

Researchers goal is 'Know thyself,' 1B



Coach hunt, 1D

Corporations work to preserve past, 3A

# Farmington Observer

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## Farmington FOCUS

If you have a news item or an idea for a feature story or an action picture with a Farmington-area connection, send a note to our downtown office at 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

**MONDAY, Sept. 1, is Labor Day.**  
At the U.S. Post Offices in Farmington and Farmington Hills, there will be no regular residential or business mail delivery or lobby window services. Special delivery service and Express Mail service will be provided. Holiday collection schedule will be provided as late in the day as possible to meet first-class mail service standards.  
Metrovision of Oakland County, Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce and Farmington Observer offices will all be closed.  
Farmington Community Library will be closed Friday through Monday.  
Trash collection in Farmington Hills will be one day late next week. It will not change in Farmington.

**WORTHY** of honor. Army veteran Thomas Riggs of Farmington will be among those honored at a National POW/MIA recognition program at 1 p.m. Friday, Sept. 19, at Oakland Hills Memorial Gardens, Novi.  
The Prisoner of War Committee of Michigan has scheduled a dedication and unveiling ceremony for a memorial to the U.S. servicemen from Michigan who are still missing in action and unaccounted for in southeast Asia.  
Riggs is one of 77 servicemen from Michigan to be recognized. He disappeared June 11, 1967.  
"Although this memorial is located in southeastern Michigan, it is intended to serve as a reminder to all citizens of Michigan of the men who served in southeast Asia during the Vietnam War but who are not yet able to return to those who love them nor the state which seeks to honor them," said Marty Eddy, a Prisoner of War Committee of Michigan board member.

**KIDS** helping kids. The kids of Canterbury West are hosting a Muscular Dystrophy Carnival 11-3 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 22, at 33297 Walnut Lane, north of 13 Mile, east of Farmington Road.  
The carnival began with one of the neighborhood kids writing to the Muscular Dystrophy Association for a package explaining how to host a fund-raising event for Jerry's kids. It didn't take long before other neighborhood kids got involved.  
Food and games galore will be available to all who attend. Proceeds will be donated to the MDA. "It's overwhelming the response we have received from all the merchants," resident Carol Bahri said. Farmington area merchants have donated prizes for winners of the carnival's events and games.

**FOOTNOTES:** One year ago this week — Crime and arrests are up in Farmington and Farmington Hills. But the increase in crime is primarily due to a rash of larcenies rather than more serious offenses, according to crime records in both communities.  
"IT WILL take three to five years to begin to implement these types of

## Hills is seeking recruits

By Susan Steinmuller staff writer

In Christine Gebhard's house in Farmington Hills, dinner is cooking in the oven. A few blocks away, dinner was cooking in the oven — but the chicken has caught fire.  
As Gebhard's pager alerts her to the fire, she springs into action. A minute later she is at the fire station, having turned off her own oven, called her neighbor to watch her two children, and driven the short distance from her house.

A couple of minutes later, she has donned firefighting gear and is at the scene, putting out the blaze. Superwoman? No. She's just one of some 80 volunteer firefighters at the Farmington Hills Fire Department who are ready to leave their jobs — or their dinner — day and night to fight a fire.

"I was interested in doing something that would be helpful to the community," said Gebhard, explaining why she decided to become a volunteer. "Most of the time you come away feeling good because you know you're doing everything you can to help someone."

Gebhard, 31, will complete her probationary year as a volunteer in October. She is one of only two women on the department's paid volunteer roster. But the department would like more women to apply.

"WE NEVER get applications from females. It's really rare," said Lt. Tom Shurtleff, who is now recruiting candidates for 12 volunteer firefighter positions. Called paid-callbacks, the volunteers receive 200 hours of paid training.  
"It's a traditional male role — people think of firemen, not firefighters," Shurtleff said.

The department, however, welcomes applications from women. Women candidates undergo the same rigorous selection and training process as do the men.

"If they have demonstrated themselves as equal, there is no reason a woman can't be a firefighter," Shurtleff said.

In the past six years, approxi-



CHRISTINE GEBHARD is one of two women paid-callback volunteer firefighters with the Farmington Hills Fire Department.

mately six women have applied for paid-callback positions. None though have applied for the department's 13 full-time positions. The other woman volunteer is Lea Strickland, 25, a six-year veteran. Gebhard applied after hearing about the job from someone she knew at the station. She believes more women probably have not applied because "it probably just never crossed their mind, and they don't know what's involved."  
Apart from the intangible rewards, she has found that, as a housewife, the job is ideal for her, Gebhard said.

"Quite frankly, the hours are good — if you don't mind the spontaneity," she said. "It's a good-paying part-time job."

**ALL VOLUNTEER** firefighters undergo a thorough selection process, which includes interviews and an agility test. They then become

candidates in the department's training program, in which each trainee receives instruction in essential fire-fighting skills.  
Topics such as hose and ladder handling, the safe wearing of personal protective equipment and self-contained breathing apparatus are discussed.

