — again.

The former Farmington Hills mayor recently received the Award of Merit from the Historical Society of Michigan for her contributions to the preservation and education of Farmington-area history.

"She's a tireless worker," said David Litogot, a trustee of the Historical

Society, who presented the award to Fox at a city council meeting Nov. 9.

"This year Jean was finally recognized for all her years of contributing to the preservation of Farmington Hills history," Litogot said. "She has been the historical conscience of the government and the community — the voice of history in this area."

Fox, also the former chair of the Farmington Hills Historic District Commission, was recognized for her

many efforts including preserving historic homes, placing markers at historic sites, publishing books and helping add Farmington-area history courses to the curricula of the city's schools.

But she says the award "could not have come to add to the luster of Farmington Hills without the help of many people."

See FOX HONORED, 4A



Jean Fox: Honored for efforts to preserve local history

### Oh (baby) boy!

Well, at least Matthew William didn't decide to enter the world on election night when his mother, Farmington Hills city clerk Kathryn Dornan, was extremely busy counting votes.

Instead, young Matt waited a week, until 12:32 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 10, to be born — five weeks early — at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit. He weighed 4 pounds and 12 ounces, according to Sue Rose, assistant clerk, and mother and son are doing fine.

The baby was born into a municipal household. His father, William, is the city manager of Wixom. "We had five pregnancies in the building," said Rose. "One of the others — Janice Wagner in the city Finance Department — also delivered a boy

### FARMINGTON FOCUS

on Nov. 10. She was four weeks early. His name is Nathan William."

#### Toys for Tots

The Marine Corps' Toys For Tots program will get under way in the Farmington area on Saturday, Nov. 21, with an event at Total Fitness, a health club at 23911 Orchard Lake Road, south of 10 Mile.

The program will kick off at 11 a.m. with a "health series" on nutrition which is open to the

public. Following that, a Marine Corps color guard will perform and a representative will explain the Toys For Tots program, which provides donated toys for needy children around the holidays.

Donated toys can be dropped off at Total Fitness Nov. 21 to Dec. 8. For more information, call Steve Parente of Total Fitness at 478-8993.

"I believe that this community is very successful and I feel that the people here can really contribute to helping children from families that are not as fortunate," said Parente.

"I know we can count on the support of our friends, neighbors and business associates in our community."

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21888 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, or dropped off at the newspaper office.