

# Farmington Observer



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## THE WEEK AHEAD

### SUNDAY

**Border watch: Borders Books and Music on Orchard Lake hosts story time with "Toot & Puddles" at 2 p.m. today while adults can have their handwriting analyzed by Liz Mills 2-4 p.m.**

### MONDAY

**MLK Day: Farmington Hills City Hall is open - city council meets at 7:30 p.m. - while Farmington City Hall is closed in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Trash collection is not affected, but mail delivery is delayed.**

### TUESDAY

**Board shuffle: Farmington's school board meets at 7:30 p.m. at The Farmington Training Center, 33000 Thomas St., not the Administration Center.**

### WEDNESDAY

**Good cents: Farmington Hills' EDC ponders business issues when it meets at 8 a.m. in city hall.**

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## Tennis club dives into pool plans

By TIM SMITH  
STAFF WRITER

In an attempt to make its facility more user friendly all 12 months of the year, the Farmington Tennis Club is seeking city approval to build a non-competitive swimming pool.

Farmington Assistant City Manager Bill Richards said the planning commission last Monday received a preliminary proposal from architects Allen & Leux, Inc. The private club, located on Farmington Road south of Grand River, is required to obtain a special exception use and site plan approval from the commission in order to proceed.

The depth of the pool, to be built on club-owned property northeast of the existing facility, would range from 3 to 7 feet. A hot tub, 29 new parking spaces and a water slide are other highlights of the plan.

"I think it's a viable proposal," said Richards, who attended the planning session. "It's a sheltered site, if you will. I think it'd have minimal impact on surrounding property owners."

Before the proposal can be approved, however, the planning commission must first hold a public hearing, before recommending to the council that the plan be OK'd.

Richards, filling in at the city helm while City Manager Frank Lauboff recovers from back surgery, said the public hearing and approval or rejection could take place at the planning commission's next meeting.

Please see POOL, A3

## Police plead for new 911 system



By LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills Police Chief Bill Dwyer is helping lead a distress call over the county's outdated 911 system and commissioners are listening. Oakland County Commission Board members have hired the accounting firm Plante & Moran to conduct a study of existing 911 lines and radio

transmission equipment. Farmington Public Safety Deputy Director Michael Wiggins and Dwyer attended a session with other public safety officials in Pontiac where details of the needs assessment were announced Friday.

Commissioners want an independent assessment before they decide how to correct the situation. One possible fix involves assessing telephone customers a 4-percent charge on their basic phone line - roughly \$6.96 a year - to pay for a countywide upgrade.

Plante & Moran's findings are expected in the spring, though Dwyer and other police chiefs say they already know the results.

"The equipment we have is failing and it's failing because it's 10 years old," Dwyer said. "It's antiquated and inadequate." Farmington Public Safety Deputy Director Gary Goss said obsolete 911 communications equipment is also concern in his department.

"The technology has advanced so

much that some of our equipment is like comparing two tin cans and a string to a telephone," Goss said.

Outmoded equipment is not only an inconvenience but a major worry for departments. Replacement parts are no longer available. A minor glitch can send an entire system spiraling to the scrap heap.

A surcharge would raise \$6.2 million annually, which could upgrade 911 systems and also put departments on the

Please see 911, A2

**Rewarding: The Rev. Frederick Sampson, photo near right, accepts congratulations after his speech at the Rainbow Recognition Awards breakfast Thursday. The event drew more than 300 people to Farmington Hills' Costick Center, including (far right photo) East Middle School principal Eugene Seaborn.**



Awarded: Fifth-grade teacher Michelle Meyers of Beechview Elementary receives her Rainbow Award.

## Rainbow honors reflect diversity

By TIM SMITH  
STAFF WRITER

According to Kristin Gustafson, society will benefit tomorrow from what the youth of today are learning about getting along with people of other races, religions and ethnic backgrounds.

Gustafson, a senior at Mercy High School, had just been presented with a Rainbow Recognition Award during Thursday morning's third annual awards breakfast.

