

## IN THE PAPER TODAY

**Up and away: The Ribcrackers reach for the clouds./3A**

**At an end: The 28th annual Founders Festival is over. Good weather and good times were its trademark./13A**

## COUNTY NEWS

**Unconventional: Correspondent Tim Richard provides a decidedly local view of proceedings at this week's Democratic Party confab./10A**

**It's a mess: New report calls county mental health system an expensive failure./10A**

## ENTERTAINMENT

**Eating out: Enjoy lunch in a garden setting at the Bates Street Cafe in downtown Birmingham. The cafe is also open Thursday evenings 5:30-7:30 p.m. After dinner, walk across the street to Shain Park to listen to the concert./5B**

**Theater: Three Guys Productions' first effort "Foiled Again!" is a wonderful opportunity to laugh./6B**

## BUSINESS

**Video sales: Two Birmingham entrepreneurs have borrowed an idea from the home shopping networks and are offering a video showroom approach to selling jewelry./10B**

## SUBURBAN LIFE

**Custom fit: A Birmingham shop, Beach Bound, has swimsuits tailor-made to fit their customers' needs./1C**

**World party: James Duggan, a Farmington Hills resident, is busy planning as the Executive Director for the 1994 World Cup soccer championships at the Pontiac Silverdome./1C**

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## OUR PHONE NUMBERS

Newsroom: 477-5450  
Newsroom Fax: 477-9722  
Sports: 953-2141  
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# Board told Wooddale lot unsafe



BY CAREY HANS  
STAFF WRITER

Residents around Wooddale Elementary School in Farmington Hills are debating just how the parking lot and area around the school can be made safe for students.

Results from a second safety study given to the school board Monday night

Concern for safety continues with Wooddale Elementary's parking lot. And school trustees are still looking for an answer as other residents don't want an additional driveway by their houses.

confirmed an earlier report that the driveway and parking area are unsafe. The board postponed a decision on the matter, saying they planned to walk the school site Monday evening.

A board decision on what to do about the issue is planned for Aug. 4.

Parents like Becky Thomas of nearby Peppermill, who three years ago

watched her kindergarten-age daughter get struck by a car on a street near the school, have studied safety issues at the school for the past few years and have gone to the school board for help.

"I just fear for the kids," said Thomas, who co-chairs the Wooddale parent safety committee and has two children attending there. "I don't know about studies, but I know enough that it's too congested and we have to make a change."

Like many elementary schools in the Farmington school district, Wooddale

sits within a subdivision. It is north of 12 Mile, west of Farmington Road and serves several subdivisions.

The school driveway's steep, eight-degree grade and inadequate parking have caused problems over many years, school officials and parents said. Added school traffic in recent years has made the problems worse, they said.

The parent group took their concerns to the school board several months ago.

See WOODDALE, 2A

## Convention-goers



Concept car: Steve Economy of Farmington Hills, assistant to the president of Michigan Bell Telephone Co., and U.S. Rep. Sander Levin admire a Pontiac concept car in the GM building in New York at a reception for Michigan delegates to the Democratic National Convention. Economy is a visitor, Levin an unpledged at-large delegate. For more on local delegates, please turn to Page 5A.

# Attorney shuns bar donations

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

BY CAREY HANS  
STAFF WRITER

Kenneth Knoppow is running a grass roots campaign for the bench without much help from the bar.

"Reaching out to the very people who will eventually come in front of you — that's always bothered me," he said. "I'm refusing to accept contributions from attorneys who practice in this area."

"If there's not a conflict, at least there's the perception of it."

The 43-year-old Farmington Hills resident who has his own law practice in Southfield has served as chairman of the state License Appeal Board and was an administrative hearing officer

for the state. In the past 12 years, he has had a private legal practice focusing on local courts.

"District court is where I make my living," he said. "I'm not interested in

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circuit court. I think I can make a difference."

Knoppow is one of seven attorneys from Farmington Hills running for an open seat on the 47th District Court bench this year. The two top vote-getters during the Aug. 4 primary election will earn a chance to compete for the job in November. The court serves the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills.

The 15-year Hills resident is married and has two children. Although his name might be familiar to some, it's a cousin who owns the wallpaper supply store carrying the same name, he said. He is a cum laude graduate of Oakland University and graduated from the U-M law school in 1973.

