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SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

IN THE PAPER TODAY

New at school: Four new administrators are ready to help take the helm at Farmington Public School buildings. /A3

COUNTY

Water world: It's truly a water wonderland at parks operated in Oakland County by parks and recreation. /A9

AT HOME

Artistic touch: This garden is a living canvas, full of variety and interesting features that include art works. /D6

ENTERTAINMENT

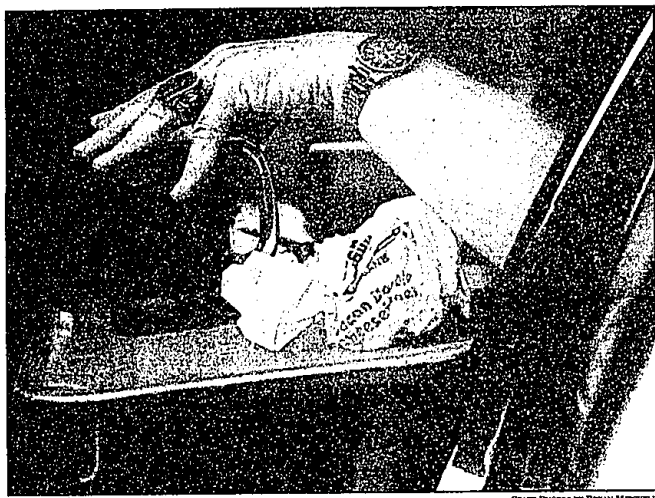
Family fun: The 148th Annual Highland Games Saturday at Greenmead Historical Village features Scottish dancing, piping and drumming, foods and athletic competitions. /E1

REAL ESTATE

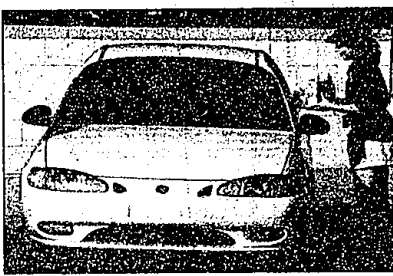
Hiring good help: Real estate professionals suggest several ways you can find the best agent. /F1

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Past withn reach



STAFF PHOTOS BY DEBBI MITCHELL



Car classes: Driver's side window service for heavy glass mugs of root beer is a frosty blast from the past for many. At left, Zachary Zatsick, 6, quenches a thirst. Just above, Sandy Khalil serves up dinner to Livonia residents Jeff and Diane Thibodeau at the A&W drive-in on Grand River last week.

Victims, officers help in blaze

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

A lightning strike started the fire, but it's the way police and residents bolted into action that are being cited for preventing an apartment blaze from turning into a deeper tragedy.

No one was injured in the blaze of Echo Valley Apartments on 12 Mile early morning Saturday, which started when lightning struck the brick structure during an electrical storm.

For that, two residents and two Farmington Hills police officers are in line for department meritorious service awards for their roles in evacuating residents.

Deborah Rector, whose unit was destroyed by the fire, and neighbor Nancy Turner went door-to-door to awake other residents who were asleep at 6 a.m. when the blaze started.

Hills officers William Maffessoli and James Skrzycki were instrumental in getting residents to safety and comforting them afterward.

"We all kind of just worked together," said Turner, whose apartment and belongings were damaged.

Maffessoli was on patrol near the scene and arrived within a minute after the call came in. With flames bursting through the roof of the brick structure, the 35-year veteran went inside after he kicked in a door leading to the apartments and carried an 85-year-old woman — who has only one leg — to safety.

"One of the residents mentioned an elderly lady was still inside," said Maffessoli, who was a fire fighter in Highland Park for four years prior to joining the Hills police. "I went to the door on my hands and knees and called out to her, 'Hello are you in there?'"

"I asked her if she could crawl towards where my voice was coming from and she said, 'I only have one leg.' The place was filled with smoke, but it was really a calm conversation.

"I carried her out and she said, 'Can you do me a big favor?'"

After carrying the woman out, Maffessoli went back into the smoke-filled building to retrieve her artificial leg.

"The action he took I thought was a really a life saving accomplishment, which is why he is being submitted to receive a meritorious service award," said Bill Dwyer, Hills

Please see FIRE, A2

5 more charged as links vandals

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Five more teenagers have been charged in the destruction of San Marino Golf Course, bringing the total to 10.

Five teenagers already pleaded guilty and have been sentenced in the case that involved the destruction of golf carts, sprinkler system, shed and a truck at the city-owned course during a three-day vandalism spree April 24. Damage estimates are \$50,000, "and climbing everyday," said Sgt. Tim Connor.

Police believe all those involved have been charged. "The investigation phase is coming to an end," Connor said.

Dave Miller, 19, of Farmington; Cliff Bingham, 19, of Farmington Hills; David Gaydek, 18, of Farmington Hills; Mark Dobkin, 19, of Farmington Hills; and Reed Hextall, 18, of Brighton are charged with a count each of conspiracy to commit malicious destruction of property more than \$100 and MDOP over \$100.

Miller and Gaydek were charged with two counts of illegal entry. Dobkin and Hextall are charged with one count of illegal entry while Gaydek also faces an additional count of MDOP over \$100.

