

The stars tell what's  
in store for '91, 1B



Mercy wins  
tourney, 1D

Local student's essay  
wins national prize, 3A



# Farmington Observer

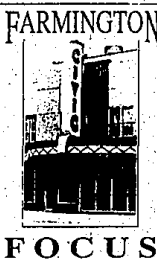
Volume 102 Number 29

Thursday, January 10, 1991

Farmington, Michigan

76 Pages

Fifty Cents



**S**IGH... the holidays are over. Get the wreaths off the doors, put away the Christmas ornaments and either pack up or throw out the tree.

But don't toss the greeting cards you received this season. Those holiday cards can be recycled for the good of the environment and some needy children.

Farmington area residents are asked to drop off the fronts only of their holiday cards at various drop-off spots around the community through Jan. 20. The fronts will be mailed to St. Jude's Ranch for Children in Boulder City, Nev.

The facility is a non-sectarian organization that helps abused, neglected and abandoned children. The program dovetails into the Farmington area's recycling efforts.

"We're trying to build a recycling ethic in this community," said Karen Birkholz, Farmington Hills' administrative assistant for special projects. "This is a fun way of feeling good about recycling."

Cards may be dropped off at the Farmington or Farmington Hills city halls, the 12 Mile or downtown Farmington library branches, and the Farmington Hills Recycling center on Halsted Road south of 12 Mile.

**A**TENTION parents of teenagers and pre-teens: "Active Parenting of Teens," a six-week workshop on parenting, will be held 3-5 p.m. Sundays, Jan. 13 to Feb. 17, at the First Presbyterian Church of Farmington, 28185 Farmington Road.

The video-based program, sponsored by the Samaritan Counseling Center of Southeastern Michigan, will attempt to teach methods of dealing with problems that teens face today.

Lee Nobel, a Samaritan Counseling Center leader, will facilitate the small group discussions. Call 474-4701 for more information.

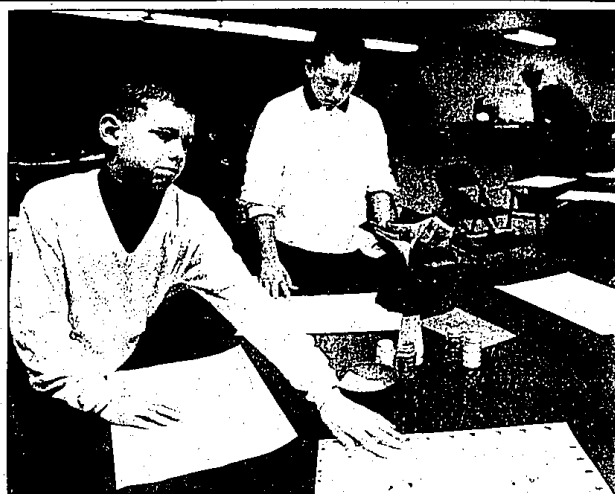
**M**ORLEY FRASER, motivational speaker and goodwill ambassador for Albion College, will speak at the annual Farmington Jaycee Prayer Breakfast 7:30 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 22, at Glen Oaks Golf Club, 13 Mile just east of Orchard Lake Road.

The public is invited to attend the breakfast, which highlights Jaycee Week in the Farmington area. Cost is \$13.50 per person. Call Kirk Baggett (474-4054) or Rita Albers (442-9201) to register.

**A**N EIGHT-HOUR course in cardiopulmonary resuscitation will be held 6-10 p.m. Tuesdays, Jan. 22 and 29, at the Mercy Center, 28600 11 Mile Road, Farmington Hills.

The \$15 fee includes books. Call 473-1815 or 478-8010 for more information.

**M**EMORY LANE — From the Jan. 11, 1991 Farmington Enterprise: Farmington and Farmington Township were growth areas during the 1940s, according to preliminary 1950 Census reports. Some 10,678 people lived in Farmington Township in 1950, compared to 5,895 in 1940. Farmington's population jumped from 1,150 in 1940 to 2,132 10 years later.



SHARON LEMIEUX/staff photographer

## Helping the homeless

Beqhan Junior High students served breakfast this week to homeless people at Our Lady of Sorrows as part of the South Oakland Shelter program. The program rotates between Oakland County churches and businesses. Here, seventh graders Todd Mil-

lor and Garek Burch reset tables for another meal. "I've got people coming out of my ears helping," said Kathy Sutton, the parish's Christian Service coordinator. Coach's Deli, Danco Meat Market, the Donut Depot and Foltyn Bakery donated food for the week.

## Fixing house woman's goal, lawyer says

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

The ultimate goal for a 58-year-old woman found on a mattress containing \$12,000 in the unsanitary basement of her Farmington Hills home Dec. 20 is to get well and back into her own home.

"She has a right to remain independent," said the woman's court-appointed attorney, Betty Lowenthal of Bloomfield Hills.

The house, owned by Beverly Tyler, was condemned Dec. 20, the same day she was removed by Farmington Hills firefighters after her family contacted police. Tyler had been living in filthy and unsanitary conditions in the house, 34335 Colfax, less than a block east of Gill Elementary School, for quite some time.

If repairs to the house would exceed 50 percent of the assessed value, city officials, following a public hearing, could order the house demolished. The final determination rests with the Farmington Hills City Council.

Building inspector Leonard Chapman said Tuesday he believes the house can be repaired. "Although it needs a lot of repairs, it doesn't

come close to 50 percent (of the assessed value), so it can be fixed," he said.

