



Farmington Observer

VOLUME 103 NUMBER 69

THURSDAY, MAY 28, 1992 • FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN • 108 PAGES

Fifty Cents

IN THE PAPER TODAY

Search for excellence: Nine of 11 candidates for Oakland Community College Board of Trustees strut their stuff before faculty members./7A

One more time: One of two Democratic candidates for county executive makes a practice of running for office./9A

SPORTS

Regional result: Farmington Hills Mercy tried to stay alive in the girls soccer tournament Wednesday when it played Grosse Pointe North in a regional game./1B

Fishing class: The art of angling is no longer for men only. Farmington's Joe Derek offers a fishing class for women./1B

BUSINESS

Better to give: Corporate giving by area businesses means more than an occasional canned food drive. A look at how companies and their employees participate./16B

SUBURBAN LIFE



Being a 'survivor': Dennis Wholley, author, TV personality and former Southfield resident, has written a new book where people tell how they fought back after tragedies in their lives./1C

I love you, grandma: Musical duo including Troy woman puts together cassette and coloring book for kids to learn to talk to grandma in 10 languages./1C

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Recycle tax idea gets canned



How to pay for the recycling program has long been an issue in the Farmington area. Should there be a tax — paid by all, even those who don't use the program — or a fee, which may be unconstitutional? Recently, Farmington Hills said no to the tax idea.

By JOANN MALUSZEWSKI
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills home, condominium and business owners won't be paying an ad valorem tax to foot the bill for the city's yearlong curbside recycling

program. "I'm happy to see the tax proposition go down," said Patrick Anderson, vice president of government affairs at Alexander Hamilton Life Insurance Co. "But the city simply must do something to change the current unconstitutional recycling tax and this resolution is one tiny step in that direction."

That city council resolution, adopted May 21, directs the staff to provide information about alternatives to the existing mandatory recycling fee by mail.

That information is intended to address concerns voiced by some residents, particularly Anderson, a director of Taxpayers United for the Michigan Constitution.

For the most part, the council disagreed with Anderson that the city's

recycling fee is unconstitutional and violates the Headlee Amendment.

Anderson told the council that the fee could become a "true" recycling fee by removing the mandatory restriction and providing an "opt-out" provision to allow residents to seek their own recycling vendor. Non-payment also should not be placed as a property tax lien, Anderson said.

Some council members haven't found

See RECYCLING, 6A

Showing the colors



Dean Laverie Staff Photographer

Taping one on: Terry Graves of Livonia tapes an American flag to his motorcycle just before Farmington's Memorial Day Parade Monday morning. Graves, a Vietnam veteran, is a member of the Gold Wing Road Riders Association which participated in the parade. Despite temperatures in the 50s, the parade drew about 25,000 spectators to downtown Farmington. For a story and more photographs, please see Page 3A.

Changes poll voters new places

By CASEY HANS
STAFF WRITER

Voters going to the polls on Monday, June 8, for the Farmington Board of Education election will likely report to a different precinct to cast their ballots this year.

The Farmington school district has changed its voting precincts effective

ELECTION

this election, doubling the number from four to eight. The change coincides with similar changes being made in the city of Farmington Hills due to redistricting. It is designed to serve voters more efficiently by eliminating long lines, such as those experienced during a 1991 school millage election, and to improve distribution of the number of voters due to the population increase in recent years.

"It's just double everything," said business support services director Beth Rothrock, who is busy preparing for the change, which will mean more election workers — about 40 compared with 21 used with the previous four precincts — and generally more confusion by her office.

Rothrock said it's too early to predict what type of turnout might occur this year, but she expects it to be little different than June elections in years past. Previous elections have had turnout rates between 1 and 5 percent.

When there are only candidates running in the June school election, it is usually much lower than special millage elections where voters are asked to decide on dollar issues.

"That always amazes me," Rothrock said. "It's those seven individuals who give the authority to — to me, it's the most important decision."

Voters can expect some help this year, because many of the new precincts are at elementary schools located in the center of subdivisions. Signs pointing the way will be posted at subdivisions

See ELECTION, 2A

Youths finding it better to give receive honor

By CASEY HANS
STAFF WRITER

See editorial, 26A

Elizabeth Poage Baxter says success is a learned behavior — something to which we can all aspire.

In her study of 330 successful people, she found that how they viewed themselves and others influenced their level of success. "It was the choices they made about how to view their experiences," she said. "They held out specific beliefs of themselves . . . and other people . . . and about the future."

Poage Baxter was the keynote speaker at a week ago at an annual Farmington Youth Assistance breakfast, where 29 Farmington and Farmington Hills students were honored for their attitude towards life and volunteer efforts in the community.

Community leaders said they were pleased to honor these local successes. "The world is made up of givers and takers," said Farmington school Superintendent Michael Flanagan. "The takers tend to eat well . . . the givers tend to sleep well." He said he was pleased to "have these kind of people in our community — people who are going to lead us into the 21st Century."

Those honored are all Farmington or Farmington Hills residents and come from a variety of schools. They include:

• Farmington High School: junior, Kiran Arora; senior Lauren Knapik; senior Karen Mager; senior Kathleen Mager; senior Kelly Miller; and sophomore Sarah Smalley.

• Warner Middle School: eighth grader Todd Bruchlak.

• Farmington Alternative Academy: sophomore Stephanie Lynn Caldwell; junior Tracie Lynn Florio; and junior Danielle Komer.

• Harrison High School: sophomore Tracey Carothers; senior David Crisp; junior Rohn Generalas; freshman Rachel Jensen; freshman Michael Kaminiski; junior Melanie McQuiston; junior

See VOLUNTEERS, 2A

Snow plows in May?

It's almost summer. The temperature has been in the 80s and there's not a flake of snow to be found. So what were those big trucks with snow plows on their fronts doing racing around the Southfield City Hall recently?

Well, it was the annual Snow Plow Rodeo, where drivers show off their truck handling skills, and the city of Farmington had two outstanding participants.

Robert Hope, a 21-year veteran of the Farmington DPW, and Paul Smith, a seven-year vet, were winners. They'll receive plaques and an opportunity to take part in advanced competition in Chicago later this year.

"It's a credit to Farmington that those two came

FARMINGTON FOCUS

in first," said Dan Rooney, director of the Farmington Hills Department of Public Works which had two teams in the rodeo. "There was a lot of great competition."

Farmington Hills' two teams were made up of Al McLeod and Bill VanDike and Wayne Smith and Darren Collins.

The participants, operating trucks with snow plows on the front, demonstrated "precision driving" on the Southfield course. There were 45 teams from 45 metro Detroit agencies in the meet, Rooney said.

Who's best in bed?

The Farmington Founders Festival isn't until July, but it's never too early to start thinking about the events — especially the annual bed race to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

The race, which involves five-member teams pushing beds on wheels along Grand River, is planned for Saturday, July 11, preceding the Founders Day parade.

The fee to enter a bed is \$100. Anyone interested in participating in the race or helping build or modify a bed should call the MBA at 476-2920.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21898 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, or dropped off at the new paper office.