

Farmington Observer

HomeTown
Putting you in touch
with your world

Serving Farmington and Farmington Hills for 112 years

Sunday
March 14, 1999

VOLUME 112 NUMBER 49

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN • 7 0 PAGES • <http://www.farmingtonobserver.com>

SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS
© 1999 HomeTown Communications Network, Inc.

THE WEEK AHEAD

MONDAY

Agenda: The Farmington Hills City Council will meet at 7:30 p.m. in council chambers, 31555 11 Mile.

City: The Farmington City Council will meet at 8 p.m. in council chambers, 23600 Liberty.

WEDNESDAY

Speaking: Anne Borg, director of the new Farmington office of Haven, will speak to the Farmington Exchange Club at noon at the Brass Pointe restaurant on Orchard Lake, just north of 10 Mile.

Democrats: Tim Richard, state and regional reporter and columnist for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, will speak to the Farmington Democratic Club at 7:30 p.m. at the Botsford Inn, 28000 Grand River. Richard's topic will be "From Mark Twain to Charter Schools..."

INDEX

Obituaries	A7
Classified Index	E5
Real Estate	E1
Crossword	E7
Jobs	G1
Automotive	H1
Home & Service	H5
Taste	B1
Arts & Leisure	C1
Malls	C8
Sports & Recreation	D1

Parents meet to talk MEAP

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
tsmith@oe.homecomm.net

Last spring, record numbers of students from Farmington's three high schools did not take the Michigan Educational Assessment Program. In many cases, parents decided the test could only hinder their children's chances of being accepted into colleges.

The prevailing view was the high school MEAP didn't have much of an upside for kids.

At 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, parents of current juniors who attend Farmington, Harrison and North high schools can discuss the controversial issue with state and local educators and legislators. The session will take place in the renovated cafeteria at O.E. Dunckel Middle School, 32800 12 Mile, between Farmington and Orchard Lake roads.

Farmington schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield, in November, had called for a yearlong moratorium on the high school MEAP. At that time, he said the moratorium would enable a panel of experts to examine the pros and cons of the test — which in spring 1998 was taken by only 16 percent of eligible students at Farmington, Harrison and North high schools.

The moratorium did not materialize. But

Please see MEAP, A5

Noise: Residents head to Lansing

■ Residents who live along I-275 are going to Lansing to talk with transportation officials about noise problems on the freeway.

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER
loconnor@oe.homecomm.net



Neighbors along I-275 will meet with state transportation officials to share their concerns about curbing freeway noise.

Organizers intend to present a number of noise reduction alternatives to Michigan Department of Transportation officials during a meeting Tuesday. The meeting is 9 a.m. at Lansing's Capitol City Airport Aeronautics Building.

I-275

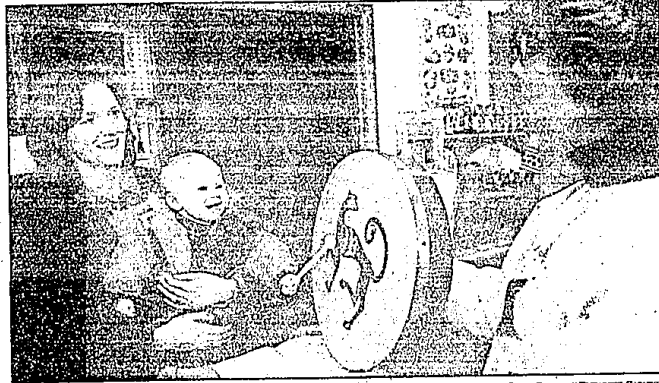
Organizers want to bring 100-200 residents but time is running out. In a month, construction will start on a \$68 million rebuild of I-275, which is intended to last 25 years.

Whatever number, the group will come in peace — contrary to the constant din from I-275 that has been measured as high as 86 decibels.

"We're not hostile to MDOT. We want the new road," said David Sharp, Meadowbrook Woods resident. "We don't want to antagonize the commission."

One suggestion residents intend to

Please see I-275, A6



STAFF PHOTO BY ELIZABETH CARNEGIE

A wee bit: Elaine Cassidy of Ireland and her son, James Patrick Allen, 10 months, shop at the Celtic Shamrock with the help of shop owner Barbara Horrigan-Goins. James plays the bodhran drum while his mom shops.

