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IN THE PAPER TODAY

Bates praised: *Outgoing Hills Mayor Nancy Bates sought to recognize the accomplishments of a Special Olympics coach and organizer but had the favor returned.* /2A

Relief mission: *Air Force Staff Sgt. Michael J. Matthews of Farmington Hills is part of an effort to provide emergency aid to refugees in the war-ravaged areas of Bosnia-Herzegovina.* /3A

COUNTY NEWS

School funding: *Tense times pervade Lansing as lawmakers struggle to agree on a school funding package by the year's end.* /5A

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

Houseware heaven: *Cargo Express stores are closing and 15 shopping centers in the area must scramble to fill the vacant retail space.* /9A



Pot of gold: *Coffee Beanery president Joanne Shaw shares her business secrets for success.* /9A

TASTE

Easy brunch: *Gather friends and family for one last holiday fling.*

Recipe make over: *Cut the fat in clam chowder from 16.4 grams of fat per serving to 1.0 grams.* /1B

SPORTS

All-American: *Wayne Memorial High product Pierre Hixon, a defensive back from Western Michigan, was honored recently by UPI.*

Grid commitments: *Doug Brzezinski and Nick Kallas of Redford Catholic Central High are headed to Boston College and Iowa, respectively.* /1C

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Hills pacts set; future pay sits



BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Nobody got everything they wanted, but the unionized workers in the city of Farmington Hills do have a contract for the new year.

The city completed negotiations with the four unions representing city

workers: The Police Officers Association of Michigan, which represents 95 officers and police department workers; the 23-member Police Officers Labor Council, which represents the department's sergeants and lieutenants; the 64-member American Federation of State and County Municipal

Employees, which represents a wide variety of city employees; and the Teamsters, which represents supervisors.

The workers will receive a 4 percent raise for the period of July 1, 1993, to June 30, 1994. But because of the economy and the unsettled tax reform situation in Lansing that would affect future state revenue sharing and possibly impose a property tax freeze, the last two years of the salary scale were left open for now.

"We left a wage resopener in for the next two years (of the contract, 1994-

95, 1995-96)," said city manager Bill Costick.

Union representatives were willing to delay a decision on pay for the last two years of their contracts.

"We would rather have had a locked-in pay scale for the other two years," said Lavanne Roberts, negotiator for the local AFSCME chapter. "But we had to take a look at what's happening in the real world with the economy."

See **CONTRACTS**, 2A

Off to see the Wizard



SHARON LAMMERS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

"I don't think this is Kansas!" *Gill Elementary School hosted a production of the "Wizard of Oz," directed by fifth-grade teacher Cathie Gural. Principal Mike Duff made a surprise appearance (as the Wizard). Lindsey Mergeners played Dorothy, Oliver Schmitt played the scarecrow, Patrick Lockhart played the tin man and Christian Tobe played the cowardly lion.*

GM exec's expertise fuels Air Force appointment

BY DIANE GALE
STAFF WRITER

Life is like a staircase: One experience prepares you for the next challenge.

That creed has taken Rodney Coleman to the top when he was selected earlier this month by President Bill Clinton as an assistant secretary of the Air Force.

"I don't think I would be looking at being one of the four assistant secretaries of the Air Force if it hadn't been for General Motors," he said. "And I don't think I would have worked for General Motors if I wasn't a White House Fellow, and I wouldn't have been a White House Fellow if I hadn't done well at Howard University." Coleman said in a room of his Farmington Hills condo decorated with mementos of his accomplishments.

Photographs of his mother, a full-blooded Cherokee Indian; his father, two adult children and other relatives are on the opposite wall, all parts of what prepared Coleman for his biggest challenge.

Awaits confirmation

If confirmed by the Senate in February or March, he will be assistant secretary for manpower, reserve affairs, installations and environment. He will be responsible for closing



Rodney Coleman

Air Force bases throughout the United States.

"I will have policy responsibility for all civilian and military personnel in the Air Force worldwide," he said. "My staff will work with Congress, the states and local communities in getting those Air Force bases deactivated."

It's similar to the responsibilities Coleman, 55, had at General Motors, for which he oversaw plant closures. "Before I was shutting plants down

and now I'll be shutting down bases," said Coleman, who has been with GM, where he is director of urban and municipal affairs, for eight years.

While with the Air Force in Vietnam, Coleman directed the evacuation of a base under attack, an effort for which he was awarded the Bronze Star and the Republic of Vietnam's Technical Service Honor Medal, First Class.

Credibility is key

Responsible for working with local governments across the country where GM plants were closed, Coleman said it was difficult to go before community leaders and talk about the demise of plants that were the economic core. He added, however, it had to be done for the good of General Motors.

"If you're truthful and honest, you have to gain confidence of the local communities," he added. "We are in a partnership with them. We had great success across the United States, and I hope to be able to do the same for the Air Force."

Grateful to GM

His loyalty to General Motors is obvious.

"I love General Motors with every sense of respect and admiration for the largest industrial corporation in the world," he said. "Having gone through a blip on the screen, it will

again be the number one corporation, wedding profitability base with market share base. I wish I had the opportunity to be here earlier in my life."

Ending that career and on the verge of another, Coleman said the presidential nomination spurred a thorough FBI investigation including interviews about him with people all over the United States.

Coleman comes to the job with experience as a 1963 graduate of the Howard University School of Architecture, government official and Air Force officer. If confirmed, he will return to the Air Force in a civilian management position.

Credits family

He credits family support and love coupled with a drive toward perfection as key to his success.

"My mom and dad (Samuel and Rebecca) instilled in me and my brother (Eugene) at a very early age this thing called success, excellence, striving to do absolutely the best with what God gave me, to manifest every skill and talent to the ultimate and to always be prepared for success," he said, adding that preparation means having goals, virtues and morals.

"The responsibility is awesome, just as the responsibility with General Motors was awesome," he said.

Real downhill sledding

If the snow sticks, expect a lot of activity at the Shiawassee Sled Hill at the Farmington School Board office at Shiawassee and Farmington roads.

The sled hill will be open weekdays and weekends 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Supervised hours will be weekends only from noon to 6 p.m. A portable toilet is also on site for the sledders' convenience.

As with any activity, there are rules for sledders that must be observed while on the hill, such as:

- Use designated sled returns.
- Maximum of two people per sled.
- Alcohol is prohibited.
- Tobogganing, skiing and snow boards are prohibited.
- You must use an appropriate sled.

FARMINGTON FOCUS

■ Sled at your own risk. Sledding devices such as trays, toboggans, plastic bags, cardboard boxes, homemade sleds and other items that would pose a danger to other sledders should not be used.

The Community Sled Hill Safety Committee, founded in 1991, provides the fencing, hay bales and supervision and makes recommendations on all safety considerations regarding the hill.

Happy sledding!

Bob McCann, general manager for Metrovision in Oakland County, will speak at the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of

Commerce breakfast speaker series at 7:30 a.m. Jan. 12 at the Wyndham Gardens Hotel at 42100 Crescent Boulevard in Novi.

McCann will talk about "Legislative Changes in the Cablevision Industry."

The series, designed for busy people who want to be informed on topics of business, civic and personal interest, began this fall.

Anyone interested in attending should phone 474-3440 for a reservation. The cost, which includes breakfast, is \$10.

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