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IN THE PAPER TODAY

Moving In: The state Liquor Control Commission and two other state agencies will locate in a vacant building in Farmington. /A2

Park it there: Parking and traffic issues at the Downtown Farmington Center mall will require a cooperative effort, city officials say. /A6

OPINION

Where's the credit? Gov. John Engler's State of the State statement left out some historical perspective. /A14

COMMUNITY LIFE

Tale of an Inn: Henry Ford's love of history and willingness to lose millions preserved the Botsford Inn — just one chapter in the storied past of the Farmington area landmark. /B1

SPORTS

City champs: Farmington Harrison overcame North Farmington in three games Monday to win the public school championship in girls volleyball. /C1

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Skateboarding ban on a roll

Adoption set for Feb. 16 meeting

By TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Pro Skate Shop Assistant Manager Tracy Stevens sees a cloudy future for the Farmington Road business if a proposed city ordinance to ban skateboarding in the central business district is approved later this month, as expected.

"I'd probably push them away from the downtown area," Stevens said Tuesday, the day after Farmington City Council members introduced the ordinance. "Now, if they're out there and their board breaks, they'd come in."

Stevens also wonders, and worries, about what might happen to those young people who enjoy performing skateboard tricks in front of her store, a tenant in the Village Mall. She characterized typical skateboarders as being between ages 7 and 25.

If the city follows through on the ordinance, Stevens emphasized that Farmington officials ought to "build a skate park for them to go to. It keeps them off drugs and helps keep them active. If they are not free to skate where they want, then they might resort to other things."

Across Farmington Road at The Pasta Stop, 16-year-old employee Rob Adair seemed surprised that skateboarding is even an issue.

Please see SKATEBOARDING, A5

High school high links on the high seas



STAFF PHOTO BY BRIAN MITCHELL

Sea legs: Farmington High School students warm up for their upcoming performances of "Anything Goes." The show runs through Saturday.

'Anything Goes' sets sail tonight

Farmington High School students in the cast of "Anything Goes" have put in three months of grueling work, said vocal music teacher Evelyn Schuette. They've sacrificed just about everything else to fine-tune their singing, dancing and acting skills in preparation for the Cole Porter musical.

Tonight, those 60 students will begin to be rewarded for that effort. The opening performance is scheduled for 7:30 p.m., in the FHS auditorium. Subsequent shows are set for 7:30 p.m. tomorrow and Saturday.

Those cast members aren't the only ones who have put in a lot of time to the Cabaret cause. Complementing the cast are 30 students in the orchestra and 15 students in a variety of capacities.

Performing the main lead, "Reno," is senior Kelley Odey, who during Monday afternoon's dress rehearsal stepped out in front of the England-to-New York City "ocean liner" to sing the title song.

Other key performers include: junior Kim Yoder, "Hope"; senior Andrew Campbell, "Billy"; sophomore Matt Gwynn, "Sir Evelyn"; junior Stephanie Batkie, "Bonnie" and the show's main tap dancer; and sophomore Nick Ward, gangster "Moonface Martin."

Besides Schuette, drama teachers Richard Burgess and



On board: Stephanie Batkie (left) and Michelle Wallen rehearse their roles earlier this week.

Leanne Walter and instrumental music teacher Norm Logan oversaw the production.

Tickets remain on sale at the high school, and likely will be available at the door each night of the run. They are \$8 for adults and \$7 for students.

For information, call (248) 489-3456.

— Tim Smith

DDA eyes \$3 million makeover

Pedestrian-friendly plan set, but who will pay for it?



By TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Big plans require big bucks. And with \$3 million needed to complete a 12-point "pedestrian-friendly" makeover of the central business district, the next step for Farmington's Downtown Development Authority is to figure out where that money will come from, said Executive Director Judy Downey.

The DDA recently approved landscape architect Grissini/Matz Associates' comprehensive plan and is deciding which projects might fit into its budget for fiscal year 1998-99.

Downey presented a "courtesy" overview of the strategic plan, complete with artist's renderings for all 12 projects, to the Farmington City Council during Monday night's regular meeting. However, changes still could be made to the plan that the DDA executive board approved in January when results of a Wayne State University visioning process for downtown are presented in the spring.

"It's just a courtesy," she explained, "that when we decide to approve a project, that we ask the council for their consideration. They are the main governing body. They appoint the Downtown Development Authority."

According to Downey, the DDA likely will proceed slowly, with two of the less-expensive projects fund-

Please see DDA PLANS, A6

FHS principal takes new post

By TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Just weeks after Farmington High School's selection as a state Blue Ribbon exemplary school, its leader is flying to a higher perch.

Principal James Myers Tuesday night was appointed executive director of instruction and student services. As of July 1, he will take over those duties from Don Cowan, who recently announced his retirement.

"It's a bittersweet situation for me," said Myers, 52, after the board approved his promotion. "I really enjoy Farmington High School. I love what we've got going there."

And life as a Farmington Falcon only stands to get better, with various building improvements scheduled over the next year and a half, projects

Please see SCHOOL POST, A5

Family puts its stamp on local postal service

By TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

When Flossie MacDonald's husband, William, was laid off from his truck driving job in 1968, she knew the Farmington family needed some help to keep the household going.

Then 45 years old, an age where some are already mapping out their golden years, Flossie re-entered the job market after a lengthy hiatus to raise four children. She took a state Civil Services examination and did well enough to land a job as a clerk-carrier with the United States Postal Service.

Late last month, at age 76, Flossie was honored with a full-fledged retirement party at the Farmington Hills branch on 12 Mile Road, on the very day she celebrated 30 years with the postal service. And all four children —

two who have 52 years service with the post office themselves — and seven grandchildren were there to celebrate with her.

"It (the party) was wonderful," said the 72-year-old Farmington resident recently. "I made many friends during my 30-year career."

Meanwhile, Flossie, a widow since 1993, isn't sure what she'll do with all her well-deserved spare time. "Right now, it feels like I'm on an annual leave. It hasn't hit home that I'm never going back. But it's been a good 30 years."

Besides having family with her at the Jan. 22 retirement party, Flossie received plaques and a watch.

"She was good," said daughter Diane MacDonald, herself a postal clerk in

Please see RETIREMENT, A5



STAFF PHOTO BY BRIAN MITCHELL

82 years of service: Flossie MacDonald (center) poses with her son and daughter, David and Diane, after her retirement from the Farmington Hills post office on 12 Mile after 30 years. Between them, the trio has put in more than eight decades with the U.S. Postal Service.

FARMINGTON FOCUS

Farmington, call Mark Fisher at (248) 473-0389. Drakeshire Lanes is located at 35000 Grand River.

Revved up for Autorama

When the 46th annual Detroit Autorama begins on Friday, Feb. 13, two Farmington area hot rod enthusiasts will have their cars on display for others to enjoy.

Randy Hubbard of Farmington Hills will bring his 1968 Chevy Camaro down to Cobo Center.

And Farmington resident Primo Petrucci's 1993 Lynx B Formula V will certainly be among the

attractions.

Autorama runs Feb. 13-15. Admission at the gate is \$12; children under 12 get in for \$5. Advanced tickets are \$10 and \$4 and available at all Belle Tire locations. Call (248) 650-5560 for more information.

It's a police sweep

The Farmington Hills Police Department will receive the 1997 Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police Award during the MACP Mid-Winter Conference banquet Feb. 12.

The MACP Community Policing and Crime Prevention Committee selected the department, which previously won awards at the state and national levels. Hills Chief Bill Dwyer and Assistant Chief Martin Bledsoe will accept the latest award.