

Mercyaires hit  
another high note, 1B



Basketball  
report, 1D

Area seniors react to  
presidential debate, 3A

# Farmington Observer

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## farmington FOCUS

To write the Observer: 33203  
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5450; sports line, 591-2312; home  
delivery, 591-0500; classified  
ads, 591-0900; display ads, 591-  
2300; fax line, 477-5722.

**STEPPING** down.  
Del Cornwell has  
resigned from  
Farmington's Board of  
Zoning Appeals.  
Not only is there an opening  
now on the zoning board, but  
also one on the city's arts  
commission. Mayor Richard  
Tupper said.  
Residents interested in  
serving should call the city  
manager's office: 474-5500.

**RECORD** disposal.  
Farmington city officials has  
adopted new rules that allow  
them to toss city records no  
longer needed.  
"We recently completed a  
survey of our storage area, and  
we have a lot of records," said  
assistant city manager Robert  
Schultz. "We really need it."  
The city must submit a  
prospective list to the Michigan  
Historical Commission for  
review before the records are  
destroyed.

**COMING** up.  
The deadline to submit  
nominations for the  
Farmington area's Citizen of  
the Year is Oct. 3. Call the  
Farmington Farmington Hills  
Chamber of Commerce for a  
nomination form: 474-3440.

## QUOTE of the week

There's a great deal  
more recognition of child  
abuse. People have now been  
sensitized to reporting it.

— Catherine Lamb, program di-  
rector at the St. Vincent & Sarah  
Fisher Home for Children in  
Farmington Hills (see story on  
this page).

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## HOME FURNISHINGS

Special Section  
In Today's Issue

## Schools to try again for bonds

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

Farmington school officials said  
Tuesday they will attempt another  
school bond election, probably this  
winter, and directed administrators  
to come back with a specific proposal  
next week.

In addition, the new ballot issue  
may contain more than one question.  
They also agreed to dip into the  
district's cash reserves to pay an estimated  
\$1.5 million for mandated asbestos  
abatement, and another \$2  
million to repair older lighting ball-  
asts, which contain PCBs.

The board's decision came after  
trustees reacted to last week's  
\$27.25 million bond defeat and heard  
comments from an audience of  
about 70 residents — most of whom  
supported the bond issue.

"WE HAVE to go back for what  
we originally asked . . . because it's  
needed," said trustee Helen Ditzahy.  
Her comments were echoed by  
most members of the board and  
some members of the audience.

"I feel very strongly it should go  
back on the ballot," said one resi-  
dent. "We will commit to fighting  
for that."

"I want to see the school built and  
the safety issues addressed," said an-  
other, who asked the district to con-  
sider holding the election Tuesday  
instead of on the traditional school  
election day, Monday.

Others chided school officials for  
not communicating more about the  
election. "If the voters were given  
all the facts, then we could make an  
intelligent decision," said one man.

The \$27.25 million bond issue  
would have earmarked \$7 million  
for an elementary school and early  
childhood center, and another \$20  
million to renovate buildings and  
handle safety concerns, including the  
asbestos and PCB problems. It was  
defeated by a 518-vote margin, with  
4.9 percent of the district's 51,851  
registered, active voters casting bal-  
lots.

Although school officials ques-  
tioned whether a new election would  
be successful, the board has agreed to  
try again.

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## Parents voice concerns for lighting contamination

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

A group of parents is asking  
Farmington school officials to take  
action, because of concerns about  
PCB contamination in old lighting  
ballasts in school buildings.

The issue came before the school  
board Tuesday, where parents  
talked specifically about several  
incidents of the chemicals dripping  
at Longacre Elementary. They also  
gave information about the prob-  
lem in other parts of the district.

Trustees have pledged to use the

district's cash reserves, or fund  
equity, to rectify the problem with  
polychlorinated biphenyls — also  
known as PCBs — throughout the  
district.

Dee Harrison, who helped orga-  
nize the parents, spoke Tuesday:  
"It has been one month since many  
(of us) became aware there was  
such a problem," she said. "Much is  
still unknown about the effects of  
such exposure."

HARRISON SAID she and other  
parents have contacted county  
health officials, the state Depart-

ment of Natural Resources, the  
federal Environmental Protection  
Agency and other professionals to  
get information about the chemi-  
cals. PCBs were commonly used in  
electrical equipment, including  
light ballasts, before 1979.

Incidents of dripping PCB mate-  
rial from lighting ballasts have been  
reported during the past several  
years at Longacre, Alameda Early  
Childhood Center, Kenbrook Ele-  
mentary and Farmington High  
School, Harrison said.

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## Edison officials promise Hills service to improve

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Detroit Edison officials promise  
that Farmington Hills residents will  
have better luck with electrical pow-  
er next summer even if this sum-  
mer's scorching heat makes a return  
visit.

