

# Farmington Observer

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**Write on!** Once again, Farmington Observer readers aren't shy about sharing their opinions in letters to the editor. /8A

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**Oh, Mercy!** The career of a Farmington Hills parochial school principal seems to have gone full circle. /11A

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## Officials on diversity: Just do it



BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Three elected governmental bodies of the Farmington area threw their full support behind ongoing diversity efforts Tuesday.

But they're only 19 people — a tiny fraction of the 85,000 who live in both cities.

What do the Farmington and Farmington Hills council members and the Farmington school trustees have in common? A desire to manage diversity in the community, the focus of a joint meeting at the Farmington Training Center.

Others outside of officialdom have to come forward if multiculturalism is to work, said members of the Farmington Board of Education, Farmington and Farmington Hills city councils.

Diversity — and how to deal with it — highlighted the annual joint meeting at the Farmington Training Center.

In the past, the elected three have discussed establishing a police liaison school program, decentralized teen center and conflict resolution program.

"I think moving into something like this is just logical for two communities that have been very proactive in this," said Farmington City Manager Frank Laubhoff.

Members of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Multicultural Multiracial Community Council gave a report on its visit to a Cleveland suburb where integration is being carefully

managed.

Cleveland Heights has been recognized nationally for its nine-point plan on integration, which has curbed the accompanying trend of white flight.

All three elected bodies agreed both communities should adopt similar guiding principles. The steering committee of the multicultural council will develop those themes.

Each elected body would then consider formally adopting such a plan.

See DIVERSITY, 2A

### A time for families in Farmington Hills



SHARON LA MIRA/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

**Lots to see and do:** The Bell family of Farmington Hills attended the recent Family Night at the Activities Center. Margaret holds 2½-year-old Christopher, and Doug holds 3½-year-old Amy.

## Exotic critters fascinate Family Night crowd

BY ALLEN WINOBLAD  
STAFF WRITER

Have you petted a python lately? How about an Indian Munjiaz deer in an African saval?

Chances are you have . . . if you're among the hundreds of Farmington-area residents who attended last Friday's third-annual Family Night at the William M. Costick Activities Center.

Dads, moms and kids of all ages

enjoyed a full schedule of events throughout the evening including visits with exotic animals, craft making, a tumbling demonstrations, a live stage performance and open swimming.

Team mascots "Paws" and "Roxy" from the Detroit Tigers and Detroit Lions were on hand to sign autographs while Farmington Hills Fire Department clowns roamed through Shannon Hall delighting families with balloon and magic

tricks.

The activities were hosted by the Farmington Hills Recreation Division along with the Commission on Children, Youth and Families.

"This (Family Night) is really very nice. We get to go out and meet people and it's good for the kids," said Farmington resident Linda Bywaloc, who came to the Activities Center with her husband Ron and their two children Michael, 8, and Stacey, 4. "When I mentioned to the

kids that there would be animals here, they couldn't wait to come," she said.

"And it is nice to get out this time of year," added Ron. "It's neat to have a day that families can do something like this together. I was pretty excited about it myself, especially the animals and nature things."

Indeed, the animals were a major

See FAMILY NIGHT, 3A

## West Bloomfield woman makes board bid

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Ellen Bouchard may live outside city limits, but she won't let a mailing address limit her from running for the school board in the district her children attend.

Bouchard, 47, is a West Bloomfield resident but her three children attend Farmington Public Schools, which boundaries include a portion of the south end of the township. Some 231 West Bloomfield children attend Farmington Schools.

Bouchard has taken out a nominating petition and said she intends to run for a seat in the June 10 election.

Two seats are open. Farmington Hills parent Priscilla Brouillette has

### FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

also taken out a petition and said she'll run.

Trustee and board President Joe Svoke plans to seek a second term.

"I'm an advocate," said Bouchard, who is a speech language pathologist. "I have a need to understand what happens from the other side."

Bouchard has twins, Adam and Melissa, 16, who attend North Farmington High and a daughter, Denn, 13, who goes to Warner Middle School.

She's been active in the Eagle Elementary PTA, past president of the Warner Middle School Parent Forum,

and member of the middle school's Building Leadership.

At the district level, Bouchard has been a member of the Community Forum and been involved with the Mission 2007 strategic planning initiative.

She works full time in her business, Functional Rehabilitation Inc., which provides home care for people who have traumatic brain injuries.

Bouchard has a master's degree in Speech Language Pathology and a bachelor's degree in Special Education. She earned both degrees at Wayne State University.

The Pennsylvania native also has a TV and radio background, including a stint as an on-air consumer reporter on WCAU-AM in Philadelphia. She did writing and editing in the WKYZ-TV (Channel 7) newroom.

Little things remind West Bloomfield residents that they belong to a different school district, Bouchard said.

For one, Farmington Board of Education meetings are not cablecast in West Bloomfield. Continental Cable wires West Bloomfield; Time Warner handles the Farmington area.

See BOUCHARD, 2A

### Let's honor volunteers

Farmington Hills' Commission on Children, Youth and Families is asking: Do you know

- someone who . . .
- Gives just a little bit more?
- Spends his/her time for others?
- Serves on committees or clubs?
- Is always there when needed?
- Volunteers in any way?

Those people deserve recognition, commission officials think. Now, Farmington-area residents can say thank you to volunteers by submitting their names for possible awards.

### FARMINGTON FOCUS

Award winners will be announced at the Farmington Hills' volunteer Recognition Night at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, April 26, at the William M. Costick Activities Center, 11 Mile Road east of Middlebelt.

An entry form for honoring volunteers may be found on page 4A. Please fill it out and mail it to the commission at the address indicated. For more information, call Kim Healey at 473-1813.

### Republican Club president

Ben Marks, former Farmington Hills Mayor and Councilman, was elected president of the Farmington Area Republican Club during the group's annual meeting Feb. 14.

Marks, executive director of The Longacre House of Farmington Hills (formerly the Community Center), served on the Hills Charter Commission (1972), the City Council (1983-92) and as mayor (1987).

He was also president of the Michigan Municipal League in 1992, receiving statewide recognition for his leadership during the term.