

IN THE PAPER  
**TODAY**

**Question time:** *There were questions aplenty at a candidate forum for the six who'd like to serve on the Farmington Hills City Council.* /4A

**Something scary:** *Some young Farmington-area filmmakers have produced a Halloween horror flick to be shown at the Civic Theater.* /2A

**COUNTY NEWS**

**Charity time:** *Oakland County Republicans will donate money from their mock fund-raiser for Detroit mayoral candidate Sharon McPhail to the Salvation Army.* /6A

**What a dump:** *Yes, Oakland County has enough landfill space to last 20 years, but the state DNR recognizes that Canadian refuse is fast using up that availability.* /10A

**MALLS & MAINSTREETS**

**Looking good:** *The proposed 2-cent increase in Michigan's sales tax worries some retailers, but others say shoppers will take it in stride.* /7A

**TASTE**

**Peppers:** *Turn up the heat in foods with peppers, but handle them with care.* /1B

**Recipe Makeover:** *Make a brunch quiche with only 3.9 grams of fat per serving.* /1B

**STREET-SCENE**



**Hard set:** *When Matt Johnson visited the Metro Musicafe in Royal Oak last week he may well have cemented the future for his band, The The.* /4B

**INDEX**

- Classifieds . . . B-D
- Auto . . . B-D
- Index . . . 8B, 7C
- Employment . . . C, D
- Real Estate . . . B, C
- Crossword . . . 8B
- Malls . . . . . 8A
- Obituaries . . . 7B
- On the agenda . . . 7B
- Personal Scene . . . 8B
- Police, fire calls . . . 3A
- Sports . . . . . 1C
- Street Scene . . . 4B
- Taste . . . . . 1B

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## Absentees to make mark in vote



BY BILL COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

As election day nears, many local candidates believe their fate may already be sealed — in an envelope containing an absentee ballot.

Increasingly, absentee voters are having a bigger say in who is elected. And this year, with city council races

the only issue on the ballot, and a low turnout expected, the absentee vote is more important than ever.

In Farmington Hills, it could account for more than 50 percent of the vote, several city council candidates said.

"That number has gone up from 4,000 to 5,000 (5,735), to 6,000 (6,399)

in the last three elections," said Kathy Dorman, Hills city clerk.

Farmington Hills automatically mails out about 12,000 ballots to voters over 50 years of age within the city, she said. The bulk of the absentee vote comes from those seniors, Dorman said. And that fact has not been lost on candidates.

"In my first campaign (1985), I lost badly among absentees," said Farmington Hills Council candidate Jon Grant, an incumbent. "The second time (1989) I knew better. I had actually beaten Terry (Sever) at the polls (in 1985)."

In 1989, a successful campaign,

and again this year, Grant has bought duplicate mailing labels of those who receive absentee ballots and pays to have his campaign literature mailed to the same voters (16.5 cent bulk rate).

It works this way:

■ The city automatically mails out absentee ballot requests to about 12,000 seniors.

■ Once a large number of requests are received, the city prints mailing labels and sends out the ballots. A candidate pays 3 cents per label and receives a duplicate set, which is then

See **ABSENTEES**, 4A

### Thinking things out at the Mercy Center



SHARON LAMIR/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The religious life: Jenny Kreft, who intends to become a Roman Catholic nun, pauses for a moment at a Station of the Cross in a wooded area of the Mercy Center.

## Unto God: Sisters act on missions of Mercy

BY BILL COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

To many people, once a woman takes the vows to become a nun she must give up many freedoms. But to Jenny Kreft, that commitment will allow her the freedom to be and fulfill herself.

Kreft, 23, is a candidate to become a Sister of Mercy. It's something she had thought about while

she was growing up in Lansing, something she thought she would never know about when she contemplated marrying, but something that could become a reality within two years.

"It was something I thought about a lot in grade school," she said. "Really, I thought about it a lot later. At one time I thought that I would be married. I remember

thinking that it would be something I would never be able to experience."

But despite graduating from Michigan State University, having good friends, a good job and a relationship that she thought would lead to marriage, Kreft still thought something was missing.

"I had everything I needed," she said, looking reflectively at the view through the front window in an off-

ice at the Mercy Center on 11 Mile in Farmington Hills. "But it wasn't enough."

#### A life of service

And so, like nearly 7,000 other women throughout the world, Kreft has embarked on a life of service to an order that traces its roots to Ire-

See **SISTERS**, 3A

## Merchants hope Halloween fest scares up some green

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

While some downtowns are fretting about dire financial circumstances, Farmington's is having a harum-scarum time.

"This weekend's Farmington Halloween Fest is expected to be a bash frightful for visitors and delightful for downtown merchants."

People from surrounding communities are expected to pour in for the event that kicks off 6 p.m. Friday, Oct. 29, and runs through midnight.

A costume contest, live music, country line dancing, fortune tellers and trick-or-treating of downtown stores are some of the activities planned.

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Judy Downey,

Farmington Downtown Development Authority director

Saturday.

A costume contest, live music, country line dancing, fortune tellers and trick-or-treating of downtown stores are some of the activities planned.

"We're getting a lot of interest in

the area," said Farmington Downtown Development Authority director Judy Downey, who has been on radio stations trumpeting the fest. "We're just trying to broaden the appeal of downtown."

The Halloween fest is the first of

its kind for Farmington. The Downtown Farmington Business Association and the DDA are hoping to capitalize on the resurgence of celebrating ghouls and goblins.

Ideally, visitors will be dropping green paper with dead presidents on it in downtown stores.

In preparation, street lamps have been decked out in corn stalks. A pumpkin large enough to make a pie for the Seventh Fleet has been decorated outside of city hall.

See **FEST**, 2A

### Party with a cause

To old to trick or treat? You can still celebrate Halloween — and help a charity at the same time — at the Great Halloween Charity Bash at 8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 29, at the Metropolitan Musicafe on 12 Mile between Drake and Farmington roads. The charity bash will benefit the Children's Immune Disorder organization.

The event will feature Kevin O'Neill from a local FM radio station, as well as food, entertainment, prizes and a cash bar. Music will be provided by the Sgt. Rock band.

Guests are encouraged to come in Halloween costumes. They will be judged and prizes awarded. Tickets at \$15 and \$20 may be bought at the door. Call 390-6100 for reservations or more information.

### FARMINGTON FOCUS

#### On race and diversity

The Multicultural/Multiracial Community Council of the Farmington area will hold monthly forums on the second Tuesday of each month, beginning Nov. 9, at the Farmington Training Center, 33000 Thomas, Farmington. The forums will be 8-9:30 a.m. Anyone may attend.

The Nov. 9 forum will feature Evelyn Spears of the Institute for Healing Racism, Ann Wettlaufer and Deborah Taylor of the Oakland Center for Open Housing will speak at the Dec. 14 event.

#### Any contributors?

Anyone who wants to contribute to the 125th anniversary sculpture being built should send the checks made payable to the 125th Anniversary Sculpture, Farmington City Hall, 23600 Liberty, Farmington 48335.

If \$10,000 is raised, the sculpture, designed by Kephah Tazian of Farmington Hills, will be erected near the Farmington City Hall next spring.

For a story on the sculpture, see Page 3A in the Oct. 18 Farmington Observer.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21858 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, faxed to 477-9722, or dropped off at the newspaper office.