

# Farmlington Observer

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## Voters pick mayor plan, road fix



**Voters said yes to mayors and money Tuesday. In Farmington Hills, voters will now elect the mayors. A millage for road improvements was passed by Farmington voters.**

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

In Farmington Hills, the question was: May or may we not vote for our mayor?

We may indeed, voters said Tuesday. A charter amendment to allow voters — not just the city council — to

elect a mayor passed. The measure was approved, 18,384 (65 percent) to 10,015 (35 percent).

"The campaign for mayor starts tomorrow," said Hills Councilman Aldo Vagozaj jokingly.

Hills voters shot down another proposal, which would have taxed residents .5 mills for five years for land

acquisition purposes. The measure failed 18,711 (68 percent) to 8,836 (32 percent).

Farmington residents approved a 1.6 mill tax for a road improvement program. It passed 2,310 votes (54 percent) to 1,967 (46 percent).

Passage of the Hills' charter amendment was unexpected.

Opponents of the measure said having a directly elected mayor would create partisan politics. They labeled it as an issue of "if it ain't broke don't fix it."

"I'm kind of surprised," said former Hills parks and recreation direc-

tor Dennis Fitzgerald, who opposed the amendment. "There wasn't a lot of effort to explain it one way or another."

"It passed. It's not profound, but it's not a profound enough an issue to get voters interested."

Councilwoman Cheryl Olivario supported the measure. She was surprised it passed by such a large margin.

Olivario disagreed that a directly elected mayor will create political divisions on council.

See **ROADS**, 3A

### ELECTION RESULTS

Below are unofficial local vote totals from Tuesday's general election. A check mark denotes overall winners.

#### GOVERNOR

Term is four years. Annual salary is \$112,025. Winner checked; vote totals are for Farmington and Farmington Hills.

Democrat  
Howard Wolpe ..... 10,914  
Republican  
John Engler ..... 23,980

#### U.S. SENATE

Term is six years. Annual salary is \$133,600. Winner checked; vote totals are for Farmington and Farmington Hills.

Democrat  
Bob Carr ..... 11,972  
Republican  
Spencer Abraham ..... 20,745  
Libertarian  
Jon Coon ..... 1,984  
National Law  
Chris Wege ..... 121  
Workers World  
William Roundtree ..... 70

#### U.S. HOUSE

Term is two years. Annual salary is \$133,600. Winner checked; vote totals are for Farmington and Farmington Hills.

11th District  
Democrat  
Mike Breshgold ..... 9,089  
Republican  
Joe Knollenberg (I) ..... 29,089

#### STATE SENATE

Term is four years. Annual salary is \$47,723. Winner checked; vote totals are for Farmington and Farmington Hills.

15th District  
Republican  
David Honigman (I) ..... 21,074  
Democrat  
Vicki Barnett ..... 11,531  
Libertarian  
David S. Thompson ..... 1,186

#### STATE HOUSE

Term is for two years. Annual salary is \$47,723.

37th District  
Democrat  
Richard M. Daley ..... 9,390  
Republican  
Jan. C. Dolen (I) ..... 23,350  
Libertarian  
Yegram Dervaharun ..... 978

#### COUNTY COMMISSIONER

Term is for two years. Annual salary is \$22,263.

18th District  
Democrat  
David Fernquist ..... 6,182  
Republican  
David Moffitt (I) ..... 11,524  
Democrat  
19th District  
Republican  
Donn Wolf (I) ..... 9,675  
Democrat  
Kurt Lopez ..... 3,996

#### JUDICIAL

New Judgeship  
Alice L. Gilbert ..... 14,391  
Bryan H. Levy ..... 11,510

#### EXISTING JUDGESHIP

David Breck (I) ..... 17,687  
Leslie Logan ..... 13,595  
Denise Langford-Morris (I) ..... 18,439  
Francis X. O'Brien (I) ..... 15,177  
Edward Sosnick (I) ..... 19,572

#### PROBATE COURT

Annual salary: \$98,508. Term: six years.

Existing Judgeship  
Joan E. Young (I) ..... 20,098

#### STATE BALLOT PROPOSALS

At Call constitutional convention  
Yes ..... 8,022  
No ..... 24,794

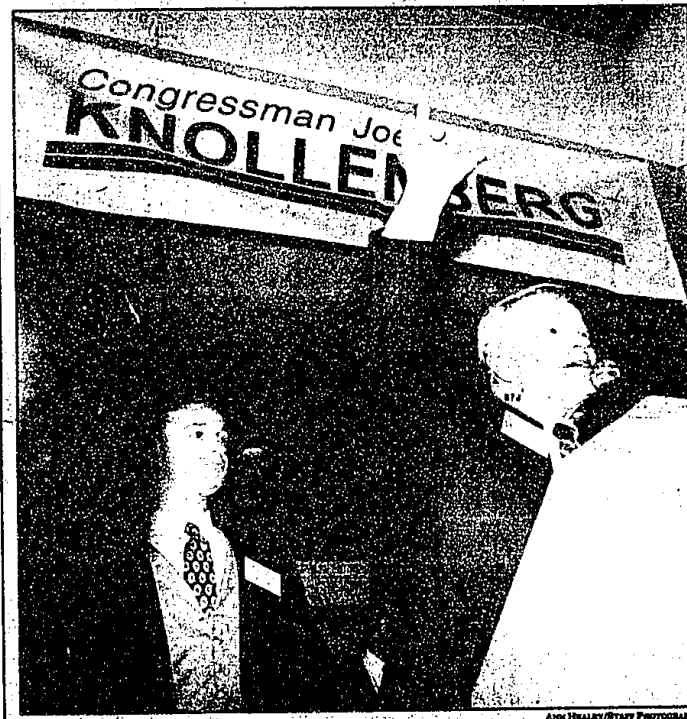
#### CITY OF FARMINGTON

1.6 mill increase for roads  
Yes ..... 2,310  
No ..... 1,967

#### CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS

Vote election of mayor  
Yes ..... 18,384  
No ..... 10,015

## Knollenberg brushes aside Breshgold



Leading the charge: Congressman Joe Knollenberg, R-Bloomfield Township, addressed supporters at the Farmington Hills Radisson Tuesday night as he defeated Democratic challenger Mike Breshgold. The congressman's son Steve is behind his dad all the way.

