

IN THE PAPER TODAY



Back to college: The Observer's summer interns — reporter Cara Plouman and photographer Heather Sonntag — put together a package of stories on dorm life versus commuting to college. They will run in the next two issues. Today's story, featuring Becky Culbert of Farmington Hills (shown above, checking out a storage box for her trip back to MSU) is on Page A7.

OPINION

Oakland Schools: We support the millages, but with some reservations we trust school officials will address. / A8

ARTS & LEISURE

Jazzing it up: The Ford Detroit Jazz Festival returns Aug. 31 with a renewed focus on the city. / B1

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LEGAL SECRETARY
Insurance defense firm in Troy is seeking an experienced, take charge assistant.

HomeTown FIELDS
We got a good rest here.



Women in business



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRENNER

Stock and trade: Annette Jones, Judy Glass, Annalee Morrison and Sue Haapaniemi are all members of the Farmington Area Stock Trading Club. Calling themselves "F.A.S.T. women," they volunteered at this year's Founders Festival.

F.A.S.T. money

Local ladies tackle stock market

BY SUE BUCK
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Call 16 Farmington women "F.A.S.T." and they love it. The women belong to an investment club called Farmington Area Stock Trading women. They take their investment interests seriously, looking at a number of sources and formulas, and painstakingly doing the research. Among their sources of information is the highly regarded National Association of Investors Corporation, which provides investor training. They also subscribe to Better Investing magazine.

"We've had speakers come in," said Judy Glass, who owns Handpainted Sweatshirts, a fabric arts business. Still, there's the mischievous urge, at times, to abandon all the research

during a meeting by simply throwing darts at some picks.

"That type of levity is short-lived. It's more research than gut feeling," said Annalee Morrison, a Farmington resident and co-owner of an automotive vinyl graphics business which makes vinyl graphic images. Their best pick in three years? "Harley Davidson," four members laugh in unison. "The first one we ever bought."

The worst choice? Clayton Homes, a company that makes prefabricated housing, whose stock they sold.

Drug and medical companies are closely scrutinized. They also keep a close eye on the latest medical developments.

"We're always interested in the medical industry because we are all getting older," Sue Haapaniemi, an exercise physiologist at Beaumont's

outpatient facility in Birmingham.

"You follow the companies," Glass said. "You find out what they have done right and what they have done wrong. Timeliness is important but not critical as in day trading."

The knowledge earned during their work experiences benefits the group. They learn what are the best anticipated developments in different fields.

F.A.S.T. women take turns meeting at each other's homes and want to keep the group at its present number because it is more manageable.

There are a lot of good companies, Glass said. "Our money is the only factor. We have a treasurer who uses the Internet. We have an online account."

They've developed a philosophy of

Please see FAST, A8

Four charged in bank robbery

Hills Police nabbed four suspects in an armed robbery Friday evening, just minutes after Peoples State Bank was robbed. A young bank teller is one of the suspects in custody.

BY KEVIN BROWN
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Just minutes after the armed robbery of a Farmington Hills bank on Friday, police had four people in custody.

"I give total credit to the quick actions of the uniformed officers that took various positions," said Police Chief Bill Dwyer, adding the arrests followed a police pursuit of the getaway car during rush hour.

Charged in the 5:54 p.m. robbery of Peoples State Bank, 37386 12 Mile, were bank teller Gwendolin Niedzielka, 19, of Hamtramck; Carlos Turner, 22, of Hamtramck; Antoine Robertson, 23, of Hamtramck; and Marika Colbert, 25, of Detroit.

"This had nothing to do with drug addiction or gambling addiction," Dwyer said. "It's an unfortunate situation. You have four young people now



Marika Colbert



G. Niedzielka



Antoine Robertson



Carlos Turner

Please see ROBBERY, A2

Oakland Schools slates two millage votes

Special ed dollars would only soften Farmington's budget blows

BY SUE BUCK
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Both Farmington and Oakland school officials say a special education enhancement millage on the ballot Sept. 26 can help to stop the drain on local districts and restore funding balances.

"This millage will be on the same ballot as a vocational education millage. They are separate issues, and voters must cast their votes separately."

"The special education piece is the more urgent piece," said Farmington Schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield. The resident of a \$200,000 home would pay an additional \$117 annually

if the special education millage is approved.

"This isn't the answer to future funding problems, but it provides a cushion

'The special education piece is the more urgent piece.'

Bob Maxfield
—Superintendent of Schools

for the future," Maxfield said. "What it really is, is it provides the county the

Please see SPECIAL EDUCATION, A5

With increased funds, districts could share innovative programs

BY SUE BUCK
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Depending on your age, you probably either know the curriculum by the old-fashioned name of "Vocational Education" or the more current "Career-Focused Education."

By either name, the program will benefit if an enhancement millage proposed by Oakland School officials succeeds, adding \$10 million annually. There's been no increase in this tax since 1987.

Farmington/Farmington Hills residents with a \$200,000 home could expect an annual increase of \$22 if it passes. The proposed tax increase is

0.2279 mills. A mill is \$1 for every \$1,000 of a home's taxable value.

Like the special education millage that is teamed with this proposal, success

'It (vocational education) becomes an alternative wave of knowledge.'

Bob Maxfield
—Superintendent of Schools

cess or failure is based on the county-wide vote, not each district.

The goal is to update curriculum at

Please see VOCATIONAL, A3

City inks golf course, condo agreement

BY KEVIN BROWN
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The San Marino Golf Course expansion may cost \$1 million per hole, but hundreds of residents have said they want it.

A site plan would be the first step toward completing a projected \$10 million development now proposed to include nine new holes (making San Marino an 18-hole course), a driving range, new clubhouse, new parks maintenance building, a tunnel and 72 duplex condominiums.

So on Monday, the Farmington Hills City Council directed the city manager to confer with developer Albert Ludwig on an agreement to produce a

Rocky scraps congressional bid

BY JONI HUBBED
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Citing "self-imposed standards," term-limited State Rep. Andrew Raczkowski (R-Farmington Hills) has announced he is dismantling his bid for U.S. Congress.

"After much consideration, I have determined that, barring any judicial change placing Farmington Hills in a new congressional district, I will not be a candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives in 2002," Raczkowski said in a prepared state-

ment issued Tuesday.

He pointed out that federal law would have permitted him to run in Michigan's new 11th District, which will not include Farmington Hills. The law provides a window during redistricting following a census that eliminates residency requirements.

"Effective immediately, I am suspending all related campaign activities and in the very near future will terminate the 'Raczkowski for Congress' committee," he said. "In



Rep. Andrew Raczkowski

Please see ROCKY, A2