

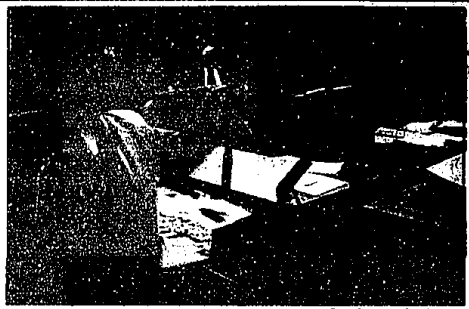
THE WEEK AHEAD

MONDAY

Choice: A parent information meeting about a K-5 year-round education program at Gill Elementary School, 21195 Gill Road, is scheduled at 7 p.m. in the Gill media center. Applications will be available at the meeting. For more information, call principal Gayle Zimmerman at (248) 489-3690. The program is designated as a school of choice, meaning students from the Gill attendance area and outside it may register, with placement based on space availability.

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STAFF PHOTO BY BILL SUGRUB

See here: Wayne County assistant prosecutor Patrick Muscat displays pieces of a rifle during a preliminary exam on charges against a former Compuware employee.

Attorneys argue: What's a gun?

BY JONI HUBREED
STAFF WRITER
jhubreed@homecomm.net

Kevin Peter Olender walked calmly into the chambers of 27th District Court Judge Randy Kalmbach Thursday morning dressed in a blue sweater and khakis, looking very little like a suspect in a weapons case.

"He's a good guy," his mother said as she stood outside the building where a judge would decide whether to bind her son over for trial on weapons charges.

His mother sat in the courtroom all day, watching as Wayne County prosecutor Patrick Muscat presented his case. Olender is charged with being a felon in possession of a weapon and being a habitual criminal, based on a conviction for assault in 1996.

The charges stem from a complaint filed by employees at Farmington Hills based Compuware. They testified Olender had shown them pictures of a FN FAL assault rifle on the Internet and said he planned to build a similar gun, then shoot his supervisor, other employees and Farmington Hills police officers who would respond.

When police raided Olender's home Feb. 18, they said they found kits to build two of the rifles, plus hundreds of rounds of ammunition, magazines and speed loaders.

Muscat presented witnesses in Thursday's hearing to determine



Confer: Defendant Kevin Olender talks with his attorney, Darryl Finh.

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Muscat presented witnesses in Thursday's hearing to determine

Please see **CASE, A5**

Shooting troubles district educators

BY TRACEY BIRKENHAUER
STAFF WRITER
tbir@homecomm.net

Bill Smith heard about the elementary school shooting death from a concerned parent calling his school. The Longacre Elementary School principal was stunned.

On Tuesday, 6-year-old Kayla Roland was shot and killed by a six-year-old male classmate at Buell Elementary School in Mt. Morris Township. On Monday, the children allegedly argued on the playground.

He said he'd kill her.

The next day, he did.

Detroit-area news stations quickly reported the story, with a couple stations even interrupting broadcasts.

Principal Smith quietly relayed the information to teachers, asking them to monitor radio and television programs in their classrooms. He didn't want children hearing the news at school. He wanted children to hear about the scary incident at home, where they knew they were safe and their parents would be there for support.

Please see **SHOOTING, A4**

Brouillette, Sharp will run again for school board

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
tsmith@homecomm.net

It's not quite "Groundhog Day," the Bill Murray movie in which the main character's life kept repeating. But it might seem that way for Gary Sharp.

During Tuesday's regular meeting of the Farmington Board of Education, incumbent Sharp announced he would — again — be running in the June school election.

Sharp was appointed in 1997 to fill the vacancy created by the unexpected resignation of Joseph Svoke for professional reasons. His appointment was to serve until the 1998 school board election, when Sharp successfully ran for the final year of Svoke's four-year term.

"I now have to run again for the seat that becomes available (Monday) June 12," Sharp said. "I thought it was appropriate to make an announcement on Feb. 29, which only comes once

every four years."

He said he hoped the timing of his announcement might be a good omen for his re-election bid.

Also announcing plans to seek re-election was school board President Priscilla Brouillette, first elected in 1996.

"I think we can move forward very quickly," Brouillette said. "And I look forward to continuing that work."

Both incumbents, particularly Sharp, want to see some unfinished business through. They are taking the lead in their opposition to the voucher movement, a state constitutional amendment that would allow public dollars to be funneled to private and parochial schools.



Priscilla Brouillette

"We have a storm cloud on the front, vouchers," Sharp said. "I'm part of a board that's taking a very strong stand in opposition to vouchers."

On June 12, depending on whether Sharp and Brouillette officially file nominating petitions for the election, the incumbents will make a bid for two four-year terms that voters will decide. Those terms would expire on June 30, 2004.

Any candidate who wishes to seek election to the board must file a nominating petition and an affidavit of identity no later than 4 p.m. on Monday, April 10, 2000.

The number of signatures required is 20.



Gary Sharp

Merchants want more information

■ Downtown merchants who have re-formed an association want to keep better tabs on the revamped festival this coming June.

