

# Farmington Observer

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## IN THE PAPER TODAY

**Setting the date:** Farmington school board members officially set March 25 for a special election on a bond issue and millage renewal. /A2

### COUNTY

**Inside schools:** Visitors to Summit Place Mall got to see a smorgasbord of happenings in Oakland area public schools, including Farmington. /A4

### COMMUNITY LIFE

**Making it work:** Newcomers to this country tell of the challenges of starting new businesses in Farmington. /B1

### SPORTS

**Hoop showdown:** Farmington Harrison visited Walled Lake Central, hoping to gain a share of first place in the Western Lakes boys basketball standings Tuesday. /C1

### ENTERTAINMENT

**Family fun:** Mel Drumm of Bloomfield Township, director of the Detroit Science Center, champions the cause of science. /1E

### REAL ESTATE

**Dealing with it:** Those who sell houses face immense challenges at this time of year. /F1

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## Tell me again, what am I eating?



**Culture shock:** Eagle Elementary student Meredith Riggan decided to try some Japanese food at the school's first "International Day" Jan. 31. For more on International Day there and at St. Fabian School, see Page A3.

## Hills judge orders schools to help police

BY WILLIAM COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

Farmington High School principal Deborah Clarke was ordered to turn over to police statements and evidence in a misdemeanor assault case.

Judge Fred Harris in 47th District Court made the ruling after an evidentiary hearing Tuesday in a case that could reach well beyond Farmington Hills.

Judge Harris also granted a motion by Clarke's attorney Carrick Craig for appeal, which means no evidence will be turned over until another court hearing.

"In this particular instance, if this had been an internal (school) investigation, Mr. (Hills police Officer Duane) Fox would not be invited into any interview," Harris said. "It's not an internal investigation once Mr. Fox is invited in."

The issue of confidentiality arose in the wake of a Nov. 13, 1995 assault of a student after a powder puff football game.

Officer Fox testified that he was called at home the evening of the incident and asked by North Farmington assistant principal Kathy Kalapos to check a motor vehicle registration in connection with the incident.

Fox testified that he was given information and statements by students who had seen the incident and was invited into interviews with those students and assistant principal Ron Jones.

Fox returned some of the evidence at Clarke's request, but when police began treating the incident as a criminal investigation, Clarke refused to turn over the interviews after parents of the those students had refused her permission.

She cited Michigan law that does not allow a "teacher, guidance officer, school executive or other professional person" in the public schools to divulge that information without the permission of the stu-

See POLICE, A2

## Attitude changes life for the better

**Editor's note:** This is the first in a two-part series examining life, changes and how people deal with them. This Sunday, we'll look at the sandwich generation and retirees.

Farmington.  
"The key question is: Does your potential make make you your best self?" he said. "If they can answer yes to that, then they have a good start."

BY WILLIAM COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

Sending your child off to school, getting married and planning your golden years of retirement are usually times of excitement in our lives.

But for many, they can be a time of stress and should be planned for, so that they are as fulfilling as possible.

"Very often, any change that involves the unknown triggers fears, stress and some sort of a response," says Donna May, a stress management specialist with Botetford Hospital's Health Development Network. "Any time you are taken out of your comfort zone, there is some confusion. Your attitude about the change is what's going to make the difference."

### Your better half

The Rev. Dr. Brewster "Budge" Gere says the couples he marries don't take their vows lightly, and usually have discussed the prospect of a committed marriage long before he sees them.

"By and large, they have given it a lot of thought," said the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of

Like any doctor, the pastor sends his marrying parishioners for a second opinion, to Dr. Wesley Brun, executive director of the Samaritan Counseling Center in Farmington Hills.

"People are different no matter how much they have in common," Brun says. "There is a difference in gender, but also other subtle, cultural differences."

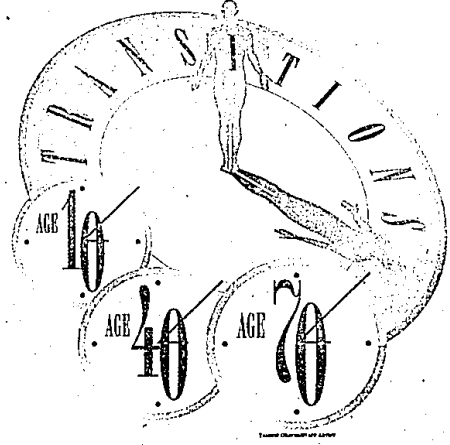
There will be conflicts, and they should be faced openly, he says.

