Step back into Vintage Farmington with photos and a poem. Page B1

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Farmington Observer

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IN THE PAPER TODAY

Spaced out: *Farmington parents want changes for overcrowding in one class and on one bus in the district.*/A2

Flame blame: *Farmington Hills fire officials investigate two apartment blazes in the last week.*/A3

SPORTS

Key matchup: *Two of Oakland County's best girls basketball teams faced each other Tuesday when Farmington Harrison visited Rochester.*/C1

AT HOME

Keeping dry: *A Troy firm offers state of the art waterproofing that puts homeowners at ease.* / D8

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Voters: 'Yes,' 'Yes'

BOND ELECTION RESULTS

Proposal I
$65 million, estimated .95 mills
Yes - 4,855 No - 3,591

Proposal II
$28.1 million, estimated .59 mills
Yes - 4,549 No - 3,862

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Bring on the architects.

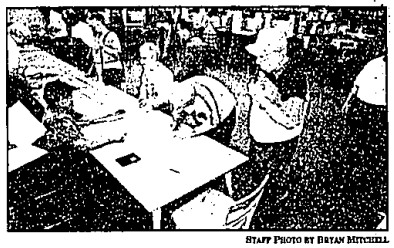
Now the work really begins for Farmington Public School District officials, who Tuesday night enjoyed victory in both halves of a combined $93.1 million bond issue.

But for one night, it was time for district leaders, teachers and parents to celebrate. Superintendent Bob Maxfield said new classrooms would be ready by next fall at both Farmington and North Farmington high schools, but projected it would take "four summers" for the complete bond issue list to be checked off.

"This is unbelievable," said school board member Frank Reid, as a huge roar erupted in the lobby of the Farmington Hills City Offices, where a gathering of about 60 waited for results to come in from the eight precincts.

"We got 'em both," said Pam O'Malley, thrusting her arm

Please see VOTE, A6



STAFF PHOTO BY BRIAN MITCHELL

Next in line: *Voters in some precincts, like those shown at Dunckel Middle School above, actually waited to get a chance to cast a ballot. Turnout was almost 15 percent.*

Staying in step

STAFF PHOTOS BY TOM HOFFMEYER

Still swinging: *Ballroom dancers enjoy big band sounds from the 1940s and '50s every Friday at the William Costick Center's senior center, at 11 Mile and Middlebelt. Above, it's polka time for Barbara Wagner, left, Leroy Papineau and Regina Bickes. At left, dancers space out for their moves on the dance floor. The dance begins at 1 p.m. every Friday. Admission is $2 and includes refreshments. Call 473-1830 for more details.*

Police warning: lock it or lose it

Thefts from cars rise in Farmington

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Downtown Farmington is generally considered safe. But leave valuables in an unlocked vehicle and you might as well say so long to your property.

According to Farmington Department of Public Safety statistics for the first two quarters of 1997, the number of larcenies from vehicles are nearly doubled from 1996 – from 19 to 37. Total larcenies, however, are reduced from 150-137 over that span.

At a recent city council meeting, Public Safety Director Gary Goss noted an example of why the stats are going up in the larceny-from-auto category.

He said a CD player and laptop computer were taken out of the front seat of an unlocked vehicle parked at the Downtown Farmington Center.

Goss, during an interview Thursday, implored shoppers and residents to use common sense when leaving their vehicles, especially if there are valuables inside.

"I don't think we have any real dramatic jumps," Goss said, referring to larcenies from vehicles. "But that's a pretty significant increase.

"These are at no particular location or time of day. But what we're seeing is the majority of these (incidents) are unlocked vehicles" with objects of value in plain view.

Goss said people should get into the habit of not leaving items on the front seat, and lock their vehicles when they leave – even if they plan on returning almost immediately.

"If you build good habits you reduce your risk" of being a target, he said. "Every time you leave the car, make a quick glance and make sure there's nothing of value within sight. And then lock it, whether you're leaving for a minute, hour or overnight."

Otherwise, Goss said the report was routine.

"There's not a whole lot here that's surprising," he said. "There are some fluctuations, such as with the larcenies from autos. But they're not major fluctuations. But it's something to keep an eye on, though."

Another area with increased numbers is drunk driving. In the first six months of 1996, there were 76 offenses reported, compared to 93 this year.

In the adult arrests summary, 462

Please see CRIME, A2

Coffee coup: Starbucks moving in?

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Efforts apparently are brewing for another major retailer to set up shop in downtown Farmington.

Virtually all that remains between Starbucks Coffee and a prominent spot in the Kimco Realty-operated Downtown Farmington Center is some completed paperwork, said Bill Richards, Farmington assistant city manager.

"We're 99.44 percent sure that Starbucks is coming to town," Richards said last Friday.

Estimating the completion of negotiations at 98.5 percent was Judy Downey, director of the Farmington Downtown Development Authority. She said Starbucks would take over space now used by Farmington Center Florist and The Total You, with the florist moving to a nearby storefront in the center.

