

Farmington Observer

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Twenty-Five Cents

Ideas sought for spending in the Hills

By Joanne Mallazewski
staff writer

Farmington Hills officials have issued a calendar of meetings and public hearings leading up to the adoption of the proposed 1984-85 budget.

The proposed budget will be presented to the City Council at the May 7 regular meeting.

Council has also scheduled a public hearing at 7:30 p.m. May 7 to hear public comments about which capital improvement projects the city should finance.

The council wants to know which projects residents consider necessary and would be willing to pay for before officials adopt the city's six-year capital improvement plan and determine how to pay for top priority projects.

Prepared by the planning commission, the six-year plan includes projects like a new police building, drainage, sanitary sewers, sidewalks, roads, and equipment purchases.

The plan also includes methods of financing the estimated \$12.8 million program.

While planning commissioners included projects which were considered absolutely necessary for the city's development, city staff whittled down the plan to a list of the most urgently needed projects that would be "more palatable" to taxpayers, said City Manager Lawrence Savage in early April.

The alternate program developed by city staff anticipates a voter-approved millage of up to 1.35 mills for 15 years. The additional millage would be broken down to three-tenths of a mill to pay for a new police building estimated at \$2.5 million, as well as a quarter-mill to pay the bonded debt requirement on the Caddell Drain for which the city is already obligated.

The remaining seven-tenths mill would be used for drainage improvements and other unspecified projects.

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Farmington tax could increase

By Joanne Mallazewski
staff writer

Farmington property owners must likely pay more in local taxes this year even though city officials have recommended maintaining last year's tax rate.

The culprit is an expected increase of approximately 2.8 percent in state equalized valuation (SEV) of property. That means that even if city officials adopt the 1984-85 budget based on maintaining last year's 11.74 mills, the rate is applied against a greater property assessment, driving up local taxes.

Farmington City Council scheduled a public hearing for 8 p.m. May 21 to receive public input on the proposed 1984-85 budget. The public hearing is required by state statute since the city will receive increased revenue because of the hike in SEV.

Council must adopt the annual budget by June 4, according to state law.

Although city officials have recommended levying last year's 11.74 mills, the distribution of the rate between the city's operating budget and debt service will be somewhat different than in 1983-84, said City Manager Robert Deadman.

The recommended 11.74 mills can be broken down into two parts: .98 mill for debt service, which is a drop from 1.22 mills in 1983-84; and 10.76 mills for the operating budget, which is a 28-mill increase over last year.

In 1983-84, Farmington taxpayers paid an almost 1-mill increase in local

taxes. The City Council hiked the tax rate from 10.755 mill to 11.74.

Last year's tax rate was due to an increase in operating costs coupled with about a 2 percent drop in SEV.

Prior to adopting the 1984-85 budget, Farmington council members are scheduled to meet with the Farmington Hills City Council at 7 p.m. May 2 to review the proposed budgets for the Farmington Community Library, the 47th District Court, Youth Services Agencies, Commission on Aging and the Commission on Arts.

Embattled educator finds new job

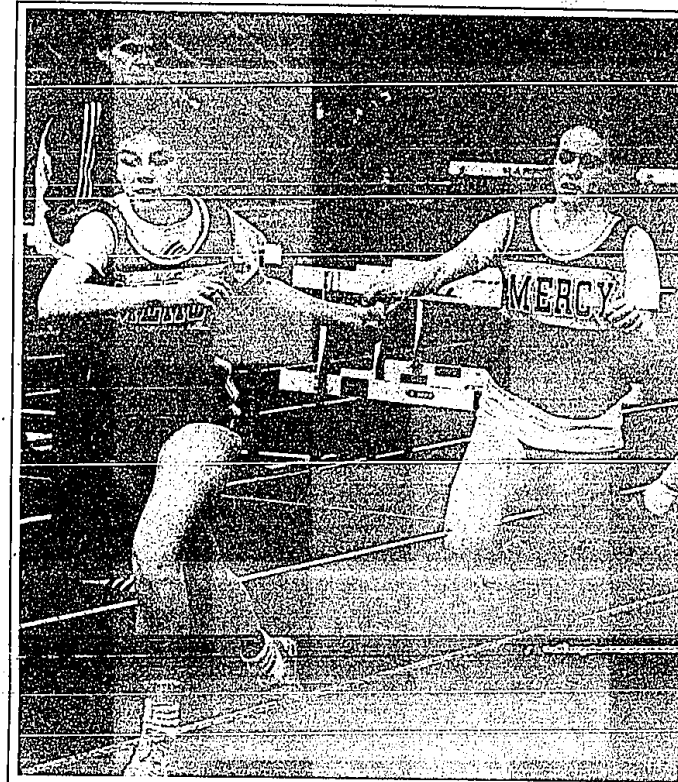
By Patricia M. Bowling
Novi-Walled Lake News

Robert Duff, former community-education director, was reinstated as a teacher in the Walled Lake School District last week.

