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It's art that leads artist Jeri Fellwock. C1



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Our Towns

DDA chooses a new director

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER

The excitement built as Frank Gerstenecker reached for his cell phone and began to dial.
Gerstenecker, a Michigan Municipal League consultant handling the Farmington Downtown Development

Authority search for a new executive director, stepped into the conference area outside of council chambers for a bit more quiet, still in sight of the remaining group.
He was making an offer of employment to Brent Morgan, community development director of the City of Davison. Morgan accepted, culminating

more than seven hours of interviews, discussion and comments Wednesday.
"I'm excited," Morgan said from his office. "It's a great opportunity. I have a lot of people to meet and a lot to learn about Farmington."
Interviewed within an hour after the job offer, he mentioned the forms which still needed to be signed and returned,

his appointment expected at a yet unscheduled special DDA meeting and another important task - informing his current employer of his decision.
He's expected to start by Nov. 8. In the meantime, Morgan is busy with the annual Davis Pumpkin Festival. He's

PLEASE SEE DIRECTOR, A2

Pumpkin mania

Thousands of pumpkins of all sizes were delivered to the Pumpkin Patch at Orchard United Methodist Church on Farmington Road in Farmington Hills on Wednesday, October 9. The patch is open from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., with adult and



BILL BRESLER/OBSERVER

youth volunteers from the church handling sales. Those who purchase a pumpkin will help Orchard UMC's youth raise funds for their 2003 mission trip. The pumpkins are also a fundraiser for the Navajo Indians of New Mexico who raise them.
Scorecrowns made by the youth will also be on sale after October 20.

Award-winner

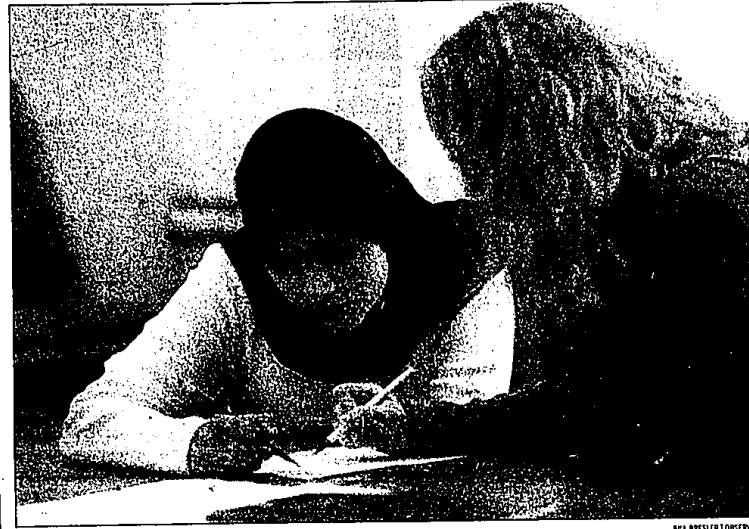
Architectural Contractors Trade Association (ACT) recently accepted the prestigious Diamond Award from the Michigan Society of Association Executives (MSAE) for their newsletter publication, The Writing on the Wall.
The Diamond Award honors "the best of the best" within associations, in eight areas of competition. Winners of the Diamond Awards were honored at a September ceremony held at the Ritz Carleton in Dearborn.

The Writing on the Wall is published on a bi-monthly basis by ACT staff and distributed to ACT members, and industry colleagues throughout SE Michigan and the United States.
Architectural Contractors Trade Association, based in Farmington Hills, represents southern Michigan union contractors and suppliers/manufacturers.

Les Miz

Walled Lake Western High School Department of Performing Arts has been selected as the Midwest premiere site for the first high school adaptation of the hit Broadway musical, Les Miserables.

The three hour and twenty minute Broadway production has been reduced to a slightly shorter production. Walled Lake Western High School will present this new adapted version of Les Miserables for five performances: Nov. 15, 16, 17, 22 and 23.
For ticket information call (248) 956-4578 or visit www.wlwpformingarts.com.



Sofia Joshi works with Teacher Mandy George.

Charter gives parents, kids 'small' choice

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER

The habits of bats may seem like an unlikely way to teach a lesson about life, but Oakland International Academy Principal Fatima Jakri used just that to generate negative responses from her students to prove a point.

While students called the rodents nasty, dirty and scary, Jakri told them wonderful things about bats. They eat insects, have nurturing mothers who pick their fallen young up from the ground instead of leaving them there like birds do, and they are mammals just like people.
"You know the misconceptions we have about bats," she said. "We make the same leaps when it comes to people."
It's easy to pin labels on one person, or on a group, she said.
"We can't live by what people think," Jakri said. "We have to find out what

PLEASE SEE ACADEMY, A6

Hills teens charged in Trillium blaze

BY PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER

An unsupervised house party in an upscale Farmington Hills neighborhood made national news when it was discovered some of the teens looted and set the home on fire.

After months of investigation, two teens were charged Wednesday in the looting and house fire on Trillium Street on Memorial Day.
A 17-year-old Farmington Hills boy and a 16-year-old Northville Township boy are charged for their role in the case.

No one was injured in the incident, but police say at one point a teen was left behind in a bedroom during the fire.
Farmington Hills Police Chief William Dwyer said it's fortunate that no one was injured or the charges could have been much more serious.

PLEASE SEE CHARGES, A4

Hills council considers dog complaints

BY PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER

How well do dogs respond to oral commands?
That's a mystery the city of Farmington Hills plans to dig up while the city council considers adjusting language in

its dog control ordinance.
In a study session Monday, the council discussed whether it might be time to reexamine the city's law, which simply requires owners to have voice control over their dogs or - if that's not possible - have them on leashes.

This issue affects owners who have registered more than 4,000 dogs in Farmington Hills.
Councilman Barry Brickner said he heard from a woman whose baby-sitter and children had to run up a slide in a park to get away from an over-

friendly Rottweiler who was apparently on the loose.
When the owner of the dog was contacted, he'd told the woman there is no leash law requirement in the city, Brickner said.
Councilman Jerry Elms said

PLEASE SEE COMPLAINTS, A7

Water board issue divides candidates

BY PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER

Valerie Knol, Republican candidate for the 37th District state House of Representatives, is supporting the reorganization of the Detroit Water Board, which would guarantee Oakland County residents have representation.

In a press release, Knol stated she submitted written testimony to a House subcommittee that is traveling to Oakland, Macomb and Wayne counties to receive opinions on changing the makeup of the water board.
House Bill 5788 replaces the current Detroit Water and Sewerage Department with a 10-member board made up of representatives of Oakland, Macomb and Wayne counties and the city of

PLEASE SEE WATER BOARD, A4



Chili afternoon

Glen Hooker and Stevie Ray Vaughn of Farmington Hills sample some of the commercial chili available Sunday in Plymouth during the Great Lakes Regional Chili Cook Off! Nearly 60 chili chefs contested their concoctions in downtown Plymouth, and hundreds of motorcycle owners took part in the annual Harley-Davidson Bike Show.

PAUL HURSHMAN/OBSERVER

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ELECTION
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LOOKING AHEAD
Our Endorsement
In Sunday's Observer, see who we've endorsed: governor, senator, secretary of state, attorney general and Congress.

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