

Farmington Observer



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IN THE PAPER

TODAY

Yes to Michigan: Some Forest Elementary School students show off some of their models of Michigan industry and agriculture./8A

Crime committee: They meet monthly for breakfast and a look at how the Farmington Hills police are coping with crime./13A

COUNTY NEWS

Tough talk: Gov. John Engler tells our local school districts they'll just have to tighten their belts and get their unions to go along./5A

Role model: Detroit Lions tackle Lomas Brown gives kids some words to live by./9A

OPINION

Turning 20: Farmington Hills will reach the ripe old age of 20 on July 1. A birthday celebration is planned./16A

It's winter! After all, this is Michigan. Winters are supposed to be cold and snowy./17A

SPORTS

Intra-city duel: The Farmington and Harrison boys basketball teams played Tuesday night in a Western Lakes Activities Association game./1B

Volleyball match: Mercy High nearly upset state-ranked Livonia Ladywood in the Catholic League playoffs Monday but lost in three games./1B

ENTERTAINMENT



Comedy hit: Neil Simon's "Plaza Suite" is an actor's romp, and Mary Pat Gleason and Wil Love are having a wonderful time at Meadow Brook Theatre./6B

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Workshop to focus on diversity



Understanding the ethnic, racial and cultural diversity of the Farmington area is the idea behind an upcoming workshop sponsored by the Multicultural/Multiracial Community Council.

By BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

The more than 60 people who will attend a cultural diversity workshop next Wednesday, Feb. 24, won't see exotic dancers from the Middle East or taste ethnic food.

They'll learn more about some-

thing closer to home — discrimination. The workshop, which will be the first of two this winter, is sponsored by the Farmington-Farmington Hills Multicultural/Multiracial Community Council as a way to bring tolerance and understanding of the area's many

ethnic and cultural groups.

"We invited presidents of subdivisions and condominium associations, PTAs, clergy, people from civic clubs such as the League of Women Voters, CEOs from the city's major corporations, teachers, and city representatives," said Bill Costick, Farmington Hills city manager and a committee member. "What would evolve from this is, we hope, some kind of long-term program."

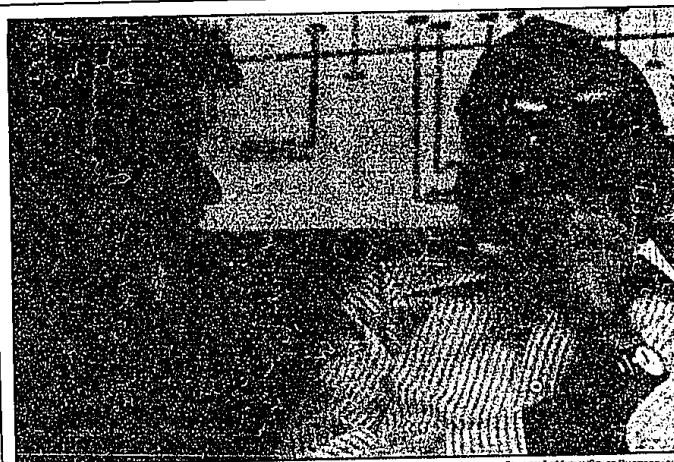
The committee is working to foster better understanding in an area that has become truly multicultural.

Judy White, assistant superintendent for curriculum and staff development for the Farmington Schools, said there are 618 bilingual students and 22 different languages represented in the district.

"This is not going to be an extravaganza," White said. "We want to get to the issues of diversity on a deeper level."

The Rev. Imam Karoub, a Michigan native and leader among Islamic clergymen in the United States, said:

See DIVERSITY, 2A



Going like 100? William Whear talks about his century of life to his daughter Joyce Jones at Detroit Baptist Manor.

Man marks century of stories

By LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

How does one live to be 100? William Whear of Farmington Hills uses the oldest trick in the book. "People say to me, 'How are you able to live so long?'" said Whear, who turned 100 on Feb. 6. "They say, 'Eat an apple a day; keep the doctor away.' I eat a lot of apples."

The centenarian also has a bushel full of stories. Despite having throat cancer, the Detroit Baptist Manor resident is happy regaling visitors with vignettes culled from 100 years of bountiful life.

With little prompting, he starts with his arrival to America in 1912.

He recites dates like a history exam.

