

IN THE PAPER
TODAY

MONDAY

Blood Drive: The American Red Cross Bloodmobile will be at Orchard United Methodist Church, 30450 Farmington Road, between 13 and 14 Mile Roads, on Monday, March 25, from 1:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. For more information call the church office 248-626-3620.

Hills City Council: Officials will meet student artists from Farmington Public Schools, hear a presentation about the new Southwest Oakland Cable Commission building and annual reports from the Beautification Commission and the Fire Department at their meeting, which begins at 7:30 p.m. in council chambers. Their agenda also includes approval of a street name change on Clairview Drive and an agreement with the Farmington Players. City Hall is located at the corner of 11 Mile and Orchard Lake Roads.

FRIDAY

Drop it! Wayne County Parks annual Marshmallow Drop will be held at 9 a.m. at Elizabeth Park in Trenton and at 11 a.m. at Nankin Mills in Westland, Friday, March 29. Over 20,000 marshmallows will be dropped from a helicopter to eager children below. For additional information, call (734)261-1990.

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Party on: Jackie Pudelek's public access cable show focuses on how to throw the perfect party, with simple but elegant table settings like this one.

Move over, Martha

Pudelek is cable TV's party planner

BY PAUL R. PACE
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The Home and Garden TV network has Martha Stewart offering advice on how to host those perfect parties, but the Farmington/Novi area has its own Martha in Jackie Pudelek.

Actually, Pudelek likes to think of what she does on her Unique Celebrations local cable show as offering party planning ideas in a more casual setting.

"It's about not making it overwhelming, but enjoyable," she said.

Other show, Pudelek said, "It's for the everyday person." She also has a party and event consulting business that goes by the same name.

She said a lot of the party hosting

shows broadcast on national cable typically require the watcher to have a thick pocketbook and a team behind him or her to get it done.

"How many people really have time for that?" she said.

"I am trying to use what people have in their home and use it different way," she said. "I'm for everyday events. It's all in the presentation.

Her show's about keeping things simple, but impressive.

"I try to bring people back to the table, like they used to do years ago," Pudelek said.

She said it takes about one to two weeks to put a show together, from designing the set, to coming up with the theme and props and memorizing a script. She pretty much does all the work herself, as for her recent segment on hosting a Valentine's Day party.

The Novi resident has a 15-year background in retail management and merchandising.

"I had to set up conferences and meetings, floor set ups," she said.

With her home business, Unique Celebrations, she said she is looking for business and residents interested in



Please see PARTY, A12

District unveils budget at forum

While last year's budget cuts were 'invisible' to the public, this year's will hit classrooms with staff reductions, including a proposed increase in the teacher/student ratio.

BY SUE BUCK
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Taxpayers got their first look at a list of proposed budget adjustments for the 2002-2003 Farmington School year March 21 at the Farmington Training Center.

This was the first time the district has held a public forum to discuss finances this early in the process of setting an annual budget. Officials anticipate a shortfall of roughly \$5 million.

The school board will hold a budget study session May 21 at the administrative building located on Shawwassee. The June 4 meeting will include the budget and truth-in-budgeting hearing; officials will also set the annual tax levy.

The board will adopt the 2002-2003 budget June 18.

"The budget development process is one in which we need to have involved as many people as possible," said Farmington Schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield. "It's a dynamic process dealing with a changing landscape. When it comes down to closing a program altogether, people become creative. What we have finally acclimated our staff to is not saying, 'I don't like those cuts,' but being able to help us come up with alternatives."

Reductions last year were somewhat invisible to the community, he said. This year, budget cuts will begin to

Please see BUDGET, A10

Road will be closing Monday

Beginning Monday, it might be a good idea to avoid southbound Farmington Road.

The Road Commission for Oakland County plans to close a portion of the road for southbound traffic to allow the reconstruction and widening of Farmington between Nine Mile and Grand River.

Between Nine Mile and Slocum, the road will be widened from four to five lanes. From Slocum to Grand River the road will be reconstructed with new concrete.

Throughout the project, the commission says southbound traffic will be prohibited on this section of Farmington. The detour route is Grand River to Drake to Nine Mile and back to Farmington.

The section between Slocum and Grand River is expected to be completed by July 15. The section between Slocum and Nine Mile is expected to wrap up by Sept. 30.

DETOUR BEGINS MONDAY



Happy feet:
Our Lady of Sorrows students Margaux Zanetti, Alex Zanetti and Courtney Delonis perform a traditional Polish folk dance for their classmates.



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRIDLER

Sorrows hosts Geography Day

Ethnic dances and food filled the second annual Geography Day March 21 at Our Lady of Sorrows School in Farmington.

The program for sixth through eighth grade students was organized by Carol Sutherland, whose oldest child is in the first grade.

Last year the program was presented to the younger grades.

"Students 'traveled' to five different countries in half hour presentations," Sutherland said.

Countries presented were Italy, Ireland, Iraq, India, Poland, Peru, the Ukraine, Israel and England.

"It was very interesting," said Joey Long, an eighth grader. "Lots I haven't seen before."

Students feasted on lasagna, mostaccioli, kielbasa, angel wings, Indian curry, Irish soda bread, garlic bread, and Mexican wedding cookies.

The school day ended with a traditional Chaldean folk dance, in which both students and teachers participated.

--By staff writer Sue Buck