BY BILL COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

The political fortunes of the two 11th Congressional District candidates were in far apart as were their campaign night gatherings, on opposite ends of Grand River Avenue in Farmington Hills.

Incumbent Republican Joe Knollenberg of Bloomfield Township swept to a 2-to-1 win over Democratic challenger Mike Breshgold. The winner avoided the anti-Congress, anti-incumbency sentiment of voters in the district, state, and most of the country.

"The trend around the country is to throw the rascals (in Congress) out, and I'm one of the rascals," Knollenberg quipped during a victory celebration in the Farmington Hills Radisson.

"But I think part of it is support for GOP ideas," he added. "There is a mood for change."

Knollenberg and his campaign workers enjoyed not only his win, but those of fellow Republicans from Gov. John Engler on down.

"The freshman congressman said he didn't take anything for granted, making the rounds to polling places up until 7:15 p.m. He credited his challenger with a well-run campaign, but turned his attention to another Democrat, President Bill Clinton.

"It may be that will be the majority party," he said at 9:45 p.m. Tuesday. "But we'll still have a Democrat as president. He can veto."

Knollenberg said the president's assurance that he would work with a Republican Senate and Congress was a good start.

"He can't go down as a do-nothing," Knollenberg said.

Knollenberg's campaign manager, 19th District County Commissioner Donn Wolf, said Breshgold ran a positive campaign.

"Mike's a nice guy," he said. "But I think Joe's message was one voters liked. He even did well in Redford."

See **KNOLLENBERG**, 3A

## Moffitt, Wolf down challengers in 18th, 19th

BY BILL COUTANT  
AND LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITERS

To be an Oakland County Commissioner apparently means putting Democratic challengers out of commission.

Farmington-area Republican incumbents David Moffitt and Donn Wolf scored decisive victories in the 18th and 19th District races, respectively, Tuesday.

Moffitt received 11,524, or 64 percent of the vote to Democratic challenger David Fernquist's 6,182 votes (35 percent).

Wolf trounced Democratic hopeful

### OAKLAND COUNTY COMMISSION

Kurt Lopez in Farmington, garnering 73 percent of the vote (3,058 to 1,109). He also collected 69 percent of the vote in Farmington Hills (6,017 to 2,577).

"It's hammer time for Republicans," said Wolf, who doubled as Joe Knollenberg's campaign manager.

Lopez wasn't disconsolate. He chalked it up to being on the wrong side of a Republican fervor swooping the polls.

"I think it's very representative in how the district votes," Lopez said. "I

think people vote along party lines without giving much thought to it ... at least in this race."

Wolf, who is a former Farmington Hills council member, didn't take the election for granted. He mounted a full campaign with mailings, door drops and signs.

"My philosophy about campaigning is if you shoot for the stars maybe you'll make it over the fence," Wolf said.

Moffitt, a five-term incumbent, couldn't join his GOP brethren at the

Radisson for the celebration because he was practicing family values — he was caring for his two children down with the flu.

"I think people appreciate that we have tried to hold down government spending," Moffitt said. "People are coming around to the idea that more government costs more money."

While Moffitt waxed philosophical on his overwhelming win, challenger Fernquist crunched numbers and tried to understand how he could work so hard with little result.

"I'm really disappointed," he said.

See **COMMISSION**, 3A

## Votes are in: New scanners draw mixed marks

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

New scanning voting machines received mixed marks Tuesday from the Farmington-area electorate.

Many liked the expediency of the process, which involves marking a ballot with a pen and inserting it into a machine that tabulates the results. Farmington Hills used punch card ballots previously.

Several Oakland County cities have switched to the new system, which is designed to make counting votes easier.

Other voters were wary of the new technology, though.

At Farmington Hills' Precinct 6 in Lakeshore Elementary School, one voter was visibly upset as he was about to feed his ballot into the machine.

"I'm going to vote now, I don't want you to look,"

said Kevin Volpe to a precinct worker. She turned her head as his ballot was being registered.

"This is ridiculous," Volpe said later. "Isn't this supposed to be a secret ballot? If someone stands there and watches you feed your ballot in, they know where you stand. How is it secret?"

Farmington Hills resident Gisela Walsh echoed similar views: "It doesn't seem to be a secret ballot. I know she doesn't look, but everything is in the open."

But others barely noticed the difference. "It's not any quicker for me than punching a card," said Farmington Hills resident Jim Allberry.

Added Farmington resident Bernard Wolock, voting at City Hall: "It didn't present any improvements from where I stand. It seems to me to present more of an opportunity for malfeas."

"You could accidentally drop a pen and mark the ballot."

Messed up ballots could be replaced, though. There were a few of those as well as a few machine jams, said Farmington Deputy Clerk Janice Schmidt.

Both cities demonstrated the new machines for residents before Tuesday's election. A representative from the company which makes the machines was on hand in Farmington.

"Overall, for new equipment, everything has gone well," Schmidt said.

Officials believe the new method will eventually catch on. Some residents yearn for the days of curtained booths and levers, though.

"It's probably faster than the punch card," Farmington resident Bob Walker said.

But he added: "I think the old mechanical (machine) were faster."