

Dentistry is key to pet's health, 1B



Big win for Mercy, 1D

Fire safety week program set, 6A

# Farmington Observer

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## Farmington FOCUS

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**O**N the hot seat. The League of Women Voters of Farmington/West Bloomfield will host a candidates night Tuesday, Oct. 13, for the nine contenders for four seats on the Farmington Hills City Council.

The program will begin at 7:30 p.m. in the Farmington Hills City Hall Council Chambers, 31555 11 Mile.

**EXTENDING** plaudits. Farmington High graduate Melanie Churella, acting Miss Michigan, has nothing but good things to say about the new Miss America, Kaye Lani Rae Rafo, who entered the Sept. 19 pageant as Miss Michigan.

"It made me feel really proud to see Kaye Lani win the Miss America pageant, since we had competed together in this Miss Michigan pageant," said Churella, 24, Miss Farmington for 1987. "Everyone said the voting was really close between us, so it was nice to see that she won it all."

Churella, a Farmington Hills resident, was first runner-up to Rafo, a Monroe resident, for the Miss Michigan title. Churella was in Atlantic City Sept. 19 to watch the crowning of this year's Miss America.

"It's just great for Michigan," Churella said about Rafo's national showing. "We hadn't been in the forefront at the pageant for some time, so it was great to see Michigan win it all."

**FOOTNOTES:** One year ago this week - A convicted bank robber who escaped from a federal prison and is being sought in the robbery of a Farmington Hills bank branch could wind up on the 10 most wanted criminal list, an FBI spokesman said.

## Head count

### Farmington school enrollment is up 77 students from last year

By Sue Mason and Casey Hans staff writers

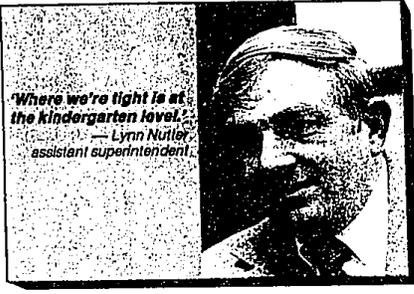
An unexpected number of kindergartners this fall has prompted Farmington school officials to look seriously at options to handle what is becoming a critical problem at some elementary schools.

One of the options includes the probability of redistricting throughout the school system, and re-evaluating uses of the district's school buildings.

There are 97 more kindergartners enrolled this fall than what officials projected last spring, and an increase of more than 320 students throughout the elementary level, according to unofficial Fourth Friday counts taken Oct. 2.

"Where we're tight is at the kindergarten level," said Lynn Nutter, assistant superintendent for administrative operations.

Flanders and Longacre, elementary schools which have no space for the additional students, face the most critical situation.



"Where we're tight is at the kindergarten level," said Lynn Nutter, assistant superintendent for administrative operations.

Other elementary schools with higher kindergarten populations this fall include Wood Creek, Larkshire and Gill, Nutter said. These are also the schools with growth at the upper elementary grades.

EXTRA HELP was hired at all the schools to handle the extra students, Nutter added. Although the district shows only

## Citizens panel to study building uses, facilities

By Casey Hans staff writer

A seven-member citizens committee is being formed to decide what direction Farmington schools will take because of continued enrollment increases at elementary schools, and decreases at the high schools.

"Some very hard decisions are going to have to be made," said Superintendent Graham Lewis Tuesday, in proposing the citizens panel to the school board. "Time is short."

The committee will study options including new schools, use of present buildings, boundary changes and land acquisition or disposition, Lewis said. "They're all interconnected."

Each of the school board's seven members will select a person from the community this week, and ask them to serve on the committee which will begin meeting next week.

If the committee does not appropriately represent all geographic locations of the district, another two citizens may be appointed by the board, according to Tuesday's decision.

## Role playing



Ashley Bobkin took center stage as Little Bo Peep when students from Fairview Early Childhood Center in Farmington Hills acted out Mother Goose nursery rhymes Friday. For the story and more pictures, please turn to Page 3A.

## Candidates tackle campaign issues



John J. Murphy, a 40-year resident of Farmington Hills, asks a question Monday night about consent judgments, a legal tool used to settle lawsuits.

Campaign platforms, 4A  
 Cable TV appearances, 14A

By Casey Hans staff writer

Farmington Hills residents want to know the status of city lawsuits, are concerned about places for young people to go and are interested in how candidates in the upcoming city election feel about budget surpluses.

Questions concerning these areas were addressed Monday night, as nine candidates vying for four Farmington Hills City Council seats took part in a Candidate's Night, sponsored by the Farmington Democratic Club.

It was one of several opportunities for the candidates to address the public before the Tuesday, Nov. 3 general election, when the three top vote-getters will receive 4-year

**A question about the city entering into consent judgments to settle lawsuits brought explanations of the legal terminology and a mixed response from the candidates on the benefits of such actions.**

terms and the fourth-place finisher will receive a 2-year term.

Three incumbents, Joe Alkateeb, 48, Joan Dudley, 44, and Terry Sever, 37, are running for re-election. Those running against the incumbents include veteran council watcher Aldo Vagnozzi, 61, local historian and politician Jean Fox, 70, and newcomers Vernon Kielbinski, 33, Raymond Cassar, 28, Richard Lytwynluk, 49, and John Heenan, 50.

QUESTIONS CAME from an audience of more than 40 residents in attendance at Farmington Hills City Hall, including two 17-year-olds who were concerned about a place for their peers to go on weekend nights.

"We have no place to go," said one of the youths. "We're not looking for afterschool activities," said the other. All the candidates responded.

## State salutes Hills business for its high-tech automation

Commerce department findings, 15A

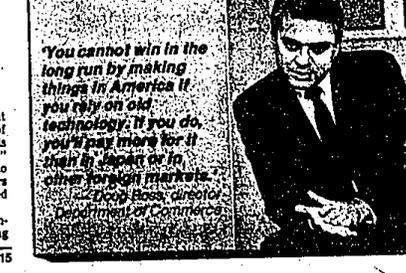
By Chris Rizk staff writer

The company, Medar Inc., received the distinction because of its leadership in design and manufacturing of computerized automation equipment.

The company is noted for its vision gauging and inspection systems as well as for its research and development for companies such as Owens Pharmaceuticals, a subsidiary of Owens Illinois in Ohio.

Michigan Department of Commerce director Doug Ross said that Medar "is an excellent example" of one of 325 companies studied that is predominantly a "vision company" - it allows production systems to see things and offers manufacturers the ability to incorporate automated technology into their systems.

Ross, who released the study commissioned by the department during



"You cannot win in the long run by making things in America if you rely on old technology. If you do, you'll pay more for it than to import it from other foreign markets." - Doug Ross, Director of Commerce

A Farmington Hills-based company was included in a recent study by the Michigan Department of Commerce for its successful entry into the field of high-tech automation.

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