

Seniors rev up for convention, 1B



Baseball report, 1D

Special section salutes Academic All-Stars

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BOYS Republic residents will go to class this fall, but Farmington school officials don't know where. "We have a commercial real estate agent working with us," assistant superintendent Mary Lou Ankele said. It does not appear the school program will move to the Boys Republic campus on Nine Mile, she added. The Boys Republic school program must move from Shiawassee Center when community education programs move in next fall. Community ed programs will move from Highmeadow, which will house a new magnet school called Common Campus.

MAKE no mistake about it, says Farmington Hills city councilman Ben Marks, a former planning commissioner and charter commissioner and a longtime civic booster. "I love what I do. I've been accused by many people that my mistress is Farmington Hills."

Quote of the week

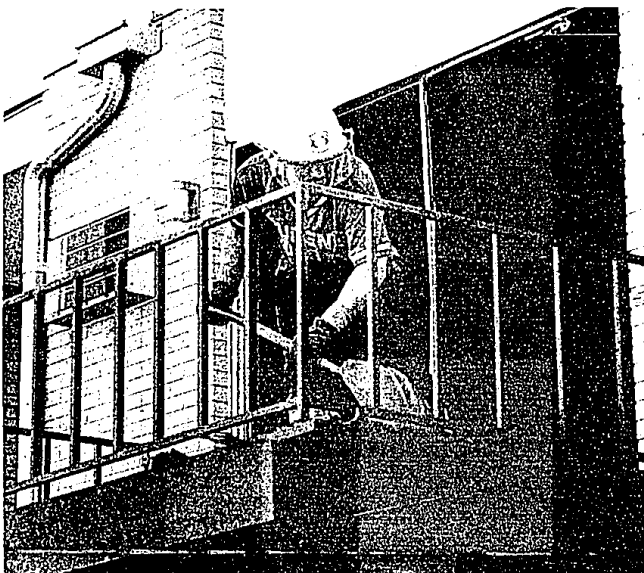
This is what they (community center directors) need to make it a product they can sell. You got to shine up your car before you can sell it.

— Ben Marks, Farmington Hills city councilman, spearheading a one-time drive to raise \$200,000 for capital improvements to the Farmington Community Center (see story this page).

what's inside

Around Farmington . . . 4B
Business . . . 1C
Cable connection . . . 10A
Classifieds . . . Secs. C, E, G
Index . . . 5G
Auto . . . Secs. C, F
Real estate . . . 2E
Employment . . . 5G
Club circuit . . . 2B
Creative living . . . 1E
Crossword puzzle . . . 10E
Entertainment . . . 6C
Obituaries . . . 13A
Opinion . . . 16A
Points of view . . . 17A
Police/fire calls . . . 4A
Sports . . . 1D

THE Observer & Eccentric
Academic All-Stars 1988
AND
Greater Livonia Expo
SPECIAL SECTIONS IN TODAY'S ISSUE



Farmington public safety officer Robert Schulz shovels debris from the deck of the burned apartment unit.

Elderly man saved during daytime fire

By Casey Hans
staff writer

An elderly man remains hospitalized this week, after being carried to safety from his burning, second-story Farmington West apartment late Monday afternoon.

By Tuesday, 82-year-old William Ford had been taken off the critical list. He suffered smoke inhalation and second-degree burns over 15 percent of his body.

Community EMS paramedics initially took Ford to Botsford General Hospital, Farmington Hills, but he was soon transferred by helicopter to the University of Michigan Burn Center in Ann Arbor. His condition remained serious Wednesday, a hospital spokeswoman said.

"He was in there for an awfully long time," said one resident, watching paramedics revive the man on the apartment complex lawn Monday.

The accidental fire was caused by careless smoking, according to fire officials. Neighbors said Ford is a

heavy cigar smoker. Cigars were found at the scene, according to fire reports.

FORD WAS discovered unconscious on the floor of his heat- and smoke-filled apartment shortly after the fire was reported at 4:30 p.m. Fire officials said they could not determine exactly when the fire began, but it had been burning for an "extended period," one said.

Three Farmington public safety officers, James Madigan, Maria Putt and reserve Paul Beale, and Farmington Hills emergency medical technicians Kevin Bersche and Denny Hughes participated in the life-saving effort at the scene.

"They saved his life," said Frank Lauhoff, director of the Farmington public safety department. "They pulled him out before they put out the fire."

The two-story brick complex, located just east of downtown Farmington on the south side of Grand

Please turn to Page 2

Parent berates open enrollment policy

By Casey Hans
staff writer

A Farmington High School parent berated the school board Tuesday night for its new "open enrollment" policy, and said she was angry trustees did not involve parents before making their decision last month.

"We're not going to lose AP (advanced placement) programs, we're not going to lose athletes, so you can give a stopgap measure to one of the other schools in this district," said Tina Jensen, representing Farmington High School's parent advisory group.

"I think it was an incredibly poor decision on your part to do this without asking any of the staff, any of the parents, anybody."

"That is why parent advisory committees were formed in the beginning. People wanted them so these things would stop dropping out of the sky."

