

Miss Farmington Pageant runway roundup



There they are: The contestants for Miss Farmington/Farmington Hills are preparing for the annual pageant Wednesday, July 14, at Vladimirs in Farmington Hills. Contestants and their sponsors are: Julie Dugan (left front row), Ge Ge Bridal Shop; Kara Lewis, Farmington Elks; Trish Sabbe, Michigan National Corp.; Patti Paciocco, Corian Carpet; Valerie Ward, O'Sheehan's; Jennifer Hardy,

Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce; Kristy Vodzevics (left top row), Subway of Farmington; Missy Surma, Metro Bank; Julie Stockle, Heeny Sundquist; Kathi Fitzpatrick, Contemporary Awards; and Stacy Swanderski, COAM/POAM. Tickets are available at the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce.

Resident helps distill liquor-board operations

By BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills Republican Jackie Stewart says some privatization can help the state save money while maintaining reasonable controls on liquor sales and enforcement.

Stewart, 52, a longtime force in state GOP politics, is serving her second term on the state's Liquor Control Commission, a five-member body that regulates licenses and sales throughout the state.

A former aide to Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson, Stewart says the state has been switching to a delivery system that should save taxpayers money by increasing efficiency. The new system has allowed the state to close 66 small liquor outlets in northern Michigan.

"As it stands now, we can do some deliveries only biweekly," she said. "Some businesses have a hard time ordering for that long a period of time."

That, along with the inefficiencies of handling deliveries for many small liquor retailers, has brought about the change, she said.

"It's been done one way for 50 years," Stewart said. "So changing it is controversial."

Michigan is one of 18 "control liquor states" that regulate price and distribution statewide. For that reason, a fifth of a particular brand of whiskey will cost the same in Escanaba as it does in Farmington Hills.

And Michigan also restricts liquor advertising, something not done in states without controls. Although retailers can't undersell one another, most don't complain about the controls, she said.

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Jackie Stewart
Liquor Control Commission



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Stewart, who admits she knew little about the commission before being appointed in 1989 by then-Gov. James Blanchard, has warmed to the task. A former in-

vestigator in election fraud, Stewart was reappointed to the commission by Gov. John Engler. The commission is composed of three members from the political party of the governor and two members from the opposition.

"I guess I've seen it from both sides," she said.

The awarding of liquor licenses to packaged-liquor dealers, taverns and restaurants is determined by population, with a license for a retailer given for each additional 3,000 in population and a license for a tavern or restaurant (Class C license) given for each additional 1,500 in population.

"We sell the licenses for \$600," Stewart said. "But they can be transferred or resold for much more. They've been as high as \$300,000 in Birmingham."

Stewart, who lives in Farmington Hills with her husband, James, says she loves her job. But she knows that her job security is, well, tenuous.

"It's like any political appointment," she said. "It depends on who's in power."

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