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IN THE PAPER TODAY

Rald: Farmington Hills police conducted a search of an apartment from which a suspected call girl service was operating. /A2

Traveler: A German exchange student is learning all about marketing as well as the American way of life. /A7

OPINION

Endorse: Voters will go to the polls June 14 to elect two school board members. We offer our recommendations. /A14

To the editor: Voters offer their opinions on the school board candidates. /A14, A15

COMMUNITY LIFE

Sizzling: Temperatures sizzled in the 90s, with matching humidity. But the St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Garden Party Sunday still managed to raise almost \$300,000 for center programs. /B1

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Judge Hand remembered for his flair

A local icon, Judge Michael Hand died Monday morning, leaving behind a reputation of fairness and toughness on the bench. He is remembered as a man of good humor, as well as a man devoted to the community.

BY TIM SMITH
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Farmington's first district judge is being remembered as a brilliant man with a flair for Irish humor, as well as a penchant for being firm but fair - always with the community's best interests at heart.

Longtime 47th District Judge Michael Hand, 80, died Monday at his Farmington home. Funeral services are scheduled for 11 a.m. Friday, June 11, at Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Farmington, where he was a member of the parish.

Survivors include his widow, Eileen A. Hand, six children, one sister and 20 grandchildren.

"He certainly was an interesting man, much more than a district judge," said

veteran Farmington city councilman Bill Hartsock, a neighbor of Hand's. "He was a scholar, a very learned person. And ... he had a great sense of humor. He quoted a lot of Irish sayings and limericks."

Farmington Hills Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi, another longtime community resident, would agree: "He was in the tradition of friendly Irish lawyers. I think he came across well for the public."

Hartsock jokingly said one of the judge's trademark sayings was along the lines of "I'll give (a defendant) a fair hearing and then hang him."

Such comments aside, Hartsock said Hand took his position very seriously.

"Law always was an important element of his life," Hartsock said. "He was an outstanding judge, very fair, very honest and very knowledgeable. He was able to take all



Judge Michael Hand 1918-1999

Please see HAND, A4

They're on their way ...

Editor's note: We start our graduation coverage today with Farmington High School, followed by Harrison Sunday, June 13, and North Farmington Thursday, June 17. Please turn to page A10 for more photographs and a list of graduates.

"I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and to see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived."

Henry David Thoreau
Motto for the Class of 1999

And with that the Farmington High School graduates of 1999 proceeded to march to the stage and receive their diplomas Sunday afternoon.

The high school's 110th commencement exercises took place at Compuware Sports Arena in Plymouth Township.

Graduates entered the arena to a procession led with the Grand



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL HENNINGER

Grad & Dad: Bernard Desmond Hatcher Jr. and Sr. share a hug after Farmington High School's Sunday afternoon commencement.

March from Aida by Verdi, played by the Farmington High School Orchestra, conducted by director Norm Logan.

The class address was given by

Tony Ostenski, president of the senior class.

Superintendent Bob Maxfield introduced the Farmington Board of Edu-

Please see GRADS, A3

Officials to whittle down bids

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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After eight developers have made their pitch to build a golf course, Farmington Hills city officials have to decide who has at least made the green.

ELEVEN PINES

On Monday, developers gave presentations on how they would build on the Eleven Pines and San Marino sites on Halsted and 11 Mile during a study session in city council chambers.

City council members as well as those from beautification and parks and recreation commissions listened to developers' presentations. City staff will try to whittle the number of bids to two or three.

"It's going to be a difficult thing to get our arms around," City Manager Steve Brock said. "All of them have interesting components in them."

"It's going to be a challenge for us, but it's a good challenge."

City officials want to expand the existing golf course to 18 holes and recoup \$5.5 million it paid for 110 acres, which partially sits on a landfill.

Developers yearn for a chance to build luxury townhouses, condominiums, apartments and senior assisted living centers in a scenic area surrounded by trees and a lake, not to mention a golf course.

