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COUNTY NEWS

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Board: Let there be lights

Farmington's three high schools will get night football games, but officials don't know if lights will be ready this fall.

It may be a month before officials know whether stadium lights at Farmington's three high schools will be installed in time for night football games this fall.

But there will be lighting. That much was assured Tuesday night by the unanimous vote of the Farmington Public Schools Board of Education approving the lighting, despite a warning of a possible zoning law violation from one lighting opponent at the packed board meeting.

The warning came from Dr. Samuel Millstone, a retired dentist, who cited a recently passed Farmington Hills ordinance regulating exterior lights and who also said he would meet with state lawmakers on the issue.

Nevertheless, the roll-call vote, which ended a parade of speakers on both sides of the issue, seemingly ended months of research and debate. It also ended the district's status as the last in metro Detroit without night gridiron games.

And it sent home a mostly happy standing-room-only crowd, who roundly applauded the vote and was ready to see night football in September.

"Remember, there's 24 hours in the day, and work can be done Saturdays and Sundays, too," Dean

Please see LIGHTS, A6

5 join race for 2 seats

Inch, Webb, challengers vie for board

Five candidates are seeking the two available spots on the Farmington Public Schools board in the June 8 election.

Joining incumbents R. Jack Inch and Cathleen Webb in the running for the two four-year terms were Melody Jasko, Jackie Katz and Anwar Mahmood.

Inch, the senior board member, is now serving his fifth consecutive term while Webb is completing her second.

The other three are believed first-time candidates for the board.

Jasko, of 20962 Larkspur in Farmington, is a part-time sales assistant and mother to Flanders School third-grader Abigail, 9.

She also is married to Kim Jasko, who served on the campaign of freshman state Rep. Andrew Raczakowski, R-Farmington Hills.

Jasko said she is running "primarily because I would like to focus on empowering parents to be in charge of their children's education."

She would do this "by taking school board meetings to the schools as a way to communicate better with the school board. Rather than hold all meetings at the Schulman Building, I would take them to the schools so parents will have easier access" to board members. "I feel that would bring more openness to

Please see SEATS, A6

Sweet search



Egg hunt: Children scramble for candy and toys, above, during the Jaycees' Easter Egg Hunt Saturday in Heritage Park. About 150 kids bundled up to pick up bags of candy and toys. At left, the Easter Bunny and, to his left, Jaycees vice president Steve Drahozal get swarmed by youngsters.



Fill 'er up: Ashley Gaabo, 4, gets help with her take from dad, Dave.



Disease won't douse town's fishing derby

Reports of a disease that is wreaking havoc on the trout population aren't going to snag the annual Farmington fishing derby.

The derby takes place Saturday, April 25, in Shiawassee Park. Some 300 anglers have already signed up.

Whirling disease is not known to affect humans, but has deadly consequences for trout. The state Department of Natural Resources quarantined and tested trout in some hatcheries to see if the contamination spread.

But a fish farm where Farmington buys its trout has been given a clean bill of health.

"So our trout derby is on," said Farmington City Manager Frank Lauhoff. "We're hoping for good weather."

Up until last week, officials were concerned about whether the derby would take place.

"If those fish are contaminated, we're up a creek, so to speak," said Joe Derek last Friday. Derek is a Farmington Hills naturalist who helps coordinate the annual event. "I guess we'll have to see if we have fish."

Whirling disease is a parasite that

Please see FISHING, A9

Hills to face its sewage, septic overflows

When it comes to controlling storm water, Farmington Hills is better off deciding what will float than having federal court judges steer the raft.

That is the advice coming from the Oakland County health department and drain commission and the city's attorney, among others. After being briefed during a study session Monday, Farmington Hills City Council members said they'll consider their options.

One recommendation is that the Hills band with other communities in the Rouge River region.

Farmington Hills is one of 11 cities named in a long-standing federal lawsuit over compliance with the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Water Act. Many cities — such as Farmington with its already built sewer separation project — have dealt with combined sewerage overflows.

'The job isn't going to be done until we're swimming in the Rouge River ... down by the Ford Rouge plant.'

John Donohue
—Hills city attorney

Now cities are being held responsible for storm water runoff that carries pollutants into the Detroit River and Great Lakes. "We're right in the middle of the thing," said Tom Biasell, Hills Public Services director. "Every drop of rain water that lands in Farmington Hills ends up in the Rouge."

First, Farmington Hills will voluntarily apply for a state storm water permit. By 2001, cities will be required by state law to have them.

In order to qualify, cities need to develop short- and long-term action plans to curb storm water runoff and other pollution.

U.S. District Judge John Feikens wanted to make the permits mandatory this year and threatened other legal action to speed up the process. However,

Please see OVERFLOWS, A6

New couple

Karen Gerard of Farmington Hills spent 25 days getting to know her new friend.

Gerard was matched with her new pal — a canine companion named Sierra — during an extensive training program hosted by Leader Dogs for the Blind in Rochester.

Sierra will help Gerard around town with verbal commands, hand signals and a special harness, through the training by Leader Dogs, which is a program set up and funded, in part, by the donations of Lions Clubs.

Bouncing to success

Laurie Palazzolo, Farmington resident and author of "The Spide: A Hippo in a Whimsical Tale for Children of All Ages," reports great sales for her first book. The story/poem which she also illustrated

FARMINGTON FOCUS

with 16 watercolors is available in major bookstores as well as on the Barnes & Noble and Amazon Internet sites.

"I'm looking forward to more exposure as a presenter in schools," said Palazzolo, who brought her message on the power of reading to students at Bulman Elementary School in Bedford Township recently. She read to youngsters during March is Reading Month and encouraged them to follow their dreams.

She has been asked to speak at the Michigan Association of Media in Education's annual conference in November.

Marked territory

It's a first for the Farmington Exchange Club: Golfers at this year's fund-raising golf outing will be taking home three-packs of balls printed with the exchange club's own two-color custom logo.

The event, which raises money to fight child abuse, is scheduled for Thursday, June 25, at Glen Oaks Golf Course. For tickets or tee times call 477-0600; to sponsor a hole call Bob Reboyt at 426-4400.

No skating on Easter

The Farmington Hills Ice Arena will be closed Sunday, April 12, for Easter.

However, the arena is preparing for its second annual ice show May 1-3. Tickets will be available at the arena daily from 8:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Performances are at 7:30 p.m. on Friday-Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday.



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