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TODAY

OPINION

Message: The Farmington Hills City Council sends the wrong message to residents living near Botsford Hospital. / A12

AT HOME

Concrete Ideas: Retaining walls offer a variety of styles to add beauty to the yard. / D8

ENTERTAINMENT

Family fun: Make plans to attend the 149th annual Highland Games at Greenmead Historical Park in Livonia. / F1

Music: You don't have to travel to Boston to hear this famous "Pops" orchestra. It'll be performing at the Fox Theatre in Detroit on Aug. 1. / E1

REAL ESTATE

Staying safe: Real estate professionals face special challenges when showing homes. / F1

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Webb takes helm

■ Cathy Webb was elected president of the Farmington School Board Tuesday.



The new president of the Farmington Board of Education isn't new to the leadership role at all. Cathy Webb, who was unanimously selected Tuesday night to oversee the school board during 1998-99, served at the helm in back-to-back years earlier this decade. She succeeds Linda Enberg.

Both during and after the meeting, Webb, 46, downplayed the selection and instead emphasized that Farmington's school board is driven by teamwork.

"It's an honor to be able to serve in the capacity of president," Webb said following the meeting. "But again, it is really only one role. I believe the strength of this board is its seven mem-

Please see SCHOOLS, A6

It's been 1 year for teen

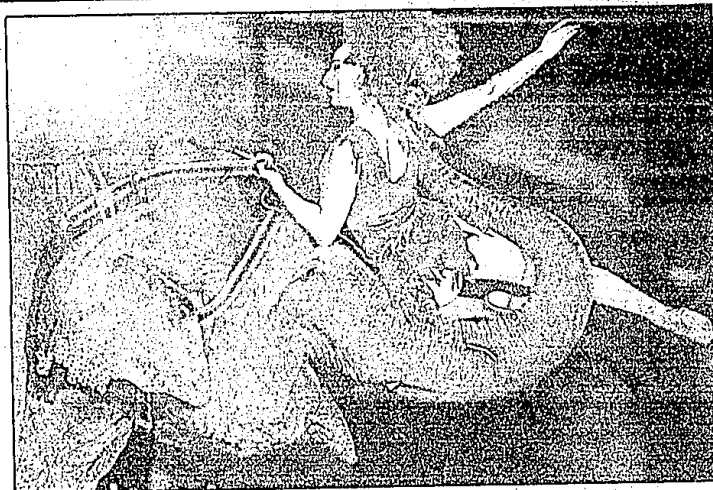
Exactly one year ago today, Melissa Garr was poolside at Farmington Glen Aquatic Center. She was baby-sitting three children when a heavy tree branch fell for no apparent reason. The branch struck Melissa on the head, knocking her into a coma and jolting an entire community.

Please see related story page A3

Many miraculous things have happened - and continue to happen - since then, as Melissa recovered to the point where she returned to Farmington High School as a part-time student during the second semester of the 1997-98 school year.

At 8 p.m. Thursday, July 30, Melissa

Please see TEEN, A2



Presenting: Viola the elephant has a role more glamorous than just raising the big top as she makes her entrance under the big top of the Kelly Miller Circus Saturday in Founders Sports Park.

Under the big top

The greatest show comes to town

With the greatest of ease, the big top went up as did expectations and excitement.

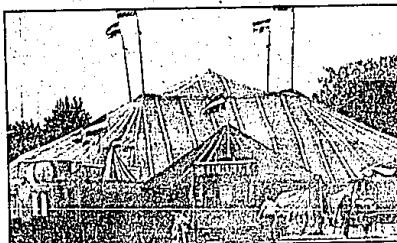
On Saturday morning, Kelly Miller Circus caravans arrived to set up in Farmington Hills Founders Sports Park. At least 100 circus-curious folks popped in to see Viola, the elephant, yank the chains on the tent poles upwards.



Smile: Matthew Lederer gets a circus balloon from a clown.

Those who turned out couldn't help but appreciate the feat of strength and, ultimately, of time.

