

Farmington Observer

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IN THE PAPER
TODAY

Pass the dish: Shoppers for satellite dishes have more to choose from and, in Farmington, one less regulation to worry about. /A3

Oh, so fine: Farmington Hills Mercy High School is saying 'So fine' to the fine arts in a renovation of its facility. /B6

TASTE

Apples: Fall is crunch time in Michigan, one of the top producers of apples. /1B

Laura's Fat Free Kitchen: By substituting a few ingredients, you can drastically cut the fat in apple coffee cake. /1B

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

Sign of the times: Oakland Mall in Troy dedicates its I-75 pylon with a party and a time capsule. /A10

Fall Spectacular: One Oakland County community's fashion benefit helps teens who survived cancer battles and now face college tuition costs! /A10

INDEX

Artistic Events	B3	Obituaries	B6
Auto report	D10	O&E On Line	A11
Classifieds	B-D	Police & fire	A4
Crossword	B8	Sports	C13
Malls	A10-11	Taste	B1-2
Movies	B4-5		

Cable customers caustic



BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

When it comes to the local cable TV franchise, both residents and officials want more reliable financial information Time Warner. Otherwise, the franchise may not be renewed.

Bottom line: The Farmington regulating authority for cable television wants reception of financial figures to be better focused. Otherwise, one member of the Southwestern Oakland Cable Com-

mission threatened to do all he can to hold up the franchise renewal for Time Warner, which serves Farmington and Farmington Hills cable subscribers. The franchise agreement between SWOCC and Time Warner expires next year. SWOCC members want to set up a

special meeting with Time Warner officials to go over financial reports. Farmington Hills Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi's was but one volley between SWOCC, Time Warner officials and audience members at Tuesday's commission meeting. "I don't feel good after one of these meetings," Vagnozzi said. "It's always, 'Yeah, we were supposed to get that in but we didn't get it in on time,' or 'We were supposed to give you 12 months (of financial reports) but we only gave you nine.' "I don't like it anymore. I seriously will do what I can to hold up the

renewal unless we start getting some answers." Confusion stems from a discrepancy in a financial report submitted by Time Warner and another provided by the cable company's auditor. Time Warner's report showed revenues at \$10.7 million while an independent auditor posted the company's earnings at \$14.8 million. As part of the franchise agreement, cities receive money from the cable company based on revenues. Time Warner's initial financial

See **CABLE**, A3

Something's fishy here!



STAFF PHOTO BY SHARON LAMBERT

Mercy split: Posing as the deep-sea fish mascot of Mercy High School, Keri Mato gets her "nose" tweaked by fellow junior Amanda Nora at the Catholic school's annual basketball tournament. Mato was handed down the honor of mascot from her sister Kristi Mato, who graduated in May. See the Sports Section for tournament action.

Many Asians shrug over Koga impact

BY TODD WICKS
STAFF WRITER

■ 'It's been about a year. People were shocked, but they will forget about it.'

Rocky Shimazu
—Farmington Hills

For anyone worried about how the Itsumi Koga murder plea might affect the local Japanese community, the answer seems to be: not much. Since the Farmington Hills mother was charged with the killing of her month-old son last year, there has been media speculation that the

unfavorable publicity might dissuade Japanese-owned businesses from moving to the Farmington area, or could somehow strain eco-

nomic relations on an international level. But the reaction of local Asian-owned business people to the event,

which saw its defendant enter a plea of "guilty, but mentally ill" last week, seems relatively mild. Hitachi on Grand River and Akebono Brake Industries declined to comment, as did Nissan Research and Development, where Koga's husband, Akhiro, works as an engineer. Meanwhile, the owner of one

See **KOGA**, A2

Team will clean Eight Mile scene

BY TODD WICKS
STAFF WRITER

Starting Sept. 27, local residents can expect a cleaner, safer, more attractive Eight Mile Road. That Friday, the Eight Mile Clean Team campaign will begin. Business owners and city governments alike will help put a new shine on the corridor, which stretches 27 miles and forms the southern border of the Farmington area.