After 20 years as an administrator, Duff said, "I'm all done with that. I have no interest in it at all anymore."

Duff's return to school-district employment was ordered in an arbitrator's decision rendered last week.

Duff was fired by the school board in November 1983 for involvement in a computer software marketing business called JAB Computing. The business was established by former community-education regional-coordinator Gerald Boers, who was fired last spring for al-



Winning form

That's what the students from Mercy High School were attempting to perfect in their recent track matchup with Bishop Borgessa. Here,

Kathleen Ryan hands off a baton to teammate Jennie Davidson. To read more about the meet, turn to the sports page.

HANDY DORST/staff photographer

Local talent ready

By Joanne Mallazewski
staff writer

Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission's (SWOCC) first cable TV public access channel featuring locally produced programs will make its debut next week.

Public access programming will air at 6 p.m. April 30 on channel 12. Initially, the channel will offer about two hours of programming, some of which will be repeated.

A schedule of programs will appear in every Thursday edition of the Farmington Observer beginning April 26, along with an accompanying article by Lark Samouelian, SWOCC executive director, about public access.

"The programs people see are produced by individuals with the support of MetroVision staff and SWOCC staff," Samouelian said.

The public access shows are developed and produced by residents and organizations in Farmington Hills and Novi.

The local producers are graduates of workshops which have been co-sponsored by SWOCC and MetroVision since January. Approximately 400 residents have completed the first phase of workshops although only about 10 percent have produced shows, Samouelian said.

Training through the workshops as well as public access programming is free to any resident or organization within the tri-city franchise area, Samouelian said.

"The workshops have been rated as the best that do exist," Samouelian said.

The first phase of workshops cover equipment use and general production for in the studio or on location. Although these technical workshops have been put on the back-burner for now, interested residents may still sign up for when the workshops are offered again in a few months, Samouelian said.

Meanwhile, the second phase of workshops is targeted for June. These workshops are designed for graduates of the technical workshops to show them how to organize their thoughts, write a script and finally produce a show. The end result, she said, should be a program that can be aired over public access channel 12.

"The premise is that anyone taking the workshop is supposed to produce a show," Samouelian said.

New life revives family's hope

By Jean Adamczak
staff writer

The Frank A. Balardi family of Farmington Hills is announcing the birth of their first grandchild in a unique way.

The words "It's a girl" are printed in white letters on the side of the Balardi residence on 11 Mile Road.

"We wanted to tell the whole world," says Frank Balardi, proudly. "And we're starting with Farmington," adds Balardi's son, Victor.

The newest addition to the Balardi clan, Jessica Ann Cedar, was born April 19 at 12:17 a.m. in McPherson Health Center, Howell.

"It's our first grandchild - we've been looking forward to this event," says Balardi, "picking up a bottle of tequila from the kitchen counter."

"This bottle was given to us by friends of our son, it's dated 2-18-80, and has specific instructions not to

open it until the first grandchild's day of birth," Balardi says with a laugh.

The birth of Jessica is an especially joyous occasion for the family. It helps to offset the Balardis' sadness as they remember their mother, Ruth Ann, who was killed in a snowmobile accident in January.

Mrs. Balardi was killed when the snowmobile she was driving collided with a truck on U.S. 31 near Emmet County.

"She was terribly well-liked and well-known around Farmington, and she was really looking forward to the birth of our first grandchild," says Balardi quietly.

Balardi, a self-employed builder, has three sons and one daughter still living at home. It was Balardi's idea to put the announcement on the side of their ranch home but it was his son Victor who contacted the Observer.

"I'm sort of the public relations man for our family," says Victor. "I just

wanted to let everyone know about the birth of Jessica," he says smiling.

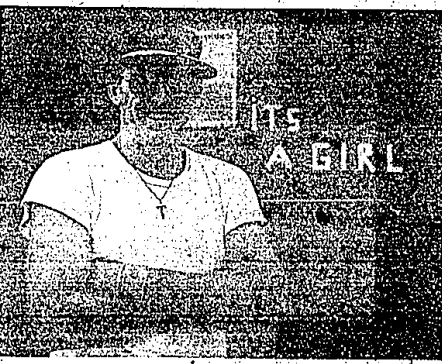
"It's about time we had some joy in this family," adds Frank Balardi.

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Reminder...

Your Observer carrier will be stopping by this week to collect for the month. Please have the money ready and be sure to get your receipt. It's worth a \$1.75 discount on the next classified advertisement you place in your hometown newspaper.



Proud new grandfather Frank Balardi stands in front of the announcement proclaiming the birth of his first granddaughter, Jessica Ann, born Thursday. Mother and daughter came home Sunday to an Easter dinner with family and friends.