

Farmington Observer

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IN THE PAPER TODAY

Sanitary need: Residents in one Farmington Hills subdivision will pay thousands to correct a sewer problem. /A3

On board: Two candidates vying for one seat on the Clarenceville school board talk about issues. /A4

COUNTY

Labels out: High school proficiency tests will still be recorded on transcripts, but labels will be removed. /A5

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

'Edutainment': Twelve Oaks' rain-forest exhibit is the kind of community event malls strive to provide — something to laugh about ... and think about. /B4

TASTE

Steaks: Frederick J. Simon of Omaha Steaks shares recipes from America's greatest chefs, and tips in "The Steaklover's Companion." /B1

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Wraps off Super K plan



BY WILLIAM COVANT
STAFF WRITER

A development proposed for a "troubled" area of Farmington Hills was presented to the city's planning commission Thursday night.

The developer, Malan Realty Investors, presented the plan for a 24-hour Super Kmart with a grocery and pharmacy, along with a separate "lifestyle center" that would include several upscale retail stores south of the Kmart.

In addition, 172 single-family

attached condominiums would be developed east of the center bordered by Northwestern and a road would be built from Orchard Lake to Northwestern that would cut between the Kmart and the center. The road would connect to the residential development, providing access for the residents and traffic relief for motorists trying to avoid the congested Orchard Lake/Northwestern/14 Mile intersection.

Larry Lichtman, the attorney representing Malan and the former mayor of Farmington Hills, spelled out the advantages of the plan over previous ones that had been pro-

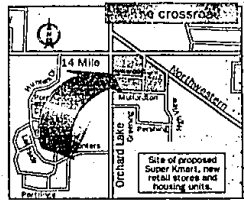
posed for the congested area.

"This could be the most significant, large scale redevelopment in the city for decades," Lichtman said.

The proposal would put a shopping center in an area zoned — and in the master plan — for that use. It also adds a new residential development, new paving, sewers and water service in an area that could not otherwise afford to pay for it, Lichtman said.

"Unlike some other developments, this would not inject commercial into a residential area," he said.

The planned unit development



FILED PHOTO BY STAFF WRITER

would not add significantly to traffic, Lichtman said, and would provide a cut-through road not only for the development, but as a bypass.

Please see SUPER KMART, A6

Do not disturb



Man's best friend: Ray Gloetzer of Farmington Hills rests upon his hammock with his dogs, Bamber and Bingo, beneath him. He said he and his wife, Gail, are planning a cookout during the Memorial Day weekend. Otherwise, he'll spend much of the weekend relaxing in the hammock.

STAFF PHOTO BY GILSON LEBELIE

In memory

Thousands parade Monday to honor those who served

BY TODD WICKS
STAFF WRITER

Area residents shouldn't be alarmed at the squadron of F-16 fighter planes screaming through the skies over Farmington Monday morning.

The fighters and two classic World War II-era bombers will be part of Farmington's annual Memorial Day parade, beginning at 10 a.m. at Orchard Lake Rd. and Moody St. and ending up downtown at Grand River and Oakland at 11:10 a.m. The event is organized by the American Legion Posts #346 and #180 and the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #2299.

According to Parade Chairman Wally Christensen, the emphasis of this year's parade, as always, will be to remember and honor all Americans who have served their country both surviving and fallen.

"That's the point we try to get across every year," said Christensen. "The Exchange Club (of Farmington) passes out close to 10,000 American flags to children and people on the parade route."

Four high school bands will supply patriotic music while various veterans' organizations proudly

march for the crowds. Four ROTC units and the Civil Air Patrol will walk alongside patriotic floats, classic cars, and civilians like local beauty queens, dance groups, boys and girls scout troops, and many other clubs and organizations. Since their parade was rained out a few weeks ago, 300 Farmington Little Leaguers will also be included.

Representing state and local governments will be U.S. Rep. Joe Knollenberg (R-Bloomfield Hills), State Rep. Andrew Raczowski (R-Farmington Hills), Oakland County Prosecutor Richard Thompson and Mayors Aldo Vagnozzi and JoAnne McShane.

Christensen expects a bigger turnout for this year's event than usual. "Bar none, we'll have 20,000 people," he said. "People participating alone will be in the thousands."

While saluting veterans from all branches of the Armed Forces, this year's event will also celebrate the 50th anniversary of the U.S. Air Force. The listed aircraft will do flybys at various times during the parade, following which Mayor Michael A. Merritt of Clinton Town-

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See PARADE, A6



Funding, leadership weighed by hopefuls

BY TODD WICKS
STAFF WRITER

It looked like an episode of "School Board Jeopardy" at Farmington Hills City Hall Wednesday night.

