

# Farmington Observer

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## IN THE PAPER TODAY

**Heritage of homes:** The Farmington Area Heritage Home Tour will be held Saturday and Sunday. A variety of historic sites, showing "A Century of Style," will be open.

/3A

**Going global:** Hillside Elementary students will have a global reach thanks to some people in the Community Partnership program.

**Tee-rific:** Golfers have yet to take a swing, but the inaugural Farmington Hills Police Benevolent Association Golf Classic looks like a success. /8A

## OPINION

**So many mergers:** It would be smart for consumers to remember that information is power as the free-enterprise feeding frenzy among communication companies picks up speed. /10A

## COMMUNITY LIFE

**Fantastic fashions:** A fashion show to benefit The Longacre House of Farmington Hills is planned. /13A

**In his opinion:** He lives in Farmington Hills but his kids go to school in the Walled Lake District. That's a problem for guest columnist Ray Dubin. /13A

## ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

**Famous name:** Russian artist Yuri Gorbachev, grand-nephew of former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, will be present at a special exhibit of his colorful paintings at the new Europa Art Gallery in West Bloomfield. /1B

## LOTTERY

The Wednesday Lotto jackpot was worth at least \$2 million. The Michigan lottery numbers for Wednesday, Sept. 13, are:

- DAILY 3: 994
- DAILY 4: 1427
- CASH 5: 8, 18, 22, 25, 35
- LOTTO: 2, 13, 15, 16, 33, 37

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# Some celebrate, others litigate



Power Road residents celebrated the city's decision to preserve their "natural beauty" setting. But wait! That click-click you hear is the sound of lawyers' briefcases being opened.

BY BILL COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

Here comes the judge! Residents who live on historic Power Road north of 11 Mile offered a burst of applause after the Farmington Hills City Council Monday ap-

proved a less dense zoning of the area.

But the legal wheels were already in motion Monday afternoon when the developer of a proposed subdivision filed suit against the city for changing the zoning. The change would severely limit the number of

houses that could be built on the developer's 22-acre parcel.

Residents had won the battle to keep their Natural Beauty Road as is, in all its bucolic splendor. But the legal war has just begun.

Although developer Joseph Trupiano's attorney Steve Kiousis had no comment after Monday night's decision, he had warned the city that changing the zoning of his client's property would have legal consequences for the city.

City Attorney John Donohue could not be reached for comment Tuesday.

The Farmington Hills City Council voted unanimously to rezone property on the road from RA-1 to RA-1A, a less-dense zoning that would conform to other historic neighborhoods in the area that are on similarly large lots.

"When we first had meetings about this, we got a lot of mixed reaction."

See ZONING, 2A



Now that's a mustard: Farmington High junior Brittany Dixon identifies a wild mustard plant with her classmates during a day project at Heritage Park.

# Students learn nature's lessons

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

In a blade of grass or a grain of soil there is a garden of discovery.

Farmington High students from Jeffrey Dwyer's Advanced Biology class took time out of the school room and ventured into Heritage Park for a project Monday.

They were collecting evidence to see how a meadow can evolve into a forest. The natural process is called succession, which involves in-depth and meticulous study.

"We weren't out there just picking flowers," Dwyer said.

Students measure out 10-by-10-meter areas and study them for changes. They examine various plots in open fields, at the edge of a forest and in the forest itself.

As they proceed toward the forest, they look for signs of age.

Students have to sketch their five "ecotones" from the top and the side, including a scale of the heights of branches. They have to provide a listing of the variety and number of plants and animals.

They also have to chart the various fungi growing on trees, rocks, and dead logs.

After gathering the information, students have to put it on a poster and describe. The poster has to include the interpretations, explaining clearly the patterns from one area to another.

Similar trips are planned for other biology classes, Dwyer said. Classes have done experiments at Maybury State Park in the past.

"They can see through time how a meadow can become a forest," he said. "They also compare it, saying, 'This is a lot better than book work.'"

Hands-on experiments give credence to scientific theories discussed in class. Many students in Dwyer's advanced class will more than likely major in science at college.

Science is a particularly strong area in Farmington Public Schools. Students regularly score in the 80s on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program science tests.

# Sense of humor keeps stress at bay



Editor's note: This is the second in a series of articles about stress and how people cope with it.

BY BILL COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

Karen Doerfler found herself on the verge of divorce, pregnant with twins

that faced medical problems, and knowing that she would have to support five children on her own.

One of the twins died from complications and Doerfler, who loved her job as a critical care nurse, developed an allergy to latex. That made work in a normal hospital setting impossible. She was on her own with four kids.

She was at rock bottom.

"A friend of mine convinced me to go to a comedy club," she said. "I saw a comedian named Gallagher and I really laughed. A sense of humor is the key."

The Farmington Hills resident has been able to laugh in the face of stress that at times has been overwhelming. She has developed her own in-

home care business for elderly patients who otherwise would have to go to a nursing home.

"That's been gratifying," she said. "But sometimes there is a lot of stress."

Doerfler, 34, balances her schedule

See STRESS, 3A

# Diversity should be accepted, managed

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Dealing with diversity doesn't have to be just about race and gender. And, it's not necessarily measured in quotas, William Brooks said.

It's not exclusively a social and moral issue, Brooks added. Rather, managing diversity in corporate settings includes differences in age, educational background.

"It's not whether you want it or not," said Brooks at Tuesday's Farmington/Farmington Hills Multicultural Multiracial Council meeting. "It's whether you can manage diversity and handle it properly."

If done properly, companies can get the most out of employees. Which, in turn, can do nice things for the bottom line.

And as any bean-counter can attest, nothing speaks more loudly in

corporate America than a healthy profit margin.

The vice-president of General Motors kicked off this season's forum in a business-like manner. Brooks' presentation will be replayed on cable Channel 12 throughout the month.

Since 1991, Brooks has been coordinating GM's diversity programs. Previously, he served in the Bush Administration as Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment Standards.

His presentation at the Farmington Training Center was part business seminar and part motivational talk.

Managing diversity means understanding employees and treating them with dignity and respect, Brooks said.

That may mean taking into account when a father cannot attend a mandatory meeting because it's his

See FORUM, 6A