

Mountain climber  
hits her peak, 6D



All-Area  
softball, 1C

Teacher sees her role  
as teaching-plus, 3A

# Farmington Observer

Volume 99 Number 76

Monday, June 27, 1988

Farmington, Michigan

52 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

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## farmington FOCUS

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**L**AND exchange. The city of Farmington has bought a half acre just west of the city's storm water treatment plant on Nine Mile from Alice Warner Brown for \$9,500.

City manager Robert Deadman called the price "very reasonable" and "less than the city has the property valued for tax purposes."

Brown acquired the site from the city in the 1950s as part of an agreement during the plant's construction.

The site is zoned multifamily. But because of its small size and rock and clay fill and the difficulty in providing water and sewer service to it, the site "is probably not very desirable for this use," Deadman said.

Deadman sees the land adding a buffer between a material yard next to the treatment plant and homes to the west. He said it also will be of use if the city must add to the treatment plant as part of water-quality improvement programs.

**WHAT** kinds of problems are caused by the midsummer Founders Festival in downtown Farmington?

**Parking problems!**

That was the overwhelming response by central business district merchants surveyed by the Farmington-Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce.

"I would suggest this response could be expected as a major portion of the available parking is being used up by festival activities," city manager Robert Deadman said.

A drugist said senior citizens just skip a couple of days of medicine because they can't get into the Downtown Farmington Center.

A majority of the 43 merchants who responded to the survey agreed that the festival promotes a positive image of the community. Said one: "It's a spirit builder. It adds vitality, and it's a great summer treat."

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SPECIAL SECTION  
IN TODAY'S ISSUE

## Site picked for Boys Republic classes

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

A group of teenage wards of the state may attend school in a building in a Farmington Hills industrial park this fall, if negotiations with a local company are fruitful.

Farmington school officials are negotiating to lease 7,500 square feet of space at 24520 Indopex Circle for an alternative education program for residents of Boys Republic.

The program is being moved from its present Shilawasse Center site due to space problems within the district.

The proposed site is just north of Grand River and east of Drake Road in Farmington Hills.

Meanwhile, the director of Boys Republic said her board wants to buy the hatch with the district, and would prefer to provide services on the Boys Republic grounds on Nine Mile under a type of joint operating arrangement.

This is a change from its stance of several months ago, when it opposed an on-campus arrangement.

**THE FARMINGTON** school district is responsible for educating some 60 boys who live at the private

## Schools seek lease of industrial building

facility in Farmington Hills. Many have been in trouble with the law, while others are emotionally disturbed or come from broken homes.

School officials have searched for months for a new program site, according to assistant superintendent Mary Lou Ankele, who coordinates

alternative education programs for the district. She said negotiations for three sites have already fallen through.

Tuesday, the school board pre-approved a three-year lease arrangement with Indopex Circle Proper-

ties for \$135,000, or \$6 per square foot.

Lease fees for the special education program would be reimbursed by the state 100 percent, Ankele said. She said that a lease agreement had not yet been signed.

Apparently, the cost efficiency of reading a building for this September is also of concern to school officials. Trustee Jack Inch visited the proposed site, calling it a "quality operation" that could be converted quickly for school use.

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RANDY BOST/Staff photographer

Marvin Yagoda surveys the colorful surroundings in Marvin's Mechanical Museum in Tally Hall.

## Arcade anyone? Antique machines fascinate pharmacist

By Louise Okrutsky  
staff writer

**F**OR A man who professes not to be good with anything mechanical, Marvin Yagoda spends a good deal of time and energy collecting antique machines.

Not just any pile of cogs, gears and small motors will do. Yagoda saves old nickelodeons and arcade games.

"Some people collect stamps, I collect machines," said the Farmington Hills resident.

Yagoda, a pharmacist who owns Sam's Drugs in Detroit, has a fascination with things that whiz, clank and cough up a prize for 25 cents that goes back to his days at the

*Marvin Yagoda saves old nickelodeons and arcade games. 'Some people collect stamps, I collect machines.'*

University of Michigan.

"My fraternity house had a player piano which I loved," he said. Part of his collection, ranging from the gaudy to the gruesome, has been a fixture at Tally Hall on Orchard Lake Road in Farmington Hills.

Settled between specialty food shops, Marvin's Mechanical Museum strives to fit the optimum number of machines in

the minimum amount of space. Not only is the collection expanding horizontally, it's rising toward the ceiling. Look up and see bears blow bubbles and a collapsed snowman inflate while a monkey band waits to play.

"I love the entertainment business," Yagoda said.