They propose to go about it in various ways. Some are simple cash-for-land transactions.

Others involve extended lease agreements, state grants and formations of special districts to capture tax money.

"Whichever proposal you accept, it will be a plus for the city," said Mark Sturgis of Farmington Hills-based Bestak Land Co.

Bestak's proposal gives the city \$5.5 million. The developer will build this golf course and give it to the city to own and operate.

In order to recover its money, the developer would build 100 attached condos, 300-350 rental units and a 60- to 75-room assisted living center.

Under two different proposals, PM Group offers \$5.5 million cash and will build a course, clubhouse and make other improvements.

Please see BIDS, A5



Graduate: Melissa Garr plans to help others as she was helped following her accident. She received a standing ovation during graduation ceremonies.

Melissa Garr walks toward her future

BY TIM SMITH
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For many months during 1997 and 1998, Melissa Garr battled back from a coma with the help of physical therapists.

Now that Garr is a graduate of Farmington High School, she wants to help others in the way she was helped, by taking up the field of recreational therapy.

Garr and her FHS classmates graduated Sunday at the Compuware Sports Arena in Plymouth Township, capping off a comeback that can only be described as miraculous.

School board member Gary Sharp said Garr "got an ovation that lasted three or four minutes; everything else stopped."

"In the 11 months I was in the hospital

Please see MELISSA, A3

Judge rules playhouse has to come down

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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After a homeowner and an association became embroiled in a year-long legal battle, a swing of a judge's gavel will topple a controversial 13-foot tall playhouse in a Farmington Hills neighborhood.

Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Fred Mester ruled in favor of Independence Commons association, which sued the Palaians to bring down the A-frame structure in the rear of their Compton Circle home. The family has 30 days to comply with the deed restrictions, which prohibit such structures.

Carol Palaian said her family offered to take down the structure to reach a solution "before this nonsense started."

The association contends it needed to take legal action after the family had been uncooperative in removing what some say is an eyesore.

"They chose to basically bully us and make it a financial burden on our family," said Carol Palaian, "and an emotional one as well."

The house was built nearly two years ago by an uncle as a gift to the Palaian children: Lisa, twins Maria and Angela, and Julie.

An attorney for the family argued similar play structures exist in the sub, which is southwest of 11 Mile and Drake. The judge didn't agree.

"Somewhere there has to be a line drawn," said Mark Frankel, an attorney for the association.

Deed restrictions forbid Independence Commons members from building any structures other than their dwelling on property.

INDEPENDENCE COMMONS

The Palaians put up the structure without approval of the homeowners association. The family didn't initially get a permit from the city, saying they didn't realize they needed one.

Farmington Hills Board of Zoning Appeals granted one after the structure was shortened 1 1/2 feet and moved 10 feet away from the house.

While the structure met city ordinance, deed restrictions are another matter.

The Palaians and neighbors who supported them were upset the association waited until after the structure went up to complain. Other kids in the neighborhood also played in the structure.

An attorney for the association said the issue has been more of a distraction than divisive issue in the neighborhood.

Please see PLAYHOUSE, A5



STAFF PHOTO BY BETANN MITCHELL

Disappointed: Carol Palaian must take down her family's playhouse.

Wanted: A few good officers

BY TIM SMITH
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The "help wanted" sign is out at Farmington's Public Safety Department.

According to Public Safety Director Gary Goss, the department needs 11 reserve officers and one full-timer.

FARMINGTON

The latter would take over a spot now held by Christine Schutz, who in August will work five days a week as police liaison officer at Farmington High School. Currently, Schutz divides her time between FHS and detective duty.

Full-time police liaison officers at Harrison and North high schools are on the Farmington Hills Police Department force.

"The (liaison) program has proven itself to be a valuable one," Goss said, before Monday night's city council meeting. "It's a good investment for the city and the schools. It's probably the best thing we can

Please see WANTED, A5



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