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IN THE PAPER

TODAY

Main corner: Farmington's Downtown Development Authority is considering further renovation to the planter near the Masonic Temple at Farmington and Grand River. /3A

The Big One: A newly-formed Farmington-area group wants to make sure WWII still looms large in people's minds 50 years later. /7A

Tragic puzzle: The suicide of a Farmington Hills teenager puzzles many who knew him. /7A

COMMUNITY LIFE

Pet those pets: Wet noses bring joy and smiles to patients in Farmington-area nursing homes. /13A

Improving schools: Guest columnist Eleanor Blum, a Farmington Hills resident and Detroit teacher, is happy to participate in a national forum. /13A

OPINION

Score to settle: They're mad — and they've vowed to get even. The city council should not underestimate the apparent losers in the Timbercrest development decision. /20A

Careful now: Proceed with caution when privatizing schools, urges Observer columnist Tim Richard. /20A

Write on! Letters . . . we get letters on a variety of subjects. /20A

LET'S GO!

Dancing: People of all ages are discovering how much fun Country Line Dancing is. /1B

Theater: Westland native Dan Cooney shows his rebellious nature in "Fiddler on the Roof." /2B

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City champs: Farmington public schools competed for city honors in girls and boys cross country Tuesday. /1C

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Brother testifies against Ponke



BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Anger and emotion were showing this week as the murder trial of Raymond Ponke got underway in Circuit Court. Ponke is accused in the hammer slaying of his wife in a Farmington dental office.

Emotional testimony from friends and family will give way to expert analysis when the first-degree murder trial for Raymond Ponke resumes Friday in Oakland County Circuit Court.

Raymond Ponke, 41, is accused of beating his estranged wife, Jackie Ponke, 36, to death with a hammer while she worked in a Farmington dental office Jan. 6.

A Boston doctor is expected to testify Friday that Raymond Ponke suffers from Huntington's Disease, a

degenerative mental disorder.

Two medical experts could be called by the prosecution to refute those findings.

Both sides have relied on eyewitness accounts and character witnesses, including recollections from the defendant's family.

A relative's testimony prompted an outburst from Raymond Ponke Tuesday. Nick Ponke said his brother made threats he was going to kill Jackie Ponke.

"Are you still doing phone sex?" Raymond Ponke yelled to his brother

as Nick Ponke left the court room.

Attorney Tim Ash tried to calm down his client. Later, during a recess, Raymond Ponke was visibly agitated. He told prosecuting attorney Robert Hodges, who called Nick Ponke to the stand: "You got a loser there. . . ."

Ponke continued to talk loudly to his attorney.

"I did more for him (Nick) than anyone else," Raymond Ponke said. . . . he talks out of both sides of his mouth."

See PONKE, 2A

Understanding through art



PHOTO BY GARY PERROZZI/STAFF

PHOTO BY GARY PERROZZI/STAFF. "If the area is going to be a success, you can't look at the city of Detroit as a liability."

Breaking down racial barriers with art

By TRAVIS GARDNER
STAFF WRITER

The artist from Farmington, Mich., is a 29-year-old man who lives in the Hazel Park area. He is a member of the Farmington Hills Art Council and is currently working on a project to bring art to the area.

Growing up in Farmington, Mich., he has seen the city's landmarks such as the Fox Theatre, Tiger Stadium and Joe Louis Arena are supplemented with art and historical notes in a gallery.

"None of the children think of the other children in a negative way. They see them playing down a hill playing on slides and swings."

"There are people who are afraid of art. They are afraid of what they see in the gallery. What the children in Detroit know about Farmington Hills is very little."

See ARTISTS, 2A

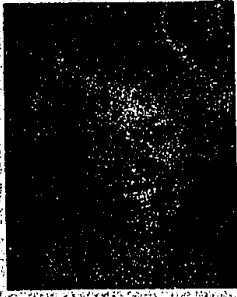
Crash claims former resident

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

When Farmington Hills residents Diane and Joe Zick saw the tragedy of the USAir Flight 427 near Pittsburgh last week on television, they could not have known how hard-hitting it would be.

Friday morning they received a call from their son-in-law, telling them that their daughter, Michelle Marie "Shelly" Zick, 36, had perished in the crash.

"We had no idea she was on the plane," said Diane Zick. Shelly's step-mother, who's one of three children she doesn't appear to know.



Michelle Marie "Shelly" Zick

She had taken an early flight home and her husband and son had been on hand to meet her at the airport.

The North Farmington High School graduate grew up in Farmington Hills and attended the University of Michigan, graduating in 1981 with a degree in journalism and communications. She moved to California to work for a newspaper.

City gives approval to Timbercrest plan, residents feel betrayed

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

An 11th-hour pitch by developer Gary Jonna for Farmington Hills City Council approval of his \$2-acre Timbercrest development convinced three council members to come on board for a 6-1 vote Monday.

Jonna's project remains a controversial one that has brought out fierce opposition from residents in the area of the 13 Mile and Middlebelt properties.

Council members Cheryl Oliveira and Terry Sever had opposed the project along with Vagnoni on June 20, when it was first approved by a 4-2 vote. Councilwoman Nancy Bates also had problems with it.

But over the weekend, the developer and his attorney Bob Carson met with Sever, Oliveira, Bates and City Manager Bill Costick and offered to further change the project to make it more palatable.

They convinced the three council members, but Voters' Voice, the citizens group opposing the project, saw the change as betrayal.

Podium is pounded

Voters' Voice member Sol Roseman characterized the process by which the council and developer came to agreement as one of "deceit" and pounded his fist on the podium at Monday's council session.

"If this is allowed, Farmington Hills will fall prey to the whims of unscrupulous developers," Roseman said, adding that the decision revealed him of something concealed and Detroit native Lilly Tomlin said, "No matter how cynical you get, you can't keep up."

See APPROVAL, 2A