

# Farmington Observer

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## THE WEEK AHEAD

**On stage:** Think of tomorrow and take in Mercy High School's "Annie" for a matinee at 2 p.m. in the school auditorium. Tickets are \$7 for students and children and \$10 for adults at the door.

### MONDAY

**Moving:** The Secretary of State office at 35576 Grand River will close at 5 p.m. in preparation for a move to a new location at 35572 Grand River on March 26. Residents may do business at the Livonia, West Bloomfield or Southfield branches.

**Agenda:** The Farmington Hills City Council will meet at 7:30 p.m. in council chambers, 31555 11 Mile.

### TUESDAY

**Meet:** The Farmington Board of Education will meet at 7:30 p.m. at Lewis Schulman Administrative Center, 32500 Shawwassee.

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## Malan Realty gathers property



By LARRY O'CONNOR  
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Depending on who's talking, some residents in a northwest Farmington Hills neighborhood are holding on, holding out or holding up when it comes to selling their land. A developer wants buy residential property in the Clairview area to build

Some of the residents in the Clairview area say they aren't being offered good prices for their land that Malan Realty wants to use for a shopping center and condominiums. Realtors, meanwhile, are getting impatient.

A shopping center and condominium project.

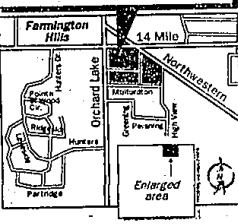
So far, Malan Realty has options on 50 percent of residential property. A spokesman wants to see that near 80 percent soon and is growing impatient. "I wouldn't call it difficulties," said Michael Kaline of Malan Realty. "We're still in the process of assembling the land. We have a pro-forma we feel that

works, with assistance from the city. "However, as these people raise their prices above what's offered, it makes the deal not work."

Meanwhile, the city-approved \$72.8 million planned unit development in the Orchard Lake, 14 Mile and North-western triangle is close to clearing other hurdles.

Landing a yet-to-be-named retailer to anchor the commercial part of the project, which already includes a Kmart - not a Super Kmart as originally planned. The upscale retailer expressed interest but hasn't provided

### New center planned



Please see PROPERTY, A5

## Historian brings Civil War to life

By TIM SMITH  
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Thanks to Civil War historian Jim Neely, Power Middle School students can scrap the CD-ROM version of the infamous North-South showdown. Neely brought the bloody 1860s war back to life for students, through his "Traveling Museum of Living History." With a haversack slung over one arm and a cartridge box over the other, he presented an authentic, first-person story of young Civil War soldier Henry Randall, who was in the Iron Brigade-24th Michigan and fought at Gettysburg.

All the stories I tell are true and documented," through the researching of diaries and letters, Neely said afterward.

Students sat in the cafeteria and listened intently as Neely revisited Randall's world. The historian based his heavily detailed presentation from journals Birmingham's Randall wrote in 1861 to 1863.

Standing on the stage wearing a replica uniform of the kind worn by Union soldiers, Neely meshed intricate details, sights and sounds (blanks fired from a musket, for example) of what Randall and his platoon went through.

Meanwhile, the presentation began with some interaction with students,



How it was: Jim Neely, a local historian, impersonates a Civil War soldier for students at Power Middle School.

Please see CIVIL, A5

## Summer brings road projects

By TIM SMITH  
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Farmington residents living in the south end of the city can expect plenty of orange cones and construction vehicles to deal with this summer.

City council members Monday night awarded a \$569,000 bid for the 1999 paving program to Hard Rock Concrete of Westland. The firm will rip out - and then replace - deteriorated concrete on several residential streets between Eight-Nine Mile and east of Farmington Road, in the Farmington Meadows subdivision.

Work will take place on Maplenut, Chestnut, Tall Oaks, Tall Oaks Ct., Kirby, Annewood, Birchwood, Robinwood, Laurelwood, Meadowlark (between Flanders and Birchwood), Flanders (between Birchwood and Meadowlark), Meadowlark Court and Salvador.

Also planned is removal of the west half of Mooney Street between Grand River and Shawwassee and the tearing out and replacement of the south side of Shawwassee, between Grand River and Farmington.

Those projects will begin early in the spring construction season, so that they will be completed by mid-summer. The council received 11 bids for the

### FARMINGTON

Please see ROADS, A5

## Freshmen will get 'real' sneak preview

By TIM SMITH  
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Thursday, June 3, could be an eye-opener for eighth-graders in Farmington Public Schools.

According to district committee recommendations for middle school-to-high school transition, that date is the projected "moving up" day - to give 1999-2000 freshmen a chance to get a real sneak preview of the

next four years.

"We're really excited about the Moving Up Day," said Farmington High School Principal John Barrett, who at last week's school board meeting detailed recommendations from the middle school-to-high school transition study committee. "We'll be enrolling (current eighth graders) in classes earlier, so that, on June 3, they will go through their (ninth grade) schedules."

One benefit of a test run is it would reduce the anxiety of making the jump from middle school to high school, often a difficult transition. That was the topic of a mock school board meeting during Friday's annual "Students Operating Schools" day.

According to the committee report, there is national research data indicating that "the freshman year

Please see TRANSITION, A6

### FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS



Editor's note: From now until the debut of the Festival of the Arts April 25-May 2 at the William Costick Activities Center we will highlight the myriad of clubs and organizations that comprise the Farmington Community Arts Council, which hosts the week-long festival.

#### Farmington Artists Club

The club - one of the oldest creative endeavors in the Farmington area - boasts approximately 140 members.

One of the headliners and contributors of the weeklong festival, the club has two shows annually: one during the spring festival, the other in the fall at the Spicer House in Heritage Park. The juried shows are restricted to members.

Club members concentrate on fine arts with a variety of mediums.

The club, which had its first exhibit in 1968, meets the second Wednesday of September, October, November, January, February, March, April and May.

Please see ARTS, A4

## Cell phone linked to accident

A dropped cellular telephone led to a one-car accident about 11:20 a.m. Thursday, near Farmington-Grand River in downtown Farmington, police said. The driver, northbound on Farmington about one block south of Grand River, lost control of his sports car and plowed into a building near Luigi's Trattoria. Police said he veered his car sharply to the right and jumped the curb to avoid a stopped vehicle. The driver told officers he dropped his cellular telephone to the floor of his car, bent down to pick it up while still driving, and then saw the stopped vehicle in front of him when he straightened back up. He sustained a scrape to the scalp area, and was



Craah: The man who was driving this car was not seriously injured when he slammed into a building on Grand River to avoid hitting a vehicle stopped in front of him.

STAFF PHOTO BY BILL DRESLER

transported by ambulance to Betsford Hospital as a precaution, said Farmington Public Safety Cmdr. Maria Putt. He was subsequently released.

## MEAP scores few parents

By TIM SMITH  
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Only about 40 of the estimated 700 parents who have juniors attending Farmington Public Schools attended Tuesday's parent information meeting about the Michigan Educational Assessment Program High School Test.

But Barbara Cherem, director of assessment for the district, walked out of O.E. Dunckel Middle School feeling a little bit better than she did after attending a similar meeting in 1998. Following last year's meeting, many parents waived their children from taking the beleaguered state standardized test; only about 16 percent of eligible juniors actually took it.

Please see MEAP, A8

