

Community Corner

This week's question:

What do you think about the city of Farmington restricting skateboarding and roller blading?

We asked this question on State Street in Farmington.



"It's no good. Where else are we going to skate? Most places really don't care as long as it's after hours."
— Jeff Mehall, 14
Farmington



"They should let us go anywhere. If we hurt ourselves, it's our problem. All skate boarders in movies are burnouts. They (people) judge us."
— Brad Dahlihofer, 14
Farmington



"It stinks because people are just going to do it anyway. It's sort of a racism against kids who dress different."
— Tim Mehall, 12
Farmington



"If we or they hurt themselves, it's our problem. We (they) should have the right to skateboard."
— Dominique Wright, 15
Farmington



"I don't think they should cause kids just want to have fun."
— Scott Wright, 14
Farmington



"The places they restrict us from skating and roller blading are the safest. The places they let you and don't bother you aren't safe. They should build a place downtown."
— Brent Rickard, 13
Farmington

Farmington Observer

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Sharon Lahmudi, staff photographer
Amy Jackson, a teacher at Eagle Elementary, represents African American heritage at the annual Multicultural Night at East Middle School.

Foreign firms have growing impact

Continued from Page 1

Chamber of Commerce, discussing the more than 20 foreign firms, including 12 Japanese companies, which are now chamber members.

She said many need to be acclimated to the idea of a chamber of commerce and how one operates. Once they see the benefit, they are pleased to get involved. "The Japanese, for example... are very interested in their community," she added.

In addition, the chamber lists 23 U.S.-based companies which export goods and do business regularly with foreign countries.

Most people involved with business and economic growth see this trend continuing.

"I think we're going to see a lot more of this — it truly is a global economy," said Carol Stencel, academic dean of the Business and Professional Institute for Oakland Community College which works with area businesses doing on-site training programs. A number of companies, including Ford Motor, use the institute for in-house training on Japanese customs and language.

Stencel said she would like to see classes on international trade and exporting included in all curricula, not just in separate programs and courses. "It's not going to make any difference where you work, you will be involved," she added.

Mary Lou Ankele, recently retired assistant superintendent for finance and planning for Farmington Public Schools, agrees that education plays

a key role in preparing the future workforce. "If we don't learn how to deal with diversity, especially in the workforce, we're going to be left behind in the dirt," she said.

THROUGHOUT OAKLAND County, there are 250 foreign businesses representing about 20 different companies. Slightly less than half of those are Japanese, with other major representation from England, France and Germany. Overall, these businesses represent only about 1 percent of the total business picture in the county, but they play an important role.

"It's an important presence," said Jeff Kaczmarek, manager of the Oakland County Economic De-

velopment Division. "It sends a message to our businesses, encouraging them to look beyond the U.S."

Kaczmarek said in the 1980s, he expects to see other Asian countries expanding to Oakland County, and a large number of Canadian firms relocating south of the border to avoid the increasing taxes and fees there. They choose Oakland County, he said, because of the quality of life here, good schools and housing, a good infrastructure and access and a quality labor force.

Farmington Hills is one of the key areas of foreign company settlement, joined by the Troy/Rochester Hills/Auburn Hills corridor and Southfield.

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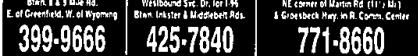


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