

Bill of Rights' 200th year is celebrated

Continued from Page 1

Farmington resident Gail Atkins, who also brought her elementary school-age kids to the courthouse, agreed that the opportunity "to be here first-hand" is something that should be taken advantage of, and had expected to see more families enjoying the open house celebration.

"They could at least have come for the parchment," added Atkins, referring to the complimentary copy of the Bill of Rights that each visitor received.

Board of Education trustee Susan Rennels, also a member of the League of Women Voters, said the setting for the celebration, as well as the event itself, was something the community needs.

"I don't think the Bill of Rights is something people even know how to acknowledge or celebrate," she said.

"THE COURT system in our country and the rights extended to us for the past 200 years are so different than those found elsewhere in the world. It's only appropriate

to have this celebration of the Bill of Rights here at the Courthouse." And though some of those who attended the event said the turnout seemed rather light, co-organizers Saltzman and Judge Harris concurred that they were pleased with the open house and with the citizen support for the program.

"People are interested here," said Harris who sits on the 47th District Court. "We have had a good cross section of people involved in government and citizens. And those citizens get the chance to view what's going on here and to ask questions in respect to how things are handled."

"They also found out about the types of criminal cases and the dramatic increase we've been seeing," he added.

Are future court open houses planned? Based on the evening's success, said Saltzman, the idea will be considered.

"We have seen that a lot of people in the community came out to look around and meet the leaders — it is the best educational process to just come out and see."



SHARON LAEMUE/staff photographer

Magistrate Maria Parker (left) gives a tour of the 47th District Courthouse to the Ploski family of Farmington Hills. Parents Cas and Pamela Ploski stand in back of children (back, from

left) Ruth, 11, Philip, 8; and (front, from left) Lydia, 4, Mark, 2, and Stephen 5.

Rules change again for primary vote

Continued from Page 1

That doesn't mean you can't follow the original rules and declare yourself a Democrat by the Feb. 18 deadline. If you wish to vote Republican and haven't yet declared your preference, the Feb. 18 deadline is still in effect for you.

The March presidential primary will decide which presidential candidates Michigan delegates will support at the 1992 National Democratic and Republican conventions.

AT THEIR conventions the parties are expected to deliver the names of delegates committed to the presidential candidates, including uncommitted delegates. But there's a glitch in this process, too.

Delegates must come from congressional districts. Re-districting of congressional districts "probably won't be completed by a federal court panel until April."

The state Legislature created the closed presidential primary to prevent those who prefer the Democratic Party from voting the Republican ballot, and vice versa. The courts also have ruled that the closed primary is acceptable.

In addition to being confusing for voters, annoying for city clerks — who are still waiting for the final word on what Republicans will do — the primary also will be expensive.

Farmington and Farmington Hills, for example, must keep a list of expenses for which they will be

reimbursed from the state. It's expected that across the state the primary will cost about \$5 million. The state Legislature, however, has budgeted only \$3 million.

After the primary, voters may return to not having a preference for either political party. Voters may obtain a form from their city clerk's office on which they designate no political party preference.

"WE WILL take the designation off their file," Dornan said.

Absentee ballots will still be available to voters. Farmington voters who wish to vote absentee will be asked when they call for an applica-

tion whether they have declared their party preference. If not, a card will be mailed to them, said Farmington City Clerk Josephine Bushey.

Farmington Hills voters 60 years and older — who have already declared their party preference — will automatically have absentee ballot applications mailed to them, Dornan said.

Voters outside that age category who want to vote absentee must declare their party preference by Feb. 18 before the city clerk's staff will mail an absentee ballot application, Dornan said.

"That's the only way by law I'll be able to issue them a ballot," Dornan added.

Chemical leak reported; office building cleared

Continued from Page 1

The building was kept off limits for 2-3 hours until the Interstate Chemical & Disposal Company could remove the approximately five to eight gallons of liquid, which had seeped into the carpet.

"We don't want people entering an environment that is explosive or unsafe," explained Deputy Fire Chief Peter Baldwin.

Baldwin said the Oakland County Health Department was being advised of the leak, although the amounts were small compared to what is considered a major spill.

A detector which checks for combustible gases was taken into the building, showing there was

never a danger of an explosion although the chemical is a "flammable carcinogen" and an "irritant," Baldwin said.

Kureja said although small, such incidents "cause a lot of problems for people in the building" and concern him too. Many go unreported.

"Part of my job is to stop that from happening before it occurs," he said. "To keep our community clean, the citizens are going to have to report problems like this."

He encourages people to call if they suspect chemicals are leaking as they were on Friday, are being misused, or are being dumped improperly. To report information of this type, call the Hills Fire Prevention Division at 553-0741.

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11:30 1:30 3:30 5:30 7:30 9:30
12:30 2:30 4:30 6:30 8:30 10:30

RUSH (R)
11:30 1:30 3:30 5:30 7:30 9:30
12:30 2:30 4:30 6:30 8:30 10:30

KUUPS (PG-13)
11:30 1:30 3:30 5:30 7:30 9:30
12:30 2:30 4:30 6:30 8:30 10:30

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