

# Farmington Observer

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## Message to Mom

Why is your mother special? Tell us in 50 words or less and you may win lunch or dinner for your mom (and three other people) at a local restaurant. Mail, fax or e-mail entries by noon Friday, May 1.

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Be sure to include your name, your mother's name, your address and telephone number. You may send a photo, however, judging will be based on your message.

We will print as many entries as possible on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 10. The contest is open to readers of all ages.

## THE WEEK AHEAD

### WEDNESDAY

**Honored:** The Farmington Area Jaycees and chamber of commerce host a Prayer Breakfast and Citizen of the Year event at 7:30 a.m. at Great Oaks. Call 851-5674 for tickets.

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## Whether you call him 'Uncle Jack' or 'Grandpa Jack' ...



Front page news: When Jack and Arlene "Barney" Curd were married in 1943, the Detroit Times Newspaper reported the story of how they wed after he survived the sinking of his ship.



## DETROIT TIMES DUKE OF WINDSOR'S FRIEND ARRESTED IN AFRICA AS SPY

Bank, Restaurant, Black Bridge, Indict Worker in Sabotage Here  
... (text continues) ...

## ... Curd is Citizen of Year

"... I was, at different stages of my life, called 'Skinny Jack,' 'Fat Jack,' and 'Crazy Jack' and later ... 'Uncle Jack,' but I didn't care what they called me, as long as they called. See, all of my life I have been a salesman or 'hustler' and the last thing this type of person needs is to be ignored."

"That's The Way It Was" by John D. Curd  
... (text continues) ...

— Cathleen Webb's nominating letter

Payback, give-back. Help the children — and often their parents — learn, understand and appreciate one another and the heritage of the country in which they live.

Although he may not often use these words, they are central to the philosophy guiding 74-year-old Jack Curd of Farmington, who has been named the Farmington Area Jaycees' and Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce's 1998 Citizen of the Year.

Known to literally thousands of area children, teenagers and adults as both "Uncle Jack" and "Grandpa Jack," the retired former Realtor with the warm heart and zest for "doing a deal" (not his words, either) has created special U.S. flag-and-history education programs, raised funds for schools and also made sure area war veterans have gotten due recognition and respect.

"He has, for his age, an insatiable

### 'I expect to keep doing it until I have to hang it up.'

John "Uncle Jack" Curd  
—local volunteer

work ethic and energy level not found in people much younger," said Gill Elementary School principal Michael L. Duff in a nominating letter.

"Uncle Jack's ability to follow through with the things he begins is clearly evident among the people who know him. Jack is always there to do his part."

### More praise

Wrote Cathleen Webb, vice president of the Farmington Public Schools board: "His sincerity, generosity and 'can-do' spirit have enabled him to build bridges among all generations."

"Uncle Jack is an exemplary example of a senior citizen who is highly dedicated to the service of his community," wrote the Flanders Elementary staff.

And Farmington schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield and Jerry Fouchey, curriculum and staff development director, said Curd "has established a standard for community service in this community that is unparalleled."

Although his current involvement with kids and the community got going in earnest in the fall of 1993, when he was asked to help raise money to send the Farmington High School Band to France for the 50th anniversary of the Normandy Invasion or D-Day, the defining moment for Curd probably took place 51 years earlier.

At 10:10 A.M. Oct. 26, 1942, a Japanese armor-piercing bomb slammed through the top two steel decks of the aircraft carrier USS Hornet before exploding on the third deck, where Seaman Third Class Jack Curd and 59 other sailors were.

It was during the battle for Guadalcanal in the Philippines during World War II and Curd, who happened to be sandwiched between his best friend Michael and another sailor, suffered burns to his hands and face and took shrapnel. But Michael was one of 48 sailors killed and the other sailor was blinded.

For Curd, it was one of those fabled "Million-Dollar Injuries" that got the husky, red-haired farm boy from the plains of Nebraska and Dakota a hospital convalescence and then a 30-day pass back to Detroit, where he'd earlier served as orderly to "The Doc," then-Navy Ensign Henry Ford II, and had met Arlene McGinnis.

Wedding bells

Nicknamed "Barney" by friends for her Barney Google "Goo-Goo-Googly Eyes" — a popular comic strip and song of the time — Arlene had written Curd daily after he shipped out. They wed during his leave and, nine months later, Curd had the first of his four children, whom he named Michael after his fallen buddy.

Curd still hadn't seen his son, though, and wasn't sure he would if he continued in hot combat zones. So he began using his contacts and power

to make sure it showed what I thought it showed."

She bought the ticket at the Kroger on 12 Mile in Farmington Hills.

