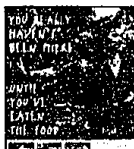


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SUNDAY
June 1, 2003
75 cents

FARMINGTON Observer

Worldly chef
Keith Famie's new
book chronicles
international
foods.
Taste, B1



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OUR
TOWNS

Hills holds the line on tax rates

BY PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER

Despite continued cuts in state-shared revenues, the city of Farmington Hills will not increase its tax rate for the next fiscal year. City department heads were asked to tighten their belts to keep the city's millage rate at 10.2221 mills for the upcoming 2003/04 fiscal year budget. A mill

equates to \$1 for every \$1,000 of a home's state equalized value. An estimated shortfall of \$1 million in state shared revenues for this fiscal year has put pressure on the city department heads to keep their respective staffs at status quo and not increase budgets more than 2 percent from the current fiscal year. To balance the budget, the city is pulling about \$330,000 from its undesignated fund balance, also known as a "rainy day" fund. "Well, it's raining," said City Manager Steve Brock. In his report to the city council, he said the 2003/2004 budget was the most difficult one he's drafted during his career with the city. The undesignated fund balance is projected to go from \$15.3 million, to \$12.12 million, representing 10.5 percent of the

next budget. Brock said that's as low a percentage as the city can go before cuts have to be made in service. "You can't keep doing that every year," he said of using the fund. "We won't let ourselves get into that position." Brock said adding to the cutback in state-shared revenues is a decline in investment income due to the ongoing

PLEASE SEE TAX, A4

Father's Day CONTEST

Picture Dad!
We're celebrating Dad this year with a special contest. Send us a favorite photograph of you and your Dad with a short caption, explaining why it's your favorite (funny, sentimental or just interesting). We'll hold a drawing of all entries and award the winner with four tickets to the Ford Senior Players Championship at the TPC in Dearborn, good for your choice of any one-day visit July 7-13. Prizes expected to compete in this PGA Champions Tour major include Jack Nicklaus, Hale Irwin, Tom Watson, Ray Floyd, Tom Kite, Fuzzy Zoeller and "rookie" Craig Stadler. All tickets include free parking and shuttle. Ford will expand its Centennial Celebration by featuring classic cars on the course, and a concert Saturday, July 12. To enter, send your photo to: Farmington Observer, Jon Hubrod, 3341 Grand River, Farmington, MI 48335. All entries are due by 5 p.m. Wednesday, June 11. Even if your name isn't selected for a prize, you'll have a chance to show Dad how much he means to you. Look for your photo with Dad on Father's Day, Sunday, June 15.



DELL PRESLER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Mercy graduates

The torrential rains stopped and the clouds parted just in time for Mercy High School's graduation ceremonies held Thursday night at Meadowbrook in Rochester. Ashley McLeod and Natasha Roulin step carefully on their way to join their classmates. More photos and a list of graduates, page A3.

Candidates give district, board grades

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER

Farmington School Board Candidates Karen Bolsen, John Goshorn and Cheryl Swaim participated in their third candidate forum March 28. The Democratic Club hosted the event at Farmington Hills City Hall. Previous forums were hosted by the Republican Club and the Farmington Area PTA Council. The election in June 9 and each of the Farmington Hills residents is hoping to nab the only spot on the school board, made available because board President Linda Enberg decided not to run for re-election. Attorney Michael Shpiece, also a Farmington Hills resident and former Farmington School Board member, moderated the Democratic Club forum. The club, which has more than 100 members, took questions from the audience and also accepted questions called in during the live broadcast. Candidates did not receive any questions in advance. As co-chair of the Farmington Hills Multiracial Multicultural Community Council for eight years, Bolsen said she's developed trusting relationships with officials and other groups in both Farmington and Farmington Hills. Goshorn, a commercial business manager for Ford Motor Company, said he will bring the best practices gathered through his business and community work to the school board position. Swaim, who co-owns Falcon Stamping in Howell, said all children

PLEASE SEE GRADES, A4

McCotter offers manufacturing bill

BY BRAD KADRICH
STAFF WRITER

When he got to Washington, conversations with constituents and others quickly convinced freshman Congressman Thaddeus McCotter that manufacturing representatives lacked support on Capitol Hill.

In an effort to bring that voice to Congress, McCotter last week introduced legislation that would establish the position of Undersecretary of Commerce for Manufacturing in the Department of Commerce. Ninth District Congressman Joe Knollenberg, R-Bloomfield Hills, is among the bill's co-sponsors. To introduce the legislation, McCotter

held a press conference at the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center in Plymouth, before an approving crowd of manufacturing representatives. "It was a great idea brought to me out of conversations with people who manufacture every day," McCotter said. "There

PLEASE SEE MCCOTTER, A4

CRISIS IN HEALTH CARE

State panel to decide fate of plan to transfer hospital beds

BY ANNETTE KINGSBURY
STAFF WRITER

Bob Feldman, a 77-year-old retiree from West Bloomfield, loves his Henry Ford surgeon. So much so that he defies rush-hour traffic to drive to downtown Detroit to see him. "I go there because he spends time with me, answers all my questions," Feldman said. "I have all the confidence in the world for them."

Having the ability to see his doctor in West Bloomfield, especially if he ever needs in-patient care again, "would be the best," Feldman said. Since 1980, 23 hospitals have closed in the city of Detroit, an average of one a year. During that time, as the populations of Detroit and Wayne County have been falling, people have been moving to Oakland County. And while there is an abundance of hospitals in eastern Oakland

PLEASE SEE TRANSFER, A6



PAUL HUNSON/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Rob Casalou, president of Providence Hospital in Southfield, said state government should be ashamed of itself for stifling new visions for health care delivery.

Hospital battle centers on capacity, money

BY ANNETTE KINGSBURY
STAFF WRITER

Patricia Mesquita was closer to a hospital in her native Jamaica than she is now, living in West Bloomfield. With a complicated first pregnancy, Mesquita, 32, endured two trips in labor — one at seven months, when she was sent home, and another in October, when her baby was born — from her home to Henry Ford Hospital in downtown Detroit. "It was very painful," she said. "Suppose I have the baby in the car. ... But I wanted to be with Dr. (Richard) Smith because he's such a good guy." Henry Ford Hospital operates a freestanding, 24-hour clinic with operating rooms in West Bloomfield. But it's never been granted permission by the state Certificate of Need Commission to add in-patient beds. So Mesquita couldn't deliver her baby close to home.

PLEASE SEE BATTLE, A7

National Award

The United States Achievement Academy recently announced that Spencer Schroer of Farmington has been named a United States National Award Winner in science.

Schroer, who attends Power Middle School, was nominated for this national award by his teacher Lorna Bussa.

He will appear in the United States Achievement Academy Official Yearbook, which is published nationally.

Youth choir

CrossNotes, the 85-voice youth choir from Emmanuel United Methodist Church in Memphis, Tenn., will present a musical worship service at 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 11, at First United Methodist Church of Farmington, 3312 Grand River, in downtown Farmington.

For more information call (248) 474-5373 or visit www.farmingtonumc.org.

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E4 Jobs
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D4 New Homes
D5 Service Guide
C6 Sports

LOOKING AHEAD
Born to Drink
Thursday in Filler: "Springsteen -
Troubadour of the Highway," an exhibit
of photographs and music videos
opens at Cranbrook Art Museum.

