

Farmington Observer

HomeTown COMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION
Putting you in touch with your world

Sunday
October 17, 1999

Serving Farmington and Farmington Hills for 113 years

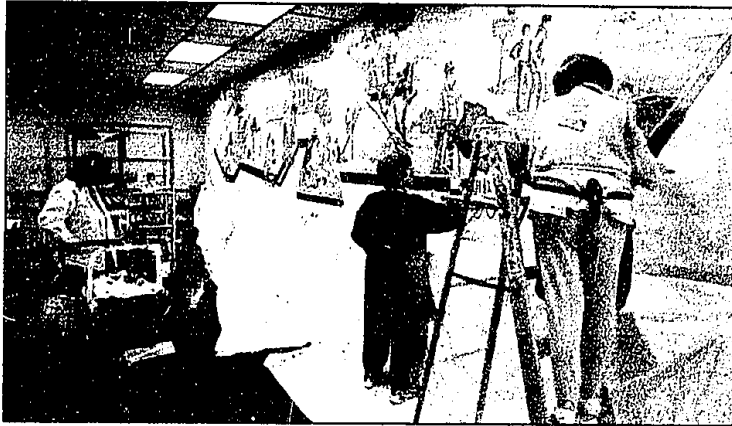
VOLUME 113 NUMBER 7

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN • 66 PAGES • <http://observereccentric.com>

SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

© 1999 HomeTown Communications Network, Inc.

Colorful chapter



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BARBER

Artists at work: Edee Joppich and Marjorie Chellstorp work on restoring their mural, admired by Rebecca Sherman and her children Rachel and David.

Library mural restores past splendor

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

Two Farmington area artists aren't trying to brush away their past as much as preserve it.

When the Farmington Library was being built in 1975, Hills residents Marjorie Hogan Chellstorp and Edee Joppich donned hard hats and painted a mural in the children's section.

Twenty-four years later, as the library has undergone extensive renovation, they've returned to restore the luster of their original collaboration.

During the past week, Chellstorp and Joppich dabbed and brushed furiously. They wanted to finish by Sunday.

"Sometimes an artist will look at something later and say, 'I wish I would've done this' or 'I wish I



Touch It Up: Edee Joppich retouches two of the many figures on the mural.

Please see MURAL, A7

Flyer sparks debate

Candidates for Farmington City Council exchange words over challenger Steve Dibert's campaign literature.



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

The gloves officially are off in the Farmington City Council race.

Veteran council member Bill Hartssock ripped into the latest campaign flyer from challenger Steve Dibert. Hartssock accused Dibert of "finger pointing" and appealing to the fears of Farmington's senior citizens.

The Dibert flyer, titled "What Does Independence Mean to You?" features the photograph of a hitch-hiking senior citizen standing behind his walker, holding a sign with the words "I Need A Ride."

The flyer maintains that Farmington senior citizens "are forced to fight everyday for their independence" from "having to rely on others for the necessities of life."

The lack of downtown grocery stores within walking distance for many older people in the community requires they "depend on unreliable taxi cabs or the generosity of friends and relatives" for transportation to those stores, the flyer continues. The 1998 closing of the Downtown Farmington Center Farmer Jack marked the third of five grocery stores to close since 1990, Dibert said.

But Hartssock last week criticized Dibert's campaign tactics, primarily that the challenger isn't proposing solutions after making allegations.

"I want to know where Steve Dibert stands on the issues," Hartssock said. "All I've ever heard from Steve Dibert is finger pointing and criticism, appealing to the fears of our senior citizens and young families."

"I want to know where this guy's

Please see FLYER, A7

THE WEEK AHEAD

MONDAY

City councils: The Farmington Hills City Council meets 7:30 p.m. at 31555 11 Mile. The council will also host a meeting at 8 p.m. at 23600 Liberty Street.

TUESDAY

School board: The Farmington Board of Education will host a meeting at 7:30 p.m., in the Lewis Schulman Administrative Center, 32500 Shiawassee.

WEDNESDAY

What's on your mind: Farmington Hills City Council will hold a 7 p.m. community meeting for residents in the southeast area at St. Alexander's Catholic Church. Among agenda topics are information on the upcoming census and proposed charter amendments. The church is located at 27835 Shiawassee, between Inkster and Middlebelt.