Help pick a diamond

The Farmington Area Commission on Aging is seeking nominations for its 1998 Diamond Award, which honors a Farmington area resident age 75 or over who remains active in service to the Farmington area community. The service may be paid or volunteer.

This year's award winner will be honored at the annual seniors recognition breakfast on Tuesday,

May 12, at the Costick Center in Farmington Hills.

To nominate someone, send a short statement that is typed or handwritten by April 23. Please include the name and age of the nominee, a short description of the type and length of service to the community. Mail nominations to the Farmington Area Commission on Aging at 31555 11 Mile, Farmington Hills, Mich. 48336. Nominations may also be faxed to 489-1581. For more details, call Carl Christoph at 489-1576.

Performance on tap

Jennifer Paige Hoemke, the current Miss Farmington/Hills, will be performing during the International Women's Show planned April 30 through May 3 at the Novi Expo Center.

She is scheduled to perform on both May 1 and May 2.

## Witness sought in Hills hit-run

■ A 53-year-old Farmington Hills man was still in critical condition Friday after a hit and run accident near his home. Police are looking for a Ford Escort, but they need witnesses.



Farmington Hills police were still hoping late Friday that someone would come forward with information about a hit-and-run incident early Thursday on Nine Mile Road near Inkster.

They were seeking the driver of what they believe is a mid-1980s Ford Escort which may have struck and critically injured a 53-year-old Hills man walking on the roadside.

Potentially, the driver faces felony hit-and-run charges and charges of leaving the scene of an accident and failure to render aid.

The victim, James William Rogers Jr., suffered broken legs and multiple trauma, according to a Detsford Hospital spokesperson. He reportedly underwent lengthy surgery Thursday and still had not regained consciousness Friday afternoon.

The incident closed Nine Mile Road for several hours Thursday morning as police gathered clues — their only good information as of late Friday.

"We need to talk to him, but unfortunately, he's still unconscious," said Lt. Dennis Green of the FHPD traffic section.

Debris found on the road included a

Please see HIT-RUN, A9

## Detroit failed to pick up missing guns — Dwyer

Police Chief William Dwyer said his Farmington Hills department keeps close track of its officers' weapons through an annual serial-number inventory.

Furthermore, the FHPD does not allow officers to take guns when they retire, though they may purchase their duty weapons.

Those policies were enumerated Thursday afternoon for the Observer in the wake of an investigation by the Detroit Police Department into the whereabouts of more than 120 of its weapons.

Dwyer was embarrassed to find himself a part of the investigation and resented the insinuation he had done anything wrong — particularly since he thought the Detroit weapons had been picked up by Detroit Police over a decade ago.

The problem, he said, lies with the Detroit PD's misadventure in 1985 of his repeated efforts to return the weapons after he left that department to become the Hills chief.

"They waited 13 years" to look for the weapons, he said angrily on Thursday. He also resented the implication

Please see GUNS, A9

### 40 years later

The Farmington High School class of 1958 is planning to gather once again to celebrate its 40th reunion.

Members of the 190-student graduating class are being sought. Contact Ross Byron at (810) 229-4474 or (810) 227-2916.

### No hurry to break the bank

A Farmington Hills woman who said she's "always been lucky" but wanted to keep her identity private recently won the \$250,000 top prize in the "Break the Bank" instant lottery game.

"I was buying Lotto tickets and asked to see the selection of instant tickets," she said. "I decided to buy 'Break the Bank,' then I went home, fixed dinner and read the mail. Then I remembered the tickets. I couldn't believe it. I kept looking at the ticket

## FARMINGTON FOCUS

to make sure it showed what I thought it showed."

She bought the ticket at the Kroger on 12 Mile in Farmington Hills.

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## 'Stuck in a swamp' on tax issue

Farmington Hills resident John Hubbard listened for 90 minutes Wednesday night to a panel discuss the various aspects — and shortcomings — of the federal income tax system and ways to improve it.

But Hubbard came away from the program at the Oakland Community College Orchard Ridge campus in Farmington Hills feeling as if there's little hope for resolving the complex problem anytime soon.

"I now appreciate the difficulty of resolving this issue," said Hubbard. "It's like getting stuck in a swamp. How do you get back out? It's not easy."

As Hubbard spoke, he watched others from the near-capacity audience converge on panelists Joe Knollenberg, John Mach and David Sowerby to continue some of the two-way dialogue that took place at the Wallace Smith Theatre.

U.S. Congressman Knollenberg, R-Bloomfield Township, who represents the 11th District, presented "A Tax Cut Forum: Where We Are Today; Where We Need To Go Tomorrow." In part to reiterate his 1997 proposal to slash taxes across-the-board, by 5 percent.

Please see TAXES, A8