Employees will pick up litter, businesses will unveil improvements and expansions, and a new emphasis will be placed on bringing people back to the area. "We've seen increasing pressure to do this from almost everyone we talk with in the corridor," said Charlan Douglas, executive director of the Eight Mile Boulevard Association, which is organizing the cleanup. The Association counts among its members the 13 communities and three counties along Eight Mile from I-275 to I-94.

"Our police departments say it will help their work, citizens' groups tell us it affects they way they feel about Eight Mile, particularly for shopping, and our member governments have asked for this also," she said.

Unlike the Detroit Clean Sweep program, no volunteers have been recruited for the upcoming campaign. "Most of Eight Mile is owned and operated by businesses," said Douglas, "so we've asked them to take responsibility for their own establishments. If there's an empty lot next door, we'd like them to keep that clean. If they're going to repave their parking lot or put up a new awning, we'd like them to have it done by the 27th so we can look at it the next day and say, 'Ta-da!'"

The Association has put months of planning into the clean-up effort. "They've done surveys and talked to people about how they view the area, so they have an idea of what people are looking for and how the businesses feel about being there," said Jody Soronen, executive director of the Hills Chamber of Commerce. "Hopefully the people who live and work along the area will put forth the effort to clean it up and make it

See **WEEK**, A1

Cayce dumps attorney; trial delayed

BY TODD WICKS
STAFF WRITER

The trial of a Farmington Hills man accused of murdering two Hills women last year has been delayed again. In Oakland County Circuit Court last Tuesday, Arthur Cayce requested a new attorney, claiming that the counsel of Gregory Wilkins of Detroit was ineffective. Cayce is charged with setting the arson fire

that killed Louise and Melissa Ann Bovair in their home on Quail Hollow Court, in the Kendallwood subdivision, Dec. 19, 1995. Judge Barry Howard, who is presiding over the trial, appointed Pontiac attorney Kerry Phillips as a replacement the same day. "I have not received any discovery information yet," said Phillips. "At this point, I know very little about the case. I did receive a call this

morning from the prosecutor assigned to the case, but we've not spoken." Wilkins could not be reached for comment. The trial was first delayed in January to determine if there was enough evidence to try Cayce and Arthur Davis of Westland, a friend and co-worker who has also been charged in the case. The trial has now been postponed

to late November or early December. The prosecutor, Lisa Madzin, was glad that the proceedings with Wilkins were halted before they began. "I'm very disappointed that (the trial) didn't go, but I understand Judge Howard's concern that the defendant was claiming his counsel was ineffective. If we had proceeded with (Wilkins), Cayce could potentially appeal on the basis

See **CAYCE**, A2

Hobbs to homeowners . . .

Daniel Hobbs, newly-hired Farmington Hills city manager, will speak at a general membership meeting of the Council of Homeowner Associations at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 10, at the Hills branch of the Farmington Community Library on 12 Mile road between Farmington and Orchard Lake roads.

All COHA meetings are open to the public. The group offers a new directory of members. It will be available at Tuesday's meeting. For information about the homeowner organization, call Irene Kernicky at 477-5965.

Amateur radio, anyone?

Anyone interested in amateur radio is invited to attend a meeting of the Farmington

FARMINGTON FOCUS

Amateur Radio Club 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 11, at the Wheeler Fire Station, 21420 Wheeler, in the Grand River/Middlebelt area, Farmington Hills.

Kick off a Sober October

Tickets are on sale for the eighth-annual Kickoff Breakfast for Sober October, the substance-abuse awareness month sponsored by Farmington Families In Action.

The event begins at 7:15 a.m. Tuesday, Oct. 1, at Glen Oaks Country Club, 30500 W. 18 Mile

Road, east of Orchard Lake. Kevin Wenzler will speak on "Continue the Just Say Notion."

About 300 Farmington-area community leaders are expected to attend the breakfast. Tickets, at \$12 each, may be purchased by calling Beverly Miller at 478-9784. Tables for eight may be reserved.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 33411 Grand River, Farmington 48335; faxed to 477-9722; or dropped off at the newspaper office. For the computer literate, the Internet E-mail address is packy@online.com.