

# Farmington Observer



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## IN THE PAPER TODAY

**Update:** A teenager injured in a bus/car crash was in serious condition as of Friday./A3

## TASTE

**All in the family:** Meet the Sharkas brothers. They're all executive chefs at high-profile restaurants in the Detroit metropolitan area./B1

## MALLS & MAINSTREETS

**Selling art:** Several artists have by-passed the gallery route to open their own stores with their own stuff./B4

## BUSINESS

**Job training:** Operation ABE opened its new Career Resilience Center in Southfield last week./C1

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## Expect to pay for driver ed

By TIM SMITH  
STAFF WRITER

When it comes to continuing driver education, don't expect Farmington Public Schools to follow the lead of the Southfield district, which is dropping its summer program next year due to low participation. But it no longer will be a freebie for residents.

The state, as of April 1, 1998, is no longer requiring that districts offer driver education. But districts have the option of continuing their programs with just a small per-tenant reimbursement from Lansing, said Sandra Welling of Farmington schools community relations department.

"The board has decided we would definitely offer it next summer," Welling said last week. "But the details will follow in the spring."

She is working with North Farmington High School teacher Lisa Dean in coordinating how the district's program will operate. Dean taught driver education for a number of years, Welling said.

What can be said about next year's curriculum fees is that they will be competitive with private driver education schools, which are popping up all over the map. Other details needing to be determined include program length, available hours and dates.

"We're able to continue the program because the state does allow us to charge for it," Welling said.

Although details for the 1998 program in Farmington are not yet firm, Welling said the state will kick in approximately \$75 per student. About 340 students took part during this year's program, available for those age 16 and up.

"The district will match that and then,

Please see DRIVER ED, A5

Just perfect!



Winners: Coach John Herrington, center, happily hoists the Class A State Championship Friday at the Pontiac Silverdome, to the delight of players including No. 22 Tom Salley, left, and No. 1 Ricky Bryant, who scored a touchdown in the 21-6 victory over Midland Dow High School. For much more on the Hawks' victory and undefeated season, see Section E.

## Kimberly sub roads get costly rehab

By LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

A majority of residents in one Farmington Hills subdivision want their roads redone - 55.9 percent of them, in fact.

Those on the other side of that figure don't want new roads, at least not at the estimated \$4,464 they'd pay through a special assessment. Some even question whether neighbors

signed a petition requesting the \$1.6 million road project in Kimberly subdivision off 11 Mile and Middlebelt roads.

Those who did were indicated with an "X" on a subdivision map shown through an overhead projector in city council chambers.

"I really question the 56 percent," said Jack Shan, who lives on Barwell. "I've talked to two neighbors who are shown to have approved of this and I know they've not."

All signatures have been notarized and verified, city officials said.

After more than two hours of public comments, the Farmington Hills City Council gave the go-ahead on the project in a 6-0 vote at Monday's regular meeting. Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi abstained because he lives on Kiltartan in the subdivision.

That gives the go-ahead to draw designs and seek bids. Another public hearing takes place to decide how costs

will be apportioned in April or May.

The city picks up 20 percent - or \$326,800 - while the remaining \$1.3 million is assessed on 307 home units in the subdivision based on frontage abutting roads.

Some say the current method for assessing such projects is unfair, especially to those who live on corner lots. Councilwoman Vicki Barnett has asked

Please see ROADS, A5

## Ford's floor

Historic Botsford site hosts ballet school

By LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

The man who made the country move on wheels is indirectly inspiring girls and women to spin on their toes in prouettes of classical dance.

Botsford Inn's ballroom dance floor - installed and cherished by automaker Henry Ford - is the site of a longtime Farmington area ballet company. Botsford Ballet features girls ages 4 and 5 to adults and rehearses three days a week in the sec-

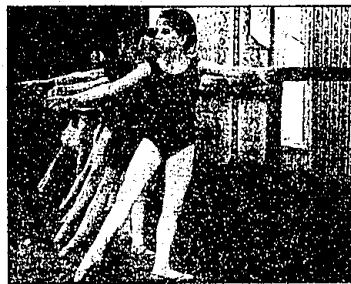
ond floor ballroom of the historic inn.