Admitting that service in Farm-  
ington Hills was not up to their  
standards, Edison officials said they  
are working on an improvement pro-  
gram for Farmington Hills circuits  
and substations. Work began in 1987.  
The purpose of the program is to  
increase capacity for Farmington

Hills customers, said Joe Chambers,  
Edison's Oakland division engineer-  
ing and planning director.

Edison will spend \$4.7 million to  
expand three substations serving  
Farmington Hills. The work will  
continue through summer 1990. Edi-  
son also is spending \$315,000 on a  
distribution circuit improvement  
program for eight Farmington Hills  
circuits. Completion is scheduled for  
summer 1989.

Work began in 1986 to increase ca-  
pacity service for Farmington Hills  
customers. The 1986 project added a  
third transformer and two distribu-  
tion circuits to a substation in West

Bloomfield that serves the Hills.  
Work on other substations and cir-  
cuits will continue through 1990.

EDISON HAS an internal monitor-  
ing service that identifies circuits in  
need of improvement. Each of the 43  
circuits is assigned to an engineer  
responsible for reviewing perfor-  
mance and developing an improve-  
ment plan. The 1989 program is in  
the planning stages based on per-  
formance in 1988 and previous year,  
Chambers said.

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## '88 heat taxed power capacity

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

August 1988 is a month to remem-  
ber. It may as well have been a  
month of lightning and high winds or  
snow. Instead heat, rarely less than  
90-95 degrees, caused it to be a  
month of problems for Detroit Edison cus-  
tomers in Farmington Hills.

"We had an extraordinary sum-

mer in terms of heat. There was no  
lightning, wind or rain, but we had  
the same kind of problems," said Joe  
Chambers, engineering and planning  
director, Detroit's Edison's Oakland  
County division. In the summer's  
heat, air conditioners taxed the sys-  
tem, he said.

Chambers and Maurice Vermeulen,  
Edison's Oakland division man-  
ager, were asked to explain the utili-

ty's summer problems in Farmington  
Hills. Councilman Aldo Vagnozzi  
requested the explanation.

"It was not a problem generating  
capacity, we had problems distribut-  
ing it. You will not have the same  
problems next year in Farmington  
Hills that you had this year," Ver-  
meulen said, adding there may still

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## Man's concern prompts abuse prevention month

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Farmington Hills resident Vernon  
Kielplinski didn't have to say much.  
The photo told the story.

In his hand was the news photo of  
a cemetery worker carrying the cof-  
fin of 7-month-old Jubilee Holloway,  
who died of starvation in early Sep-  
tember. Her grandmother is charged  
with manslaughter for allegedly not  
providing care for the baby.

The child's grandfather was the  
only one at her funeral.

"I hope more care than what's in  
this picture," Kielplinski said.

The avid council watcher probably  
isn't the only one bothered by mount-  
ing reports of child abuse. But Kiel-  
plinski intends to do something about  
it.

For starters, he prompted the  
Farmington Hills City Council Mon-  
day to adopt a resolution designating  
October as Child Abuse Prevention  
Month in Farmington Hills.

"... we should acknowledge  
Child Abuse Prevention Month,  
stamp out child abuse of all types,  
encourage parents to learn about  
their children, and bring to the atten-  
tion of society that children and the  
problems of children should not be  
ignored," according to the resolu-  
tion.



Vernon Kielplinski

KIELPLINSKI'S PUSH for a local  
resolution is part of his effort to in-  
crease awareness in the city about  
child abuse.

There's no doubt Kielplinski knows  
the roster of the most recent notori-  
ous abuse cases throughout the coun-  
try. But it was the news reports of  
Lisa Steinberg's death from parental  
abuse in New York City that prompt-

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Eastbound traffic on Grand River converges at this location due to the large number of cars  
that intersect at Halsted. Traffic backs up at turning left onto Halsted and M-102.

## Local officials say proposed tax would bring useful funds

What cities would do  
with their share of pie, 4A

A broader view of the  
proposed vehicle fee, 4A

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Farmington and Farmington  
Hills have big plans for road im-

provements if the Oakland County  
vehicle registration fee meets with  
voter approval in the Nov. 8 gen-  
eral election.

If the \$25 vehicle registration  
fee is passed in November, Farm-  
ington would receive an estimated  
\$188,913 and Farmington Hills \$1.3  
million annually for 10 years.

Neither the Farmington nor  
Farmington Hills city councils  
have taken a public position on the  
proposed vehicle fee. But city ad-

ministrators are optimistic.

"I want to be optimistic. We  
have tremendous road needs,"  
Farmington Hills city manager  
William Costick said.

Farmington assistant city man-  
ager Robert Schmitt said revenue  
from the proposed fee would be  
useful even though the city is pre-  
dominantly developed.

"It's a serious hunk of money."

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