



IN THE PAPER TODAY

Labor of love: Everyone loves a parade. This year's cavalcade of floats and marching bands highlighting the 28th annual Founders Festival proved it again./3A

Miss Farmington: Amber Arbuckle was crowned at the Miss Farmington/Farmington Hills scholarship pageant Wednesday at Vladimir's./8A

COUNTY NEWS

Democratic battle: Democrats Walter O. Briggs and Michael Meyer air their views as the Aug. 4 primary draws near./2A

Draining job: What exactly does the Oakland County drain commissioner do and why do these men want the job?/5A

TRAVEL

Dublin your pleasure: James Joyce isn't the only Irish literary artist with roots in Dublin./6A

Flying solo: Traveling alone doesn't have to be lonely./6A

OPINION

Beggar's banquet: Visiting downtown sometimes means an official welcome — from a panhandler./10A

TASTE



Winner dinner: Make-ahead meal perfect for casual, at fresco dining features recipes from the Southfield Senior Arts League Cookbook./1B

Budget gourmet: Caterer shares tips for preparing wholesome, elegant meals with style./1B

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2 blame battle over lot on Hills



A neighbor and a developer who are at odds with each other are putting the blame for their continuing battle over lot sizes on the city of Farmington Hills.

By **BUCK RUCK**
STAFF WRITER

Robert Wilk doesn't want to live on a secluded lot.
 But the roofer and builder wants to know how the city of Farmington Hills could have allowed a non-conforming lot owned by Michael Schwartz of United Homes, Inc.

Wilk lives on an acre lot on Watt Street, east of Middlebelt, north of Nine Mile Road, in the Elm Grove subdivision.
 Schwartz wants to build a house on a 66-foot-wide parcel — next door to Wilk — which is not permissible in the area where 80-foot-wide lots are required. So he recently petitioned for a 14-foot vari-

ance, which the city denied. Schwartz's response was a lawsuit against the city in Oakland County Circuit Court.
 Twenty-five neighbors signed a petition opposing Schwartz's variance request. Most of these people reside on Watt Street, a few live on Elm Grove.
 "His (Schwartz's) problem is self-created, by the way he divided the lots," Wilk said.

Wilk and his petitioning neighbors told the city their property values would be affected — something Schwartz vehemently denies. Schwartz says he proposes to build a house of equal quality to others that he has built on the

street. Size would be the only difference.

Schwartz acquired nine lots in November, 1988, at which time the properties were zoned RA-4 (single-family residential) and it was permissible to build on 60-foot lots. At that time all nine lots were buildable.

In late 1988, however, the planning commission and city council decided to rezone part of the Elm Grove subdivision to an RA-3 zone, which requires 80-foot lots in order to build a house.

See **BATTLE**, 4A

City to start letter

By **CAREY HANS**
STAFF WRITER

Farmington residents can expect more news from city hall this year.
 The city will begin publishing a newsletter this fall in addition to the

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informational year calendar the city has traditionally published at the beginning of each year.

The newsletter will be distributed twice each year — in the fall and again in the spring/summer season.

The idea had been discussed by the city council for several years but was raised again during council goal-setting sessions in recent months. Mayor William Hartsack, who has made public participation and communication with residents a goal, is taking the attitude "the more the better."

"If we have better communication with our residents and tell them what's expected of them, you don't have the subsequent problems," he said.

The newsletters are to be done, initially, by Marketing Communications Counsel Inc. of Southfield, which aided the city in an informational campaign surrounding the city's recent sewer bond issue. The city has decided to try the newsletter and measure its results before making it permanent.

Councilwoman Joanne McShane was the lone voice speaking against the newsletter, saying that she's "not against the newsletter itself" as a tool to communicate with residents.

"I'm not completely opposed to it,"

See **JOURNAL**, 4A



Circus wagon

GUY WARREN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Kids day: Two-year-old Mark McGraw studies the circus wagon play equipment at the annual Kids Day in the Park — the traditional Tuesday kickoff for the Founders Festival, which concluded Sunday.

2 relive town's history

Editor's note: History is best told by those who have lived it. In this second of a two-part series, Nora Ragland, who is promoting the Founders Day Festival for the Farmington-Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce, talked with two lifelong residents for their stories.