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
tsmith@homecomm.net

Merchants of the recently resurrected Downtown Farmington Business Association held what was described as a "very positive" session about issues such as the new-look founders festival.

Honing the meeting at the Pasta Stop was Roger Ratkowski, owner of the Farmington Road eatery.

"It was very positive, and we want to be positive," said Ratkowski Friday. "We don't want to have any animosity, even though it started out that way."

According to Ratkowski, the members discussed Farmington Area Founders Festival Inc. president Jim Stark's answers to a set of their questions about the festival.

They left with the understanding that the merchant's association was back to stay and that they still had more unanswered questions to present to Stark.

"It will stay in effect," Ratkowski said. "We'll meet as necessary. But right now, that will be every week."

Apparently, the merchants aren't that upset about the \$50 fee that each must pay in order to display merchandise in front of their stores during the

■ "We have no ax to grind. There really was a misunderstanding, a lack of communication before. We want to understand it better."

Skip Rosenthal
—Books Abound, about festival

June 22-24 festival.

"It's not the money," said Ratkowski. Rather, it's the way businesses were notified, and the attitude to "Here, do it." We want to know what we're getting for our money."

Perhaps they will have some light shed on the situation during the 8 p.m. Monday Farmington City Council meeting. That's when Stark is scheduled to discuss the annual three-day event.

Books Abound co-owner Skip Rosenthal, also at the Wednesday night meeting, said that the association members vowed to maintain a friendly front in further dealings with the FAFF, the board which manages and oversees the event. The FAFF is a non-profit organization, which hired Watts-UP Inc. to coordinate the festival.

Represent us

"We have no ax to grind," Rosenthal said. "There really was a misunderstanding, a lack of communication

Please see **MERCHANTS, A2**

Workshop offers a primer in politics

BY JOANNE MALISZEWSKI
STAFF WRITER
jmaliszewski@homecomm.net

Do you want to get into politics. But do you know how?

The League of Women Voters and the Women Officials' Network are here to help with a campaign workshop designed to teach political newcomers the ropes for turning your dream of running for election into a reality.

"Money, Organization & Media, The Nuts and Bolts of Running for Public Office" is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Saturday, March 25, in the Wexford Room of the William Costick Activities Center, 28600 11 Mile.

"This is really meant for first-timers — anyone who truly has not had a competitive race," said Barbara Moorehouse of the Women Officials' Network. "It's also for anyone who wants to work on a campaign."

The workshop is divided into three major facets of running a campaign:

- Organizing a campaign to win. Three panelists, Tim Donovan, Al Lanstra and Rich Poling, have experience running a variety of campaigns.
- Financing a campaign. Presenter Denise Sloan, a professional fund-raiser for political and non-profit clients, will talk about where to get money to run a campaign. A second segment features



Moorehouse, who has served as treasurer on a number of political committees, who will talk about what finances candidates are required to report.

■ "How Not to Handle the Media," will be a presentation by Tim Skubick, producer/anchor of the political affairs show "Off the Record."

The workshop is not the first effort by either group to interest newcomers in politics or to give newcomers, especially women, a hand.

"The league believes very strongly in citizen participation in government," said Eva Packard, LWV president. "This also means running for government and that starts at the local level. We encourage citizens to do that."

Last November, the LWV and the Women Officials' Network hosted a panel discussion — which included Farmington City Council member Joanne McShane — in which elected women officials discussed their experiences in politics.

"That was more of an opportunity for

Please see **POLITICS, A4**

File petitions

A candidate who wishes to seek a position on the Farmington Public Schools Board of Education must file a nominating petition and an affidavit of identity no later than 4 p.m. on Monday, April 10, 2000. The number of signatures required is 30.

The regular school board election will be held on Monday, June 12, 2000. Two positions on the Farmington Public School Board, now held by Priscilla Brouillette and Gary Sharp, will be filled at the election. Both positions are four-year terms ending June 30, 2004. Both school board members

Please see **POLITICS, A2**

RAGE seizes the grant

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
tsmith@homecomm.net

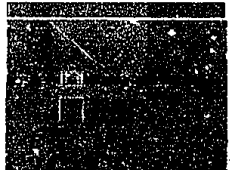
Seize the day and the money might be a more appropriate slogan for the RAGE student club, which began at Harrison High School and is now branching out to both North and Farmington high schools.

Club sponsor Tim Russell, a teacher at Harrison, said a grant of \$75,000 was received for RAGE programs and promotions from CVS Pharmacy Inc. The grant also was announced by Harrison senior and club president Ed Cleland during the recent joint meeting of the Farmington Board of Education and Farmington and Farmington Hills city councils.

"The main goal of the grant is to provide us opportunities to interconnect with other student groups, other (district) schools and the Farmington and Farmington Hills communities," Russell said.

It was Russell who got the ball

Please see **RAGE, A5**



The first place to visit when you're looking for a new place to live? The Real Estate ads in today's HomeTown Classifieds

