

recreation news

Each week the Farmington Hills Parks & Recreation Department will present a synopsis of upcoming activities in this column. For further information regarding our programs, contact our office at 474-6115.

RECREATION CENTERS — Eight community playground sites are now open through Thursday, Aug. 4. Supervised activities will include games, sports activities, arts and crafts and

special events. All activities will include boys and girls ages 6-13 (must have completed first grade). The morning sites will be Forest, Kenbrook, Larkshire and Longacre, and they will be open from 9:30 a.m. to noon. The afternoon sites will include Flanders, Grace, Woodcreek and Wooddale, and they will be open 1-3 p.m. There is no fee for this activity.

CAMP RAINBOW — Camp Rainbow

is a summer camp for all mentally and physically impaired individuals. The program operates Monday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., and offers a variety of recreational activities. Daily activities will incorporate socialization skills, gross and fine motor coordination and self-awareness. Additional activities will include swimming, field trips and overnight camping during specific seasons. The first session will begin Monday, July 18, and take place at Oakland Community College, Orchard Ridge campus. The camper registration fee is \$38 per person.

KID'S DAY — The fourth annual Kid's Day celebration is scheduled for Saturday at City Park. Activities will begin at noon and continue through 8 p.m. Events will include pony rides, games, petting zoo, entertainment, clowns, sportsmobile, magicians, the Farmington Community Band and more.

FOOD CO-OP — The senior adult food co-op continues to be a great success. The bimonthly program offers a variety of vegetables which adds up to a substantial savings. The initial membership fee is \$1, and the cost of the bimonthly food bag is \$3.25. We ask that members help out periodically if they are able. To join the food co-op, you can register at the senior adult center located in the Mercy Conference Center on 11 Mile just east of Middlebelt.

amentals of the game or improve your existing skills. Classes will meet twice each week in 50-minute sessions for four weeks. All lessons will take place at Farmington and North Farmington high schools. Participants are asked to bring a racquet and a can of new tennis balls for the lessons. The second session will begin Monday, July 18, and continue through Thursday, Aug. 11. The times vary throughout the day: youth classes are scheduled for 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. while adult classes are scheduled 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 6-9 p.m. The fee for the eight-class session is \$18 per participant.

RECREATION OPEN SWIM — We host open swim at North Farmington and Farmington High School pools on a Monday-through-Thursday basis. The pools are open between 1 and 3 p.m. Fee is 75 cents for children and teens and \$1 for adults. Children must be 36 inches at the chin to swim alone or they must be accompanied by an adult.

TENNIS LESSONS — Learn the fun-

Brotherton mulls Medicaid solution

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now than we do on welfare benefits. It is the fastest rising component of the Social Services budget which is larger than education, mental health, or any other state budget. In the last four years alone, the per diem cost of Medicaid hospital care increased 98 percent.

Brotherton said that philosophically, he believes that competition is "a more straightforward and fair way to limit Medicaid costs than a system of administrative rules and controls."

"The controls are less effective and, in the long run, less equitable than market forces would be."

To illustrate the problem, Brotherton said that a two-year old Detroit study showed that costs for the normal delivery of a baby ranged from \$800 to \$2,600 in hospitals within a three mile radius.

"The obvious question is why should the state send Medicaid patients to the \$2,600 hospital?"

"Medicaid is growing by leaps and bounds and putting an increasing strain on our budget. I believe we have to cut back on costs, not merely shrug our shoulders and give into them. If we're going to save money, we've got to start saving where the largest amounts are being spent — and right now that's Medicaid," Brotherton said.

Change contemplated

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guage would give the council the power to create, by ordinance, a retirement system for city employees. The ordinance then would provide for a board of trustees (identical to the current charter provisions) a method of funding the system and for investing the pension plan's money. The proposed ordinance also would establish the amount of retirement benefits that could be adjusted by amending the ordinance. Any additional amendments or ordinances would be unable to diminish the current levels of benefits provided, Deadman added.

The reason the retirement system's board of trustees is able to recommend a 2 percent increase in benefits, Deadman said, is because the interest earned on the investment of the pension plan's money was greater than expected and because of some early

deaths among some retired employees.

"This was a way to compensate in some way for the inflation that has occurred over the years," Deadman said, indicating that the money that would have otherwise been given to those retirees who are now dead is a surplus that can be divided among the city's 15 current retirees.

Under the city's plan, retirees may continue with Blue Cross insurance coverage but must pay for it themselves, Deadman said. The level of benefits also varies among retirees ranging from \$4 per month to a current maximum of \$236, he added.

Kelly indicated that although the ballot question would ask voters to change the city charter, a full text of the proposed amendment would be posted in polling booths so voters can see what changes are suggested.

Church rebuilds steeple

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"It does not appear that it (the lightning) struck the cross," said Frank Lauboff, Farmington's deputy director of public safety. "If it had, there would have been a lot more damage."

Darlene Lane, who was sitting on her front porch around the corner from the church, at Oakland near Grand River, said she saw the lightning strike the steeple.

"It was terrible," she said. "It was huge, enormous and extremely loud. It's amazing it hasn't been hit before."

Another witness, construction worker Andy Lucas, said, "It was loud. I never heard anything that loud before. Everything just kind of lit up."

No injuries were reported, although

onlookers and firefighters occasionally backed away from the church as burning embers fell from the tower.

THE MOST FRUSTRATING moment for the 18 Farmington firefighters, Lauboff said, was waiting to get the aerial tower basket operated by the Farmington Hills firefighters, into position.

Manned by firefighters from both cities, the aerial basket was elevated to the steeple where firefighters knocked a vent into the tower "to be sure there were no hot embers inside" in the words of one firefighter.

"Both fire departments did a fine job considering the difficult situation," Tyler said.

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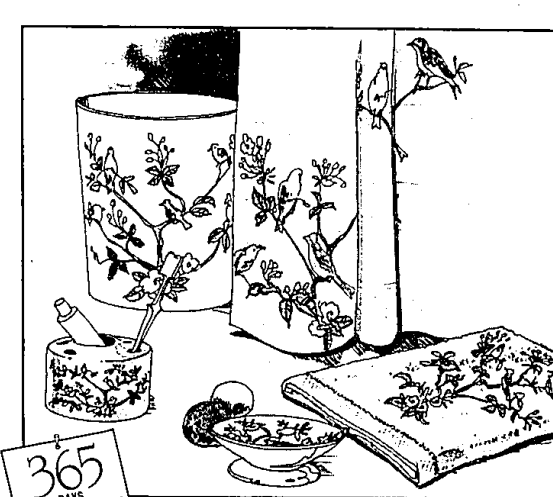
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