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IN THE PAPER TODAY

OPINION

Get involved: The Nov. 3 general election isn't that far off. It's time for voters to study the issues and the candidates. And don't forget to register to vote./A12

COMMUNITY LIFE

Vintage: As we face a new millennium, local historian Dave Litogott takes a peek back at a 100 years of Farmington area history./B1

Tour: Don't forget that this weekend is the Heritage Home Tour, 1-5 p.m. Saturday, September 19 and Sunday, September 20. Tickets are on sale./B3

SPORTS

Grid review: Senior quarterback Dave Pesci had a big day as a passer Saturday while guiding unbeaten Farmington Harrison to a 47-0 defeat of Farmington./C1

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Block scheduling delayed one year



A majority of Harrison's staff voted to delay block scheduling last week.

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Harrison High School faculty members apparently felt it would be a double whammy to go ahead with a controversial four-by-four block scheduling plan at the same time the building undergoes massive construction.

To minimize disruption, about two-thirds of Harrison's staff last week voted to delay block scheduling one year, until fall 2000. The delay was being announced to parents this week, said Principal Rande Horn.

"The staff just felt, and a large majority sensed, that it would be better to take our time and get through the bulk of construction" before the implementation of block scheduling, Horn said Tuesday. "And this gives us a better chance to step back and look at what we're doing."

Parents were very receptive to the delay.

"I think that's an excellent idea," said Darlene Sherry, who has a son who will enter Harrison in the 1999-2000 school year. "It gives us enough time to do more research and have more input into what's going on. Our big problem was that it was kind of thrown at us and we were caught off guard."

Both Grossman, a member of the district's 14-member block scheduling planning committee, said she was "thrilled to death" about the delay. But she is confident ongoing pressure from parents triggered the decision more than the "graceful" excuse of bond issue construction.

"That gives them a very easy out," Grossman said Wednesday. "The bottom line is it was the right thing to do."

Considerable anxiety from Harrison parents about four-by-four started right after finding out in May that it was the high school's block of choice.

Worries, expressed by parents at a June informational forum at Harrison, were repeated during a recent informational meeting of Harrison Concerned Parents. Their criticism of four-by-four, which requires students to complete a full year's worth of courses in one

Please see BLOCK, A7



STAFF PHOTO BY DILL BRISLER

Good news: Tom Petros, owner of Cigar Emporium, just got the OK from the state allowing him to open a new wine shop.

State lights the way

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

The good news Cigar Emporium owner Tom Petros was waiting to get for several months finally arrived Wednesday.

State officials OK'd his request for a permit to sell packaged beer and wine, paving the way for Petros to open the Wine Emporium next door

to his existing business in the Downtown Farmington Center.

Petros and store manager Ron Shannon were excited to learn of the Michigan Liquor Control Commission's approval - which took several months to complete.

"I'm relieved," Petros said. "... I'm

Please see WINE, A7

Minorities needed, few available



Involved: Preston Brown teaches vocal music to seventh graders at East Middle School.

EDUCATION UNDER FIRE

BY TIM SMITH - STAFF WRITER
STAFF PHOTOS BY BILL BRISLER

It's almost a Catch 22 situation. First, American colleges aren't producing enough minority teaching candidates to fill the bill in public school systems, such as Farmington, where diversity is embraced.

Because the number of recruits are low, minority high school students don't see enough African Americans or other minorities teaching them. Why pursue a field where their chances of success aren't as great as perhaps engineering, medicine or industry?

Having more minority teachers on board in increasingly diverse districts makes sense to Farmington High School freshman Keri Firestone, who is white.

"There are a few black teachers," Firestone said. "(But) I think it'd make it nice for the African Americans to see their culture being brought in through jobs such as teaching."

However, for educators, parents and students, the main consideration is teaching ability, not skin color.

