

Farmington Observer



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THE WEEK AHEAD

Hit the Ice: Need to break in those new skates? Farmington Hills Ice Arena has open skating 3:30-5:20 p.m. Cost is \$3 for residents; \$5 for non-residents.

MONDAY

Trump it up: Farmington Single Professionals play euchre or pinocle and have dinner 7-10 p.m. at the Maples of Novi Golf Course.

TUESDAY

Off the wall: Wallyball is offered 6:40 p.m. at Racquetball Farmington on Farmington Road.

WEDNESDAY

Pop the cork: Ring in the New Year with singles' groups at the Botsford Inn on Grand River. Cost is \$45 in advance and \$50 at the door.

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Band has jolly good time on journey in UK

BY RICHARD PEARL
STAFF WRITER

The English accents may have been difficult and water and ice were hard to come by, but that won't keep Jason Smith and many of his fellow Farmington High School band mates from wanting to go back to England and Scotland someday.

The Falcon Marching Band and director Norman Logan, accompanied by band booster club members, both visited and performed in the two countries Nov. 21-29, mixing in a good bit of sight-seeing.

Among the communities in which they performed were Colchester, Peterborough and York — where they lit the town's Christmas tree — in England and Edinburgh, capitol of Scotland. They met the mayors of each city in which they played.

Sightseeing spots included Westminster Abbey, the Tower of London and Stratford-upon-Avon, birthplace of Shakespeare. Band mates also power-walked Brimsford Street and Hyde Park and they even found a Harrod's Department Store at their London airport.

Many students got good prices on Doc Martens, a hot footwear item these days. But many also felt both the Scotch and the British kept too tight rein on the dispensing of water and ice.

Nevertheless, they enjoyed the trip. Smith, a junior drum major, called it "a wonderful experience" and said he will always have "fantastic memories."

He definitely wants to go back, he said. "It's another country, another culture. And the people I met were really great and nice."

Sometimes, in noisy restaurants, it was hard understanding English accents, he said, "but they understood us."

And what was the reaction of the Scotch and English to this American high school band?

In Scotland, they were surprised by the band's size and impressed by its synchronized marching and playing.

And in Peterborough, the Falcons were the top story on the 6 p.m. news.

Sobering reminder

Hills family mourns boy killed by drunken driver

BY TONY BRUSCATO
STAFF WRITER

The message is clear — if you drink, don't drive.

Police officials have stepped up enforcement of drunken driving laws in their efforts to help insure a safe-driving holiday season.

However, that could be a tough task.

According to a study conducted by EPIC/MRI of Lans-

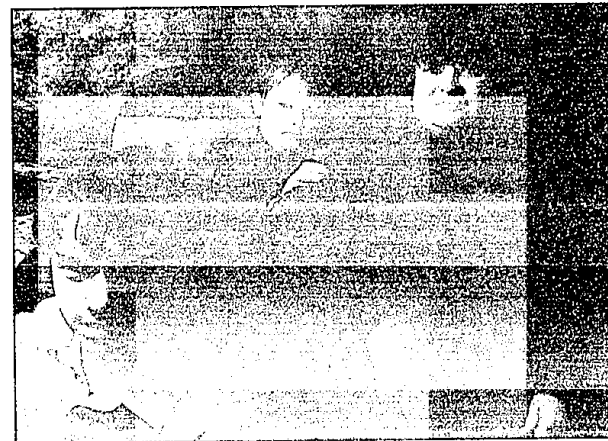
ing, nearly 250,000 Michigan drivers will get behind the wheel while legally impaired during the holiday season. The survey also suggests that nearly 11,000 drivers under the legal drinking age of 21 will get behind the wheel during the holidays after consuming some alcohol.

"We have zero tolerance, particularly around the

Please see MESSAGE, A5



Wet!m: David Klenke was killed while riding his bike September 1995.



Family's loss: Midge Klenke, pictured here with Stephen, 13, and Andrew, 9; is reminded how her son was struck by a drunken driver every time she travels through the 10 Mile and Middlebelt intersection.

MADD offers rides to save lives

BY TONY BRUSCATO
STAFF WRITER

Mothers Against Drunk Driving is hoping its annual Project Lifeline will help produce a third consecutive year of no drunk driving fatalities in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties New Year's Eve.

For the 13th year, MADD is the main force behind Project Lifeline, which provides cab rides for anyone too impaired to drive after ringing in the new year.

Hosts of private parties will be able to call the lifeline for guests who have had too much to drink. Restaurant, lodging and bar establishments in the tri-county area will be able to arrange a free ride home for their customers who may be too intoxicated to safely drive.

This year, MADD has a toll-free number for Lifeline, 1-888-388-6223 (MADD). Operators will be taking calls for free cab rides from 9 p.m. New Year's Eve to 5 a.m. New Year's Day. Last year, there were 549 requests for rides,

with 1,144 people transported. Sponsors picked up the tab, which was about \$7,000.

The number of calls is almost double what it was 10 years ago. As a result, MADD is encouraging drinkers to plan for rides home, or have a designated driver.

"We would rather have people plan ahead to get rides home if they know they'll be drinking," said Michele Compton, chapter administrator for MADD in Oakland County.

