

Farmington Observer

VOLUME 109 NUMBER 86

THURSDAY, JULY 25, 1998 • FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN • 96 PAGES

SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

IN THE PAPER
TODAY

Spreading good cheer: Several Farmington-area girls are getting the chance of a lifetime, and they get to see the Olympics, too./A3

Sheriff candidates: The race for Oakland County sheriff is a hot one in the Republican circle, and we've got their views on issues facing the law enforcement community. The winner in the Aug. 6 election will face off in November's general election against the winner of the Democratic contest./C7, 8

OPINION

The Observer says . . . So who is the Farmington Observer endorsing in that red-hot State House race? What about the county sheriff's primary? The answers can be found on the editorial page./A8

Letter ript: Observer readers have outdone themselves endorsing their favorites in the House race./A8-9

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

At the Zoo: The Detroit Zoo leads the way into the 21st Century with the \$8.2 million Wildlife Interpretive Gallery, the only facility of its kind in the world./B1

SPORTS

Winding down: Farmington summer baseball players are finishing the regular seasons and heading into tournament play./C1

It's incredible: Players in the Girls Incredible Fast Pitch Softball League provide plenty of action./C1

AT HOME

Gateway Garden: Explore a New World with the Gateway Garden, which is being dedicated this weekend at the University of Michigan./Section D

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Hills to pay postage on ballots



If you're mailing your absentee ballot, the city of Farmington Hills would like you to put on the correct postage — 55 cents. But the city will pay for ballots that arrive postage due.

BY WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills doesn't want to confuse postal workers, but they are asking them to deliver postage due ballots to the city.
 At Monday's regular meeting, the council voted 6-0, with Councilman Jon Grant absent, to pay the postage due on absentee ballots for the Aug.

6 primary.

"At the beginning of month residents are getting their tax bill," said Councilman Terry Sever, a state house candidate himself in the primary. "Asking for the additional postage is not a good PR move for us."

The primary ballots were sent to absentee voters with the instruction

to "affix the proper postage," said City Clerk Kathy Dornan. In most past primaries, one 32 cent stamp would have done the job.

But with a larger ballot in the presidential election year, it takes 55 cents to mail in the ballot. Dornan said the city had paid \$87 in postage due the first day the absentee ballots came in. She instructed the post office to return the ballots to voters so they could add the extra 23 cents.

House candidate Linda Jolicœur offered to pay the difference late last week.

"One woman told me she was so

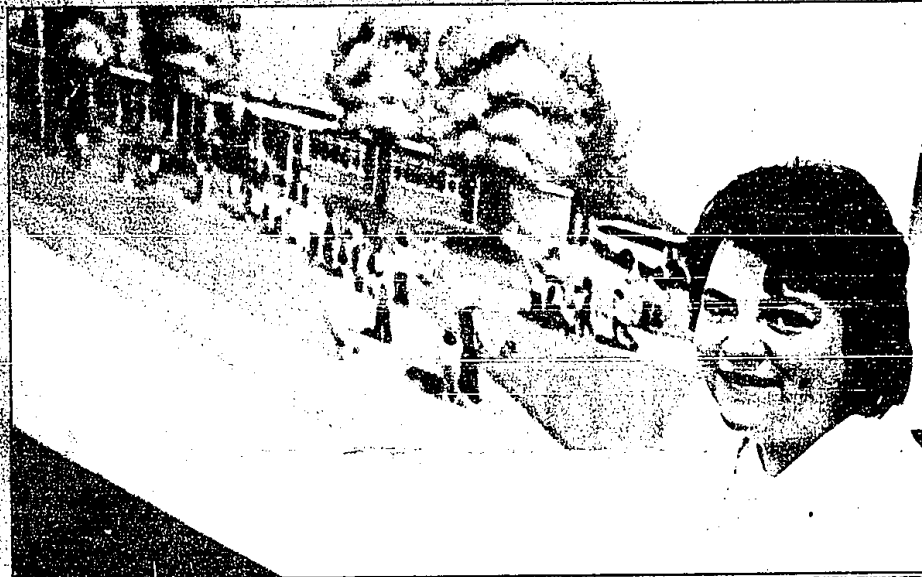
angry she wanted to tear the whole thing up," Jolicœur said. "I promised her I would do anything I can to make it easier for her and other seniors."