"All of my life, I've been brought up to not see color but to see the people inside," said Farmington High School freshman

Please see MINORITIES, A3

Parks-rec chief hired

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

When Farmington Hills city officials looked for a special services director, they knocked on their neighbor's door and David Boyer answered.

Boyer, 38, who is Southfield parks and recreation assistant director, has been named as director of the Special Services Department. Boyer's first day on the job is Oct. 5.

The Southfield-Lathrup graduate replaces Dan Potter, who stepped down in the spring. Boyer, who has a bachelor's degree in recreation from Northern Michigan University, is relishing the chance to oversee a department so large in scope.

"From what I've seen, they've done a great job with their programming and facilities," Boyer said. "It's exciting to come into a situation like that where they have new buildings."

More than 40 people applied for the position. The city posted ads in professional parks and recreation newsletters in nine Midwest states and the Michigan Municipal Review.

As part of the extensive recruitment effort, the city also sent letters to 240 parks and rec professionals.

Boyer emerged from a pool of 18 candidates.

Please see PARKS, A7

New educator just wants to teach

Chris Bruce is a black teacher. But one thing has nothing to do with the other.

Instead, the 27-year-old Bruce thinks of himself as a teacher who happens to be African American. The fact that school districts all over the United States are fighting over few minority teaching candidates isn't what prompted Bruce to take up the field at the University of Michigan.

This fall, he began a job teaching history and computers at Dunckel Middle School in the Farmington district. And the Farmington Hills resident is fairly certain that his recruitment by the district wasn't a decision based on skin color, either.

"They haven't said 'Chris, we like you because you're a minority.' I have more of a sense that I was hired because of the set of skills I bring to this district," said Bruce, during a

recent interview at Dunckel. Bruce did count minority teachers among those who motivated him during his own school days. Gerald Young, a minority teacher who has since left the district, was his mentor when he completed student teaching work.

"He recommended I apply for a job at Farmington High School," Bruce said.

But as much as Bruce doesn't think he was hired because of race, the issues of race or ethnicity were not why he sought a position in Farmington - even though it is a district attempting to diversify employees to better match the student population.

"I don't recall Gerry pointing out the fact that Farmington in particular is striving to attract more minority members among its ranks as a

reason to apply," Bruce said. "But I do think that, making it known that Farmington and Farmington Hills is a diverse community, and discussing these issues, will attract minority applicants."

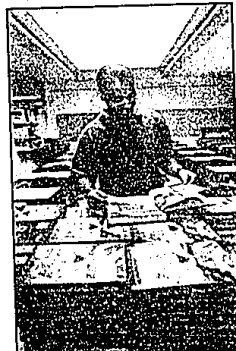
According to Bruce, he gravitated toward a teaching career for many reasons: his excellent communications skills, sense of humor, personal values. But it wasn't a case of finding a career lacking in minorities - as true as that may be - and then going after it.

Desire is essential

He wanted to teach and do for others what his teachers did for him.

Bruce emphasized that teachers of all backgrounds had a major impact on his life "in shaping what I consid-

Please see TEACH, A3



Chris Bruce

Hills dad in custody after holding wife at gunpoint

■ On Sunday, Marko Ivezic showed up at his wife's Bronx residence armed with a shotgun and 11 pairs of handcuffs, Farmington Hills police said.

front of the children, reports said.

After a half-hour standoff, New York police convinced Ivezic to surrender without incident. No one was injured.

According to Farmington Hills police,

Ivezic failed to return to Oakland County Jail from his work release assignment Sept. 6. The Oakland County Apprehension Team searched for the missing prisoner.

Ivezic, 37, was serving a 12-month sentence for his involvement in a botched scheme to extort money from his wife's family in April.

Ivezic handcuffed his son, Zoran, in a bathroom sink in a Romulus hotel while telling police two masked men kidnapped him and demanded \$10,000 ransom. The plot unraveled after police investigators found discrepancies in the father's story.

Ivezic wanted the ransom money to

Please see CHARGED, A7