By **NORA RAGLAND**
SPECIAL WRITER

As Farmington celebrates 125 years since its incorporation as a village, it's enlightening to share a few nostalgic memories with the sages of the community to give a refreshing account of what life was years ago.

Through the eyes of Harley Walters and Mary Bush, both lifelong community residents, the history of the Farm-

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ington area comes to life. Here's a continuing glimpse of what life was in the Farmington area throughout the years from Harley Walters, who was born in 1905:

"Bill Grove's blacksmith shop at the northwest corner of State and Farmington, installed horse shoes for 25 cents each or four for 90 cents.

The Farmington Town Hall — now the Masonic Temple — built in 1876, was the focal point of the social and political life of the town.

"Home talent shows, lectures, Eastern Star dances, political meetings and basketball games were all held there. It was there, at 16, I learned to dance and

See **HISTORY**, 9A

Judge candidate cites experience

This is the fourth in a series of stories about candidates vying for an open seat on the 47th District Court bench.

By **CAREY HANS**
STAFF WRITER

Richard Poehlman has made his mark as a 25-year trial attorney — something he believes makes him the best qualified person to sit on the bench.

"I have more experience than anyone running, or anyone who could run for the job," said Poehlman, 52, a former Farmington Hills city attorney who lives and practices in the Hills. "I've been there and I think I belong there. I'm not really soft on crime at all. I be-

lieve in tough prosecution, but not over-prosecution."

An overriding concern of Poehlman's is the atmosphere in today's courtroom. He said there should be "a little more dignity" in court and that it should be "an arena of propriety and decorum, rather than a circus."

Also, he advocates more recognition of personal rights in the judicial system. "That's what it's all about," he added.

Poehlman is among seven Hills attorneys running for an open, non-partisan

seat on the 47th District Court this year. The seat opens with the retirement of Judge Margaret Schaeffer. Located in Farmington, the court serves both Farmington and Farmington Hills.

Of the seven, the two top vote-getters on Aug. 4 will face a run-off in November.

Poehlman first became interested in law while attending a seminar for three years as a young man, where he developed a "respect for the law and truth," and learned Latin, he said. After a disappointing experience with an accounting career, he decided to go to law school at the University of Detroit, the

See **CANDIDATE**, 11A



Election 92



James Poehlman: Says experience makes him the best qualified for the job.

Animal tips

If you've ever wondered what to do if you come across abandoned or injured young wildlife, the answers are waiting for you at the Farmington and Farmington Hills branches of the Farmington Community Library.

Sheets of information for rabbits, raccoons and birds, for example, are available thanks to Farmington Hills resident Beverly Cornell, a well-known wildlife rehabilitator, licensed by the state Department of Natural Resources.

The data is available in the information files in both the adult and juvenile departments at the Hills branch on 12 Mile, and the Farmington branch on Liberty. You can also ask for assistance at the information desks.

Permanent home

Farmington's Heritage Quilt found its permanent home at Farmington City Hall, July 1.

FARMINGTON FOCUS

The quilt was made in commemoration of Farmington's incorporation as a village in 1867.

Under the supervision of co-chairwomen Laura Myers and Kathleen Edinger, the quilt blocks were created by 22 needlewomen and the quilt was quilted by hundreds of children and adults ranging in age from 5 to 100 years of age from Farmington and Farmington Hills.

The 126th anniversary celebration committee extends special praise and thanks to the project co-chairwomen and to all the school children and adults who worked on the Heritage Quilt, said Farmington Mayor Shirley Richardson.

The celebration committee invites the public to stop by Farmington City Hall, 23600 Liberty, and see the Heritage Quilt.

My Vote Counts

The Farmington Hills Committee to Increase Voter Participation invites cable television viewers to tune into its next two monthly shows "My Vote Counts" — on Channel 12 Metro-Vision.

July's show features an interview with Oakland County Commissioner Lawrence Pernick of Southfield on home rule in Oakland County. Vicki Barnett is host.

August's show will feature an interview with Eleanor Whitson, president of the Republican Women's Federation of Michigan, about the federation on state and national levels. Committee member Julieann Hovanessian will host the show.

"My Vote Counts" can be seen at 8 p.m. every Wednesday, 2 p.m., Thursday, and 7 p.m., Friday.