

IN THE PAPER TODAY

'Nutcracker' ballerina: A Farmington Hills ballerina is featured in the Fox Theater's production of the famous ballet through Dec. 30./3A

COUNTY NEWS

Pick again: L. Brooks Patterson seeks another nominee for director of the county health and human services department following Farmington Hills resident Dr. Edwin Blumberg's withdrawal under fire./9A

STREET SCENE



Sound check: The loss of the percussionist and the addition of a bassist, drummer and backup singers have ushered in a major format for the once techno-driven Blue Nation which now fronts a harder edged, somewhat bluesy sound./5B

TASTE

Wassail feast: There's been a renewed interest in the customs of merry old England and the traditional wassail feast celebrated between Christmas and the Epiphany, Jan. 6. It's not too late to plan a menu and invite a few friends over to celebrate the holidays English style./ 1B

Wine Column: Wine enthusiasts have been smitten by the taste of premium spirits, cognac in particular. Learn more about this product, which is especially enjoyable during the holidays./ 1B

CABLE-TV WEEKLY

Local access: "Lansing Connection" will be presented on Channel 12. Check your cable guide for time and date.

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House move sparks big problem



The planned expansion of a church is putting the squeeze on a historic house. Moving the house offers one solution, but presents a large problem: How do you move a large old house without taking down electrical lines?

By MARY LOU SONG
 STAFF WRITER

Talks about moving the historic Kirby White house have hit a snag — of the electrical kind.

Plans to move the 63-year-old house, adjacent to the First Presbyterian Church of Farmington, were discussed Wednesday. But no decisions were made because more information will be needed to determine the cost of moving the house past electrical wires along Farmington Road.

"It's like taking an elephant and walking down the street," said Ruth Mochlman, chairwoman of the Historic Commission.

When the church decided to expand its building, the choices several months ago were to demolish the house or to move it. Expansion plans would put the building a stone's throw away from the Kirby White house, built by architect Marcus Burrows. But after some persuasion, First Presbyterian agreed to allow the house to be moved.

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Katherine Ulrich, a city planner, said the church is "anxious to have the house moved. But it's not so critical that it has to be moved today."

The next meeting to discuss the issue is scheduled for Jan. 23.

The Historic Commission is also considering proposals from two developers to purchase and renovate the house. According to Mochlman, both developers hope to renovate the house for personal use. One move would put the house at Farmington Road and 10 Mile, another west of Farmington Road just south of I-696.

"A historic building should not be moved," Mochlman said. "Historic homes are districts unto themselves. But this is a special case. It's a church that wants to expand, not for financial gain. It's not condoned."

Secret Santa



With helpers: Aaron Mundy, left, looks at a toy and Kristin Reed sits in Santa's lap as Elves Ryan Rae and Mike Hein and Mrs. Claus, look on.

Secret St. Nick strikes again

By SUE BUCK
 STAFF WRITER

We all suspected that Santa had another line of work to keep him busy throughout the year.

But not many know that Secret Santa is really a Farmington businessman who wishes to remain nameless.

Last year, this local Santa began asking his clients to donate money so he could buy needy children a nice toy. He asked everyone, including his doctor and dentist.

"Everyone who walks in my door has been hit," he said.

Secret Santa, with the help of a rotating number of Mrs. Clauses and Elves who want to get in on the

act, delivers all gifts personally.

"There's a lot of different scenarios," he said. "One night, two kids came lying out of the house in their stocking feet. Last night, one kid ran to his room. Never came out from under his bed. Locked himself in his room. There's kids that want to sit in your lap and those who won't come out."

When Secret Santa arrived at one stop, he discovered the recipient had the chicken pox.

"That's alright," Secret Santa said. "I have had it, too. But, I forgot to ask if Mrs. Claus had had chicken pox. She hadn't. So, I had to go in solo."

Secret Santa doubled the amount

of kids he bought gifts for this year. Some 109 kids were served compared to last year's 52.

He raised \$2,700 this year just by asking Farmington's and other merchants to help.

Secret Santa comes prepared and overstocked with what he calls "all around utility" gifts.

He's got answers for kids who don't believe in Santa Claus, too. "I've got all sorts of puns," Secret Santa said. "Luckily, I've been a salesman all my life, so I can give quick answers."

Sometimes, Secret Santa finds that there are more children pre-

See SANTA, 2A

Pioneer judge calls it a career

By BILL COUTANT
 STAFF WRITER

In her college days at the University of Michigan, Margaret Schaefer was once advised to "get married and have a family." She did that — and a lot more.

