



# Farmington Observer

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## Proposal A RESULTS

Farmington	NO: 2,479	YES: 1,031
Farmington Hills	NO: 15,100	YES: 6,372
Statewide results	Figures not available at press time	

# Farmington says nay to 'A'

Statewide, they were counting Proposal A votes into the wee hours of this morning. But the proposal was a loser with Farmington-area voters.

At midnight, though, Proposal A was losing slightly statewide with 78 percent of the vote counted. At 10:30 p.m. Farmington Public Schools superintendent Michael Flanagan was still hopeful it would pass.

spoken in favor of Proposal A. The plan would've guaranteed at least \$4,800 per pupil spending for all districts, but, more importantly for Farmington Public Schools, eliminate school aid recapture.

BY LARRY O'CONNOR STAFF WRITER

A is first in the alphabet, but as a ballot proposal it ranked last among Farmington-area voters.

Wednesday. Voter turnout was higher than expected.

In Farmington, 43 percent of the city's 8,000 registered voters shot down Proposal A 2,479 to 1,031.

The turnout in Farmington Hills was also 43 percent. The ballot issue fared no better, going down 15,100 to 6,372.

Otherwise, he said, there is no going back in school finance reform.

"I think this is it," Flanagan said.

"... nothing substantial has come until now. I think this is the moment in history, you either change the system or it virtually stays the same."

Flanagan had been the most out-

spoken in favor of Proposal A. The plan would've guaranteed at least \$4,800 per pupil spending for all districts, but, more importantly for Farmington Public Schools, eliminate school aid recapture.

As for the resounding defeat in the Farmington-area, Flanagan attributed it possibly to voter suspicion of Lansing.

Backers of the proposal mounted a last-minute media blitz to convert people who were undecided. But, people who turned out were unwayed.

See PROPOSAL A, 8A

## IN THE PAPER

# TODAY

**To the rescue:** The Farmington Hills Fire Department had to be called after the Ferris wheel stalled, leaving some youngsters with a great view./3A

**Buttoned up:** A Farmington school trustee was wearing his choices on his coat at the Memorial Day parade./6A

## COUNTY NEWS

**Rails to trails:** Oakland County gets another bike/hike path, as West Bloomfield dedicates its 4.25-mile link in the Michigan Trailways network./5A

**Rouge revival:** Rescuing the Rouge these days involves more than just cleaning it out. Find out what you can do at your neighborhood site Saturday./9A

## OPINION

**Brighter town:** The Farmington-area young people honored recently for their volunteer spirit are deserving./18A

**A place to march:** Farmington-area folks never let a little cold snap keep them away from the Memorial Day parade./19A

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Two patriots: Farmington Place residents Doris Beasley (right) and Martha Turner wave the flag during the Memorial Day parade.

# Crowds show they remember

BY TOM BAER STAFF WRITER

The calendar said end of May, but the weather said November. Parade watchers probably expected a football game on TV afterward.

"Yeah, it's more like a Thanksgiving Day parade," said Keith Grattaw, a Farmington resident, as he stood along Grand River Avenue Monday.

He was one of several thousand people (and quite a few dogs) who lined Farmington's main street for the annual Memorial Day parade. They watched the clowns, politicians, high school bands, Scout troops, military people (current and former), and all the other trappings of a parade.

And no one seemed to mind that the temperatures were in the 50s.

Asked why she braved the elements, Ann Zuckman said, "My daughter's marching with North Farmington."

Ken Cooper of Farmington Hills had a ready answer when asked the same question.

"To be patriotic," he said. "Remember the veterans who fought and died and sacrificed." Added his wife, Barbara, "He was in the Navy."

Memorial Day parades have become a tradition for many Farmington-area people, and a little cold snap isn't going to keep them away.

"It's just something I do every year," said Nancy Cook of Farmington Hills. "You see all your neighbors."

Conversation ranged from impromptu debates on Proposal A (settled in yesterday's election), to the upcoming school election, to which parade exhibit was going past on Grand River.

Several hopefuls for the Farmington Board of Education were seen passing out their literature, and

See MEMORIAL DAY, 2A

# New York firm buys four downtown buildings

BY LARRY O'CONNOR STAFF WRITER

Some downtown Farmington businesses have a new landlord.

Reelyn, N.Y.-based Kimco Realty Corp. has bought Downtown Center Properties from Equitable One Management. The sale price was not disclosed.

Larry Lenchner of Equitable One could not be reached for comment.

In the deal, Kimco acquires four buildings with 98,000 square feet of store space spanning the southeast area of Grand River and Farmington Road.

Tenants include A&P, Damman

Hardware, Harmony House, Cargo Express, H&R Block and Dagwood's Deli. Kimco also owns Livonia Shopping Center as well as 181 other commercial properties in 23 states.

City manager Frank Lauhoff and assistant city manager Bob Schultz met with representatives of the company.

"I'm really encouraged," Lauhoff said at the Downtown Development Authority meeting Tuesday. "I think we're going to see some improvements."

The company has started on maintaining the property, doing cleanup and correcting roof problems and

brick work, according to Kimco spokeswoman Nadine Rafferty. A face lift to the existing structures is possible.

"We anticipate we'll be doing something like that," Rafferty said. "We don't have any plans right now."

The deal was completed May 13, and the package included a shopping center in Clawson, according to acquisition director Ed Seneman.

Seneman said Farmington fits what Kimco looks for in commercial property.

"We generally look for upside potential in the leases . . . and to increase value that way," Seneman

said. "We see Farmington as being fully built out and not being faced with much competition."

Kimco's reputation includes buying existing properties and enhancing them through re-tenanting, renovations and expansion. The company targets neighborhood and community centers which are below market-rent leases or have other potential.

Some tenants in its other properties include K mart and Wal-Mart.

What impressed Lauhoff is that Kimco has only sold five of the 200 properties it has owned.

"We don't sell," Seneman said. "We're long-term players."

## An honor is planted

Betty Frankel, the late Detroit Free Press gardening editor and a longtime Farmington Hills resident, was remembered with a tree planting in her honor Wednesday, May 26.

The Greening of Detroit provided and planted three flowering crabapple trees near the Conservatory on Belle Isle, the island park in the Detroit River.

Mrs. Frankel, a horticultural expert and nature lover, had asked that donations be sent to The Greening of Detroit in lieu of flowers upon her death.

"It's a very pretty setting," said Maureen Austin, urban forest coordinator for The Greening of Detroit. "I know Betty would have liked it."

## FARMINGTON FOCUS

Since Mrs. Frankel's request was published, The Greening of Detroit has received more than \$4,000 in donations, Austin said. The funds will help the organization carry on its work of urban restoration.

"Betty wanted to provide color to drab situations," said her husband, Richard. "She would always promote inner-city gardeners and give recognition to people who were interested in beautifying their environment."

## An arresting development

Several leading Farmington-area citizens are expected to turn themselves in Thursday, June 17, to the American Heart Association at the Farmington Community Center.

As part of the AHA Cardiac Arrest fund-raising event, the prisoners will be held behind bars until they donate sufficient "bail" to win release.

Richard Headlee, honorary chairman for the event, leads a group of volunteers who live and work in the Farmington area.

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.