A Detroit native, Knoppow is a member of Temple Kol Ami and, in his spare time, is active in working for Middle East peace, debating both sides of the Israeli and Palestinian issue. He also has organized an annual Southfield folk concert series of blues, jazz and folk acoustic music for the past decade as part of the city's parks and recreation activities.

"I think that having other interests gives you a broader perspective in dealing with people," he added.

See ATTORNEY, 2A

# Trustee Abernethy quits board

BY CAREY HANS  
STAFF WRITER

Jim Abernethy leaves the Farmington school board carrying the pride of accomplishment, but he also has plans to keep a close eye on education.

The two-term trustee, who left the board at the end of his term in June for health reasons, said he plans to continue being an "active voice" in education. "People ask if I'm happy it's over, and I say 'No.' Because it's not over," he said. "I plan to stay involved."

He was replaced Monday night by trustee Joseph Svoke, a Farmington

Hills resident who was elected in June.

Abernethy has never been shy voicing concerns about the schools during his eight years on the board. But he also offers high praise when something is done right, and believes the Farmington district is on the right track with its board, staff and a highly involved community.

"The ship is in very good hands and definitely steering in the right direction," said the 52-year-old husband and father of two. "We are to be commended as a community for that."

See TRUSTEE, 2A



Jim Abernethy

# Jack Inch to lead school board



R. Jack Inch

Trustee R. Jack Inch was elected to serve as president of Farmington Board of Education Monday, as the gavel passed from outgoing president Jack Cotton during the board's annual organizational meeting.

"It's always tough to follow a legend," Inch said of Cotton, the district's retired athletic director and self-employed businessman who continues to serve as a trustee.

First-term trustee Cathleen Webb was endorsed by her peers for the vice president's seat, newcomer Joseph Svoke was elected secretary and Helen Ditzhay continued in her role as board treasurer.

In his fourth term on the board, Inch is a professor of economics at Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge Campus and is a resident of Farmington.

He has lived in the district for 30 years.

By taking the vice president's seat and if tradition reigns, Webb is in line to be president of next year's board. The Farmington Hills resident is a freelance retail artist and has lived in the district for 10 years. She was elected to the board in 1990.

Svoke and trustee Helen Prutow were sworn in for new four-year terms on Monday, after being elected to the board in June. Svoke begins his first year on the board, while Prutow enters her 17th year of service.

The Farmington Public School District serves residents of the city of Farmington, most of the city of Farmington Hills and a small portion of West Bloomfield Township.

## Senior discounts

Oakland County senior adults age 60 and older may obtain identification cards — entitling them to discounts from various merchants — 10:30 a.m.-noon, Friday, July 17, at the Farmington Hills Senior Center, 28600 11 Mile Road, Farmington Hills.

The card, issued by the Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency, provides information, such as name, address, birthdate and Social Security number. The front of the card displays the person's picture, which will be taken by an OLSHA photographer, as well as signature and the Oakland County seal.

For more information contact OLSHA in the Pontiac area at 858-6180. If you are calling long distance call OLSHA on the free WATS line, 1-800-482-9250.

## FARMINGTON FOCUS

### Fun series

From a beautiful princess and wicked magician to a very big dragon, the performance of "The Magic Onion" has all the ingredients to enchant audiences of all ages at Downtown Farmington's Summer Fun Series Wednesday, July 22.

The free shows will be at 10:30 a.m., noon, and 1:30 p.m., under the green and white striped tent in the Downtown Farmington Center parking lot on Grand River, one block east of Farmington Road.

The show is presented by the Royal American Fol-

kart Theatre and International Puppet Place. "The Magic Onion" is sixth in a 10-week program of the Downtown Farmington series.

The show combines the fantasy characterization of folk art puppetry with the talents of human counterparts with the idea of keeping it simple, yet appealing to kids and their parents.

"By eliminating a lot of the riff-raff found in other stage shows, we can solicit the audience's imaginations. That is what makes us so appealing. It makes our viewers feel like a part of the show if they get to think a little. It's not like the muppets where they do everything for you," said John Byrne, company co-founder and manager.

The Summer Fun Series is held every Wednesday downtown throughout the summer.