

Street Scene gets you ready for yuletide, 1D



Grid playoff picture, 1C

Winter awareness draws spotlight, 4A

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LENDING a hand. The Farmington Public Schools Head Start food kitchen and the Farmington Hills Salvation Army Corps and Community Center are each \$1,200 richer this week.

The money was raised during the CROP Walk for Hunger in May. Walkers from 12 Farmington-area churches raised more than \$12,600 for Church World Services.

"Twenty-five percent of the money we collect stays in our own community," said Judy Hauser, who coordinated the walk. "So more money for both Head Start and the Salvation Army is still yet to come."

HOLIDAY mixer set. Jack Cauley Chevrolet will host a holiday mixer for chamber of commerce members from Farmington/Farmington Hills, the Lakes area, Novi and West Bloomfield.

The mixer will be 6-8 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 15, in the Jack Cauley showroom, 7020 Orchard Lake, West Bloomfield. Bring your business cards.

Call your local chamber for reservations.

FOOTNOTES: One year ago this week — Farmington Public Schools math and reading scores showed overall improvement in recently released results of state-mandated skills testing done annually in grades, 4, 7 and 10.

The scores were part of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program.

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Reminders

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 \$2.00 discount on the next classified advertisement you place in your hometown newspaper.

Hills, schools stress harmony

'There is an unfounded attitude between the two entities that we're adversaries. And I don't think we really are.'

— Ben Marks
Hills mayor

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

The past is history. That's the attitude held by many Farmington Hills and Farmington Public Schools officials as they look toward an unprecedented joint meeting Tuesday, Dec. 8.

"There is an unfounded attitude between the two entities that we're adversaries. And I don't think we really are," Farmington Hills Mayor Ben Marks said.

Superintendent Graham Lewis agrees. "What histories there are

need to be history," he said. "We have too much to do, too many issues to waste time in the past."

The public meeting, for which a time and meeting place have yet to be determined, came about as the result of a conversation between Marks and former school board president Helen Prutow.

While there have been occasional rumors of rifts between the two political bodies, there's little doubt that administrators in the school district and city have a successful working relationship.

The meeting is designed to allow

the elected officials to get to know each other and develop a better understanding of each others' points of view.

"IT WOULD be well for both organizations to see how well we (administrators) work in harmony. There is a different relationship between administrators and the elected officials," Lewis said.

"We have two good administrators (Lewis and city manager William Costick), and I think they should have the support of the elected officials. I don't like the undercurrents. I

want to break down any, if any, barriers," Marks said.

An agenda is still in the works, but Marks is hoping the political bodies discuss the school district and city's "needs, dreams and priorities and develop a way to work together toward making this a better community."

"When you shake it all down, we're here for the betterment of the whole community," Marks continued.

The one thing Marks hopes won't

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Detroit Lions offensive captain and starting guard Keith Dorney was guest speaker at Tuesday's dedication of a Botsford General Hospital Gamofield Fitness Court.

staff photos by RANDY BORST/staff photographer

AT RIGHT: Power Middle School eighth graders Allison Davis (left) and David Link demonstrate some of the new equipment at the Gamofield Fitness Court between Power Middle School and Gill Elementary.



Schools' fitness court dedicated

By Casey Hans
staff writer

DETROIT LIONS offensive captain and starting guard Keith Dorney had more to talk about Tuesday than football.

"Fitness has become an important part of our lives," Dorney told a group of elementary and middle school youngsters, and school and hospital officials. "This is an excellent experience for all of you to maintain physical health."

Dorney was guest speaker Tuesday morning at the dedication of the Farmington Public Schools Gamofield Fitness Court between Power Middle School and Gill Elementary in Farmington Hills.

The court is the latest in 40 such fitness programs awarded by regional sponsor, Botsford General Hospital of Farmington Hills. A second fitness court was dedicated earlier this fall at another Farmington school, Eagle Elementary in West Bloomfield Township.

THE FITNESS courts are part of the overall Gamofield Fitness Program, a self-guided course that promotes outdoor fitness for people of all ages.

Created by the Stanford University Heart Disease Prevention Center and the Arizona Heart Institute, the program is designed to

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— Graham Lewis
superintendent

promote a lifestyle of physical fitness.

On the fitness court, players begin on the warm-up court and follow the "referee" on a tour of one of five fitness programs.

"We're very pleased to have this new addition in the school district," said Superintendent Graham Lewis. "But we must really emphasize that fitness is really more than we have at school."

Physical education teachers at both Power and Gill say they have already used the fitness court this fall. John Witkowski at Gill takes children from kindergarten through fifth grade out to warm up for gym class activities.

"You can take a whole class and they can all be active," he said. "You can do a lot, faster."

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Veteran reminisces about heroic act

By Victoria Diaz
special writer

"I would give my immortal soul for that decoration," Gen. George S. Patton once said.

Of the millions of men who have fought in this country's battles since 1862, fewer than 3,400 (Patton not among them) have been awarded "that decoration."

A small, bronze-and-copper star suspended from a blue, star-spangled ribbon, the Medal of Honor is the highest award an American serviceman can receive for bravery on the battlefield. More than half the time, it is a posthumous decoration.

people

Today, five men living in Michigan are entitled to wear the Medal of Honor. Four of these men live outside. The fifth, Robert E. Simanek, resides in Farmington Hills.

An ex-marine who fought in the Korean War, Simanek now works as a small business loans officer in Detroit and spends his leisure time gardening, reading and traveling with wife, Nancy, an elementary school teacher. He contends that, from the

beginning, he has felt undeserving of the decoration.

Two men who fought at his side Aug. 17, 1952, felt differently, however, and nominated him for the rarely bestowed medal. He has not seen the men since that day. He never knew their names.

THE SUN was just beginning to color the horizon outside Farmington, Korea, as the young Marine and 11 other men set out across the scarred, hilly terrain on an assignment that would place them a mile or so in front of friendly lines. As a unit, their job was to plot the locations of enemy artillery — a form of outpost duty most of the men had performed several times before.

Though early, the heat was already intense and, as he moved along, Pfc. Simanek of Detroit — the unit's radioman — wiped the sweat from his face and checked his insulated back pocket to make sure he had remembered to bring along a cold can of beer. Finding it there, he hoped he'd get a chance to drink it and cool off, once the group reached the outpost and settled in.

For several minutes, the men continued to move forward, one-by-one, working their way up the treeless slope, toward a trench line near the top.

Six of the 12, Simanek among them, passed a small, American-made bunker and were almost at the trench line when, from inside the bunker, an enemy machine-gun unit opened fire. Almost immediately, Simanek was hit in the back. (The beer can in his pocket exploded and began to spill and, for a moment, the



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Farmington Hills resident Robert Simanek and his Medal of Honor.

Center lacking steady funding

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

The Farmington Community Center's executive directors are plotting the 19-year-old center's future.

"There's been a lot of give-and-take and back-and-forth," said board president Jan Dolan. "We're going to come up with some really good ideas."

The executive board is working with the preliminary results of a study that's being conducted by Plante & Moran CPAs of Southfield. "They need more directing from us," Dolan said.

The preliminary results of the \$12,000 study were presented to the executive board Nov. 3. Plante & Moran representatives gave the board an overview of results they'd collected on financing the center and its programs, fund-raising, the historic facility and community needs, said interim director Lawrence Freedman.

The preliminary results included interviews of people from community agencies, the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills, business and center volunteers. The interviews

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