Instruction continues in areas such as first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation, which is an important aspect of the job, since medical problems are involved in about 70 percent of all calls answered by the department, according to Shurtleff.

After completion of 90 hours of training, the candidates are assigned to one of four of the Farmington Hills Fire Department stations. For the most part, volunteers are assigned to the station closest to their home.

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## Hills council eyes change in sign law

By Casey Hans staff writer

Politicians will eye Farmington Hills City Council actions with interest during the next few weeks, as they prepare for the Nov. 4 election.

City officials will immediately review and probably revise — the city's current sign ordinance prohibiting placement of political signs on front lawns, following recent complaints from local residents and legal threats from the American Civil Liberties Union.

With the timing so close to the November general election, administrators will likely not enforce the current ordinance until a revision is made, following a recommendation from city attorney Paul Bibeau.

He advised the city council Monday "the courts would not uphold a violation" of political sign placement under the city's current sign ordinance. A representative of the ACLU threatened legal action if the council continued to enforce what he called "an unconstitutional ordinance."

Bibeau said the ordinance "should be changed" and that the "timing is essential in light of the November election." He referred to legal cases that "suggest a ban is just not constitutional."

**THE COUNCIL** voted unanimously to authorize Bibeau to draft an ordinance "to meet the constitutional framework, but that it be as restrictive as possible." He was directed to bring the proposed ordinance before the council on Sept. 8.

Revising the ordinance is a quicker method than going through a zoning change, which would have to be taken through the city's planning commission, City Manager William Costick said.

The proposed change follows complaints from attorney David Haron and ACLU Oakland County vice chairman Michael Lockman, both Farmington Hills residents, called for a revision of the current sign ordinance and a halt in enforcement of the current sign ordinance.

Haron was verbally warned by a city zoning officer when he placed a judicial political sign on his front lawn prior to the August primary

election. He subsequently complained to the ACLU, which has threatened to bring suit against the city and possibly city officials personally.

Most council members spoke in favor of the change and all had varying concerns. Councilwoman JoAnn Soronen spoke out against the issue, although she ultimately cast her ballot in favor of reviewing it.

"I'm opposed to changing the ordinance," she said, noting there was

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## Driving tips are offered

By Joanne Maliszewski staff writer

It's the weekend that marks the closing of the summer season. And Michigan residents are expected to make the most of the Labor Day holiday.

**'We would anticipate that Labor Day travel should be at fairly high levels.'**

— Dave Morris travel researcher

If traffic statisticians' estimates are on the mark, Michigan motorists will travel 810 million miles in the four-day period from noon, Friday, Aug. 26, to noon, Tuesday, Sept. 2, said Ralph Swan, supervisor of the Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT) Traffic Statistics Unit.

"That's a little higher than last year when motorists traveled 790 million miles," Swan said.

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## GOALS

### School leaders plan for district's future

By Casey Hans staff writer

Farmington school officials are establishing long-term goals to keep the district healthy and to guide it toward the turn of the century.  
The Farmington Board of Education and top school officials met in a brainstorming session Thursday at the Farmington Hills Holiday Inn to begin the goal-setting process.

Ideas involving curriculum and instructional programs, community, finances, staff development, facilities, policies and procedures, research and evaluation, and future planning were tossed into the ring, guided by newly appointed assistant superintendent for curriculum and staff development Judith White.

The board also reviewed its district philosophy statement, which will be rewritten with additional information from the meeting.

"We need a total district commitment so that all kids can learn," White said. The goal-setting effort involves "every level — starting with the board right straight through. Each level has its piece of the pie."

"IT WILL take three to five years to begin to implement these types of



**'What we're doing is not implying this is not a good school district. We're on our way for future planning.'**

— Judith White assistant superintendent

changes," she added. Goals and objectives will be formulated using suggestions from board members, school administrators, directors, principals and staff members from each school, White said.

"What we're doing is not implying this is not a good school district," said White. "We're on our way for future planning."

Trustee Helen Ditzhazy, also involved with goal-setting at Jackson

Public Schools where she is an assistant superintendent, cautioned the board against setting "too many goals."

In the areas of curriculum and instruction programs, involving what is taught in the district and how it is implemented, trustees generated several new ideas.

John Cotton, trustee and retired athletic director from the district, asked that after-school activities be

considered as part of the district's curriculum.  
"We should be mindful that those schools are used in another part of our education program," he said.

He also advocated "maintaining the integrity of the school day" by not allowing students to be constantly taken from classes.

Ditzhazy suggested equivalent credit be offered for vocational classes because "some people are being pushed out." Preventive attendance work at the elementary level was a suggestion offered by Board President Helen Prutow.

**OTHER SUGGESTIONS** included development of research, thinking, and problem-solving skills, exploration of the arts, encouraging risk-taking and development of foreign language in the elementary schools.

Dealing with community issues, trustees suggested teen job placement, effective public relations, support groups for one-parent families and a basic reading skills program for the community.

Trustee James Abernethy said the district should not duplicate successful private sector ventures.  
"If someone is doing something

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