

Farmington Observer

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Mind games: Farmington students use their heads for the *Odyssey of the Mind* competition. /A3

COMMUNITY LIFE

Pretty pooch: A Farmington man goes to the dogs for his grooming business. /B1

RELIGION

Helping hand: Jewish community responds to racial animosity, helps destroyed Southern church rebuild. /B7

SPORTS

Volleyball: Mercy High School battled rival Livonia Ladywood in a Catholic League match Tuesday. /C1

AT HOME

Literally speaking: Designing the modern home library takes many ideas into consideration. /G6

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Chalk up sidewalk savings to patience

BY WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

They say that patience is a virtue and that virtue is its own reward.

In Farmington Hills, patience has a little more of a payoff when it comes to sidewalk construction.

"This is more than \$100,000 less than our estimate," said Hills Public Services Director Tom Biasell.

The city had asked for bids last summer to put in sidewalks in several areas of the city. The areas include the west side of Farmington from 14 Mile to Old Timber, the north side of Freedom from Gill Road west, the south side of 12 Mile from Balmoral to Lincolnshire, the north side of 10 Mile from El Marce to Middlebelt, the east side of Drake from Hampton Drive to 12 Mile, the south side of 12 Mile from the library west, the south side of 10 Mile from Middlebelt to Glencreek and the west side of Drake from 13 to 14 Mile roads.

The city had pushed up the priority of some of the sidewalks, including a stretch on 10 Mile where a youngster had been hit and killed by a drunk driver. But when the bids came in last summer, the lowest was \$80,000 more than the city's estimate for the work of \$450,000, Biasell said.

"The problem was that we asked for bids during the height of the construction season," Biasell said. "Everyone was working, so they were going to charge more."

The city council decided to ask for bids in December, when construction is slow and companies are making plans for the coming season.

The strategy apparently paid off. The lowest bid for the work came in at \$344,000, more than \$100,000 less than the estimate and almost \$200,000 less than the lowest bid of last summer.

"If that bid is approved, the sidewalks should be done this spring," he said.

At Monday's regular meeting, the council unanimously approved condemnation of four easements out of the 22 needed to complete the work.

Biasell said the city had tried to negotiate for the easements, but was forced to take stronger action to get right-of-way for the sidewalks.

All four properties, which include a vacant lot, are on the south side of 10 Mile between Middlebelt and Glencreek. The money is already budgeted from the capital improvement fund, said Biasell, adding that council will likely take action at Monday's meeting.

Rainbow recognition



STAFF PHOTO BY GILMAN LEBLANC

Day for honors: Fay Kinaya, above, accepts her Rainbow Recognition award for the school district's Newcomer Center. At right, East Middle Schoolers Angela Foder and Brenda Wickline accept their awards for designing a sweatshirt logo based on multiculturalism.



Rainbows aren't always easy to find, judge says

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Rainbow Recognition Awards applaud people's efforts towards a diverse community, though the net results of their work cannot be judged right away.

And that bit of wisdom comes straight from the bench.

Michigan Court of Appeals Judge Henry William Saad related his experiences as being part of a once-fledgling Arab and Jewish American friendship group during an award breakfast Tuesday.

Judge Saad's pop talk was part of the keynote address at the Farmington/Farmington Hills Multicultural/Multiracial Community Council's second annual Rainbow Recognition Awards program in the William Costick Center's Shannon Hall.

Saad shared the perspective of being a Lebanese American, who loves his culture —

though he doesn't speak Arabic — and who embraces the Catholic faith.

"It doesn't mean that defines who I am," Saad said.

His law background includes developing nondiscriminatory practices at the workplace for companies. Saad was a trial attorney for 20 years before becoming a judge.

Laws can only do so much, he said.

"How do you mandate having a conscience?" he asked.

Rather, volunteer efforts make society adhere to fairness and decency. Such inspiration led Saad to get involved with a similar grassroots group that met clandestinely in a Detroit restaurant.