Miller, Bingham, Gaydek and Dobkin were arraigned in 47th District Court Friday and each released on \$10,000 personal bond. Hextall was arraigned Monday in 47th District Court and released on \$1,000 personal bond.

Preliminary exam is set for 8:30 a.m. Monday, Aug. 4, for four of the five defendants. Gaydek's exam is Aug. 22.

William Zima, 17, Stephen John Munro, 19, and Michael Paul Tomoy, 19, Robert John, 18, all of Farmington Hills, and Ryan Nicholas Hubbard, 19, of Livonia received three years' probation after pleading guilty to two counts of MDOP over \$100 and one count of illegal entry.

Zima and Munro were also sentenced to 90 days in Oakland County Jail, which will be suspended if they complete the Oakland County Sheriff's Boot Camp for youthful offenders.

The five were granted Youthful Trainee Act status, meaning the offenses will be cleared from their records if they complete probation.

The five must perform 100 hours of community service, write 750-word essays to the judge explaining why what they did was wrong and avoid contact with each other during the three-year probationary period.

All five agreed to testify in upcoming cases.

"I can tell you they are on a warrant to be subpoenaed for the exam," said Shawn Ryan, assistant prosecutor.

The city is also likely to seek \$50,000 in restitution for damages and personnel costs involved in the vandalism case.

Mugs of memories

Drive-in fills customers' thirst for nostalgia

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

It's a throwback, a relic, even nostalgic. But that's not necessarily a bad thing, according to customers at the A&W drive-in restaurant on Grand River.

"I like it," said Jeff Thibodeau of Livonia, who drove over with his pregnant wife Diane for foot-

long coney dogs on a sunny Thursday night. "I think they should have more of them. . . If they had a beat up old hot rod car it'd be just like Happy Days."

Richie Cunningham's gang did get burgers and fries at A's. But those frosty mugs of A&W's world-famous root beer really makes the experience in Farm-

ington Hills, and it's served right up to your car window.

Or to a nearby picnic table. That's where Farmington resident Julie Zatsick and two sons (Zachary, 6; Jacob, 3) enjoyed their dinner.

Zatsick drove up to one of the 26 numbered drive-ins, and

Please see DRIVE-IN, A2

Hills man's finished Ferrari shines Sunday

BY VIVIAN DEGAN
STAFF WRITER

Its taken three years, thousands of dollars and hours of inspiration and perspiration for the Farmington engineer-owner, but Tord Smedberg will drive his restored 1969 Ferrari Sunday for the first time at the 19th annual Concours d'Elegance at Meadow Brook Hall in Rochester.

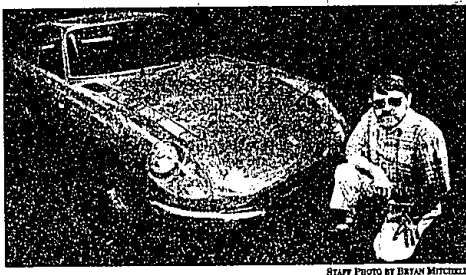
"There are hundreds of oil paintings and then, there are Rembrandt's. The Ferrari has that same distinction," Smedberg said of his red 365 GT 2 Plus 2 with black leather interior.

His baby gleams like a new dime, but the 69-year-old semi-retired mechanical engineer said his labor of love was all under the hood and in the chassis.

Smedberg not only rebuilt the guts of his Ferrari from nose to tail, he often hand-designed the tools for the job in his garage shop. He contracted for the complete interior restoration and the buff paint job retouch, but he designed the covered headlights and added classic wire wheels by Borrani Milano.

"For a car guy, to be chosen for a

Please see FERRARI, A5



STAFF PHOTO BY DEBBI MITCHELL

'69 is fine: Tord Smedberg won't drive his Ferrari until after they appear Sunday at Concours d'Elegance in Rochester Hills.

Teen still critical, in coma after accident

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

The family of 16-year-old Melissa Garr continues to stand vigil over the critically-injured Farmington High School student one week after a freakish pool-side accident.



Melissa Garr

Melissa's father, Farmington Hills Fire Lt. Michael Garr, keeps the fire department informed with regular telephone updates. But, as of Wednesday morning, Melissa remained comatose and in critical

condition at University of Michigan Medical Centers in Ann Arbor. Her unchanged condition was confirmed by hospital spokeswoman Tracy Justice.

"At this point they're dealing with a wait and see situation," said Farmington Hills deputy Chief Pete Baldwin Wednesday. "They're doing things in shifts, so they're down there all the time."

Right now, the medical team assigned to Melissa is trying to control brain swelling with medication. A respirator is helping with her breathing. The Farmington resident sustained a skull frac-

ture in the Wednesday, July 23, accident at Farmington Glen Aquatic Center. A 18-foot-long limb from a nearby tree inexplicably toppled 40 feet and struck Melissa in the head, knocking her to the cement pool deck.

She was at the pool baby-sitting three children at the time of the accident, described by Baldwin as "one of the flukiest things" he's heard about in a long time.

Baldwin added that the fire department is getting "a lot of phone calls" about Lt. Garr's daughter, as well as some get well cards. "This is going to probably be a long-term thing."