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Bates is Hills mayor in landslide



Nancy Bates is the new Hills elected mayor, trouncing challenger George Sarkisian out of the running. She took 80 percent of the vote.

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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Nancy Bates left tire tracks that her automotive analyst opponent would have needed an odometer to measure. Bates rolled over George Sarkisian — a Ford Motor Co. warranty analyst — by garnering 80 percent of the vote in Tuesday's Farmington Hills mayoral race. Bates succeeds Aldo Vagnozzi, who couldn't run because of term limits. The 10-year city council member had four-fifths of the absentee vote. Her support continued to pile up at the polls where only 16 percent of the city's electorate turned out. "I've been here for a long time," Bates said during a celebration at San Marino Golf Course's Off the Tee restaurant. "I think people have understood and appreciated the things I've tried to do and the things I've accomplished."

The former legislative aide to state Rep. Jan Dolan had the backing of council colleagues and much of the area's political movers. She was endorsed by the Farmington Area Republican Club and other groups. Some of those helping on her campaign included: Farmington School Board member Cathy Webb, former Hills councilwoman JoAnne Smith, former Farmington Children and Family Foundation Chairman Richard Duguanno and former Hills City Manager Bill Costick. By contrast, Sarkisian ran as an outsider. His proposed 10-acre, self-titled "George Sarkisian Fields of Freedom" animal park didn't galvanize support. Neither did his attacks on Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi, who he said was "pompous." Sarkisian also criticized Bates for her condoning former councilman Terry Seaver's position as a consultant to a developer, who was bidding on a city project. The developer later withdrew from consideration. "I was very disappointed that the candidates founders had such a negative tone," Bates said. "I was very offended by his attacks on Aldo. They were uncalled for and inaccurate."



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BAZZOLA
Appreciative: Nancy Bates thanks supporters for her election win.

Please see **BATES, A4**

Electoral Results '99

MAYOR	
Nancy Bates - 7,688	
George Sarkisian - 1,774	
FARMINGTON CITY COUNCIL	
JoAnne McShane - 966	
Bill Hartsock - 762	
Jim Mitchell - 678	
Steve Dibert - 279	
FARMINGTON HILLS CITY COUNCIL	
Wald Summit - 7,458	
Nancy Bates - 4,988	
Chris Mallico - 4,549	
Ronald Oliverio - 3,724	
Paul Molin - 1,886	
FARMINGTON BALLOT PROPOSALS	
Charter amendment 1	YES: 787 NO: 218
Charter amendment 2	YES: 746 NO: 209
Charter amendment 3	YES: 688 NO: 245
FARMINGTON HILLS BALLOT PROPOSALS	
Proposal A	YES: 5,321 NO: 3,676
Proposal B	YES: 3,818 NO: 5,002
Proposal C	YES: 2,843 NO: 6,869
Proposal D	YES: 6,068 NO: 3,102
Proposal E	YES: 2,978 NO: 6,869
Proposal F	YES: 4,021 NO: 3,687
Proposal G	YES: 4,569 NO: 3,567
UNOFFICIAL VOTE TOTALS	

IN THE PAPER TODAY

On stage: Two students from Our Lady of Sorrows School have roles in the currently running MOT production of "Werther."/B1

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STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BAZZOLA
Quittin' time: Precinct 6 pollworker Jan Freude cleans up at the end of a long election day. Few residents chose to vote. The last vote came through this precinct about 7 pm, an hour before the polls closed.



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BAZZOLA
The winners are... Jim Mitchell, Bill Hartsock and JoAnne McShane watched the first returns in from the 1st precinct. The three incumbents beat challenger Steve Dibert.

Incumbents returned

BY TIM SMITH
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Five of six precincts in Farmington were counted. There was no doubt city council incumbents William Hartsock, JoAnne McShane and James Mitchell would prevail over challenger Stephen Dibert. But the incumbents wouldn't congratulate each other until the final totals were in at Farmington City Hall. "You never know," said an obviously relieved Hartsock moments after the results were announced. "You just ... don't

know. You can't take it (victory) for granted," said Hartsock, a 26-year council member. Faced with Farmington's first contested city council election since 1993, the winning candidates gave a collective sigh of relief. "I'm happy it's over," said McShane, the top vote-getter with 805 votes. She won a four-year term, as did Hartsock, who collected 762 votes. Third-place finisher Mitchell earned a two-year term with 675 votes, while Dibert trailed with 279 votes.

Please see **RESULTS, A4**

Voters approve amendments

BY TIM SMITH
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Tuesday's overwhelming approval at the polls of three amendments to Farmington's city charter did not surprise JoAnne McShane. McShane, one of three incumbents re-elected to the city council, said the wide margin of victory for the ballot proposals indicated that "the voters are confident we know what we're doing. They're showing their support" by approving the amendments. All three proposals received at least 73 percent of the total 968 votes cast. The city has 7,694 registered voters. Following is a breakdown of how each proposal fared: Charter Amendment 1, to increase the annual salary of the mayor and council members from \$900 to \$1,800; yes, 737 (77.2 percent); no, 218 (22.8 percent). Charter Amendment 2, to drop from three years to one year the residency requirement for those interested in serving on city boards and commissions; yes, 746 (76.1 percent); no, 209, (21.9 percent).

Please see **PROPOSALS, A5**

Opening Friday



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BAZZOLA
Local bands An excited Anne Shirley, played by Kelli Fortuna, takes home for the first time with the winners' trophies, played by Matt Ziskie. Both are cast members in the Mercy High School Fall play, *Acts of Ocean Gables*, at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Nov. 5 and 6, and 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 7, in the school auditorium at 11 Mile and Middlebelt in Farmington Hills. Tickets are \$6 and may be purchased at the door or by calling the school, (248) 478-8820, ext. 223.

Barnett nabs most votes

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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As a city council candidate, Chris McRae said he possessed insight of what it's like raising a young family. To that end, McRae's abbreviated victory party spoke volumes. While his new colleagues still revelled in their respective triumphs Tuesday, McRae was loading up the van. By 10 p.m., his celebration was well over. His children Megan, 4, and Kiera, 10 months, were pooped, he explained. Wife Maureen took the kids home. "She's happy this (campaign) is over," McRae said. "As much support as we had, it's still a lot of work." McRae, with 4,549 votes, outdistanced Ron Oliverio (3,724) and Paul



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BAZZOLA
Winner: Top vote-getter Vicki Barnett gets a few more votes from husband Mark Steckhoff and son Jordan.

Please see **HILLS, A4**

Council, mayor get pay hike

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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Farmington Hills voters decided to give the city's elected officials a raise but also said nay to three other proposed charter amendments Tuesday. Proposal A passed with 59 percent of the electorate in a 5,216-3,676 vote. Hills council members' salaries will increase from \$1,800 to \$5,000, while the mayor's pay rate goes from \$2,700 to \$7,500.

The pay increase is the first since 1973; when the city charter was drafted. Voters supported what were largely viewed as changes to keep up with the times. "They get paid nothing for the time they put in," said Cheryl Pellitteri, who voted at East Middle School. "They're not asking for a lot more." Voters rejected Proposal B, which would have allowed the city to create additional departments beyond the five allowed in the

Please see **CHARTER, A5**



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