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THE WEEK AHEAD

Come one, come all: It's Family Day in Heritage Park on Farmington Road in Farmington Hills. Have fun and food noon-5 p.m. The Farmington Historical Museum is also open 1-5 p.m.

MONDAY

Cruisin': Co-hosted by The Pasta Stop and Page's Food and Spirits, all car enthusiasts are invited to attend Cruise the Grand 5-9 p.m. in the parking lot on the southwest corner of Grand and Farmington.

WEDNESDAY

Animal-manla: Downtown Farmington's Summer Fun Series closes its season with a petting zoo at 10:30 a.m. and noon Wednesday, Aug. 4, under the tent in the Downtown Farmington Shopping Center. Carousel Acres brings a variety of farm animals for kids to view and pet. Parents, of course, are welcome.

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Woman safe after escape from robbers

By LARRY O'CONNOR
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A woman said she tumbled out of a slow-moving car to escape armed robbers in a Farmington Hills shopping center Thursday afternoon.

The victim, a 33-year-old Detroit woman, didn't sustain any injuries. Police found her crying hysterically in the doorway of Kohl's, shortly from the incident took place in the Target Plaza Shopping Center on Grand River Avenue.

Police have no suspects but immediately recovered the car at a nearby apartment complex.

"It's an unfortunate incident," said Hills police Chief Bill Dwyer. "What the original intent of the carjacker was, we're not exactly sure."

Around 4:20 p.m., a man shoved the woman onto the back seat of her 1999 red Lexus as she was loading items. She had been shopping at Target and returned to her car parked in the southeast lot when the man approached from behind.

As he pushed her, the man said "Get into the car." She started to kick at the man,

Please see SAFE, A3



Hi there: Evelyn Homan, a patient at Botsford Hospital's Rehabilitation Department, gets a big kiss from Wendel as he makes his rounds among the patients.

Making the rounds

By RICHARD PEARL
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Laughter is the best medicine, but smiling isn't far behind, judging from the happy faces of patients this week in Botsford Hospital's 20-bed Rehabilitation Department.

Tuesday's case of the grins was caused by a pack of four-legged "physicians" making rounds without giving shots, poking or prodding body parts or asking any questions.

DR. PAWS

They were the "doctors" from Doctor Paws of Farmington Hills, an organization which provides dogs and cats trained and certified in pet-assisted therapy for the hospital's rehab patients.

"Instead of prescribing medicine, they are the medicine," said Kathryn Bartz, Botsford

Please see DR. PAWS, A3

Saying goodbye Not easy when co-workers are like family

By LARRY O'CONNOR
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After answering the phone for 20 years, Dorothy Savage found that it's hard to hang it up.

Savage, 72, has retired as a receptionist in Farmington Hills City Hall, where they estimate she may have answered nearly a million calls during her tenure.

Co-workers and officials as well as family fete the "voice of Farmington Hills" during a reception Thursday in City Council Chambers.

"She's like the gatekeeper," said Pam Wright, a secretary in the City Manager's Office.

Savage, who received two dozen roses and a bouquet of well-wishes, answered phones in the middle of city hall's reception area.

She served as an information center for visitors, a cheerful face to regulars and a compassionate ear for those frustrated or confused.

Before voice-mail and direct dial, Savage answered 1,000 calls a day on the switchboard.

Phones rang non-stop from 8:30 a.m. until her break at 10 a.m., she said. Savage would arrive earlier to brace for the onslaught.

RETIREMENT



Remember when? Dorothy Savage, at right, tells a few stories about her 20 years at the city switchboard to Marilyn Richardson and Assistant Chief Richard Niemisto.

Please see BYE, A4

Cattleman's owner says he can relate to crisis

By LARRY O'CONNOR
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High-profile health alerts like the hepatitis A outbreak traced to a Farmington Hills eatery leave symptoms long after illnesses go away.

An owner of a former Farmington market can relate to what proprietors at Roosevelt's Bar and Grill are going through. The Hills eatery on 12 Mile and Orchard Lake is believed to be the source of several reported Hepatitis A cases.

County health officials cited an air condenser at Cattleman's Market in Farmington as the source of bacteria whose airborne transmission led to a Legionnaire's disease outbreak in 1996.

A civil suit is pending in Oakland County Circuit Court over the 1996 outbreak in which four people died and 30 became ill.

The same law firm, Thurswell, Chayot & Weiner in Southfield, is handling that case as well as recent suits already filed against Roosevelt's.

The Cattleman's store in Uptown Plaza closed December 1997.

Cattleman's officials said sales volume was down before the outbreak, but publicity from the Legionnaire's outbreak didn't help.

"It almost broke me," said Marcus Rohbart, Cattleman's owner who still operates stores in the Detroit metro area. "I feel bad about anybody (who goes through this). I feel bad about the people who got sick. I feel bad about the business."

Media reports unintentionally make such outbreaks sound as if they're caused on purpose, Rohbart said. "No one does this intentionally," he added. In Roosevelt's case, Farmington Hills police weren't so sure at first.

Authorities investigated whether a former cook who was described as disgruntled played a role in the hepatitis A outbreak at Roosevelt's. By Friday, Hills police Chief Bill Dwyer called the reports "unlikely."

Hills police investigators got involved after a report surfaced Wednesday that a former employee may have tampered with food.

An employee, who has since quit, told Westland police she heard a second-hand account from a cook, who said a colleague purposely defecated onto food to get back at management.

Investigators became wary of the report after checking health department charts and interviewing past and current employees.

No one else could verify or heard rumors about the alleged incident, Dwyer said. Five employees are among those who have become ill.

As of Friday afternoon, Oakland County Health Department officials confirmed 29 cases.

"If you're going to do it as an act of revenge, you'd have to do it several times, not just one random act," Dwyer said. "It doesn't add up at this point."

Roosevelt's owners have been cooperative and helpful during the joint

Please see CONCERN, A4



Popular: North Farmington football players (from left) Zach Lessauy, Ron Chika and Brian Lafer congratulate Richard (Rick) Jones on his appointment as principal.

Alumnus takes the helm

By RICHARD PEARL
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"Teachers and coaches have always been my heroes, and that will never change," Richard B. (Rick) Jones vowed on Wednesday. Jones, a popular teacher and coach, himself, at his own alma mater, North Farmington High School, spoke those words after becoming the first North graduate ever to be named its principal.

The youthful looking 50-year-old educator, who also has been North assistant principal four of the 12

years since he returned to the school from a post in Florida, was unanimously endorsed as principal Wednesday afternoon by the board of education.

Noting the very appreciative standing-room-only crowd at Farmington Public Schools district headquarters, Superintendent Dr. C. Robert Maxfield Jr. said it was "an unprecedented number of faculty, students and friends" for such an event, while veteran board member R. Jack Inch drew laughs when he said of the applause for Jones,

Please see NORTH, A5

