

Farmington Observer

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VOLUME 109 NUMBER 85

MONDAY, JULY 22, 1996 • FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN • 62 PAGES

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IN THE PAPER TODAY

Changes needed: A development planned for the 13 Mile Orchard Lake roads needs some work if it's to be accepted by the Hills Council. /A2

Saturday is market day: The cold, wet spring has cut down on the fruits and vegetables usually available at the DDA's Farmers Market. /A3

She has the right: Sorry, Andy, but Citizens of the Year do ride in the Festival Parade around here. /A6

It's no contest: A Farmington Hills teen has pleaded no contest in a home invasion case. /A4

School fix-up: Clarenceville's schools are in for a major renovation. /B6

SPECIAL SECTION

All that Jazz: Look for a special guide to this weekend's Jazzfest in downtown Birmingham in today's paper.

SPORTS

Summer baseball: Mike Fisher's late-inning heroics enabled the South Farmington Blues 16-year-old baseball team to defeat the 15-year-old Blues last week. /1C

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'Would I send him again? I would'

Some Farmington Hills parents have a special reason for following news reports of the Flight 800 tragedy. Their children recently returned from a trip — on a jet airliner — to France.

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

A side note to the tragic story of 230 people killed on a flight that exploded on the way to Paris didn't escape some Farmington Hills parents.

News that a TWA flight 800 carried 16 high schools students, a teacher and chaperones from Mon-

tsourville, Pa. — who were en route to France on a class trip — put a different light on a similar journey their children took in May.

Twelve O.E. Dunckel Middle School students went to Cergy, France as part of a Back-to-Back exchange program.

"It kind of hit home," said Sue Williams, whose son Andrew was

part of the group. "He's been there. He's been on a flight to Paris. You think for a second, would I send him again? ... I would."

Experiences their child would gain from such a trip outweigh the fears of a remote chance a plane would crash, parents said.

Yet their thoughts are with the parents in Montoursville, whose children died in the crash.

"My greatest nightmare would be to lose one of my children," Williams said.

Montoursville students spent two years raising money for the trip to France, reports said. Duke sales

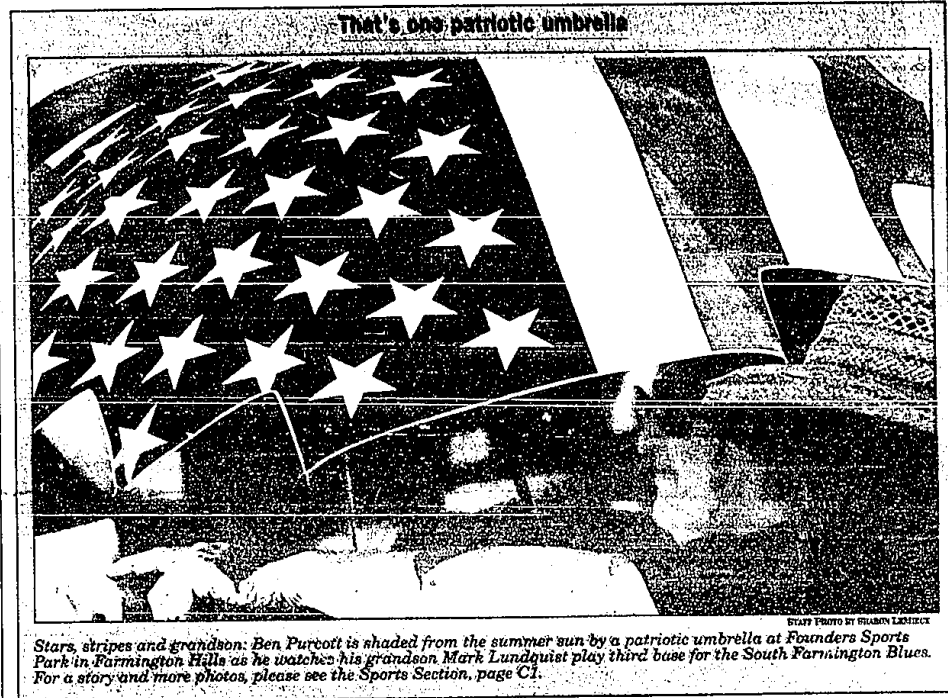
and car washes took place in the small community, which rallied around the excitement of its children going abroad.

Parents and students at O.E. Dunckel felt the same type of excitement and anticipation days proceeding their trip.

"It's just thrilling," said Andrew Williams, 13. "The anticipation of going to a whole new country I haven't been to before, it's a whole new world."

Said another student Karen Doerr: "I love the program so much

See FLIGHT, A2



Stars, stripes and grandson: Ben Purcott is shaded from the summer sun by a patriotic umbrella at Founders Sports Park in Farmington Hills as he watches his grandson Mark Lundquist play third base for the South Farmington Blues. For a story and more photos, please see the Sports Section, page C1.