Kelly Miller's traveling outfit is one of only eight tent circuses remaining in the country. That number has dwindled from 14 has dwindled from last year. Insurance, traveling costs and a lack of interest are cited as reasons for the traveling tent circuses' decline.



What a sight! The big top is up and ready to invite guests Saturday. The Kelly Miller Circus is one of the few old-fashioned circuses left in America.

"When these kids grow up, there will be no more tent circuses left," said Pop Corn, a Kelly Miller Circus clown who provided an overview through a megaphone during the tent raising. "So, you kids are all a part of history."

Before the television age, the traveling circus often provided the sole source of entertainment.

With its ditty clowns, daring feats and dazzling animal acts, the lure of the traveling show was not to be

Please see CIRCUS, A5

Marks says he'll vote your conscience

Ben Marks' survival in political circles didn't come by pacifying people.

"I can't please everybody; I can't be everything to everybody. All I can be is the best representative I can be," said Marks, 75, who is seeking the Republican nomination in the 19th District Oakland County Commissioners race.

The primary is Aug. 4. Marks is pitted against Jeanne Molin and Farmington Hills Council member Terry Sever in the GOP runoff for the seat held by longtime commissioner Donn Wolf.

Marks, who is director of Longcove Community House, is well-versed in Farmington Hills politics. He served on city council from 1983-92, including a term as mayor in 1987.

He served a term as president of the Michigan Municipal League.

Prior to elective office, the licensed builder served on the planning commission and charter commission. In his wake, he left a few broken eggs shells behind. "I don't know if I shoot from the hip, but I'm forthright," Marks said. "You'll see me coming all the time."

Please see MARKS, A3



Loyal patron: Harry Avagian uses the Farmington Hills library almost every day as a place to tutor students. He is working with student Brandon Pavach.

Voters go to polls for 3rd time on library

For the third time in less than a decade, a tax proposal to improve the Farmington Community Library will be decided by voters.

But this time, things are different. Or, at least Library Director Beverly Pappi hopes they are. Voters will decide on an \$11.7 million proposal during the Tuesday, Aug. 4 primary election.

According to Pappi, the third tax attempt was put together only after receiving significant feedback - from the Farmington and Farmington Hills city councils and from residents - about why previous bids in 1989 and

1993 were not successful.

Pappi said this year's version is so far garnering positive response from the public. She cited at least two reasons: It's a "grassroots" campaign, fueled by the efforts of many volunteers; residents like the idea of expanding the Hills branch, at its current 12 Mile Road location, instead of building a new facility elsewhere.

"We looked at the fact that voters twice said no new library at a new location," Pappi said.

Both city councils also helped spark

Please see HISTORY, A6

Improvements eyed for both libraries

Please see related story page A4

"This moat will disappear," said Beverly Pappi, looking through the window toward the south side of the Farmington Hills branch of the Farmington Community Library.

But the director of the two-branch library will be the first to tell you that enhancing her window view isn't what the \$11.7 million tax proposal is about. It's about eliminating a space rut - and bringing the heavily used libraries into the 21st century.

Voters will have an opportunity to make that happen during the primary election on Tuesday, Aug. 4.

If the package wins at the polls, that moat area outside Pappi's current office would be replaced by a 36,000-square-foot addition, linked to the existing concrete-over-steel 1972 facility by a breezeway for the central circuitry by a breezeway for the central circuitry.

Another \$2.4 million would renovate the Hills facility, with \$1.02 million in improvements for the 23-year-old Farmington branch. Pappi said both branches are among the most heavily used public libraries in Michigan.

"Our needs are critical," Pappi continued. "Without relief things will not improve ... We have the reputation as one of the best libraries in the state."

Farmington Community Library Millage

If approved, the .6 mill over 15 years will cost the average homeowner with a home assessed at \$100,000 (and with a market value of \$200,000) \$60 a year or \$6 a month.



We can't continue that with the (space) limitations we have.

The proposal calls for a 0.6-mill tax for 15 years. The owner of a home assessed at \$100,000, with a market value of \$200,000, would pay \$60 more per year in taxes.

Please see MILLAGE, A5

