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TODAY

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Digging In: All of the school finance reform plans being offered need some sprucing up, according to an editorial on today's Opinion Page./14A

West on I-696: It takes lots of drive to get to work each day — and there's plenty to see along the way./15A

SPORTS

All-Area swimmers: Some of the best swimmers and relays in the state comprise the 1993 All-Observer team./5B

Soccer preview: Farmington teams are getting ready for the start of a new season next week./1B

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Off to Washington: Farmington Hills resident Doug Ross, director of Michigan Future Inc. was offered a position in the Clinton administration./1C

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Healthy kids: Kindergartners in Farmington Hills are practicing their exercises, to show them at a health-oriented day that area YMCAs will celebrate./1H

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City to study ice arena viability



BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills City Council members want to make sure they are on solid ground before they go any further with plans to build or run an ice arena.

The council voted unanimously to hire the University of Michigan's

sports facilities research laboratory to conduct a market study to see if an ice facility could be a money maker, not something the city would have to subsidize.

"Ultimately, whether it would be public or private, this would have to pay for itself," said Councilman Terry Sever.

The city's ice arena citizens' study committee, which began work in December 1992, recommended that the city contract with the laboratory and its director, Jack Vivian, at a cost of \$8,000 plus expenses.

"He is one of the foremost ice arena consultants, if not in the country, at least in our area," said mayor pro tem Larry Lichtman, who chairs the ice arena committee. "We need reliable information and an analysis of the known potential users in the area."

In a letter to the city, Vivian said the study would "analyze the market

for hockey, figure skating, and speed skating activities in the Detroit area by surveying existing skating organizations for their current use patterns and by examining general population characteristics of Farmington and Farmington Hills."

The study could begin as soon as next week.

Councilwoman Joanne Smith emphasized that the study did not commit the city to building a facility.

"We are not buying an ice arena at this point," Smith said.

See ICE, 4A

New author finds pleasure in words



SHARON LEMIEUX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Romancing the word: Author Joan Avery's interest in history is shown in the photos of her family and forebears (background) in her Farmington Hills home.

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

When Joan Avery quit a good advertising job to stay home with her newborn daughter 10 years ago, she found that reading romance novels provided a healthy retreat from parenting.

Now she's writing them.

The University of Michigan-Dearborn graduate said that having three children in 3½ years and raising them until school age gave her little chance for serious intellectual pursuits. But historical novels provided enough interest without being too difficult.

"I love history," Avery said. "I found that I could read (historical romances) in short spurts and not lose the plot. It saved my sanity a bit."

After her kids were sent off to school, Avery suddenly found herself with time on her hands. So she decided to try her hand at writing a historical novel, even though she had little writing background.

"It was quite a change from writing something for an advertisement that takes a matter of seconds to writing something of 100,000 words," she said. "I decided to give myself a year and see if I could do it."

Eighteen months later, with the

See AUTHOR, 2A

Joint meeting to re-examine clock plan

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

A special meeting has been called for Wednesday, March 31, between the Farmington City Council and the Downtown Development Authority to discuss a timely topic — the proposed downtown clock tower.

The meeting will take place at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday in the council chambers of the Farmington City Hall, 23600 Liberty Street.

The city council called the meeting after a group of residents spoke in opposition to the plan — which called for a 28-foot clock tower at the corner of Grand River and Farmington — at a recent council meeting.

"I think this meeting will hopefully bring about a compromise on this issue, using the best of all ideas, including input from the citizens," said councilwoman JoAnne McShane.

"We have heard the people speak," said DDA director Judy Downey. "Our focal point was not to be disruptive but to beautify a part of downtown."

Downey said she couldn't speak for the DDA board of directors, but more than likely they'll reconsider the plan. City architect Chris Wzacny, who designed the clock tower and is one of its greatest supporters, is supposed to submit a revised plan.

A number of alternatives may be considered in place of a 28-foot clock tower.

One could be the original proposal submitted by the 125th anniversary committee, of a streetcape clock on a lamppost or renovating the Masonic Temple corner without a clock.

"The corner needs renovating badly," Downey said. "I'd like to see it completed this year . . ."

Jewelers face trial on gem theft charge

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

The owner and the manager of a Farmington Hills jewelry store will stand trial on charges that they kept jewelry that a salesman mistakenly left in their store, denied they had it, and then tried to sell it.

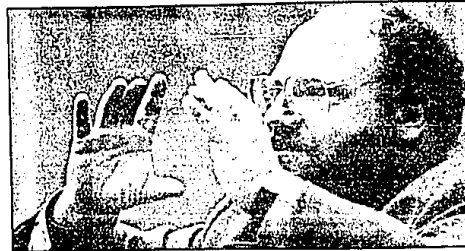
District Judge Fred Harris bound over Paul Vatch Terterian, owner of Artisan's jewelry at Grand River and Drake, and the store's manager,

Dennis James Moloney, for larceny over \$100, a five-year felony.

The men face arraignment in Oakland County Circuit Court before Judge Steven Andrews at 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, April 6.

The Ohio salesman who said he misplaced the jewelry with a wholesale value of \$19,800 last April 24, testified that Terterian and Moloney

See JEWELERS, 2A



SHARON LEMIEUX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Testifying: Ohio salesman Michael Goldhagen describes the missing jewelry in 47th District Court.

March into spring

The Farmington Community Band, directed by R. Paul Barber, will perform a concert of marches at 3 p.m. Sunday, March 28, in the auditorium of Harrison High School, on 12 Mile west of Middlebelt.

This year's band roster includes more than 60 members from 20 communities. For more information on this activity, call 476-5014 or 489-3412.

A healthy activity

Mercy Center in Farmington Hills will be a site for Project Health-O-Rama, which attempts to alert individuals to possible health problems. Health screening will be offered to anyone 18 years or older from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Wednesday,

FARMINGTON FOCUS

April 7, during Health-O-Rama at Mercy Center, on 11 Mile, east of Middlebelt.

Some tests include height and weight, vision, blood pressure, glaucoma, and counseling and referral. Also available are a blood test panel (21 tests for \$12), the prostate specific antigen blood test (\$25), and colorectal cancer screening kits (\$4).

Volunteers from local nursing schools, allied health schools, hospital and community organizations will participate. For more information on Health-O-Rama sites, call 424-8500 during normal business hours.

Memory Lane

From the March 26, 1953, edition of the Farmington Enterprise:

- Sliced bacon was advertised at 39 cents a pound at Zhenner Meats on Grand River.
- A bill to ban hunting with firearms in Farmington Township was passed by the state House of Representatives.
- Bruster Bulck was leading the Kings and Queens Bowling League. Richardson's Appliance was second.
- Flags were flown at half staff to honor the late Gov. Alexander Grobeck, who held that office 1921-25. He died March 13, 1953.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21898 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, dropped off at the newspaper office, or faxed to 477-9722.