Wearin' the green Don't go far to celebrate

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER
loconnor@oe.homecomm.net

St. Patrick's Day is for wearin' the green, but Farmington area merchants count on collectin' a wee bit of it too.

Downtown Farmington, in particular, is a hub of Irish holiday activity March 17, which falls on Wednesday this year.

Cowley's Village Inn, a staple of St. Patrick celebrations, is preparing for its perennial throng of revelers. Doors open 7 a.m. at the Grand River Avenue watering hole.

■ For the first time in 20 years, WCSX-FM's 'JJ & The Morning Crew' won't be doing a live radio broadcast from Cowley's.

This year, though, a St. Paddy's rite has passed quietly. For the first time in 20 years, WCSX-FM's 'JJ & The Morning Crew' won't be doing a live radio broadcast from Cowley's.

Kelly and Lynn Woodison are not doing a St. Patrick's Day remote, a station spokesman said.

"With all the voices, they don't take the show out of the studio very much," said Jennifer Williams, WCSX-FM promotions manager.

George Baier, who did parodies of "Dick the Bruiser" and former Red Wing groat and announcer Sid Abel, left the Morning Crew last April.

Coincidentally, the authentic

Please see CELEBRATE, A2

School incumbents seek re-election

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
tsmith@oe.homecomm.net

The school board incumbents are definitely running to retain their seats in the June election, and now it's time to see whether they will be challenged

MONDAY, JUNE 7

or not. Linda Enberg, finishing her first four-year term, and relative newcomer Gary Sharp announced dur-

ing Tuesday's school board meeting their intentions to run for election. Both have taken out nominating petitions and have until 4 p.m. Monday, April 12 to file them with the district's business office.

"It doesn't seem like it's been four years already."

Please see ELECTION, A5



STAFF PHOTO BY ELIZABETH CARNEGIE

On stage: Mercy High School will present its spring musical "Annie" at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, March 19-20, and 2 p.m. Sunday, March 21, in the school auditorium. Tickets are \$7 for students and children and \$9 advance or \$10 at the door for adults. For information, call Mercy High School at (248) 476-8020, Ext. 223. Above, the musical's main characters are (from left) Grace Farrell, played by Sarah Haley; Maggie Wright as Annie; and Robert Rodemeyer as Oliver Warbucks.

Death of student shocks classmates

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
tsmith@oe.homecomm.net

Shock waves rippled through Farmington High School Friday over news of the sudden death of sophomore Matthew Miller, 16.

"Yes, we're in shock, but we have a crisis intervention team that went into action this morning to meet with the classmates and friends of this young man," said Farmington High School Principal John Barrett.

About 30 students participated in Friday's counseling sessions, which Barrett said are expected to continue this week to help the school come to terms with the student's death. The student died early Friday, apparently from injuries sustained in an attempted suicide Wednesday night.

Teachers read a statement to their classes during the last hour of classes on Friday, said Barrett. The principal said he did not know the victim well.



Matthew Miller

Earlier Friday, Farmington schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield said "It's a horrible tragedy anytime a child is lost."

Matthew Miller attempted suicide in the basement of his home in Farmington, sometime

between 8:30-9:25 p.m. Wednesday, according to Farmington public safety reports.

After being found unconscious by a family member, paramedics arrived at the home. They then were able to restore a pulse before transporting him to nearby Botsford Hospital in Farmington Hills.

The teen was transferred Thursday to William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, where he died about 2:40 a.m. Friday, police reports

Please see DEATH, A5

Police review correspondence from online romance

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER
loconnor@oe.homecomm.net

Police investigators are going over e-mail correspondence between a Hills man and a French woman, looking for reasons why a six-month online romance ended in her death.

Michigan State Police crime technicians downloaded files from the man's computer, which was seized during a search of his Fairmont Park Apartment residence.

On Friday, state police turned over their findings to Hills authorities. Investigators planned to review e-mail letters during the weekend.

Assistant Chief Chuck Nebus already

read some of the letters, which revealed their was passion expressed by both parties.

"It's kind of a romantic love story with a tragic ending, except you know it's real," Nebus said. "It makes for sad reading."

In paper form, the electronic correspondence filled the assistant chief's

brief case. Nebus and other investigators believe the missives could shed some light into Julie Yasa's death, which police continue to rule as suspicious.

Yasa's body was found in a wooded area outside of Fairmont Park Apart-

Please see E-MAIL, A2

