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FARMINGTON Observer

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B1

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OUR TOWNS

Buckner graduates

Farmington Hills resident Joshua Buckner completed his basic and advanced training at Fort Sill Army Base on Aug. 26.

Attending the graduation ceremony was his parents, Kelly and Rickie Buckner, sister, Kate, grandmother, Shirley Troyer, his aunt and cousins.

Private 2nd class Buckner will continue his training in Assault at Fort Campbell, Ky.

End of summer

The End of Summer Music Fest will be held on Saturday, Aug. 31, in the Village Mall parking lot. It runs from 4-9:30 p.m. Those scheduled to perform at the free-admission concert are: Two For Thirty, SqueezeBox, Porter, DJ Bruce Bailey, PCL and Galax Entertainment Singers.

Aller on staff

Jodie Aller, a former resident of Farmington, was introduced as a new faculty member at Northeast Community College in Norfolk, Neb., last week during a two-day new faculty and staff orientation.

Aller was introduced as the physical therapist assistant program director.

Instructor. She is a graduate of the University of Michigan with a bachelor of science degree in health science and a master's degree in physical therapy. She also has a bachelor of fine arts degree in computer graphic design. She has nine years of physical therapy experience in hospital, clinic and home care situations. Aller is married to Dr. Lawrence Rubens, a physician in Norfolk. She also has a daughter, Carly.

NFHS reunion set

The North Farmington High School class of 1972 will celebrate their 30-year reunion on Friday, Nov. 29. For more information contact Class Reunions Plus at 800-548-6666 or (586) 446-9636.

Sergeant retires

Farmington Hills Sgt. Joseph Rebb will be honored at a retirement ceremony at 11 a.m. Friday at the Farmington Hills City Council Chambers. The ceremony will include a brief summary of Rebb's career, best wishes messages from colleagues and friends and tributes by Gov. John Engler's office, U.S. Senators as well as local dignitaries. Among Rebb's many accomplishments was being honored as the 1993 Optimist Club Police Officer of the Year.



Sue Kin wheels her bus out of the district's bus yard.

BILL BRASLER / OBSERVER

Veteran school bus driver knows the road

BY SUE BUCK STAFF WRITER

After three decades of driving Farmington Public Schools buses, veteran driver Sue Kin knows her profession.

In her role as president of the Farmington Transportation Association, the bus driver's union, there aren't many stories this most senior (but not the oldest) driver hasn't seen or heard. She's been union president for five years and sat on the board for 15 years.

"I enjoy driving, and I enjoy kids," Kin said. Previous to that she was a summer camp counselor for the Farmington Parks and Recreation Department. "My baseball coach was a supervisor, and they needed bus drivers," Kin said. "She said I could do this job and I was needed."

Then, as now, bus drivers were predominantly women. "I think we have more men now," Kin said. Drivers over 75 runs, with one bus and driver assigned to each.

Kin drives a special education bus. With her seniority, she has the first choice of different routes.

"I've always focused on special needs students," Kin said. "I just found I had more patience with them. I love those kids."

One day, after driving one autistic child for four years, she was stunned to hear him say on his own without prompting from others: "Bye, Sue."

"Wow. That was really something," she said. "I was in shock. He did it for the rest of the school year."

Focused in their own world, autistic children will do things when they are ready to do things. "You have to allow them to like you, and not push them to like you because it's not going to happen," she said.

When Kin first started her career and had a mix of runs, she eagerly took any special needs routes she could get.

This year Kin drives two autistic students in an out-of-district run. Special education students often attend schools out of the area because those schools cater to their specific, inclusive needs.

"It's considered a pretty small run," Kin said. One ten attends Seaholm High School at Evergreen and Lincoln Roads. An elementary age student goes to Maple Elementary and Inkster and 15 Mile Roads. She drives each student separately and picks them up at their houses.

PLEASE SEE DRIVER, A7

More riders needed for SMART's new fleet

BY DOUG JOHNSON STAFF WRITER

Aggressively look for more riders. Buy and put into service 287 brand new "low floor" buses.

That's SMART's mission now that they have successfully passed a millage renewal and a small millage increase.

Earlier this month, the Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation got voters in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties to approve 0.6 mills to keep SMART buses running; of that, 0.22 was new tax.

SMART serves Garden City, Westland, Redford, Livonia, Farmington and Farmington Hills.

PLEASE SEE SMART, A4

Business owner's FOIA requests denied

BY SUE BUCK STAFF WRITER

In duplicate responses on different letterheads, both the City of Farmington and the Farmington Downtown Development Authority denied a local businesswoman's

Freedom of Information Act request as a "clearly unwarranted invasion of the individual's privacy."

The request from Becky Burns, co-owner of Farmington Bakery on Grand River, was for information concerning the ongoing

process to hire a new DDA executive director.

"I don't plan on appealing this right now, but I do think there were some things they could have given me," Burns said.

In other situations where she submitted FOIA requests,

information may have been blacked or crossed out but some information was forwarded, she added.

"I'd like to see the revised search done a bit more openly even if they don't open up all

PLEASE SEE FOIA, A7

Local women help others fly

BY SUE BUCK STAFF WRITER

When it comes to finding women in need of help, the board of directors of Women in Need of Guidance and Skills (WINGS) doesn't need a compass.

"We don't have to look," said Sheryl Simmons, executive director. "Most of it is through word of mouth."

The three-year-old education and support program for women was started by Simmons, the Rev. Dr. Laura Foster of Detroit and Dr. Verona Morton, a now retired Wayne State

University professor and Detroit resident.

Joyce Snodgrass, a Farmington Hills resident, who is in charge of budget of finance, is now also active along with Shawnesse Walker, an Oak Park social worker.

The program has grown through referrals and positive word-of-mouth. "When you are down and out, WINGS is just there," said one client whose identity was withheld.

A counselor for Detroit Public

PLEASE SEE WOMEN, A5



Joyce Snodgrass, Sheryl Simmons and Shawnesse Walker (sitting) help women in need.

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LOOKING AHEAD
Head all about it
The Farmington Library Hills branch will re-open after Labor Day. Learn more about its features, in Sunday's Observer.

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