

Benefit ball to help teen program

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills has a new decentralized teen program, now they're going to have a ball.

"We have at least 10 tables filled already," said Hills Councilwoman Nancy Bates. "That's 80 people."

And at \$100 a ticket, the Cornucopia Ball on Nov. 11 at the Hills Activities Center on 11 Mile, east of Middlebelt, will raise a lot of money for a new community foundation that will continue to fund programs of the city's Commission on Children, Youth and Families. The commission and city were successful in winning a \$387,000 state grant for a decentralized youth centers program.

The city already had earmarked \$200,000 for such a program, which gave it the match it needed to get the grant. The grant and match will be used over a three-year period.

During that time, the commission is hoping to make the black-tie optional event a can't-miss function with the proceeds going to the foundation to provide an endowment and continuing support for the youth program and other commission projects.

"We call it Cornucopia because it is a pouring out," Bates said. "And so far, the community has been very generous."

Bates praised Botaford General Hospital's commitment of \$10,000 a year for the next three years, a generous contribution from Target, and said other companies and organizations are also taking part.

She said having tax-exempt status will make contributing to the foundation, whether in the form of ball tickets or other contributions, an attractive way to contribute to the community.

"Our goal was 150 tickets," Bates said of the ball. "I think we could have up to 300 attending."

Commission Chairman Todd

Lipa said people he's contacted are excited about the event. "People really seem to like the idea," he said.

Debbie Grant, one of the event organizers, said she expects about 1,000 invitations to be sent to community residents.

Fox Formal Wear Inc. in Crowley's shopping center on Farmington and 12 Mile is offering a discount for those who attend, said Marilyn Barnett, president.

Tuxedos, regularly renting for \$79 to \$89, will be \$59 for Cornucopia ball participants. Out of that rental fee, \$5 will go to the event for each tux rented, Barnett said.

The youth program, which should be operating by Nov. 1, will provide transportation to middle-schoolers to the YMCA, Farmington Hills Activities Center and other sites. The program targets children 11-15, who can not yet drive, but who need recreational and other after-school programs.

Bates cited research that shows appropriate after-school activities deter youngsters from drug use and teen parenthood. The study, by West- at, also shows that the average 10th-grader does only a half an hour of homework a night and watches 2 1/2 hours of TV a day. The study found those and many other activities do not build skills or character.

The study also found that of those who did not participate in after-school activities:

■ 57 percent were more likely to drop out of school by their senior year.

■ 49 percent were more likely to use drugs.

■ 37 percent were more likely to be teen parents.

■ 35 percent were more likely to smoke cigarettes.

■ 27 percent were more likely to have been arrested.

Anyone interested in attending the ball can call 474-6115.



Top hat and tails: Event organizers Todd Lipa, left, and Debbie Grant are already gearing up for the Cornucopia Ball on Nov. 11, which will raise money for the Commission on Children, Youth and Families.

Event to aid blind

Joe Muer's seafood restaurant will serve as the setting Oct. 30 for an event billed as "Birdies for the Blind," a benefit for the Penrickton Center for Blind Children.

Farmington Hills humorist Joey West will mark the release of his newest book, "Birdies for the Boardroom: Golfing Your Way Up the Corporate Ladder," at the benefit.

"It's a primer for business people on how to use golf as a business tool," said West. "It's amusing but highly informative."

He sees the evening as an opportunity for "golfers to exchange stories and revel in golf outside the golf course."

West first learned about the Penrickton Center five years ago from a neighbor whose daughter attended the private school in Taylor. It serves blind, multi-disabled, children ages 1 to 12.

Fees are not charged to students' families. Rather funding comes from individuals, corporations, service clubs and foundations. The center was established in 1952 as a day-care nursery for blind preschoolers. Currently, Penrickton specializes in treating blind children with at least one additional handicap such as deafness, cerebral palsy, brain damage, developmental delay or mental retardation.

Kurt Sebnely, executive director of Penrickton, welcomes the irony of having golfers for whom eyesight is so important raising funds to educate and train blind children.

"This is a splendid way to show their appreciation of the gift of vision."

Muer is planning a seafood dinner, featuring wines and imported cigars between courses.

Tickets are available in advance only. Call Penrickton Center at 313-946-7500 to obtain ordering information or to make credit card reservations.

Audit gives Farmington 'A' on finances, issues cautions

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

The city of Farmington has received a clean bill of financial health, but it doesn't come without a few cautions.

The city should be wary of pending state legislation, Plante and Moran's Tom Doerschler said. The accounting firm gave the city an "A" grade financial report during its annual audit presentation to Farmington City Council Oct. 16.

