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IN THE PAPER TODAY

Shop to Stop Drugs: Area Farmer Jack and Kroger stores are participating in a monthlong campaign to help stop drug use and violence. /A4

OPINION

Patience: Everybody needs to have some while construction-cluttered schools get up to speed. /A12

COMMUNITY LIFE

Sleepy no more: Farmington has its own Sleepy Hollow. The story behind the former mill at Sleepy Hollow makes fascinating telling. /B1

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Welcome: Sister M. Loretelle, principal at St. Fabian's, opens the new addition to the school on 12 Mile. The addition was built from contributions from parishioners and with help from the Archdiocese of Detroit.

Opening day at St. Fabian's

BY TIM SMITH
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With kindergartners and seventh graders roaming the halls of St. Fabian Elementary School for the first time ever on Tuesday, parents such as Mary Vucinaj were wearing some heavenly smiles.



NEW ERA

"It's really nice," said Vucinaj. "It's great that they can have the young kids start in kindergarten and go all the way through and not have to transfer."
Vucinaj, a West Bloomfield resident, was among the many parents who attended ribbon-cutting ceremonies marking the opening of St. Fabian's kindergarten through seventh-grade era. Her son, Christopher, is beginning second grade at the private



Ready: The first St. Fabian kindergarten class (above at right) walks through the halls of the new addition, while Michael Hayes (above at left) holds the door for his fellow fourth graders on their first day of school.

Serious crimes decrease in cities

So far this year, serious offenses are down in both Farmington and Farmington Hills. Police chiefs explain why.

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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Farmington and Farmington Hills police are both reporting a drop in serious crime in their respective cities.
Through Aug. 22, serious offenses — murder, robbery, assaults and break-ins — are down 22 percent in Farmington Hills. Neighboring Farmington reports a 39 percent drop through June.
Farmington's numbers follow one of the lowest incidents of crime in the city's history last year.
"They're (serious crimes) non-existent," said Gary Goss, Farmington Public Safety director. "All that can change tomorrow, but that's where we're at so far."
Hills Chief Bill Dwyer credits the department's community policing programs as well as external factors — mainly low unemployment for the drop

Please see CRIME, A6

Fight over pick-up leads to stabbing

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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A fight over a pick-up truck led a man to stab another in Farmington Hills Tuesday night.
Hills police have a Detroit man, 62, in custody. He is expected to be charged with assault with a knife with the intent to commit murder.
The incident took place on the 21000 block of Roosevelt where both were visiting a home.
The victim, Jeffrey Wade Miracle, 32, of St. Clair Shores is expected to recover from a multiple stab wound, police said. He was in critical condition Tuesday night at Botsford Hospital.
"We expect he's going to survive because no vital organs were struck," said Assistant Chief Chuck Nebus.
He sustained four stab wounds in the chest, stomach and shoulder areas. His car was also cut.
Shortly after 8 p.m. the two men got into a wrestling match after the perpetrator got into the truck, a red 1998

Please see STABBING, A6

Turn in your bottles and cans

The Farmington High School Music Patrons will hold a bottle and can fund-raiser from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 11 in the parking lot behind Farmer Jack on 9 Mile and Farmington Roads. Students will also be collecting cans in various neighborhoods.
The money raised will go to the music programs at Farmington High School.

Farmer Jack employee suffers burns

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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A 16-year-old Farmer Jack employee sustained second-degree facial burns from a bottled connection that exploded in the parking lot at the Farmington grocery store Tuesday.

BOTTLE EXPLOSION

Around 10:30 p.m., Farmington Public Safety officers found two teens — one complaining of burns — near a bottle that was smoking and foaming in the lot on Nine Mile and Farmington roads.
Authorities responded after a report of possible gun shots.
Paramedics took the employee to Botsford Hospital where he was later transported to Beaumont Hospital. He is listed in serious condition.
"The young man who was injured and another employee are not really telling us what happened," said Mike Wiggins, Farmington Public Safety deputy director.
"We haven't ruled out anything. We believe they either came upon it or it was some kind of juvenile mischief."

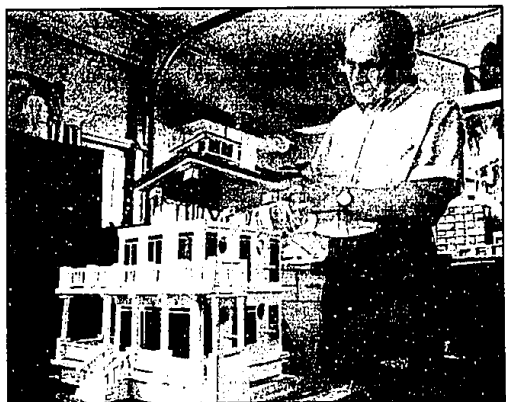
Please see EXPLOSION, A5



For the birds Woodworker replicates Warner Mansion

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM
STAFF WRITER

The avian residents of a house a Farmington woodworker built probably won't notice all the details — the stairs, the porch, the columns and the tall, narrow windows.
Chet Lutz wasn't content to just build a simple birdhouse during a recent woodworking project — he wanted to build a bird mansion — a Warner Mansion for the birds.
Lutz, 88, of Farmington donated his 2-foot by 2-foot replica to the Warner Mansion last week. The bird mansion replaces another mansion replica he built in 1981 that became weathered. He spent about a month working on it.
Now it's just a matter of finding a good place to put the birdhouse, said Dick Carvell, chairman of the Warner Mansion museum committee.
"Hopefully we'll find a place where we can put it out where people can see it," Carvell said. The new bird mansion is much more detailed than the old one, he added.
But humans aren't the only ones he wants to attract to the birdhouse, which will sit on the grounds of the former home of Gov. Fred Warner.
"I hope it will be something to attract some birds," Carvell said, adding that martins usually like large, high birdhouses.
People seeing the bird mansion might be surprised to learn Lutz relied on his photographic memory when building it — not photographs or pictures.
"I just kind of figured out the size of



Done: Chet Lutz places the roof on his latest birdhouse, a model of the Governor Warner Mansion. The birdhouse features room for eight feathered residents.

Please see BIRDS, A7