The three candidates for the two open seats on the Farmington Board of Education met for an open forum, participating in a fast-paced question-and-answer segment designed by former board member Michael Shpiece to highlight differences between the three. The Farmington Democratic Club sponsored the forum, moderated by club Chairman Barry Brickner.

Mark Clevey, incumbent board member Bobbie Feldman, and Frank Reid are the candidates vying for seats currently held by Feldman and board president David York in the

June 9 election. York is not running for re-election.

Each gave a brief opening statement and had five minutes to pose questions to each other.

Clevey outlined a three-point plan, calling for less dependence on taxpayers and to "unleash" teachers and faculty to pursue alternate sources of school funding. He proposed the creation of a school board task force, to be chaired by York, to link students' academic performance to teachers' and faculty's incentive pay.

The \$110 million bond issue rejected by voters March 25 drew much of Clevey's discussion. He questioned the failure of the school board and

See DEBATE, A2

TMI/EMI parents question program, info from district

BY DAVE VARGA
STAFF WRITER

Teachers, administrators and school officials at two different meetings Tuesday night tried to reassure parents that their mentally impaired children would continue getting a good education in Farmington schools.

Almost 20 parents attended a special meeting at the Farmington Training Center, with many heading from there to the school board's regular meeting.

In both places, parents vented frustrations over plans to combine Trainable Mentally Impaired and Educable Mentally Impaired students into one program at Kenbrook School and over poor communication of the pending change.

Parents also questioned staffing levels and complained about transferring children to new schools.

"This treatment of special education smells of politics and poor logic," said parent Anita Mergener, an EMI parent who attended both meetings. "This will be the seventh move in eight years for my child, and according to the parents I've spoken to, that is more or less the average."

See IMPAIRED, A2

TMI description countered

Parents and school officials rejected the characterization of Trainable Mentally Impaired youngsters in the May 18 Farmington Observer.

A parent of an Educable Mentally Impaired student contended that TMI students tend to act out physically, which could interrupt a combined TMI/EMI class.

Laura Athens' son, Nicolas, is 7 and attends the TMI program at Kenbrook Elementary.

"I was offended by the depiction of my child as someone who would get out and fiddle himself or defecate or urinate in his pants," Athens said after a meeting Tuesday. "He is a whole person. He is educated in that classroom."

In a letter to the editor (to be published in Thursday's Observer), Athens says the description isn't fair. "This inhumane depiction of our children perpetuates outdated stereotypes about children with disabilities."

Gary Goffner, TMI supervisor, said many children have accidents at school. "That's why they have bathrooms in kindergarten classrooms," he said.

"People who read that won't get a balanced picture of what trainable mentally impaired youngsters are about," Goffner said.

Exchanging quips

Farmington city officials hosted visitors from Birmingham during Mayor's Exchange Day Tuesday.

In addition to touring city facilities, Farmington hosted a lunch for the visitors and dozens of guests at Marco's Restaurant where Mayor JoAnne McShane introduced the guests, including Birmingham Mayor Mike Woolley, City Manager Markus and several city commissioners and administrators.

McShane took the opportunity to point out similarities between the two towns: "Birmingham has a JazzFest, Farmington has a Founders Fest. Birmingham has the Elton Academy and Farmington has an 'entire' academy," we call it Green's, our four-star hamburger joint."

FARMINGTON FOCUS

Closed for the holiday

Expect plenty of closings around town for the Memorial Day Holiday Monday.

Both branches of the Farmington Community Library will be closed Saturday, Sunday and Monday; the Farmington Hills Ice Arena will be closed Sunday and Monday; and most area businesses (including the Observer office at Grand River near Farmington) will be closed Monday.

Big band turnout

More than 400 people — including senior citi-

zens — joined in from 10 Farmington area nursing homes — enjoyed the Farmington Community Band's spring concert recently.

The band performed with the Farmington Community Chorus at the William Coetick Activity Center in the theme "Around the World in 80 Minutes," as narrated by WJR-AM personality Mike Deja.

"This concert is dedicated to our senior citizens," said Ginny McDonald, FCB's business manager. That dedication included band members helping get audience members in wheelchairs off and onto the buses and into the center.

The band concludes its 31st season with three summer concerts in Heritage Park on May 29, June 19 and July 17.