Please see RIDES, A5

Prep hockey backers go for rebound



BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

The Farmington school board is expected to receive a proposal next week for a "pay-to-play" ice hockey program that would include all three high schools.

Superintendent Bob Maxfield said a committee, spearheaded by Athletic Director Ron Holland, parent Dennis Patterson and North Farmington teacher Rick Jones, will make its recommendations at the 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 6, meeting to be held at the Lewis Schulman Administration Building.

"There has been renewed interest in starting high school hockey," Maxfield said before the holiday break. "It would be parent funded but sponsored by the schools."

If a proposal is ultimately approved by the school board, a team combining North, Farmington and Harrison high school players could hit the ice as soon as the 1998-99 season, Maxfield said.

Such a proposal would be the second to reach the board in recent years. More than a year ago, a plan featuring partial pay-to-play was rejected. Among board members opposing that plan was Cathy Webb.

Asked about the new plan Friday, Webb said she still isn't sold on such a concept.

"I have concerns for pay-to-play," said Webb, during an interview Friday. "Are we setting a precedent for the

Please see HOCKEY, A2

Morning blaze destroys house; 3 slightly hurt

BY RICHARD PEARL
STAFF WRITER

A 22-year-old man taking a shower was forced to climb naked through his bathroom window to escape a morning-after-Christmas fire that destroyed his family's Farmington Hills house.

The man, his 14-year-old brother and their father, Dennis Miller, were home at the time of the Friday-morning fire at 22780 Purdue.

The older brother reportedly was clothed by neighbors.

The older Miller escaped injury but the brothers, whose names were not immediately available, were taken to Botsford Hospital by CEMS ambulance for minor smoke inhalation. Both were released a short time later.

The boys' mother, Susan, was at work at the time of the 10:30 a.m. blaze.

"My husband (Robert) talked to the oldest boy and he told him he was in the shower and had to go out the back window naked," said Mrs. Ruby Messer, whose house is across the street from the Millers'. She said somebody gave the young man a tank top and sweat pants to wear and her husband gave him a jacket.

The Millers' one-story frame house and its contents were declared a total loss by the Farmington Hills Fire Department, which estimated total damage at \$100,000.

The family was being housed Friday night at a Holiday Inn by their insurer, according to Bob Rebovy, a district fire chief who also is active in Goodfellow.

Please see FIRE, A4

Family shares tradition

BY JENNIFER PLACINTO
STAFF WRITER

When Elaine and Joe Metzger take their 47-year-old daughter, Susan, out for the day, she looks forward to returning home.

And they're glad.

Susan is one of six residents at the Milan Home in Farmington Hills, a Jewish Association for Residential Care (JARC) home for developmentally disabled adults. Susan was institutionalized from age 11 to 40.

"It's a home to them, rather than a place to sleep," Joe said.

Milán Home is one of 18 JARC homes in Oakland County. JARC also offers an independent living program.

"We serve people who are able to live in their

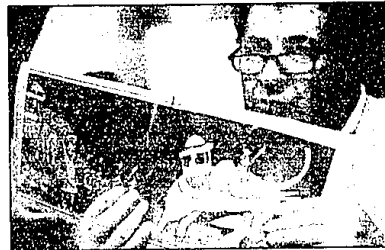
own homes, who need assistance with budgeting, planning... to people who were in hospitals and require 24-hour care," said Margo Berry, Milan Home manager.

Susan has been a resident since the Milan Home opened seven years ago and the Metzgers of Farmington Hills couldn't be more thankful their daughter is out of the hospital and in a home.

As a way of showing their appreciation and spreading cheer on the eve of Hanukkah, the Metzgers decided to tell the story of Hanukkah to the women residents at the home followed by food and a celebration.

"I'm crying, but it's just a joy and my wife and

Please see HANUKKAH, A5



Listen In: Joe Metzger shares the Hanukkah story to residents at the Milan home in Farmington Hills.

Calling all baritone, sopranos, ect. . .

The Farmington/Farmington Hills Community Chorus will be holding auditions for its Spring Session at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 6 and 13, at the Farmington Hills Activity Center, 11 Mile Road just east of Middlebelt Road. If you have ever wanted to sing now is your chance. The chorus performs two major shows each year, a holiday concert and a spring concert as well as singing at the Farmington Founders Festival and at Heritage Park.

The chorus has more than 70 members. Organizers are looking for area residents 18 years of age and older. Musical experience is not necessary but is helpful. All sheet music and a practice tape is pro-

FARMINGTON FOCUS

vided. Contact Chorus Manager, Kathy Hall at 471-4516 for more details.

A dear peer

The Michigan Federation of Private Child & Family Agencies bestowed Youth Living Center's employee and Farmington Hills resident Eugene Hudson with the "Peer Award." Hudson was cited

for his efforts on behalf of children and families and for his ability to inspire and support his peers. Hudson has been chief operating officer at Youth Living Centers for seven years.

A panel of judges representing human service staff from the state gave Hudson high marks in all selection categories, including difficulty and wide range of responsibilities and willingness to speak out for children and families at community and state levels.

Farmington Focus items may be mailed to: 33411 Grand River, Farmington Hills 48185; or faxed to: 248-477-5450.