Matt Wilson, Midwestern leasing director for Kimco Realty, Tuesday confirmed that serious discussions are going on to bring Starbucks to the center. Kimco is the leasing agency for the shopping center.

However, a spokesperson for Seattle-based Starbucks Monday denied having any knowledge of a pending Farmington deal. She asked that her name not be identified.

According to Wilson, who works out of Kimco's Long Island office, no leases have been signed and there are no guarantees they will be. "But my gut feeling is it's going to happen. . .We want the deal very, very much and we believe they do, too."

Wilson said that if a deal should be consummated, it would be sometime during the next couple weeks. He added that the deliberate pace of negotiations is nothing unusual between two large corporations.

Although Farmington Center Florist owner Linda Tryczinski confirmed discussions about moving her to another storefront took place, Tryczinski said, "Until I have a lease in my hand I'm not taking anything seriously. It's all talk."

Meanwhile, Wilson emphasized that

Please see COFFEE, A8

Officer injured as suspect flees

BY VIVIAN DEGAIN
STAFF WRITER

A Farmington Hills police officer was wounded Tuesday morning while trying to catch a combative suspect at the Comfort Inn located at 30715 12 Mile Road in Farmington Hills.

The veteran female police officer suffered broken bones in the cheek and eye socket area and facial injuries in a scuffle, while trying to arrest a male suspect believed from Detroit.

The officer was taken to Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak where she was released pending a physician's diagnosis of her injuries to determine if she needs surgery for the fractures.

Commander Charles Nebus said three officers were called to the scene 9:30 a.m. Sept. 16 because hotel management suspected a male guest was vandalizing room property.

Police records had identified the suspect, with a last known address in Detroit, as being wanted on an existing warrant for receiving and concealing stolen property in Flint, and for a traffic warrant in Livonia.

■ '. . .they decided to not pursue him in a high-speed chase because of the hour of the morning, the high volume of traffic and concern for other citizens.'

Cmdr. Charles Nebus
—Farmington Hills Police

As an officer tried to enter the room with a pass key, asking the suspect to surrender, the man jumped out of a second story window, Nebus said.

Two officers waiting on the ground chased the man and scuffled with him. He broke free, ran to his car and sped away on I-696.

According to police reports the suspect fled in excess of 120 mph, and drove down the freeway shoulder.

"While officers had spotted his Ford Taurus getting on the freeway, and they made some attempt to stop him with lights and sirens, they decided to not pursue him in a high-speed chase because of the hour of the morning, the high volume of traffic and concern for other citizens," Nebus said.

"Knowing who he was and his background, and considering the traffic conditions during rush hour, we didn't want to jeopardize other drivers and their safety. But we know his identity," Nebus said, adding that police continue a search.

Police will continue with follow-up investigation and pursue possible charges of aggravated assault of a police officer, fleeing and eluding, resisting arrest and vandalism.

Also taken into custody at the Comfort Inn was a 17-year-old female from Flint, who was arrested for obstructing police officers and released.

Management of the Comfort Inn said the suspect had checked-in Monday night and no one else was injured in the incident.

FARMINGTON FOCUS

Publicity workshop tonight

Tonight's the night for the Farmington Observer's publicity forum for community and local non-profit groups. Join us at 7 p.m. today, Thursday, Sept. 18, in the meeting room of the Farmington Community Library, behind Farmington City Hall.

Members of the Farmington Observer staff will offer information about how to get your information into the newspaper, including press releases and photographs.

School boosters, neighborhood associations, club representatives and others are invited to attend.

Singing with delight

Everything has been coming up roses for Stacie Guerreso since the William Grace Elementary fourth grader was profiled in the Observer recently for her singing talent.

Stacie, who won the talent award of the Miss North American Scholastic Pageant in New York City last July for her rendition of "Everything's Coming Up Roses," has been invited to sing for the Farmington school board on Tuesday, Sept. 23.

Stacie, 9, will also sing at St. Alexander's Church fall festival on Sept. 19, 20 and 21. To top off the busy week, she will sing at the Salvation Army Children's Home on Monday, Sept. 22. And, she is still active with the Northville Children's Theatre.

Stacie is the daughter of Mario and Karen Guerreso of Farmington Hills.

For the Force

Look for Colonial Car Wash's honor to the 50-year anniversary of the U.S. Air Force, which was dedicated on Sept. 18, 1947.

A special marquee greeting will honor the celebration through this weekend, while the U.S. Air Force Commemorative 50th anniversary flag is flying under Old Glory at the car wash.

The Farmington area's celebration of the anniversary has been coordinated by a committee including "Uncle Jack" Curd, Mary Bush, Cathleen Webb, Wally and Lorraine Christensen, Ginny Morris and Miss Farmington Hills Jennifer Hoemke. They've also developed a flag program that will be offered to Farmington schools, according to Curd.