**SURVEYING** HIS crowded mechanical empire, Yagoda seems as

pleased as the youngsters who drag their parents over for one more ride on the helicopter that really rises.

He's fascinated by the human element he sees in the machines. Instead of a clever arrangement of motors and pulleys, he sees them as a continuing testimony to a crafter's imagination and skill. There's respect for the skill needed to carve an art deco design in the metal base of a machine or devise a banjo that plays by itself.

The latter, dating from the early 1900s, is one of the collector's favorites. "Some people are so blasé, they walk by like they think nothing of it," Yagoda said.

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## Bank is sued by builder

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Keating Community Homes is suing Southfield-based Bloomfield Savings and Loan Association for \$4.8 million, claiming the bank reneged on a loan commitment to the manufactured housing builder.

In a complaint filed June 20, Keating Community Homes officials maintain that when the bank allegedly backed out of almost \$500,000 in loan commitments, the housing company was faced with a series of problems, some resulting in complaints from municipalities, including Farmington Hills.

Builder Howard Keating is claiming damages in excess of \$4.8 million for loss of reputation, potential buyers, sales and profits, manufacturer discounts, financial investors, purchasers and return of deposits. He also is claiming increased interest costs.

Keating was unavailable for comment, as were bank officials.

Keating is seeking a jury trial, which has been assigned to Oakland County Circuit Judge Fred Mester. A hearing date has not been set.

**THE LAWSUIT** is the latest in a series of events surrounding the manufactured housing builder. Farmington Hills is one of the cities in which Keating has come under scrutiny following complaints from neighbors near construction sites in the Nine Mile-Middlebelt area. It is unknown whether any potential purchasers of the Keating homes in Farmington Hills are affected by the reported financial problems.

"Due to the financial risk being pulled out from under them," the housing company also was forced to lay off employees, was subjected to lawsuits by purchasers, and had equipment impounded, according to the complaint.

In the complaint, Keating contends that the company ordered the manufactured units and hired contractors to prepare the home sites, following a written loan agreement.

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## GOP House hopefuls reflect similar views

This is a report on one of several candidate forums scheduled throughout the Farmington area before the Tuesday, Aug. 2, primary. The focus here is on the Republican primary race for the 69th state House District. Democratic primary issues will be highlighted in upcoming coverage.

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

All gave strong comments about the issues, but the four Republican candidates for this area's state House seat also had many of the same answers.

School finance reform, property tax reduction, special attention to crime and drug problems, and Michigan's small business concerns seem

to form the common thread that runs through the GOP primary platform for this year's 69th District state House race.

Michael Bouchard, Jan Dolan, Mike Sarraf and Paul Welsley got a chance to pitch to Farmington Hills residents last week. Members of the Council of Homeowner Associations of Farmington Hills highlighted the race at their Primary Candidates Night.

Candidates for other Oakland County races, including prosecuting attorney, the county commission 27th district seat and two probate court judgeships all spoke. The debates were recorded for future airing on Metrovision cable Channel 12 in Farmington, Farmington Hills and Novi.

THIS IS the first time in 14 years



an incumbent has not run for the 69th District seat, currently held by veteran Rep. Wilbur "Sandy" Brotherton, R-Farmington, who will not seek another term. In addition to four Republicans, the contest brought out two Democratic candidates who will vie in their own primary.

In the area of education, the Republican candidates called for increases in curriculum quality and for more financial equality. They also had related comments:

• "For every \$1 spent in education, five dollars is saved later on," Dolan explained. "It's a dollar well spent."

• Sarraf wants to "help depressed schools without hurting schools in our area."

• State money to local districts should increase, according to Welsley. "I believe we can turn that around and make education a priority," he said.

• Bouchard wants to ensure that school funds go for curriculum and teachers. He wants to "attack inefficiency and waste in the system. We must make sure funds . . . are delivered effectively and efficiently."

**DRUGS AND** crime are "pervasive," according to Welsley, who advocates attacking the supply and demand.

Sarraf called for "tougher sentencing for drug overlords and kingpins" and better drug education for young people. "Drugs directly relate to crime," added Bouchard, who wants enhancement of forfeiture laws and updating of state wiretapping laws.

And Dolan believes "education is the primary way to go" to halt the drug problem. "A million dollar a day crack habit — it's coming out of your pocket," she said.

Other issues raised by residents included casino gambling for Detroit, which all four opposed, and home schooling, to which all four said they had no problem, given reasonable limits.

The 69th District includes Farmington, Farmington Hills, Bingham Farms, Beverly Hills and Franklin.