Whear left Cornwall, England with his family Sept. 9; he landed in New York Sept. 16. The family only spent a half-day in New York, he said, trying to catch a train to Chicago.

"We didn't know coffee," Whear said. "We only drank tea." Like many Cornish settlers, his family made their base in Ironwood, Mich. The natives of the region are credited for making the meat pie known as pasties a U.P. delicacy.

Whear recalls how iron mine workers kept pasties warm inside

their coats. He was a mine worker himself, toiling for \$2.40 a day as he worked 1,900 feet below the surface. "In the mines, there were lots of rats," he said. "If you killed them, it was considered bad luck."

Luck wasn't found in a letter waiting for him after work one day. The missive told him to report to duty at Fort Custer in Battle Creek. Whear was a British citizen, but fought for the U.S. Army Fourth Division, 47th Infantry during World War I. The doughboy was on the front lines in France and later on the Rhine in Germany.

See CENTURY, 2A

Council backs neighbors, dumps parking lot plan

By BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Residents turned out in force Monday to hold back commercial development in the Wood Creek Farms subdivision in northeast Farmington Hills.

Apparently, they won the battle. At a public hearing during Monday's city council meeting, several residents warned that the proposed change in zoning to allow Northdale Investment Co. to build a parking lot would open the floodgates for developers and lower property values for residents.

"We bought here 15 years ago believing that the master plan meant something," said Amy Ryberg, a Wood Creek resident. "Wood Creek Farms is one of the jewels of Farmington Hills."

'We bought here 15 years ago believing that the master plan meant something . . . Wood Creek Farms is one of the jewels of Farmington Hills.'

Amy Ryberg
Wood Creek resident

The council agreed with Ryberg and several other residents that to change the zoning would set a bad precedent. The council unanimously voted down the proposal that would have changed a lot from residential to commercial. That change had been recommended by the city's planning commission after a Jan. 21 public hearing. "The line was drawn," said councilwoman Joanne Smith. "The environment of our neighborhoods is more than just an emotional issue."

Mayor Nancy Bates said although the city has a large commercial tax base, its residential areas are too valuable an asset with which to tinker.

"I realize that 39 percent of our tax base is commercial," Bates said. "But I'm extremely concerned that this would have an adverse effect on the

quality of life." Commercial development would lower the value of residential property in this area," said Hank Murawski, the subdivision association's president.

Northdale, represented by former city attorney Richard Poehlman, had planned to build a 32-space parking lot on the property adjoining its office building on Northwestern Highway west of Inker.

Poehlman said the building's existing parking lot was too small to accommodate its use as a medical facility. Residents said that had been the Overdale Building is too large, leaving inadequate space for parking.

"That was poor planning on their part," Ryberg said. "Why should we pay for their bad business decision?"

Attention, young artists

Artists who are high school students and reside in the Farmington area, take note.

The annual Farmington Area Arts Commission contest is coming up. Prizes in two categories of "art endeavor" will be picked March 23. Two- and three-dimensional work will be considered separately this year.

The contest is open to Farmington-area high school students. A \$250 first prize will be awarded in each category. Second prizes (\$150) and honorable mentions (\$50) also will be awarded.

Awards will be presented 3 p.m. Sunday, April 25, at the Farmington Community Center. Entry forms may be obtained from high school art teachers.

FARMINGTON FOCUS

Researching Farmington

Entries for the 10th annual Lee S. Peel Historical Research Contest, open to anyone interested in Farmington-area history, will be accepted until April 14.

Sponsored by the Farmington Historical Society, the contest encourages original research in Farmington and Farmington Hills history.

Texts of any length, neatly written, printed or typed, are acceptable, as are audio tapes, videotapes, 35mm slides and photographs. Entries

should be the original work of the author. There are four categories: first elementary school, grades 1-5; middle school, grades 6-8; high school, grades 9-12; and college and adults.

Some suggested topics are: Street and place names, dairy and cheese industries, flour and lumber mills, merchants and town center development, English and German settlements, schools and churches, Indian history and trails, and material describing daily living habits and lifestyles of earlier times in the Farmington area.

A bibliography of source material should accompany the entry. Entries should be mailed to: Lee S. Peel Historical Research Writing Contest, 33309 Shiawassee, Farmington 48356, no later than April 14. Photos and artifacts will be returned if requested.

For more information, call Nancy Leonard at 476-4125.