One proposed change would have the fiscal year's end moved to Sept. 30. Farmington's fiscal year ends June 30, which is when property tax bills go out.

Expenses would still mount during a three-month lag in revenue. Farmington would probably have to tap its fund balance for \$200,000.

City reserves could take a hit

because of proposed changes in distribution of single business tax money, Doerschler said. Cities are already receiving less in state shared revenues.

"I'm really amazed at how you can still be impacted by legislation financially," Doerschler said. "As a community, you are really dependent on things that are happening outside of you. If I were up there (on council), I would find that very frustrating."

Inside, Farmington remains financially sound.

Revenues increased 5 percent this year, \$5.7 million compared to \$5 million in 1994. Interest on investments and growth in property values and additional tax account for most of the money. State shared revenues also increased by 8 percent.

Spending increased 7 percent from \$4.8 million in 1994 to \$5.1 million. General government op-

erations and capital outlay consumed most of the increase. Public safety costs have risen to \$1.645 million, up from \$1.548 million.

Salary and benefits account for 51 percent of all expenditures, which is slightly below the average of 63.5 percent for most cities.

"We don't see anything out of line," Doerschler said.

The city has tried to keep employee costs down by contracting some services outside, City Manager Frank Lauhoff said. The city has also tried to cut health care costs by offering cash incentives for employees who do not take the city's medical coverage.

"You've heard all the terms: Downsizing, right-sizing," Lauhoff said. "It can't be a fad you do once in awhile. You have to keep doing it, and we are."

Sept. 25. Witnesses identified Smith and his damaged car. Police found the car and the Detroit man later on that evening.

"We're waiting for the prosecutor to come up with some more information," said Smith's attorney, Elias Escobedo Jr. "He (Smith) doesn't want to have to go to trial and put the (Klenko) family through that."

Escobedo said he wasn't sure which of the charges the prosecutor would proceed on at this point.

"We'll have to see," he said.

Smith remains in the Oakland County Jail.

Pretrial set in fatal hit-run case

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Midge Klenko waited in the courtroom as other cases were called, including one involving a guilty verdict in another fatal drunken driving case.

At about 10:15 a.m. Friday, Christopher Phillip Smith Jr., 22, the man accused of the driving into and killing her 13-year-old son, was arraigned before Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Rudy Nichols.

Smith, who stood handcuffed with head bowed and dressed in orange jail issue clothes, will stay in jail awaiting a Nov. 17

pretrial on charges of drunken driving, leaving the scene of a fatal accident, and manslaughter. He could face up to 15 years in prison if convicted.

"I want this to go to trial," Klenko said, even while she admitted that it would be hard on her family, especially her son Stephen, 11, who witnessed the death of his brother. "He (Stephen) is starting to get back to normal. But this is still hanging over him."

Smith is accused of driving a car into David Klenko as he and Stephen were riding bikes on the south shoulder of 10 Mile on

where she was pronounced dead. Burn was not charged.

"When it's rush hour, people often have to cross two lanes of heavy traffic," said Hills Officer Don Fradette, who was at the scene. "If you make that turn, you have to make sure you can see that other lane of traffic. If you don't, you're really taking a chance. That is one of the most common accidents we see."

Detroit woman killed in Hills crash

Farmington Hills police believe a Detroit woman could not see a pickup truck that was in her path as she attempted to make a left turn into Royal Cleaners on Middlebelt Road north of Northwestern Highway in Farmington Hills Tuesday.

Jennifer Cecilia Juracek, 48, died from injuries after her 1989 Mercury Topaz was struck by a pickup truck driven by Corey

James Burn, 20, at 3:22 p.m. Farmington Hills officers said traffic was backed up on Middlebelt and a SMART bus in the inside southbound lane stopped to give the woman room to turn left, but she didn't see the pickup, which was going the 45 miles per hour speed limit. The truck hit her car on the passenger side.

She was transported to Providence Hospital in Southfield

CALENDAR OF EVENTS WEEK OF OCTOBER 22, 1995

Mark your calendar!

26/WEDNESDAY

LOIS HILL COLLECTION

Exquisite sterling silver jewelry.

10 am to 4 pm

Fashion Jewelry

27/FRIDAY

VERONICA HART COLLECTION SHOW

Preview this collection of women's handbags and business coses.

2 to 7 pm

Women's Accessories

28/SATURDAY

"MAD HATTER" TEA PARTY

Join the fun and fantasy at our Children's Halloween Party! Storytelling, treats, costume parade and more. For information, call 810-645-8574.

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