The Arab and Jewish American friendship group wore "in the closet" for five years before becoming more visible, Saad said. Members wanted to save face in their respective communities.

"The easy part was Arab Americans and Jewish Americans sitting down at a table and dealing with each other and talking about our dif-

See RAINBOW, A3



Judge Saad

Lawyer bashing from a pro

Keynote speaker Judge Henry William Saad aimed a number of one-liners at his own profession during Tuesday morning's Multicultural/Multiracial Community Council awards breakfast.

For example, he talked about how attorneys choose a career: "Everybody who doesn't know what to do with their lives goes to law school," he said. After college, he continued, attorneys who don't "know what to do with their lives becomes judges. It's easier to tell other people what to do with their lives."

As for his judicial style: "I tend to ramble and lose my place which is why I'm on the bench."

FARMINGTON FOCUS

Marks leads GOP

At the annual meeting of the Farmington Area Republican Club on Jan. 15, Ben Marks was re-elected as president.

The long-time community activist has served as a member of the Farmington Hills Charter Commission in 1972 and the Farmington Hills City Council from 1983-1992 where he served as mayor in 1987.

Marks also served as president of the Michi-

Pleas fail to save 'sibling' policy

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER



Brothers and sisters of students attending Farmington schools of choice will not get the nod over others to enroll at the same school.

The Farmington Board of Education voted 5-2 at Tuesday's meeting to stop the district's sibling preference policy starting next school year, despite heated arguments from Highmeadow Common Campus parents. Trustees Jack Inch and David York voted against the policy change.

Though "grandfathered in" and not affected by the change, several Highmeadow parents spoke in favor of continuing to give siblings enrollment preference. Another 20 or so wrote letters.

"The issue is fairness, board members said. 'I've been told many, many times that enrollment procedures at Highmeadow school have created a private school in a public setting,' Trustee Bobbie Feldman said. 'I understand your concerns... but Highmeadow Common Campus belongs to all of us in this community.'"

"So, every family must have the same rights to admission to this program."

The change affects all district schools of choice, but Highmeadow has been the primary source of controversy since the policy started in 1990.

The number of those who want to enroll exceeds openings at the school offering alternatives.

See SIBLING, A10

Drowning of woman, 82, accidental

BY WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills police do not suspect foul play in the drowning death of an 82-year-old woman at an indoor therapeutic pool at the Botsford Continuing Health Center Monday night.

"At this point, there is no reason to believe that what happened was other than an accident," said Detective Sgt. Tim Swanson.

Witnesses told police that Adelaide Kusy, who lived with her husband in a condominium at the nearby Botsford Commons, had gone with her husband to the Town Commons, which is on the same campus, to visit with friends at the facility's clubhouse.

While her husband was playing cards with friends, the victim left the room and was gone for some time. Although there were early reports that the woman excused herself to go to the restroom, which is attached to the pool area, police believe she simply "wandered off," Swanson said.

"She was not sitting at the table playing cards," Swanson said. "She apparently got up and wasn't noticed."

The woman's husband and friends then searched before two of the men found her floating in the three-foot deep pool. One man pulled her to the edge and kept her head above water while an ambulance was called.

Farmington Hills firefighters and Community EMS medical personnel attempted to resuscitate the woman on the scene. She was transported to Botsford General Hospital where she was pronounced dead at 9:54 p.m. The Oakland County Medical Examiner determined that drowning was the cause of death, Swanson said.

Swanson said the woman suffered from Alzheimer's disease, which might have disoriented her at some point.

"They had lived in a condominium, which are

See DEATH, A10

gan Municipal League in 1992 and received statewide acclaim for his strong leadership during his term.

He is executive director of The Longacre House (formerly the Community Center) of Farmington Hills. In his first term, membership there has increased from 88 to 221. Marks is leading the effort to achieve the goal of 500 paid memberships.

Also elected were Linda Joliceur as vice president, Robert N. Ranney as corresponding secretary, Kim Jasky as recording secretary, Ric Farrell as treasurer and Suzzanno Clinton as program chairwoman.