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TODAY

Protection: The Farmington Hills Consumer Protection Committee warns residents to expect more solicitors knocking on their doors./A8

News: Happenings at Clarenceville and Walled Lake schools./A10, A11

OPINION

High notes: Congratulations to the Farmington school bands who scored big in recent music festivals./A12

Revenues: Farmington Hills Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi talks about cuts in state and federal revenues./A13

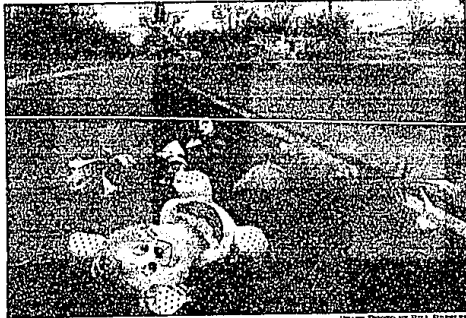
COMMUNITY LIFE

Break: A group of Mercy seniors is taking an alternative spring break, building homes with Habitat for Humanity./B1

Friends: A heartfelt friendship blossoms between an octogenarian gardener and a Farmington scout./B3

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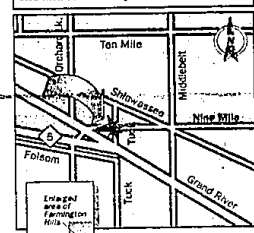
Remembering: Nine Mile traffic drives by a roadside memorial to hit-and-run victim Kathleen McKeon, who was killed Saturday night.

Police search for runaway driver

Police are asking for help in locating the driver of a pickup truck who killed a woman Saturday.

When Kathleen McKeon stopped by a Nine Mile Road party store just

Hit-and-run fatal pedestrian accident



before 8 p.m. Saturday night, it was pretty much routine, according to Nick Shammo, owner of The Wine Tasters.

She came and went as usual. Accompanied by her small dog, McKeon, 44, made her usual slow walk to the store from her residence in Nantucket Townhomes, located across Nine Mile. The short Farmington woman - who lived alone with her dog - apparently suffered from a muscle impairment that kept her from walking any faster, Shammo explained.

After some friendly chatter, she and her dog left the store and began embarking on her return trip. As always, McKeon did not cross Nine Mile at Tuck, where there is a traffic light. Shammo said the talkative customer crossed from the store's center driveway.

This time, her return wasn't routine, it was tragic. A white 1998 Ford pickup truck, headed westbound on Nine Mile, did not see McKeon and her dog in

Please see FATAL, A5

Motorists expect inconvenience with I-275 project

BY KEN ABRAMCZYK
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Haydn Kramer expects inconveniences this year as a commuter from Canton Township driving to his job at the Livonia Marriott on Six Mile just east of I-275.

As the hotel's general manager, he may well expect the hotel staff to be part public relations specialists and part traffic advisers.

"We'll alert our guests that there is going to be road construction," Kramer said.

Yes, there is.

See related story, Page A2

On April 19, Kramer and about 200,000 other motorists who use I-275 each day will see the beginnings of the \$40 million resurfacing of the freeway between I-696 in Farmington Hills and Five Mile Road in Livonia, just north of the I-96/M-14 interchange.

On that date, contractors will start building crossover and temporary lanes on the northbound side of I-275, the state's second busiest freeway. In late April, southbound motorists will be crossing over to the northbound side just north of Grand River in Farmington Hills, then back to the southbound side south of Five Mile Road in Livonia.

Traffic will be crossed over so that the southbound side of the freeway can be reconstructed. Crossovers will be created through the construction zone for southbound traffic entering and exiting the freeway.

"It will take contractors about two weeks to build these crossovers at every mile road," said Robin Farnecouk, spokeswoman for the Michigan Department of Transportation.

Temporary lanes

Contractors also will pave temporary lanes on the northbound side so that three lanes can travel in each direction. The "loop" entrance ramps onto the freeway will be closed for 180 days - six months - of the project.

The freeway will not be widened from its current four lanes, but entrance and exit lanes will be lengthened to allow for easier access and exits.

Decks on the Grand River, Five Mile, Six Mile, Seven Mile and Eight Mile bridges will be repaired. Crews have already started to work under the Eight Mile bridge.

The longer and straighter entrance and exit ramps will be closed temporarily while they are reconstructed. Each interchange will be closed on an alternating basis so that no more than one interchange will be closed. For example, when Eight Mile is closed, Seven Mile and Six Mile interchanges will be open.

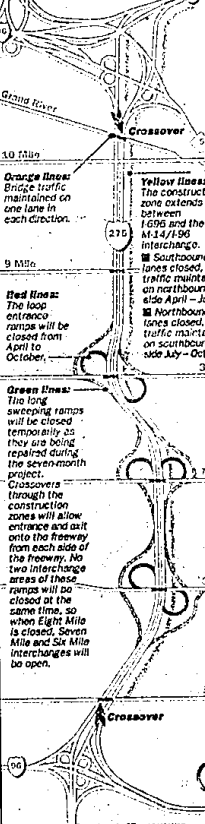
Robert Schron, Livonia's city engineer, said workers with John Carlo, who the Michigan Department of

I-275 motorist information

In late April, southbound I-275 motorists will be crossed over to the northbound side between Grand River in Farmington Hills and Five Mile in Livonia. Travelers should expect delays through the construction zone and obey lower speed limits.

Traffic will be crossed over onto temporary lanes so that the southbound side can be reconstructed. That traffic remains on the northbound side through July, then the northbound and southbound traffic will be crossed over to the southbound - side through October, so that the northbound side can be reconstructed.

Construction begins Monday, April 19



Source: Michigan Department of Transportation

Board backs plan for easier transition

BY TIM SMITH
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Ninth-graders struggling in the transition to high school is a black-and-white fact, one that is experienced in Farmington Public Schools as well as across the United States. Exactly how to go about smoothing over that bump in the educational road isn't as clearcut. But the district is moving forward with a plan that intends to help future ninth-graders,

FRESHMEN

beginning in the 1999-2000 school year.

The Farmington Board of Education recently approved a district committee's recommendations for improving middle school-to-high school transition. School board President Cathy Webb lauded the proposal. But it stands to be

Please see TRANSITION, A5

Please see I-275, A5

Albanian students watch, worry and wonder



Sentiments: Luke Juncaj, who teaches English as a Second Language at East Middle School, agrees with his students: if NATO prevails Kosovo should become an independent democratic nation.

BY TIM SMITH
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Without bringing in ground troops to Kosovo or arming the Kosovo Liberation Army, Farmington Albanian students don't hold out much hope that Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic will be defeated.

Several students from East Middle School and Harrison High School Monday discussed the ongoing "atrocities" inflicted by Milosevic and his army against ethnic Albanians.

Because air strikes aren't working well, the only hope for the Kosovans is for NATO to bring in ground troops, the students agreed.

Unless that happens, "I think all the people in Kosovo are going to be killed, massacred," said East student Fatos Gjetaj, whose family now is on the run from the oppressed, southern Yugoslav province.

"He doesn't care about the people," said Fatos, about Milosevic. "He just wants to keep the power."



Concerned: Vilma Sinishtaj is worried that ethnic Albanians have no food or water.

If, for some reason, NATO prevails, the students and their teacher (Luke Juncaj) said Kosovo should be allowed to be an independent, democratic nation. And Milosevic, described as a modern-day Hitler, should be put on trial for genocide.

"I feel so bad about this," said Fatos, who arrived in America about a year ago. "My nunts are

Please see KOSOVO, A5

