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IN THE PAPER TODAY

Visiting D.C.: A Farmington student learned a lot about politics and getting things done by serving in Washington. /A2

Sworn in: Judge Fred Harris has a friend in a high place and she helped him renew his vows to serve on the bench last week. /A5

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

Holiday glamour: Hairstyles and fashions recall a bygone era with romantic and opulent looks. /A10

Games galore: Some local folks have marketed their ideas for fun and learning, just in time for holiday gift giving. /A10

TASTE

Focus on Wine: Champagnes add sparkle to the holidays. Eleanor and Roy Heald offer suggestions for superior sparklers. /B1

Sweets: This season you can make the gifts you bake for friends and family just a little bit healthier without sacrificing their great flavor. /B1

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Molester of boy gets 3-15 years

A Farmington Hills man convicted of molesting an 11-year-old boy was sentenced Friday to more than the minimum of 1-3 years. His attorney says this first offense deserved a lighter sentence.

BY WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Oakland Circuit Judge Rudy Nichols sentenced a Farmington Hills man to 3-15 years in prison for molesting an 11-year-old boy. Gregory Allen Gilbert, 30, was sentenced Friday after a jury took

just 20 minutes on Oct. 30 to find him guilty of two counts of second-degree criminal sexual conduct. The case received national attention in January when he was accused of luring young boys over the Internet, bringing the issue of child pornography and molesters

finding potential victims on the Internet to national attention. As it turned out, the case did not turn on evidence of an Internet link. The victim's testimony was key.

Gilbert had been good friends with the 11-year-old's parents, a Bloomfield Hills couple. After therapy, the youth told his parents that Gilbert had fondled him in September of 1995.

The boy had testified in 47th District Court in Farmington in January.

"We believed that there were a lot of items recovered during the search warrant process that linked the defendant with child pornography and pedophile activities," said Assistant Oakland County Prosecutor Pamela Maas. "He was contacting another child in Novi through the Internet, through a bulletin board."

Maas said she had hoped Judge Nichols would go beyond the minimum guidelines of 1-3 years because she considers Gilbert a danger to

See MOLESTER, A9

Maestro in motion



Making music: Steve SeGraves, director of the Farmington Community Chorus, keeps the voices sailing during a rehearsal for the group's "Songs of Good Cheer" concerts this week, Dec. 19-20.

STAFF PHOTO BY SEASON LEMLEY

Perfect pitch Community chorus puts together voices, lives

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

It's a place where Harry can meet Dixie, a visually impaired fellow crooner like Frank Sinatra and a Sister of Mercy and an inactive priest may sing with joy.

And that's not the half of it. The "it" is the 80-member Farmington Community Chorus, which is directed by Steve SeGraves and whose December concerts have become a must-see for holiday harmony seekers.

This year's performances "Songs

of Good Cheer" take place 8 p.m. Thursday and Friday, Dec. 19-20, at Farmington High Auditorium, 32000 Shawwassee.

"I've had people call me and say, 'It's not Christmas unless I come to your show,'" said Kathy Hall of Farmington Hills, who is second soprano in the chorus. "That's their Christmas experience."

The chorus is not only about voices of harmony, but people reaching a perfect pitch in their personal lives.

Harry did meet Dixie through the Farmington chorus. The pair

sat next to each other during rehearsals and began chatting.

Both were previously married and endured difficult periods in their lives.

Dr. Harry Doerr, 54, probably didn't know he was being courted at first.

"I was the person doing the standing arrangements," said Dixie, who is an alto. "I made sure he stood next to me."

Said Harry Doerr: "Men are naive; They don't understand these things."

The two married in March 1994.

They announced their engagement during a dress rehearsal.

Dixie is the decorating chairwoman and Harry is director of ticket sales for this year's Christmas performance. As of Dec. 13, 100 tickets remained for Thursday's show and Friday's was sold out, though people are urged to call, since more tickets may become available.

"I found after my divorce, it helped me through a lot of difficult times," Dixie said. "It's a nice, friendly group."

See CHORUS, A8

Grand jury weighs federal charge in armed guard murder

BY WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

A Farmington Hills man will await the decision of a federal grand jury as to whether he will face first-degree murder charges and a possible death penalty. Perry Daniel Hollie, 23, was held over without bond after federal Judge Thomas Carlson found probable cause Dec. 2 in federal court in Detroit for a grand jury to consider an indictment.

Hollie is accused of murdering Matthew Girardin, 29, of Garden City on Nov. 13 at a Michigan National Bank in Dearborn. The men were both employed as armed guards for the bank at the time.