"I think parents do their children a disservice when they have not argued in front of their kids," he says. "The kids are anxious. The advantage to arguing is that the kids learn that anger does happen and can be resolved. The couple works together and negotiates a compromise."

With many couples and families squeezed for time, people are less secure, less certain about themselves, often leaving their self esteem suffering.

"It makes it hard for people to allow themselves to be vulnerable," Brun says. "They are afraid if people get to know them, they won't like them. So they show a public face, one they think is lovable."

That can lead to love as an obsession, possessiveness or love



as a way to provide self esteem, he says.

"Differences emerge along with a cycle of conflict," he says. "The divorce rate is leveling at about 50 percent. But it isn't going down either. We're still in a kind of cri-

sis." For the Rev. Gere, an ounce of prevention can be most satisfying. "A couple of my biggest successes were helping people know they

See TRANSITIONS, A10

## Lottery is the ticket to Highmeadow; signup March 3-7

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

A lottery to select students in grades one through five for Highmeadow Common Campus for the 1997-98 school year will take place Tuesday, March 11.

This year's draw takes on special significance since it is the first since the Farmington Board of Education eliminated the practice of giving priority siblings of enrolled students for openings. Families of current Highmeadow students are "grandfathered" from the recent policy change.

The effect in terms of how many people apply is difficult to gauge, a school spokeswoman said.

"That's hard to say," Principal Barbara Reams said. "Some people might think there's a better chance because there are more openings. Some people because of the (elimination) of sibling priority might not enter."

"It will be interesting to see how the community interprets it."

Under the grandfather clause, 19 siblings are eligible for this year's lottery. That leaves 56 openings for the rest of the community.

Next year, because of enrollment, there will be three first-grade classes, Reams said.

In order to be eligible for the drawing, a parent or guardian must register a child during the week of March 3-7 at the school. Highmeadow is in the Holly Hills subdivision, which is north of 12 Mile, between Orchard Lake and Middlebelt roads.

Applications will be taken 10 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, March 3-7.

On Monday, March 3, registration hours will be extended until 7 p.m. followed by an overview of the school's program presented by Highmeadow Reams and staff.

Any person who is interested in the school or applying for the lottery should attend the meeting, school officials said.

Enrollment for Highmeadow is by lottery only. Only those applications received March 3-7 are eligible for this year's draw.

### Pledging to the city

The Farmington City Council hasn't turned into a fraternity, but members are looking for a few good pledges.

Farmington Mayor Jo Anne McShane suggested that members of the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts troops, or similar organizations, could lead the council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Students traditionally do the honors at the start of Farmington Board of Education meetings. They receive "I led the pledge at the board of education meeting" pens.

"Possibly, the child might stay and see how government works and feel involved by actively taking part in the pledge," McShane said.

Councilman Bill Hartsock has a more practical reason.

## FARMINGTON FOCUS

"Maybe they can teach us how to say it," Hartsock said. "There is always this long pause after 'One nation under God...'"

McShane said she got the idea after appearing before groups like the Brownsies and Girl Scouts. Letters will be sent to local troops, asking them to take part. They'll likely be given a certificate by council.

Farmington City Council meetings take place 8 p.m. the first and third Monday of the month at city hall.

### National PR

A Botetford General Hospital program called "Let Them Play" took the national spotlight Wednesday morning on a CBS' "This Morning" telecast.

The after-school program is aimed at helping kids who aren't involved in team sports and are struggling to be healthy. It's currently offered at Walled Lake's Hickory Woods Elementary School. Botetford exercise physiologist Ed Fienkoos and family practitioner Stephen Goldman, D.O., are interviewed in the segment.

The program aims to thwart Michigan's high percentages of overweight (about 33 percent) and inactive (63 percent) children by promoting the fun of exercise, games and free play to instill a lifelong appreciation of physical activity.