"The beauty of this room and the elegance, you'll never find a maple floor like this," said Carole Cotter, Botsford Ballet owner and instructor. "The ambience is everything. It's a great training place for the girls."

"You couldn't ask for a more elegant, familiar setting to teach classical ballet."

The maple floor Cotter speaks of gives way to the strenuous, yet graceful move-

Please see FLOOR, A5



Classic: Lisa Emerson, 10, foreground, and others in the Botsford Ballet beginners class practice in the historic Botsford Inn ballroom.

## Lots of Goodfellows help

They came out in droves for the fourth annual "Skate for Farmington Area Goodfellows" on Monday, Nov. 17 at Bonaventure Skating Center, said Chuck Findlay, manager of the Farmington Hills facility.

To be exact, there were 497 youngsters who participated, said Findlay, "plus maybe another 160 parents who were here as spectators." The skaters each brought a can of food and paid \$2 in order to take part. Findlay said members of the Goodfellows collected the food on Saturday and also picked up a check for \$994. The canned goods and money will help benefit needy families in the area.

Findlay was delighted with the turnout, which was about 100 more than first expected.

"It makes me feel good that the people of Farmington and Farmington Hills came out to support a

## FARMINGTON FOCUS

worthwhile cause," Findlay said. "It speaks well for the people."

### Help nominate rainbow winners

The Farmington/Farmington Hills Multicultural/Multiracial Community will host its third annual Rainbow Recognition Awards Breakfast to be held at 7:30 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 15, at the William Costick Activities Center in Farmington Hills.

The annual breakfast is a celebration of the community's commitment to diversity and multiculturalism. The entire community is invited to attend and share in this celebration.

Keynote speaker for the breakfast will be Dr. Frederick Samson of the Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church in Detroit.

Rainbow Recognition Awards will be presented to community members, including students, who have made significant contributions to multicultural understanding and advocacy.

Community members are invited to submit letters nominating individuals for these awards to:

The City of Farmington Hills, 31555 11 Mile Road, Farmington Hills, MI 48336, Attn: Gail Jackson.

Nominations must be received by Monday, Dec. 16.

Tickets are \$10 each. Orders can be made payable to the City of Farmington Hills and sent to Irene Karricky, 26693 Power Road, Farmington Hills, MI 48334. Or, reserve a seat by calling the Rev. Suzanne Paul at 477-8548.

## Owners renounce apartment inspections



A Farmington Hills plan to inspect apartments to ensure owners maintain them isn't very popular with complex owners.

By LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Keyed-up apartment complex owners are quick to serve notice to Farmington Hills city officials: They don't like their idea for a comprehensive rental unit inspection program.

Many rental property owners deposited their feelings before Farmington Hills City Council at Monday's meeting. City council members want to look at the proposal further in a future study session.

Thorough inspections of apartment interiors and exteriors will maintain the area's 63 complexes, which account for 38 percent of the city's housing, officials said. Some 22 apartment structures are 20 years or older.

With increasing age, complaints to the city about the condition of some rental units - ranging from

Please see APARTMENTS, A4

## Night football: 40-year debate

By TIM SMITH  
STAFF WRITER

When Jack Cotton became athletic director in the Farmington Public School District in 1956, high school football games were played on Saturday afternoons at Shawannee Park.

People debated putting up lights, even then, but the effort got stuck in the mud.

Another group approached Cotton and the school board in the early 1970s to have lights installed at Farmington High, North Farmington and Harrison. Again, the bid stumbled like Scott Mitchell trying to escape a pass rush.

"Around that time we lost all of our (athletic department) funds for a year and we were supported by the public for a year," said Cotton. He added that the school board quickly opposed the idea for

Please see LIGHTS, A4