Hollie's cousin Commit Rowson III of Detroit, who was the other suspect in the murder/robbery, was killed after being surrounded by FBI agents and police at a Warren Red Roof Inn Nov. 20. Agents found much of \$1.2 million that had been stolen from the armored van in Dearborn in Rowson's room.

"The grand jury will have 20 days from the date of the complaint (Dec. 2) to dismiss or indict," said Assistant U.S. Attorney Diane Marion.

Marion is presenting the case to the grand jury. Hollie, a former U.S. Marine, had been attending Eastern Michigan University while working for the bank at the time of the killing. He had told Dearborn police he escaped being shot during the robbery.

Hollie passed a polygraph given by Dearborn police during the investigation, something his attorney, Michael Sharpe, brought up during a hearing on whether he would get bond.

"He (Hollie) passed when he was interviewed after the arrest," Sharpe said. "We had the detention hearing in federal court with the sole purpose of changing his detention status. That's what this came up."

Results of a polygraph (lie detector test) are not admissible in court.

Hollie was originally charged in 19th District Court in Dearborn with murder, which carries a mandatory life sentence in Michigan upon conviction.

But U.S. Attorney Saul Green took jurisdiction of the case. Under federal law, Hollie could receive the death penalty if convicted.

"You do not even get a bond in a state murder case, so we did not expect it," Sharpe said. "And if my client would have gotten bond, it probably would have been one he couldn't afford."

Marion said a video tape from a camera inside the bank will be a key piece of evidence in the case. That tape showed the actions of the defendant at the time of the robbery, which led Dearborn police to doubt Hollie's story, Dearborn Police Chief Ronald Dezic said.

Hollie remains in the Wayne County Jail without bond.

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

When East meets West at the business table, a pause is better than a grimace.

So says a consultant to American companies on Far East affairs, who spoke Thursday in a forum on diversity at the Farmington Training Center. The program is part of an ongoing series sponsored by the Farmington/Farmington Hills Multicultural/Multiracial Community Council.

Steven Myers assists in negotiations, public affairs issues, and trade programs in the Far East —

most notably in Japan for Michigan companies. The topic has relevance to the Farmington area, which is home to several Japanese firms.

When confronted with a seemingly foreign opinion, value or proposition, people initially act on instinct, which has been honed through their own cultural upbringing.

■ 'When you celebrate some diversity, there is going to be some discomfort.'

—Steven Myers
—consultant on Far East affairs

Such responses — Self Reference Criteria as Myers calls it — can be the bane of a burgeoning business deal.

Take time out in those situations, Myers suggested.

"You can't escape it; You shouldn't," said Myers, who runs Suzuki, Myers & Associates with his wife. "When you say, 'What?'. Instead of grimacing, take 10 seconds to think

about it. Then you win it."

Some of those customs may even be incongruous to tenets supported by a multicultural council promoting diversity and understanding, Myers said.

In Japan, for example, it's customary to expect women to be homemakers, employees to work overtime without compensation, and younger folks to always defer to their elders.

"When you celebrate some diversity, there is going to be some discomfort," Myers said. "A certain amount of discomfort is valuable in that it is

See CULTURE, A5

Repair lesson: It's no snap

Phyllis Howard of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Neighborhood House thought she was just helping a down-on-her-luck resident who needed brakes for her car.

The woman is among the working poor who come to the Neighborhood House for help. When the woman mentioned having problems with her brakes on her 1984 Phoenix, Howard offered to send her car to auto shop teacher Tom Allen at Farmington High, where his students perform the labor at no cost.

After fixing the brakes, they took care of some other problems including a turn signal that didn't work.

Fixing that signal proved more difficult,

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involving tearing apart much of the electronic wiring in the vehicle. One student even told Allen the experience had colored his view of automobile repair. Howard said. "There's one kid," she said, "who will never go into mechanics."

Aerosol cans added to recyclables

Aerosol cans are among the many items recycled from Farmington and Farmington Hills. The Resource Recovery and Recycling Authority of Southwest Oakland County collects the

cans at the curb and they're eventually melted down and recycled into cans.

The cans are shipped from the authority's Southfield facility to Luria Brothers and Great Lakes Steel in River Rouge.

The cans are melted with other metal at 2,500 degrees Fahrenheit with the finished product going into automotive applications.

The cans were added to five of the eight RRRASOC member communities: Farmington, Farmington Hills, Southfield, South Lyon and Wixom.

For further information, contact recycling coordinator Heidi Wayco at 810-208-2270.

RRRASOC also has an internet home page with information and e-mail. That address is RRRASOC@online.com.