Schaefer steps down from the bench after 18 years as a district court judge and many more as a distinguished attorney and community activist. And although she might be considered a pioneer in breaking

ground for women who choose careers, she gives much of the credit for her decision to pursue a law career to a man — her father.

"He always encouraged us to do whatever we wanted," Schaefer said. "I think we were fortunate in that way."

Judge Schaefer and her sister Cornelia Kennedy became the first sisters to become judges in the United States when Schaefer was elected 47th District judge in 1975. Kennedy

serves as a U.S. district judge. Schaefer's youngest sister, Dr. Christine Gram, retired as president of Oakland Community College's Auburn Hills Campus.

Pursuit of excellence

An achiever in a family of achievers, Schaefer grew up in Detroit, the oldest of three girls. Her father, an attorney himself, raised

See JUDGE, 6A

Brady Bill stirs debate

By MARY LOU SONG
 STAFF WRITER

Almost every day in the Farmington Hills Police Department, you can find someone requesting a permit to purchase a handgun or carry a concealed weapon. And sometimes, you hear someone saying with dread, that getting a permit could become more difficult in the blink of an eye.

While the debate still stirs, quietly at times, about the right to bear arms, many firearm owners are hoping that lawmakers do not confuse legal gun ownership with crime.

With waiting periods, some cities in Michigan beat the Brady Bill to the punch. Although no state law requires a waiting period, some cities require a background check before a person is permitted to purchase or to own a firearm. Depending on the time required to do a check, cities have in effect created their own waiting periods.

In Farmington Hills, that check takes about two weeks. In Southfield, the background check takes 30 days. In Livonia, a background check can take as few as 10 minutes or several days should anything questionable arise.

The Hills police department says most Hills residents buy guns from shops in surrounding cities, like Shooters in Livonia.

Roger Little, manager of Shooters, is one of many gun owners that says tighter gun laws would only hurt the legal owners of guns — not the criminals with illegal weapons the laws are aimed at.

"I feel better, legally and liability-wise, having the state do a background check," Little said. "The Brady Bill doesn't ask for that. The reason that gun people have such a problem with the Brady Bill is that it's tied to a crime bill."

"It is associating legal gun holding with crime, and all of sudden people are saying that legal gun ownership is tied with crime. I say treat crime the way it should be treated."

Bill Chunn, a Farmington Hills resident and gun owner, said that he has no objections to a waiting period.

"When they say there should be a waiting period, I agree," he said. "But this city has had one for a long time."

When hunting season began this year, hunters were not by people protesting the killing of animals. But Little says that not all gun owners

See BRADY, 4A

Kids New Years party

Ground Round restaurants in metro Detroit, including the Farmington Hills location, will ring in 1993 with a New Year's Eve Kids Countdown party from 4-8 p.m., Dec. 31.

The restaurants will host the party for children and their parents.

Every half hour during the evening, the restaurants will celebrate an early version of the traditional midnight countdown. Ground Round's Bingo the Clown will distribute hats, balloons and noisemakers to guests and will conduct the countdown by calling off the minutes to "midnight."

The parties will take place at the Ground Round restaurants in Farmington Hills, at Orchard Lake and 13½ Mile roads, in Livonia at Six Mile and Newburgh, and in Royal Oak at Woodward and 13 Mile.

FARMINGTON FOCUS

Founded in 1969, The Ground Round, Inc. restaurant chain caters specifically to families with children.

'Tie one on'

Mothers Against Drunk Driving is asking motorists in southeast Michigan to participate in the Red Ribbon campaign and "Tie One On for Safety."

The programs, in their seventh year, are aimed at saving lives, preventing injuries and promoting awareness.

MADD is encouraging businesses to ask their

employees to tie a red ribbon on a visible location of their vehicle to symbolize a pledge to drive safe and sober during this holiday season and throughout the year, and to encourage friends and family to do the same.

Trash, recyclables

Refuse and recyclables will not be collected on Christmas Day or New Years Day in Farmington and Farmington Hills. It will be picked up on the Saturdays after the holidays, Dec. 26 and Jan. 2, respectively.

Christmas trees placed at the curb during the week beginning Jan. 4 will be picked up and taken to a compost site rather than a landfill. Trees in bags are not accepted at the compost facility.

Holiday cards will also be recycled. Cards collected from Dec. 30 to Jan. 22 at five locations.