The awards, given by the Farmington/Farmington Hills Multicultural/Multiracial Community Council, recognize those who help promote "multicultural understanding and advocacy." This year, 32 winners -

many who now attend various elementary, middle and high schools - were honored at the William Costick Activities Center in Farmington Hills.

"What's real important is the education about diversity and different things," said Gustafson, an active member of Mercy's student council, which embraces diversity. "And I think it's great that they're starting (diversity) programs at the middle schools... When I went to East (Middle School), there was hardly any diversity."

"But when I went to Mercy, I saw all these different cultures, so much diversity, and I learned so much. It

Please see RAINBOW, A4

## Wisdom clears 'muddy streams'

By TIM SMITH  
STAFF WRITER

When the Rev. Dr. Frederick Sampson was 12 years old, he was ridiculed for being a stutering overweight boy with little to say.

Then, he encountered a wise old woman in his Texas neighborhood.

What she said to young Sampson inspired him to start down a path that led to his position as pastor of the Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church in Detroit.

"That little old lady, who told me when I was a fat, stutering nothing that I had something on the inside... she made me feel that I had, in my life, cosmic significance," said the uplifting, often humorous Sampson. "You can give that to every child, to every youth."

Sampson performed an entertaining and inspirational keynote address with the theme "Broken Fences, Muddy Streams" during the Farm-

Please see STREAMS, A4

## Hearts open for homeless

### Sorrows rolls out hospitality, hoops

By LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

For people who are homeless, a game of basketball could offer something of a metaphor.

Where they somehow fall shy of society's safety net, they can at least connect with the one of the surrounding rim. Unlike the hard court game, they've also learned life offers few if any free throws.

A pickup basketball contest

among guests from a Royal Oak shelter in Our Lady of Sorrows gym Thursday night provided a little fun and an escape.

Hoops and hospitality were part of the theme at the Farmington church, which hosted 19 people from South Oakland Shelter. Guests - one boy as young as age 3 - have a warm place to sleep and eat while they or their parents spend the day working or

looking for a job.

This is the ninth year Our Lady of Sorrows has provided meals and a place to stay for those in need.

"The parish just wants to try and make a dent in the problem," said Jim Pelon, who co-chaired the event with Kim Gary. "It's a good experience for them (the parishioners), for the kids especially. They realize how fortunate we are."

The 300-volunteer effort at the

Please see SHELTER, A2



High five: Sorrows shelter visitors Joe Weigand (left) and Daniel Williams slap hands during a basketball game Thursday evening.

STAFF PHOTO BY JEFF KIMBLE

### Dishing accolades

Potter John Glick of Farmington Hills visited city hall last Monday for a "Meet the Artists" reception, then stayed around afterward for a presentation at the city council meeting.

While city officials praised Glick's ceramic works and his international reputation, Glick responded with kind words about the city's cooperation to make his dream of opening up a studio pottery shop in 1964 come true.

He also presented to the city a hugo, swirled bronze and brown-colored ceramic plate, about the size of a truck tire. "Use it in good cultural health," Glick told the city council, handing it to Mayor Aldo Vagstad.

Never one to let an opportunity for a quip pass, Vagstad smiled. "This would make a neat spaghetti

## FARMINGTON FOCUS

dish."

An exhibition of Glick's creations will be displayed through Feb. 28 in the Art Corridor Resident's Galleries inside the Farmington and Farmington Hills city halls.

### On reaping and sowing

The Rev. Frederick Sampson delivered many a humorous but pointed anecdote during his keynote speech at the Rainbow Recognition Awards Breakfast Thursday morning. (See story above)

One dealt with how a Baptist hierarchy member

had asked Sampson to explain why he would allow five women to be licensed as ministers, since, he said, "If God wanted women to be ministers he would have had a woman apostle."

Sampson's answer was philosophical: "I said you had better not push that, because God did not have any African-American apostles either. So don't plant it if you don't want to cultivate it."

### Yearlong Longacre

Farmington Hills' Longacre House is aiming to be a year-round resource, according to facility manager Ben Marks.

Look for a new series of summer camps for youngsters starting this summer, Marks said. "We want to be open through the year and have activities throughout the year."