

# Farmington Observer

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## IN THE PAPER TODAY

**Bond Issue business:** Officials in the Walled Lake School District, which includes the northwest corner of Farmington Hills, are asking voters to approve a bond issue next Saturday. Today's Observer carries important information about the upcoming election. /A3

## TASTE

**Appetizing movies:** "Big Night," which opens Friday, is not the first movie to tap into the audience's love of culinary arts. /B1

**Taste Buds:** Measure for measure, accuracy brings successful results in cooking and baking. /B1

## SPORTS

**Grid showdown:** An important early-season divisional football game took place Saturday when Farmington Harrison battled Walled Lake Western. /C1

**Swimming feats:** Each of Farmington's four girls swim teams achieved a measure of success in dual-meet competition last week. /1C

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## Bus service will expand

BY TODD WICKS  
STAFF WRITER

Teenagers and senior citizens often have only one thing in common: no ride.

But soon, four new public transportation vehicles should help make these two groups a lot more mobile. A joint effort by Farmington and Farmington Hills has led to expanded Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART) services, which will be offered to local youths and seniors in addition to the current SMART routes.

**'These new programs are a direct result of that millage approval.'**

**Frank Lauhoff**  
—Farmington city manager

"We were just looking at where we needed to do things in the transportation budget," said Frank Lauhoff, Farmington city manager. "Farmington Hills' contribution showed the senior issues, so it made sense to allocate our contribution to the youth program."

The new purchases include two mini-buses, equipped with mechanized lifts, a new full-size 12-passenger van to function as a shuttle to the senior center, and a used 18-passenger bus to be bought from SMART for transporting youngsters to afternoon youth center events.

Funds for the vehicles came from the Community Credit Program, started with monies from the SMART millage tax that passed last year.

"This was part of the promise, that cities would receive increased funding," said Lauhoff. "These new programs are a direct result of that millage approval."

The Community Credit Program is a doubling of the amounts currently provided by the Municipal Credit Program, a state and local program which let cities provide whatever SMART transit they desire.

When voters approved the millage, Farmington

See **B3B2B, A3**

## He lends talents to city



The Rev. Keith Butler, a former Detroit City Councilman, lives in Farmington Hills now and hopes to participate in civic life by serving on a crime prevention committee.

BY WILLIAM COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

The Farmington Hills police have found a new, prominent ally in their efforts to prevent crime.

The Rev. Keith Butler, pastor of the Word of Faith International Christian Center in Redford, has joined the Farmington Hills Citizens Crime Prevention Advisory Commit-

tee. "I was talking with Chief (Bill) Dwyor about an unrelated matter and he asked if I would be a part of it," said Butler. "This is something that appeals to me." Supporting the police is not anything new for Butler, who served as a Detroit City Council member from 1989-1993. Butler has been an out-

spoken supporter of that city's department and plans to continue the practice in his new city, Farmington Hills, where he has lived since 1993.

"The scriptures tell us that the police are called of God," said the minister of 20 years. "I like working with police and with people on community policing."

Butler is one of the country's best recognized spiritual leaders. He was Detroit's first African-American Republican elected to the council, and supported current Mayor Den-



See **BUTLER, A3**

The Rev. Keith Butler

## A walk in the wilds of Woodland Hills



STAFF PHOTO BY SHARON LAMBERT

Nearby nature: Susan Hansen walks in Woodland Hills Park. She works in a nearby office complex and likes to alternate between Woodland Hills and Heritage Park.

## Hills hopes to preserve park's future

BY WILLIAM COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills undoubtedly has some of the best natural park land in the state. But keeping it that way continues to be a concern of some of its residents and officials.

The Hills City Council, a Michigan Department of Natural Resources representative, members of the city's parks and recreation commission and city administrators discussed the status of the Woodland Hills Park on Farmington acres from Oakland Community College

and how to keep it from becoming something other than a natural park at a study session Sept. 16.

"I would like to see this on the agenda of a regular meeting," said Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi. "There are people in the city who think the park is vulnerable in the future."

The 74-acre park, which opened last fall, is made up of what had been 25 acres of private property and 49 acres of state land. The state had given the land to the city with a provision that it must be used for recreational purposes for the next 10 years.

But that could include a performing arts center or active recreation use, such as a swimming pool. Even that suggestion has some residents concerned.

"They'll deny it, but there are a lot of people who would like to develop that park into something else," said Roy Lindhardt, a parks activist. "They are just waiting in the bushes. I want to make sure a future city council doesn't change it."

Dan Potter, the city's director of special ser-

See **PARK, A4**

## Officials beam over scores on new test

BY TODD WICKS  
STAFF WRITER

The results of a new proficiency test show Farmington high school students placing among the brightest in Oakland County.

Go ahead, build away — and enter your creation in the Craftique Craft and Antique Mall's Scarecrow Contest. You could win a gift certificate worth as much as \$100.

The contest is part of the annual Fall Harvest Festival in downtown Farmington.

Scarecrows can be constructed of any materials. The more creative the better, say contest sponsors. Entries will be displayed inside the Craftique Mall, 35300 Slocum, Farmington, beginning Oct. 1.

The HSPT replaced the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) tests in high schools for the first time this year, although a modified version is still taken by fifth and eighth-graders.

Now, multiple choice questions have been joined by constructive response problems, which require students to explain their answers. Students brought writing samples from past classes, and performed hands-on science experiments as

part of the test. Farmington students performed above the county averages in all four categories.

They did best at math (63 percent proficient, 31.4 percent novice, 5.8 percent not yet novice), almost as well at reading (67.7 percent proficient, 39 percent novice, 3.9 percent not yet novice) and writing (63.3 percent proficient, 43 percent novice, 3.6 percent not yet novice), and poorest at science (44.6 percent profi-

cient, 45.8 percent novice, 9.7 percent not yet novice).

Proficient is described as "above average," and novice as "mastered basic skills." Students scoring "not yet novice" failed that section.

Administrators warned not to be discouraged by low scores. "This testing was new to everyone," said Carolyn Mahalak, coordinator of assessment for Farmington Schools. "The time of year it was given and

See **SCORES, A4**

### Build that scarecrow!

Ah, there's a nip in the air and maybe even a little frost on the pumpkin. Anyone feel like celebrating the season by building a funny, crazy, scary or unique scarecrow?

Go ahead, build away — and enter your creation in the Craftique Craft and Antique Mall's Scarecrow Contest. You could win a gift certificate worth as much as \$100.

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## FARMINGTON FOCUS

On Saturday, Oct. 26, the Scarecrows will be moved outside the mall as part of the Harvest Festival. That's also the day the winners will be announced.

Contest entry forms are available at Craftique. Contestants will be assigned a number to be displayed on the scarecrow for identification and judging purposes.

Judging will be done by Craftique customers, and ballots will be submitted during the display period, Oct. 1-26. To maximize the potential number of votes, scarecrows should be displayed

as close to Oct. 1 as possible. Contestants must be present Oct. 26 to win. Scarecrows may be removed after the winners are announced.

First prize is a \$100 gift certificate to Craftique. Second and third prizes are \$50 and \$25 certificates.

Last year, the inaugural contest drew about 20 serious entries, a Craftique employee said. For more information, call Craftique at 471-7933.

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@oonline.com.