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Entire southbound I-275 reopens

Motorists traveling on southbound I-275 can expect all four lanes to be reopened to traffic by Monday morning.

Contractors are expected to complete lane setting and removal of the barrier wall by Sunday, according to Robin Pannecoek, spokesperson for the Michigan Department of Transportation. Crews have reduced traffic to two lanes for the wall removal and three lanes for the striping.

The Six Mile Road interchange ramps to exit and access the northbound side of I-275 will be closed for several more days, probably through next weekend. Entrance and exit ramps at Seven Mile and Eight Mile interchanges can be used as alternates while Six Mile is closed.

When those ramps reopen, so will the circle ramps Seven Mile and Eight Mile roads. The Six Mile circle ramp to southbound traffic is open.

The Six Mile interchange repairs are the last repairs to be completed that require detours. Most of I-275's \$49 million reconstruction project has been completed, Pannecoek said.

Last of the season



Last cruise night: Automobile enthusiasts gathered together one more time last Monday evening. The weekly summer event draws owners and dreamers to the city parking lot. Steve Klinge and Van Nazarian talk wheels in front of a pair of classic Corvettes. Nazarian owns a 1965 'vette that he bought new. It has only 48,000 miles on the odometer and lots of memories.

STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRIDGEMAN

New director selected

A new executive director has signed on to operate the Farmington Hills/Farmington Community Foundation.

BY JOANNE MALIJEWSKI
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The Farmington Hills/Farmington Community Foundation is coming into its own with the recent selection of Suzanne Lichtman as executive director.

"We really need someone to do the day-to-day business," said Cathy Webb, chairwoman of the foundation's annual fund-raising Cornucopia Ball. "Everyone is a volunteer and busy with their jobs. While we had the best intentions, some things fell through the cracks."

Lichtman, who owns her own Farmington Hills public relations, marketing and media relations consulting firm, will also serve as the foundation's official spokeswoman.

"We are excited to have someone with Suzanne's background join forces with the foundation," said Ty Tartt.

Please see DIRECTOR, A4

THE WEEK AHEAD

THURSDAY

Let's talk: The Multicultural/Multiracial Council will host a forum at 8 a.m. at the Farmington Training Center, 3300 Thomas. The public is invited to attend.

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Historic mansion is focus of new campaign

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM
STAFF WRITER

The Gov. Warner Mansion is the focus of an effort by the Farmington City Council to find out who should be responsible for operations, records and upkeep of the 182-year-old historic

house on Grand River west of downtown.

Increasing fees for weddings, restricting photo taking on the property and making it more of a community meeting place were some of the ideas discussed during a study session Monday.

"We want to try and help resolve the issue of operations of the mansion," City Manager Frank Lauhoff said.

Currently, the Warner Mansion Museum Committee, a subcommittee of the Farmington Historical Commis-

sion, oversees the operations.

The recently formed Warner Mansion Development Committee has begun handling tasks like membership drives, making the mansion self-sufficient through fund-raisers and increasing...

Please see WARNER, A6

Dunkel kids, staff bundle up

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM
STAFF WRITER

The air is expected to warm up at O.E. Dunkel Middle School following a boiler malfunction that left students and teachers bundling up in sweaters last week.

"When we fired up the boilers (last week) we had some complications,"

MALFUNCTION

said Don Cowan, of Cowan Educational Consultants in Milford, which is overseeing the district's ongoing renovations.

"It's very comfortable in here right now," Cowan said via telephone at Dunkel Friday afternoon. He estimated the average building temperatures last week were 68 to 72 degrees.

"We originally thought (the repairs)

Please see BOLLER, A6

Hills attorney wins 5-year legal battle

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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During a five-year legal battle, a Farmington Hills resident said he felt the weight of a community's retirement dreams on his shoulders.

Attorney Mark Steckloff represented union employees of Peet Meat Packing in a lawsuit over their pension fund, which had been raided by the since-closed company's former owners, Denny McLain and Robert Smigiel, as well as investment advisor Jeff Egan.

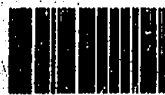
Through a recent out-of-court settlement, nearly \$3.5 million has been recovered.

Some 500 pensioners and their families were affected. The Chesaning-based plant closed in June 1995 after going bankrupt, leaving 200 people unemployed.

"It's a wonderful result, especially for the people of Chesaning," said Steckloff, whose wife, Vicki Barnett, is a Farmington Hills City Council member. "There was a tremendous degree of anxiety because they wouldn't get their money during their retirement."

"They are thrilled, excited and extremely grateful."

Please see ATTORNEY, A6



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Falcon fun



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRIDGEMAN

Royal: Farmington High students capped off a week of festivities with the crowning Friday of the king and queen, Sean Murphy and Tricia Krause. This was the first night homecoming in the Farmington district. Farmington beat Livonia Stevenson, 13-0.

Candidate says he's not a dissenter

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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At least one Oliverio doesn't think two by the same last name will overshadow the Farmington Hills City Council.

Ron is running to pay back a debt of public service, he said. His ex-wife Cheryl is already on the city council, but he doesn't believe that has any bearing on his candidacy.

"We have something great in common: four wonderful children," he said. "We're natural allies. We have a difference of opinions on some issues."

Oliverio doesn't portray himself as a dissenter.

In a recent candidate forum, he said city councils shouldn't be mutual admiration societies. That wasn't a shot at the current council, he added.

"Sometimes when they get along, they get along really well," he said. "Sometimes when they don't get along,

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they get along very badly."

Oliverio sells himself as a conservative.

"I think people on the council are a little more statist," he said, "where government is the answer to people's problems opposed to people being the answer to people's problems."

His conservative views are largely based on fiscal terms.

When there is a special assessment, user fee or tax, Oliverio wants those to be voted on in the November elections rather than special ballots. He also favors special assessments requiring a super majority of two-thirds or three-fourths approval. Special assessments currently are approved based on a 51 percent majority.

If there are areas to pare the city budget, he hasn't seen them yet.

"I'm still an outsider as far as city government goes," he said. "But once I study the budget and study the ways things are done with personnel, I can get a better handle."

"Although from what I've heard from residents, (City Manager) Steve Brock has done an excellent job. In talking to the residents, a vast majority are very happy with the way the city is run."

He approaches things such as tax abatements with similar caution. Companies shouldn't, in essence, be paid to relocate in Farmington Hills, Oliverio said.

If a firm planned to bring a substantial number of jobs and wanted a "reasonable" tax break, he'd listen.

"My mind is not closed to it, I'd prefer not to do it," he said.

Though he and son Alex spoke before the city council during the debate over the since-enacted bike helmet ordi-



Ron Oliverio

Please see OLIVERIO, A2