Mayor Aldo Vagnassi said he appreciated Jolicœur's offer, but added that the city should handle the situation.

Dornan said if the city paid all of the postage due for absentees, it could amount to more than \$1,000. But Councilwoman Nancy Bates said that would be cheaper than some alternatives.

See **BALLOTS A2**

School life's a picture



STAFF PHOTO BY BRILLIANT LIGHTS

It's all yours, Melody DiGiglio, a parent of William Grace Elementary School children, donates a mural intended to hang in the hall for all to see. The painting, which depicts a school day in June, includes elements of her own children.

They gave at the school house

BY ELIZABETH
STAFF WRITER

Some would argue that the money expressed with tax dollars to many Farmington area businesses and businesses also pay it back in a ribbon and a bow of love.

"Gifts to the schoolhouse" is a term used to describe the donations that parents and other community members make to support their children's education.

One such donation is the mural painted in a hallway at William Grace Elementary School depicting a school day in June. The mural, which includes elements of the artist's own children, was donated by Melody DiGiglio, a parent of William Grace Elementary School children.

The mural is a beautiful work of art that captures the essence of a school day. It features children playing, reading, and learning in a classroom setting.

DiGiglio said she was inspired to create the mural after seeing a mural at another school. She wanted to give back to the schoolhouse in a meaningful way.

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Connector should ease Hills traffic woes

BY JENNIFER PLACINTO
STAFF WRITER

The effort to alleviate traffic congestion in Oakland County continues Friday when Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) officials kick off the second phase of construction for the Haggerty Road Connector.

The total project, which is expected to cost approximately \$70 million for construction alone, is anticipated to be completed by the year 2000 provided funding is available.



according to Haggerty Connector Assistant Project Manager Victor Encino.

The first phase of the project was completed in the October 1994 and now carries motorists from the interchanges of I-96, I-275, I-896 and M-5 to 12 Mile Road, just west of Haggerty.

Phase I included the construction of 12 miles of ramps and multi-lane connector roadway and seven new bridges.

The ceremony for Phase II is scheduled for 10 a.m. Friday on the Haggerty connector bridge over 12 Mile Road in Novi. State and local

officials, including keynote speaker Robert Welke, Director of MDOT, are expected to attend the ceremony.

Phase II construction will extend an eight-lane boulevard style roadway with Michigan turnarounds from 12 Mile Road north to 14 Mile Road between Haggerty and Meadowbrook Road, MDOT office engineer Molly Grabowski said.

Sited for completion in 1999, the second phase includes 11 miles of new pavement, 11 ramps and

See **HAGGERTY, A3**

New name, owner

That little store just west of the Civic Theatre has a new name (Bead Bohemia) and a new owner (Leslie Ogleby). The name of the business was incorrectly listed in the Farmington Founders Festival guide published in the July 8 Observer. The shop used to be known as Ying Yang.

Election events coming up

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

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interview with Linda Jolicœur, one of four Republicans in the race for the State House in the 37th District at 6:30 p.m. Friday, July 26.

■ On the following Tuesday, July 28, at 7:30 p.m., the six candidates in the 37th District State House race — Republicans Terry Sever, Cathy Webb, Linda Jolicœur, and Democrats Carl Christoph and Steve Dibert — will participate in a debate at the Farmington Hills City Hall, 11 Mile and Orchard Lake roads. The

forum, open to the public, will be cablecast live on Channel 8 on Time Warner, the cable TV system for the Farmington area.

■ "Rappin' with the Senator and Steve," a fundraiser for House Democratic candidate Steve Dibert, will be held at 6 p.m. Wednesday, July 31, at the Botsford Inn on Grand River northwest of Eight Mile Road. State Sen. Gary Peters, D-Pontiac, will speak. Cost is \$25 per person. Call 315-9698 to RSVP.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 23411 Grand River, Farmington 48335; faxed to 477-9722; or dropped off at the newspaper office. For the computer literate, the Internet E-mail address: pa.kj@conline.com.