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ASSESSMENT RENEWAL:

Eyed for downtown shopping district

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Farmington's city council last week gave its blessing to the proposed five-year Principal Shopping District special assessment district renewal. Now, it's property owners' turn.

A public hearing on the renewal is tentatively scheduled for 8 p.m. Monday, Oct. 19, at Farmington City Hall, 23600 Liberty.

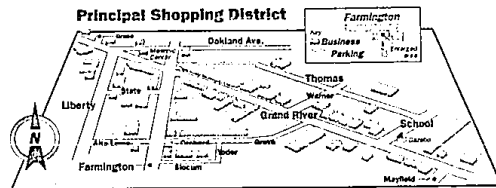
"At that time, anybody with concerns is welcome to step forward," said Judy

Downey, executive director of the Farmington Downtown Development Authority.

If approved, non-residential property owners in the Principal Shopping District - identical to the DDA - would generate a total of about \$650,000 during the years 1999-2003. Just as importantly, it would enable some of the smart-looking improvements of the past few years to be maintained well into the next decade.

Please see ASSESS, A6

Principal Shopping District



IN THE PAPER TODAY

OPINION

Opportunity: You have to protect yourself from crimes of opportunity./A14

Guess again: Learn the state Open Meetings Act./A14

COMMUNITY LIFE

Bond: Through a YMCA-sponsored program, parents and children learn to bond and to learn some Native American ways./B1

SPORTS

At stake: When Walled Lake Western visits Harrison Saturday, the game will most likely determine who wins the Western Division and plays for the league title in late October./Section C

AT HOME

Dream rooms: Area designers put creativity and imagination to work in the Designers' Show House./D6

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STAFF PHOTOS BY BILL BERKHAUSER

Waiting: At long last, Teresa Liang and David Zhang embrace, seconds after they were pronounced husband and wife by Farmington Hills Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi.

Kismet

Couple marries 11 years after first meeting

BY RICHARD PEARL
STAFF WRITER

Monday was very special for David Zhang and Teresa Liang.

It was Sept. 28, the day in 1987 in Shanghai in their native China that the couple first met and the day this past week - 11 years later - they exchanged marriage vows in a civil ceremony at Farmington Hills City Hall.

The date also had special significance for Teri Arbenowake, assistant to the city manager, who was a special guest at their wedding.

She not only helped arrange the couple's civil ceremony officiated by Hills Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi, but also helped David decide to establish his import/export business in the city.

But most of all, Sept. 28 was special for Teresa and David.

"I still remember the morning we met, just like it happened yesterday," the happy bride said of that long ago day half a world away, when the two saw each other on a bus as they headed for school. She was then 17, he 19, but it was kismet.

Please see KISMET, A11



Begin: At top, bride and groom Teresa Liang and David Zhang enter the city council chambers. In center, Teri Arbenowake, assistant to city manager, holds the rings, while friends Kevin Burch and Yvonne Macey witness the ceremony, performed by Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi (above).

Burglaries increasing in the Hills

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Burglary numbers are up in Farmington Hills, but unlike baseball's home run derby, police officials are not looking at the digits glowingly.

After 40 reported burglary complaints in August, the city is on pace to equal the 496 cases in 1996. This follows a sharp decrease in 1997 when only 372 break-ins were reported.

In 13 of the past 14 years, burglaries have dropped and overall statistics compare favorably to 932 cases reported in 1984.

Nonetheless, Hills crime prevention folks are asking residents to be more vigilant in safeguarding their homes. That includes:

- Making sure locks are safe and sufficient;
- Maintaining well-lit houses and garages;
- Trimming bushes, shrubs and trees to make sure they don't become hiding places for burglars; and,
- Keeping garage doors locked and shut, especially those attached to homes.

Please see BURGLARIES, A7

Beanie Chase in demand

BY MARY RODRIQUE
STAFF WRITER

Three days after a Farmington Hills couple won a compromise ruling in the battle of the Beanie Baby board game they created, copies of The Beanie Chase are flying off the shelves in local stores.

"In three days we already sold half of our inventory," Ellen Keils said Monday afternoon. "I had 600 single orders at home this weekend from across the country."

Ty Inc., maker of Beanie Babies, is letting Ken and Ellen Keils sell the remaining 7,000 units of the board game they created last summer but were barred from selling in a copyright infringement suit by the giant toymak-



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BERKHAUSER

On sale: Ben Watson sells the Beanie Chase game Deb's Crafts in Village Mall.

Please see CHASE, A10

Day care poised for move into post office

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

A state-licensed day care center is poised to take over the vacated United States Postal Service station on Slocum Street in downtown Farmington.

But first, there are "many hoops" that owners of Sunny Day Care Center must successfully jump through, said Realtor Mary Bush of Cornwell and Bush Real Estate in Farmington. Bush, mayor of the city of Farmington, is the listing broker for the 6,900-square-foot building.

If successfully completing those

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requirements, Sunny Day Care would move from its current location on Folsom in Farmington Hills.

"All we have now is a fully accepted purchase agreement," Bush said this week. "It's highly contingent on many things that I don't think I can actually divulge, for confidentiality purposes."

Among the steps that day care owners must take is a full inspection

Please see POST OFFICE, A7

