



## Praise Mom with a poem

Celebrate your mother with a poem and win a prize for her courtesy of the Observer Newspapers. We're inviting our young readers, 18 and under, to submit a poem in praise of their mother. The poem can take any form from haiku to sonnet to free verse. A panel of judges will select their favorite.

Seven winning poets will win a gift for mom. The prizes include an 11- by 14-inch portrait for up to 14 people from Focal Point Photography in Farmington and Canton (sitting fee is included), \$100 gift certificate to Ernesto's Restaurant in Plymouth Township, \$100 gift certificate to Antonio's Italian Cucina in Farmington Hills, \$100 gift certificate to Sandtraps in Livonia, and more.

We'll publish the winning entry and other entries on Mother's Day. Entries are due to The Observer by Monday, May 6.

Send entries to Mother's Day Contest, Observer Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150, or fax to (734)591-7279 or e-mail to hgallagher@oe.homecomm.net.

## THE WEEK AHEAD

TUESDAY

**Official meetings: Farmington City Council meets 5:30-10 p.m. Tuesday, April 30 in Farmington City Hall for a budget review. The meeting of the Councils of Farmington and Farmington Hills will be held 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 7, at the Farmington Library, 32737 12 Mile, to discuss jointly-funded agencies. The meeting will include a tour of the new library.**

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## Patient doctor



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL DRESLER

A patient man: Dr. Allan Weiner, 72, has retired after 40 years as a pediatrician.

## After becoming ill, Hills pediatrician reluctantly hangs up his stethoscope

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM  
STAFF WRITER  
hneedham@oe.homecomm.net

A Farmington Hills pediatrician who has seen uncommon childhood diseases such as measles and chicken pox all but go the way of smallpox has hung up his trademark stethoscope.

Dr. Allan Weiner, 72, has retired after 40 years as a pediatrician. He said the retirement was somewhat forced upon him by the University of Michigan Health System, which bought Middlebelt Pediatrics, his 21000 Middlebelt practice, four years ago.



In profile

chemotherapy and even became the U of M Medical Center's oldest stem cell transplant patient.

The cancer is in remission. But when he was ready to come back to his practice recently, University of Michigan Health System said it was

not renewing his contract. He and partners Harvey Stein and William Rubinoff began practicing at the Livonia Health Center, 20321 Farmington Road.

Though he wasn't ready to retire, Weiner said that the turn of events was probably for the best. "At my age it's not so bad to retire. It's nice to sleep in a little."

Now that he is retired, he plans to do some volunteer work — perhaps read to elementary school children and help teach medical students.

"That might be nice for me," Weiner said of the opportunity to teach

Please see DOCTOR, A5

## Standards 'road map' approved

■ After almost two years in committee, new graduation requirements for Farmington high school students are on their way to becoming a reality.

BY SUE BUCK  
STAFF WRITER  
sbuck@oe.homecomm.net

After nearly two years of committee deliberations, the Farmington school board approved changes in high school graduation requirements Tuesday.

Incoming freshman, the class of 2006, are expected to be the first for whom these requirements apply.

"This is a road map of what we'd like to see," said Jan Colliton, assistant superintendent for instruction.

"I want to underscore the fact that it isn't even a roadmap yet, but a signpost that we want to head in this direction," said board member Frank Reid. "We don't know when it will be implemented."

Students can expect to see emphasis on diversity and technology, as well as a requirement to demonstrate what they've learned.

The board gave approval to begin the planning and development stage for a senior project requirement. Only a handful of school districts in Michigan require a senior project. It includes the Avondale, Saginaw, and Jackson school districts.

The senior project gives students an opportunity to participate in a higher learning experience which they haven't had an opportunity to do before, Colliton said.

Laura Sparrow, who headed up the graduation requirements committee, is piloting a Senior Seminar class for advanced placement students. The senior project may be patterned somewhat like her Harrison High class. Goal setting, time management and self-confidence will also be incorporated.

"We have a vision for it which is worth pursuing," Colliton said.

A team will be developed from each high school to discuss how to pursue

Please see ROAD MAP, A5

## Blaze hits Muirwood, apartments damaged



Backdraft: Firefighters worked from top to bottom on this Muirwood Apartments unit.

■ Two Farmington Hills firefighters suffered minor injuries while battling a fire that heavily damaged units in Muirwood Apartments Friday morning.

BY PAUL R. PACE  
STAFF WRITER  
ppace@oe.homecomm.net

Six apartment units were damaged in a Friday morning fire at the Muirwood Apartments complex off Grand River and Drake in Farmington Hills. Two firefighters suffered minor injuries battling the blaze that was being investigated Friday afternoon. One suffered minor burns while another had a piece of drywall fall on him. He was not seriously hurt.

Both were being treated Friday afternoon, said Pete Baldwin, assistant fire chief.

The fire, believed to be accidental, caused an estimated \$400,000 in damage, said fire officials.

Yvonne James of Decatur, Ga., was staying in the end unit of the apartment building on Pine Grove visiting her son. She said she saw smoke outside the kitchen window before she heard firefighters banging on apartment doors to evacuate the building's residents.

"I thought the smoke was coming



Apartment fire: Units from three Farmington Hills fire stations worked to kill the flames at Muirwood Apartments late Friday morning. Two firefighters suffered minor injuries.

from a furnace," she said. "I just got out when (firefighters) told me. I left everything. I didn't take anything."

The fire apparently started in a middle unit of the building and was called in at 11:16 a.m., said fire officials. The lone occupant escaped without injury. Three units had fire damage while

three other units had smoke and/or water damage, according to Baldwin.

At least three fire stations were called to the scene. Baldwin said residents whose apartments were damaged will likely be able to relocate temporarily in unoccupied apartments.

## Garr, Goss: Beware of phony fire donation solicitors

BY PAUL R. PACE  
STAFF WRITER  
ppace@oe.homecomm.net

It's spring time and with it usually comes phone solicitors asking for donations to local fire departments.

Officials at the Farmington Hills and Farmington fire departments want residents to know that the departments do not seek donations no matter what any phone solicitor may say.

"Fortunately we have a good tax base that supports us," said Hills Fire Lt. Mike Gray.

He said the Michigan State Firefighters Union sometimes uses phone solicitation companies to seek donations for training.

While some Farmington Hills firefighters are members of that union, the department asks the union to opt the city out of donation requests.

However, some local phone numbers

still get picked up by telemarketing companies hired to seek donations, he said.

Garr said a resident complained to the department recently about a solicitor who was rude enough to actually swear at her.

Gary Goss, public safety director for the city of Farmington, said the city's safety departments do not seek donations, either.

"Any one who says a donation will

benefit the department is lying," he said of phone solicitors.

Sometimes the solicitors "stretch it," Garr said. "They will say anything to make that solicitation. (Residents) are sort of being preyed upon by young kids eager to make a commission."

Garr has a suggestion for residents if they ever get such phony calls:

"They can simply answer that their chief said to not make donations and just hang up," he said.