Clerks: More postage is due on bigger ballot

BY WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Farmington and Farmington Hills voters will have some weighty decisions facing them in the Aug. 6 primary.

And according to the post office, some absentee voters haven't realized just how weighty.

"The first day we received our absentee ballots (back from voters in the mail), we had an \$87 postage due bill," said Farmington Hills City Clerk Kathy Dornan. "We told the post office not to accept any more and to send them back."

Dornan, who is also interim city manager, said the absentee ballots any "affix the proper postage" on them. In past elections, one first class stamp was enough. But not this time.

"Because it is a presidential election year, the ballot is bigger," she said. "One stamp isn't enough."

In Farmington, there have been no problems so far. "I think that's because most of our absentee voters bring them in," said Farmington Clerk/Treasurer Fatsy Cantwell.

Dornan said the city can't afford to pay the postage due on all of the estimated ballots that would be mailed back.

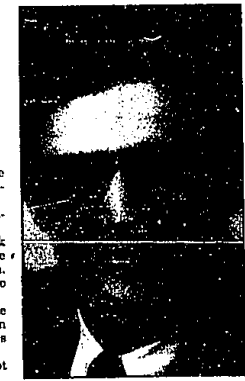
"That could be over \$1,000," she said.

Dornan said at this point she is not worried about voters missing out because their ballots were returned postage due. She said the post office simply returns the ballots with the amount due. The absentee voter can then add the necessary postage and remail the ballots.

"We will pay the postage due for anything we receive on the Monday or Tuesday (election day)," Dornan said. "We don't want someone's vote not to count because of the postage due."

But in the meantime, absentee voters should make sure they have enough postage on the ballots, she said.

About 1,700 absentee ballots out of an estimated 9,500 have already been received, she said.



Jerry Ellis

BY WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Money and how to get it for the City of Farmington Hills seemed to be one of the biggest concerns for the two candidates running for city council.

Massie Kurzeja and Jerry Ellis squared off in a forum sponsored by the Council of Homeowners July 16. The two are running for the seat vacated by now-Mayor Aldo Vagnoni. Kurzeja was appointed to fill the seat until the Aug. 6 primary.

The winner will have to run again in November of 1997.

Panelists Tom Baer, editor of the Farmington Observer, and Jim Starks, editor of the Northwest Gazette, provided most of the questions. Bob Bruckner of COHA moderated and read questions from the television audience. The forum was broadcast live beginning shortly after 7 p.m.

Both candidates said with the end of new development, the city would have to become even more efficient

COUNCIL RACE

at spending money, getting grant money and redeveloping what is here.

Ellis, an attorney and 21-year resident, said Farmington Hills was in good financial shape, but had gotten there by financing its growth with the resulting increased tax base.

"The problem is that as the price of goods and services goes up, the tax base is not likely to because we are 98 percent developed," Ellis said, adding that road money and capital improvement money would be running out by the end of 1997.

His solution would include redeveloping "declining" commercial areas to improve the city while increasing the tax base. In addition, new services would have to be separately taxed only if voters approved or financed like the ice arena, through bonds paid back with proceeds.



Massie Kurzeja

See COUNCIL, A2

Election events listed

Farmington-area voters take note: The following election-related events are coming up in the near future:

- "The Ben Marks Show," a cable TV program on Time Warner's Channel 12, will feature an interview with Cathy Webb, one of four Republicans in the race for the state house in the 37th District, at 9 p.m. Tuesday, July 23.
- At 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 24, the two Farmington Hills City Council candidates, Massie Kurzeja and Gerry Ellis, will participate in a debate at the Farmington Hills City Hall, 11 Mile and Orchard Lake roads. The event is sponsored by the Farmington Area Democratic Club.
- On the following Tuesday, July 30, at 7:30 p.m., the six candidates in the 87th District State House race — Republicans Terry Sever,

FARMINGTON FOCUS

Cathy Webb, Andrew Raczkowski and Linda Jolicoeur, and Democrat Carl Christoph and Steve Dibert — will debate in a forum at the Farmington Hills City Hall. Sponsor is Oakland Area League of Women Voters.

Both forums are open to the public, and are cablecast live on Channel 8 on Time Warner, the cable TV system for the Farmington area. They will be rebroadcast several times before the election, a cable official said.

The elections — the Democratic and GOP primaries and the Hills Council race — will be settled Tuesday, Aug. 6.

Applause for her!

Lorene Patel, a registered nurse, has been named "Applause! Applause!" winner for July at Bedford Continuing Health Center, a nursing facility in Farmington Hills.

Her emphasis is developing patients' functional ability and facilitating patient and family education.

Patel and her husband, Rusty, live in Fenton.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 3341 Grand River, Farmington 48335; faxed to 477-9722; or dropped off at the newspaper office. For the computer literate, the Internet E-mail address: pocky@centline.com.