The open enrollment policy, adopted April 19 by a 6-0 vote of the

board, allows any Farmington district resident to attend a school designated as "open enrollment." It is designed to give administration flexibility at schools where student numbers fall to low levels.

It will apply at both Harrison High and Warner Middle School this fall.

THE APRIL 19 meeting was the first time the issue was put on the board agenda. Open enrollment was originally proposed only for Harrison High School, but after discussion, trustees voted to allow it at any low enrollment school.

Trustee Janice Rolnick defended the policy, and advocated open enrollment at all Farmington schools in the future. "This is strictly a choice of the residents, of the parents, of the students who attend public schools — to have one more choice," she said.

Jensen is concerned that, under the new policy, Farmington High may lose students to Harrison, and that opportunities for remaining stu-

"I think it was an incredibly poor decision on your part to do this without asking any of the staff, any of the parents, anybody."

— Tina Jensen

dents may decline. She also feels the idea of three, comprehensive high schools in the district will be lost.

"We feel very strongly it is undermining our abilities to become a more effective school," she said. "Farmington High will not be sacrificed to give Harrison more enrollment."

Director Zan Alley of the Farmington Education Association said district staff members were also concerned about the way the policy vote was handled.

"The basic problem here is not whether the program is good or bad," she said. "Neither parents or staff, none of us were consulted. We're appealing to you, don't surprise us. Let us know. Let us all have input."

ALTHOUGH BOARD support was reiterated for the policy Tuesday, trustees Jack Inch and Susan Rennels said they understood the frustration of having the issue discussed only at one meeting.

"Our error was . . . we did not allow enough input," said Inch. "I feel I made a mistake. I am really not fond of the way it came about."

Rennels, who was absent for the April vote but supports the program, said, "perhaps it should have been on the agenda one time and voted on another time."

But, she added, "You cannot have a good district and remain static. Nothing is faster in changing these days than education and the material we have to teach our children. It is going to mean a lot of

change."

Superintendent Graham Lewis, who proposed the open enrollment policy, said it would be reviewed annually to see if it is adversely affecting any school.

"We must be able to move back in and say, 'let's readjust,'" he said. "If the idea is not a good idea in the making, then that idea has to go the way of the dodo bird."

TO DATE, seven high school students have enrolled at Harrison as open enrollment students, and no students have enrolled at Warner, according to assistant superintendent Lynn Nutter. Only one of the seven would be involved with Advanced Placement programs, he added.

Inch asked Lewis to bring information to the May 17 board meeting about Advanced Placement classes offered in the district, and opportunities available at the three high schools.

"I think we can take a look at this issue and make a judgment," he added.

Councilman vows to raise \$200,000 for center needs

□ For a related opinion, see Page 16A

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Farmington Hills city councilman Ben Marks has at least \$125,000 in cash and pledges from area business leaders to give to the financially troubled Farmington Community Center for much-needed capital improvements.

"I didn't go to every business. I went to the leaders, the big guys," said Marks. "I'm shooting for \$200,000."

At their board meeting Tuesday night, the center's executive board of directors accepted Marks' concept of a one-time only capital improvement pledge drive.

"This has been discussed since the big meeting last year between the two city councils," said fellow council member Jan Dolan, Farmington Community Center board president.

At that joint spring meeting, then-board president Nancy Finley announced to the Farmington and Farmington Hills city councils that the board indeed was experiencing financial problems, particularly

Please turn to Page 3



Farmington Hills city councilman Ben Marks, outside the Farmington Community Center, for which is spearheading a capital fund drive.

Hills businessman gives \$1,000 to fund to track down rapist

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Husband, father of five grown daughters and Oakland County businessman Richard McNair wants the man or men responsible for a series of rapes and attempted rapes in the past year caught.

To further that effort, the owner of Holiday Farms Gourmet Foods, 24069 Research Drive, Farmington Hills, is giving \$1,000 to the existing \$10,000 reward fund for tips leading to an arrest and conviction in the yearlong string of sexual assaults in Oakland County.

"I'd like to get a challenge going," McNair said. "Sometimes it takes a kick in the pants to get people to do things. These guys who own these shopping malls and other businesses, if they chip in, that thing (reward fund) could go up in a hurry."

McNair has witnessed the fear and apprehension in women caused by the 11 rapes or attempted rapes at homes in Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield Township, Bloomfield Township, Birmingham and Independence Township since last April. Fear can be seen as far away as

Grosse Pointe, where at least one of McNair's employees who serve residential customers has been stopped by police, he said.

"It's hurting my business," said the Novi resident. "There's a lot of fear. We serve the community. And the community keeps us going. We want this guy (rapist) to know he hasn't gotten away with it."

MCNAIR EXPECTS to give his \$1,000 to Richard Thompson, Oakland County chief assistant prosecutor, who with law enforcement officials is preparing to form a county-wide task force in case another serial rape occurs, Farmington Hills police Chief William Dwyer said.

Dwyer and police officials from Bloomfield Township, West Bloomfield, Birmingham, the Oakland County Sheriff's Department and the Michigan State Police are expected to meet Friday to clarify the activation and role of the task force, Dwyer said.

Michigan State Police Lt. Joseph Kraske will supervise the task force. If it's activated, Kraske heads the

Please turn to Page 2