INDEX

Arts	C1
Classified Index	E4
Autos	H1
Home & Service	H3
Jobs	G1
Rentals	E9
Crossword	D8
Health	D6
Obituaries	A4
Real Estate	E1
Sports	B1
Taste	D1
Travel	C8

Encouraging diversity focus of panel discussion

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM
STAFF WRITER

Community members converged Thursday to talk about ways to get people from different cultures more involved in community groups.

About 60 people attended the multicultural forum at the Farmington '11' Center. The Multicultural/Multiracial Community Council presented the forum, co-sponsored by the Farmington PTA Council, Farmington Observer and Northwest Gazette.

The forum is the first in a series that began with the council's opening rally Sept. 18.

"The purpose of the forum is to identify ways to make organizations more responsive to the needs of the community."

"Our purpose today is to look at ways to encourage and get the community involved," said Polly Bachrouche, student assistance specialist at Wood Creek Elementary, who moderated the four-person panel discussion. Panelists were Janet Holm, presi-

dent of the PTA Council; Hiram Harris, parent; Olive Awad, bilingual professional with the Farmington Public Schools; and Irene Kernicky, representing the Council of Homeowners Association.

Questions discussed by the panel and audience involved the diversity of community groups, how new community members are discouraged from participating, personal experiences about getting involved and what can be done to increase participation.

Samir Haddad, bilingual director for the district, said 20 percent of students hail from non U.S. countries. A majority of those students learned to speak a language other than English before coming to the States, he added.

As for community groups, some are more diverse than others, Harris said.

"Our homeowners (association) group is not very diverse," he said. But, Woodcreek's PTA is "moderately diverse."

He said he decided to get involved because he received a letter from the

Please see DIVERSITY, A5



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BARBER

Input: Sue Odeh offers suggestions on how to welcome new parents to PTA meetings.

Dems' forum to highlight candidates, issues

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

Farmington City Council candidates take their turn under the Democratic Club microscope Wednesday.

Incumbents JoAnne McShane, Bill Hartssock, Jim Mitchell and challenger Steve Dibert will answer questions at a Farmington Democratic Club sponsored forum.

All four are vying for three open council seats Nov. 2. The top two vote getters receive four-year terms; the third place finisher gets a two-year stint.

The debate takes place 7-8 p.m. in Farmington Hills City Council Chambers.

From 8-9 p.m., discussion will shift to Farmington Hills' seven proposed charter amendments.

"To talk about it, showing what the issues are, is important," said Gerald Goldberg, a Farmington Democratic Club member who is organizing the forum.

Both forums are open to the public and will be televised on the cities' respective cable access channels.

Those who attend can submit questions, while those at home may phone in theirs. Farmington council candidates had a

Please see FORUM, A5



Steve Dibert

Challenger hopes to bring change

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

Steve Dibert loves Farmington, but he doesn't love the direction he thinks the city is going in.

That is why he is challenging three Farmington City Council incumbents in the Tuesday, Nov. 2, election and why he is knocking on doors and trying to find out what people - particularly the city's significant elderly population - really want from their elected officials.

For example, he doesn't think city officials were open enough concerning the recent decision to purchase the Civic Theatre.

Dibert, who twice ran unsuccessfully



his concerns include:

- Urban sprawl and blight are moving toward Farmington;
- City leaders lack cohesive vision and foresight concerning the downtown district, which he doesn't think can compete against others in Oakland and Wayne counties;
- The council's decision to buy the

Democratic candidate for the 37th District House against GOP candidate Andrew Raczowski, worries about the future of Farmington. Some of

Civic Theatre was the wrong move; ■ Something needs to be done for the city to better market itself if it is to economically survive in the 21st century.

Marketing and communication shortcomings, noted Dibert, fuel what he called an identity problem for the smaller municipal neighbor of Farmington Hills.

"When I knock on doors," said Dibert during a recent interview at the Farmington Observer office, "you wouldn't believe the number of people who think (Hills Mayor) Aldo Vagnozzi is the mayor of Farmington."

The first challenger in a city council
Please see DIBERT, A7

