

Keeping the kids busy
this summer. 1C



Summer
season. 1B

Harrison grads
go out in style. 3A

Farmington Observer

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FOCUS

KIDS... school may be out for the summer, but let's not hear any of this, "But there's nothing to dooooooo!" — at least not on Wednesdays.

There'll be lots to do on Wednesdays in Farmington as long as the big green-and-white striped tent stays up at Grand river and Grove, east of downtown. That's the site of Downtown Development Authority's Summer Fun Series, which runs every Wednesday through Aug. 14.

"A lot of people say they're looking for family-oriented things to do during the summer," said Wendy Strip-Sittamer, DDA director. "We hope this will appeal to them."

The program includes performances and interactive experiences for families: Safety City, Farm Fun, Shop/Swap/Sell, Clowning Around, Fun With Plaster, Story Hour and magic shows. Most events will take place between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Also, many local businesses will offer Wednesday specials for children and adults. Some of them are:

- A Wednesday matinee for children at the Civic Theatre on Grand River. Doors open at 1:45 p.m. and showtime is 2:15 p.m. Limited season tickets are available for \$5.
- A seminar on current home furnishing trends hosted by Ray Interiors each Wednesday 2:30-3:30 p.m.
- A green "goody" bag for youngsters provided by Focal Point Photography Studio at the green-and-white tent.
- A \$4.95 pasta special at Marco's Restaurant in the Village Commons.
- Free job consultation offered from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. by ADIA Personnel Services in the Village Commons.
- Money off on selected summer clothing at the Cloths Encounters store.
- Demonstrations or drawings 2-3 p.m. at the Village Clippers in the Village Mall.

For more information, call the DDA at 473-7276.

Hills to stuff hoops at Olde Town Park

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Ida Ranesbottom has watched the arguments over the basketball court. Carol Boyd says she'd forgotten the type of vulgar language teens can use.

And Robert and Wanda Schlicker have a list of troubles residents say they have had to endure since warm weather has made the basketball court at Olde Town Park — formerly Waldron Park — a popular place.

"We and our neighbors have had to put up with foul language, fights, lack of parking for our guests, noise, vandalism at the park and outright fear for the kids and property," Wanda Schlicker wrote in a letter to the city council.

'We and our neighbors have had to put up with foul language, fights, lack of parking for our guests, noise, vandalism at the park and outright fear for the kids and property.'

— Wanda Schlicker
Olde Town resident

Residents, particularly those who live near the park at Waldron and Independence in Olde Town, begged the council for help Monday night. Actually, the residents came prepared with their own solution. "We

of the problems in Olde Town Park," Ranesbottom said.

AND SO IT will be done — immediately, according to the city council. "I'm convinced we should just take them down tomorrow," councilman Terry Sever said.

While the city council agreed, city manager William Costick appeared surprised. "We spent a lot of money relocating that basketball court," he said.

According to residents the family park they have long wanted at Independence and Waldron was becoming just that until teenagers came to play at the basketball court.

The court was moved last year from one end of the park — shared with the parking lot — to the center

where the former ice skating rink used to be. The parking lot also was reduced in size. Residents had complained that the parking lot attracted youths who hang out and cause trouble.

Now residents complain that the troubles with youths have just moved further down the street to the basketball court's new location.

Residents who now live near the court complain that cars — from youths playing basketball — block their driveways. They also complain about fast traffic and youths who are causing problems especially for smaller children who also want to use the park.

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Susan Rennels, the vote tally in her hand, whoops it up after winning a third term on the Farmington Board of Education Monday. Board trustee Cathy Webb and her husband, Jim, (right) look pleased with the election results.

Voters keep Rennels on board

Related stories, 9A

By Casey Hans
staff writer

Incumbent school board candidate Susan Rennels captured 54 percent of the vote Monday, winning her third, four-year term on the Farmington Board of Education and beating out two challengers.

"I feel wonderful. I feel relieved," the 47-year-old banking executive said as she and supporters let out a whoop of pleasure after votes were tallied at Farmington Hills City Hall Monday night.

"I owe it to a good group of volunteers. I think it means people have confidence in the superintendent and what the board is doing," she added.

CURRENTLY THE school board president, Rennels bettered PTA and community activist Laura Myers, 39, who got only 15 percent of the vote, and 41-year-old Ford Motor engineer Richard DeVries, who took 31 percent.

Rennels garnered 1,573 votes, DeVries 906 and Myers 423, according to unofficial vote counts released Monday.

Both Myers and DeVries were making their second run at a school board seat. Myers said she did not plan to run next year if incumbents Helen Frutwin and James Abernethy run again because "I think they do their job."

DeVries, however, said he would run again.

Both said they planned to continue in their current roles as board watchers.

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Despite protest, Hills adopts budget

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Gordon Dirasian is fed up with taxes. He said he was taxed out of his first house and will soon be taxed out of his second house in Farmington Hills.

"There's nothing patriotic when you take a senior citizen and veteran and put him in the gutter," said Dirasian, who said his assessment increased \$5,000 this year.

But it's not just assessment increases that are bothering Dirasian. He's mad about the city's taxes, especially the proposed 1.8 percent tax increase for 1991-92.

Dirasian was the only taxpayer who waited through 2 1/2 hours of other council business Monday night to make his feelings known at a public hearing on the \$28.7 million budget.

'There's nothing patriotic when you take a senior citizen and veteran and put him in the gutter.'

— Gordon Dirasian
tax protester

He demanded that the city council make cuts in the budget that increased 3 percent in expenses over last year's budget. As a 12-year retiree on Social Security, Dirasian told the council he has had to learn to live within his means and they should too.

"Since it (tax increase) is a small increase for people who are working. It seems simple for you to sit there and do these things. You don't take

his recyclables to the recycling center.

But the city council adopted the 1991-92 budget as well as the basic tax rate. The 1.8 percent increase is expected to be approved at the Monday, June 17 meeting.

Councilman Terry Sever opposed the budget because of the 1.8 percent tax increase, which amounts to \$334,000 that city officials say is needed to balance the budget.

"I really feel the tough decision is not whether to raise the 1.8 percent. But the challenges should be where we refrain or cut," Sever said. "I think the residents expect from us to make due with non-increases and make the tough decisions where the money will be spent."

Like councilman Ben Marks, Sever wanted \$20,000 removed from

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Tenants, officials upset over rent hikes

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

When Fred Pidruzny moved into Carrington Place Apartments for Seniors, he says, he was told rents would probably increase 3 or 4 percent annually.

Imagine the shock, Pidruzny said, when he and other residents got notice of monthly rent increases of close to 9 percent at the apartments on the northeast corner of Freedom and Drake.

"That's very extensive for our means," Pidruzny said.

Pidruzny and other residents of Carrington Place, designed for seniors with low to moderate incomes, asked the Farmington Hills City Council Monday to step in and work something out.

"We feel you people were partially responsible for this program," Pidruzny told the council.

Just over a year ago, the city council gave the partners who own the apartments a tax break after they couldn't make a financial go of the complex.

The partners, one of whom is Sam Yaker of Liberty Construction Co. in Southfield, were allowed by the city to make a 4-percent payment in

lieu of taxes because they received financing from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, which provides low-interest mortgages.

THAT MEANS Carrington pays, instead of property taxes, 4 percent of its revenue from shelter rents, which are rent receipts after utility costs. In 1990, Carrington was expected to pay \$17,580 — compared to about \$61,000 in property taxes without a tax break — based on a state equi-

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