CHAPMAN SAID he believes a professional sanitation company should clean particularly the basement where the 440-pound woman lived in a wet, partitioned corner without bathroom facilities. He said the Oakland County Public Health Department is expected to be contacted on that issue.

A tenant who lived on the first floor of the ranch house had to move out when the house was condemned, Chapman said.

In an agreement approved Monday by Oakland County Probate Judge Barry Grant, a son and daughter are now legally responsible for Tyler's affairs and are required to report to court.

The approved co-conservatorship is different than a guardianship, which was initially requested by Tyler's daughter. The children are required to take care of Tyler's financial affairs as opposed to physically caring for their mother, Lowenthal said.

When Farmington Hills fire-

Please turn to Page 4

## New mayor asks council for cooperation

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

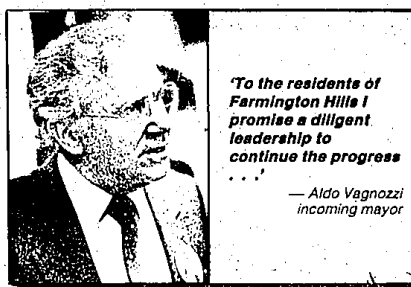
Farmington Hills' new mayor, Aldo Vagnozzi, called himself a realist Monday and acknowledged that his recent election to the council's top post was not a mandate.

Nonetheless, he urged cooperation among his colleagues to tackle the city's problems in 1991.

"To the entire council I extend the hand of cooperation and propose a partnership built on the strengths of each of the seven members," Vagnozzi said, following his swearing-in as mayor by city clerk Kathy Dornan.

Vagnozzi was elected Nov. 26 in a split 4-3 vote. Council members Terry Sever, Jonathan Grant and outgoing Mayor Jean Fox supported Vagnozzi, as well as Vagnozzi himself.

The new mayor, as well as each council member who spoke briefly of the future, acknowledged the council's peaks and angry valleys of 1990 and pledged cooperation.

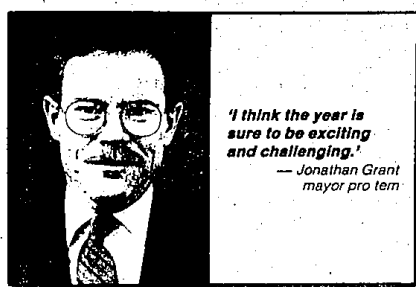


*'To the residents of Farmington Hills I promise a diligent leadership to continue the progress ...'*

— Aldo Vagnozzi  
incoming mayor

effort to continue the progress made while beginning to address the needs of the future," Vagnozzi continued.

IN HIS FIRST speech as mayor, Vagnozzi acknowledged the support he received from Jean Fox throughout the council's controversies in 1990.



*'I think the year is sure to be exciting and challenging.'*

— Jonathan Grant  
mayor pro tem

"The grace with which she handled the council's controversies in 1990,"

Please turn to Page 9

## Opposing sides gird for school tax hike fight

Related editorial, 12A

By Casey Hane  
staff writer

Emotions are running high and groups are gearing up information campaigns. In preparation for a major school millage election in the

Farmington school district Tuesday Feb. 5.

Members of a group supporting a new 2.7-mill operating tax to maintain education programs are fanning out to parents at individual school buildings with their message, the district is sending out its information to voters, while Farmington Hills insurance executive Richard Headlee

is spending money on full-page newspaper ads opposing the tax increase.

### School Millage

The special election ballot will ask for a new operating millage of 2.7 mills and one additional mill for capital projects. Proposition 1 would bring the district about \$1.75 million, which would recover \$5.8 million recaptured by the state and give the district a minimal cash reserve. Proposition 2 would bring the district about \$2.5 million per year.

"I'VE BEEN pleasantly surprised," said Jayne Wechamurka, who is co-chairing the pro millage Friends of Farmington Schools with two other parents, Carol Luckescheiter and Bobbi Feldman. "We're getting committed people who understand what they're doing."

Please turn to Page 2

## Councilwoman blasts Kroger for closing Farmington store

By Casey Hane  
staff writer

Farmington councilwoman JoAnne McShane said Monday she is disappointed with the "lack of corporate morality" shown by the Kroger Co., which recently closed a busy grocery store serving nearby senior citizens.

Her comments prompted fellow council members to agree to send a letter opposing the move on behalf of the city. She is also proposing that concerned residents get together and fight the closing.

"I don't think it's morally right," she said. "There has to be a grassroots effort... to create that change. If they (area residents) got together, they can work in union to try and solve the problem."

Sources say Kroger continues to pay rent on the store at Grand River and Halsted, in effect letting it "go dark" to keep another grocery from taking the space, which Kroger officials deny. The Kroger Co. also closed a second area store at 13 Mile and Orchard Lake roads.

McShane said she spoke with a representative of Standard Construction Co., the shopping center's owner, who told her Kroger is 20 years into a 40-year lease on the property and that some 11,500 people per week patronized that store before it closed.

Managers at Standard could not be reached for comment.

Please turn to Page 4

### what's inside

Building scene	Sec. H
Business	Sec. C
Cable connection	10A
Classifieds	Sec. C-E-H
Index	4G
Auto	Sec. C-H
Real estate	Sec. E-F
Employment	Sec. G
Creative living	Sec. E
Crossword puzzle	5E
Entertainment	3C
Obituaries	10A
Opinion	12A
Police/crime	7A
Sports	Sec. D
Suburban life	Sec. B
Travel	5C

**THE NORTH AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL AUTO SHOW**  
Special Section  
In Today's Issue