

Christmas observed  
Colonial style, 1C



Gridiron  
stars, 1B

Broomfield calls for  
resignations, 2A

# Farmington Observer

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## Farmington FOCUS

If you have a news item, feature story idea or an action picture with a Farmington area connection, send a note to our downtown office at 3203 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

**READYING** that holiday season mall?  
Farmington Postmaster Kenneth Harris announced expanded window service hours for both the Farmington and Farmington Hills post offices during the December holiday period.  
On Saturdays, Dec. 6, 13 and 20, windows will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., two hours later than normal. On Mondays, Dec. 1, 8 and 15, windows will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., one hour later than normal.

**WORLD** War II grabbed center stage at the Kiwanis Club of Farmington's week-late Veterans Day program Nov. 18 at the Sweden House in Farmington.  
More than 60 members of Farmington-area civic and service groups turned out to hear Woody Woodring of Union Lake, personal chauffeur for Gen. George Patton during the war.  
Woodring described his experiences, including the crash that later claimed the general's life, reported by Kiwanian Lloyd Smith of Farmington.

**IT'S** a sign of the times. The Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce will host a holiday luncheon Tuesday, Dec. 9, at the Botsford Inn, 28000 Grand River.  
Guest speaker will be Farmington Hills resident Dick Osgood, former radio personality and author of "Wysie Wonderland" (history of WXYZ).  
The luncheon will begin with a cash bar at noon. The cost is \$10 per person.  
Call the chamber for reservations; 474-3440.

**SHE'S** a winner. Claire Davis always enters contests. And for the first time, this Farmington Hills woman says she has hit the jackpot.  
Davis is one of four grand prize winners in a sweepstakes sponsored by Banquet Foods. Top prizes were 1987 Chevy S-10 Blazers.  
Davis, who sells perfume at a flea market in Taylor, chose the cash equivalent. "I enter contests all the time, but I don't win," she said.  
Her luck changed with the "Banquet, Baseball, Apple Pie and Chevrolet" competition, whose winners were picked at random from entries across the country.

**INTERESTED** in helping the Farmington Area Goodfellows brighten the holiday season for needy families and seniors in Farmington and Farmington Hills?  
Call the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce to volunteer your efforts and learn about upcoming meetings; 474-3440.  
**FOOTNOTES:** One year ago this week — It has taken four elections, one appointment bid and two recounts, but Terry Sever will finally sit on the Farmington Hills City Council as a bona fide member serving a two-year term.  
Results of an election recount conducted and certified by the Oakland County Board of Canvassers Nov. 21-22 confirmed Sever's victory over challenger Jonathan Grant in the Nov. 5 (1985) general election.

## Hills massage law target of suit

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

A sign on the Tokyo Oriental Health Spa reads "Closed for Remodeling."  
But that's not the only reason the Farmington Hills massage parlor — that is suing the city in federal court — is closed for business.  
U.S. District Court Judge Barbara

Hackett denied a request Nov. 26 by the spa's owner and two employees to keep the business open despite the Farmington Hills City Council's recent decision to close it permanently.

In the first test of a newly enacted massage regulation ordinance, city officials denied spa owner Lin Chu Shinn a business license, following a special hearing Nov. 24.

The following day, Shinn filed suit in U.S. District Court in Detroit, claiming the city's ordinance is unconstitutional. The suit was filed against the seven-member Farmington Hills City Council, City Clerk JoAn Reynolds and Police Chief William Dwyer.  
The ordinance, according to the suit, "places an unlawful and prohibited burden upon the exercise of a

fundamental right . . . the right of an individual to engage in a lawful occupation."  
Hackett scheduled a hearing Dec. 17 on Shinn's motion for an injunction to open the business and prevent the city from enforcing its massage regulation ordinance.  
"WE HAD expected them to file suit," Dwyer said. "I am confident,

however, they (Shinn and employees) will go along with the (federal court's) cease and desist order."

Shinn's attorney, Milton Spokojny of Birmingham, would not return telephone calls. City attorney Derk Beckerberg was unavailable for comment. "I expected it," Mayor Joe Alkateeb said. "I had a hunch when

Please turn to Page 10

## Friends recall gentle leader

By Casey Hens  
staff writer

Nicholas Abid Sr. was not only an elementary school principal but a teacher to many.  
The longtime Farmington schools employee taught others how to live through his belief in helping his community in the many programs he founded — specifically the district's Student Emergency Fund and the student flouride program.  
The 60-year-old principal of Gill Elementary in Farmington Hills died Tuesday, Nov. 25, at the University of Michigan Medical Center in Ann Arbor following an illness of several months. He was a Farmington resident for 25 years.  
"He was one of the dearest, sweetest men I'd ever known," said Lawrence Freedman, assistant superintendent for Farmington Schools and Abid's friend and associate for many years.

**THEIR FRIENDSHIP** began 28 years ago when Freedman came to Farmington as a music teacher and worked for Abid. Abid eventually worked for Freedman, and they maintained a personal and professional friendship over the years.  
"No matter how drastic things seemed, he always managed to point out the good things," Freedman added.

Please turn to Page 10



Nicholas Abid

## Still enthusiastic



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Farmington school board president Helen Prutow appears at a Kenbrook Elementary kindergarten class during her weekly school visits.

## She's hooked on the schools

By Susan Stolnmueller  
staff writer

When Helen Prutow, Farmington Board of Education president, attended her first local school board meeting after moving to the area from Detroit in 1971, she was hooked.  
"We read that the board was going to meet in the auditorium, so I went," the Farmington Hills resident said. "I found it fascinating, and coming from Detroit, it was terrific to be able to talk to board members so easily. Your voice was heard."  
But Prutow did not become involved immediately. "Probably for two years, I just sat and watched," she said.

But the education activist did become very involved in the local Parent-Teacher Association, working her way up to president. From there, it was a simple step to becoming elected to the school board.  
Prutow, one of a field of five candidates, unseated one of two incumbents in what she said was an

### people

exciting campaign. She began her duties a month later, in July 1976, at the same time as newly appointed superintendent Lewis Schulman, who retired last year.  
Today, Prutow, elected school board president in July, is the longest serving current board member.

**A HOMEMAKER** and the mother of two grown sons, both North Farmington High School graduates, she said, "Having children in school, I am convinced that parents getting involved in the school where their children go shows the children how important parents feel education is. Secondly, it lets the administration and school get to know you."

Despite 10 years of service on the board, Prutow said her enthusiasm this year is at a peak.  
"There's so many positive things

*'My goal has always been to provide the very best education available, and I think we're on our way. We're on the beginning edge of new education.'*

— Helen Prutow  
school board president

going on in the district right now in curriculum and staff development," she said, noting those two areas are under the leadership of newly appointed assistant superintendent Judith White.

The district is also ending a long decline in student enrollment and is seeing a slight increase. More students, more programs and a decreased student-teacher ratio add up to the need for more classrooms. So building repairs, renovations and additions are priorities, she said.

"As I said, there's nothing negative," said Prutow, with a laugh.

"I'm excited — even after all these years I've been involved. My goal has always been to provide the very best education available, and I think we're on our way. We're on the beginning edge of new education. I'm really pleased with what I see happening."

**ON THE** agenda for Prutow this year is visiting each district building to evaluate structural needs, in keeping with the priority of building renovation. The visits also give her the chance to meet principals.

Please turn to Page 8

## Dead end

### Street to be closed; subs stand alone

By Casey Hens  
staff writer

The residents of Green Hill Commons have won the right to stand alone.

But the Farmington Hills subdivision's gain may create a "major change" in city policy, according to one city council member.

On Nov. 24, the council voted 4-3 to reconstitute Wildwood — a connector street from Green Hill to the neighboring Green Valley Estates subdivision — be closed, and that the city staff meet with developers to re-study the Green Valley platting "to meet 1981 end."

Green Valley is a new development, which received plat approval in mid-October, when the developer was directed by the city to begin opening the Wildwood connector between the subdivisions located on Nine Mile east of Halsted.

Residents have been vocal about the issue since the plat was approved, and several voiced support for the closing of Wildwood on a resident called a "seven-year fight for Green Hill Commons."

They said the street as a thoroughfare may cause residents of the newer subdivision to trespass on their 75-acre commons area, which they

pay to maintain through association fees.

Also speaking was resident and chairman of the city's planning commission, Phil Arnold, who asked the council to maintain city policy of connecting subdivision streets for public safety reasons.

"It seems a little ridiculous that people should have to drive half a mile to come back into a subdivision," Arnold said. "From the planning standpoint, I see it has no merit (the request)."

"You remove one building block

Please turn to Page 11

## what's inside

Around Farmington	. 3C
Crossword puzzle	. 7C
Entertainment	. . 8B
On the agenda	. . 11A
Police/tra calls	. . 12A
Shopping cart	. . 5-8B
Sports	. . 1-3B
Suburban life	. . 1-3C
Classifieds	. . Sec. B-D
Index	. . . . 6C
Automotive	. . . . 6B
Real estate	. . . . 6C
Employment	. . . . Soc. C,D
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Sports line	. . . . 591-2300
Home delivery	. . . . 591-0500
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