

# Farmington Observer

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## YMCA's chief leaving

He's been a fixture for the Farmington YMCA as well as the community. Kevin Bush has a new job with the organization.

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
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The person who put the Farmington Y before "I" — as in himself — is leaving.

On Jan. 1, Farmington Family YMCA Executive Director Kevin Bush will step down to become the Y's fund-raising coordinator for Metropolitan Detroit. He'll work out of the regional office in Detroit.

Bush, 46, intends to work with newly appointed Executive Director Jim Fagan, who has been involved 20 years with the YMCA.

Bush has been executive director at the Farmington branch for 16 years and was assistant to then-Director Gary Unruh for two years before then.

Under Bush's stewardship, the Y's

Please see BUSH, A4

## Residents balk at 7-Eleven

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
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Residents in one Farmington Hills neighborhood are not thanking the heavens at the prospect of a 7-Eleven.

In fact, they're fighting it. Their problem, though, is akin to taking in a slurpee through a pin-hole sized straw: The proposed 7-Eleven store will be built on the southeast corner of Inkster and 11 Mile roads.

Churchill Estates Homeowners Association is undeterred and members have asked Farmington Hills City Council for help.

Southfield City Council is expected to hear the matter Nov. 30. At its meeting Nov. 23, the Hills council passed a resolution in opposition to the site plan approval for the national convenience store.

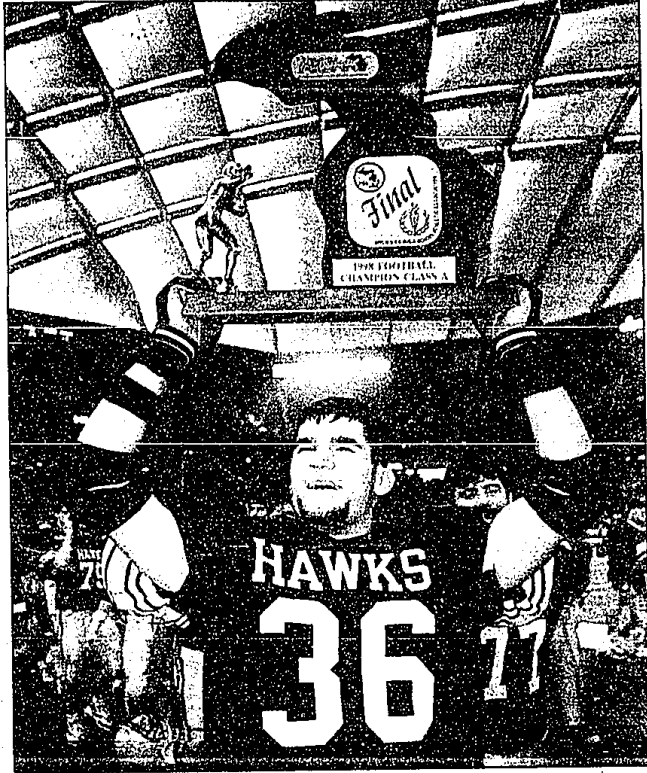
"We see the potential for crime," said Clarke Sanford, Churchill Estates vice president.

Sanford cites the access to major roads and that convenience stores, in general, tend to have a reputation as teen hangouts. Neighbors don't see the 24-hour store as a convenience, either.

An informal survey found 117 of 162

Please see IRKED, A6

## Victory!



STAFF PHOTO BY BRIAN MITCHELL

Big win: The Harrison Hawks brought home the state championship trophy for the second consecutive year with a 35-13 win over Hudsonville Friday afternoon. Above Mike Hoard, a defensive linebacker and one of three team captains, hoists the trophy in victory following the team's anticipated win in the Class A division. For more information, please turn to the Sports section, D1.

## Ropes



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BREIDER

Resolving: North Farmington High School student Laura Zakalik successfully leaps from the beam to the next platform. The effort was part of a program called Challenge Ropes Course. For more information and photos, please turn to Page A3.

## AHEAD

Making plans: You're all invited to give good wishes to former Farmington Hills Councilman Terry Sever, a new Oakland County commissioner, at 4-6 p.m. Monday Dec. 7, in city hall, 31555 11 Mile. For more information, call the city manager's office, 473-9500.

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## Parents want final word

BY DIANE GALE ANDREASSI  
SPECIAL WRITER

Parents recently raised concerns about a new program that talks about inappropriate touching, peer pressure and similar issues for students in kindergarten through fifth grade.

## CURRICULUM

At a recent school board meeting, Melody Jaske drew specific attention to a movie, "Better Safe Than Sorry."

"Ultimately parents should have the final say in this type of curriculum," said Jaske, who is Farmington Area PTA Council vice president.

The movie addresses the following issues:

- A girl has to decide whether to take a ride with her softball coach and just the two of them going to his house for snacks;
- Another girl almost becomes involved in being videotaped in a compromising situation by a neighbor;
- A boy is troubled by his aunt's sexual advances and seeks help from his teacher; and
- Two sisters offer to help a hearing

Please see PARENTS, A6

## Big-name chefs cook it up

BY PAT MURPHY  
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To hear Mickey Bakst and Ron Edwards talk, raising \$200,000 is almost as easy as whipping up a few hors d'oeuvres.

Bakst and Edwards are friendly rivals who normally compete for hearts and palates of restaurant-goers in the metro area — Bakst at the Tribute restaurant in Farmington Hills and Edwards at the Five Lakes Grill in Milford.

In a sense, they match their business acumen and culinary skills with other friendly rivals at restaurants and eateries like the Golden Mushroom in Southfield, the Whitney in Detroit and Restaurant 220 in Birmingham.

Almost two weeks ago, however, that rivalry all but disappeared as each

learned about Hurricane Mitch and the thousands of people it killed and many more it left homeless in Honduras, Nicaragua and other places.

Bakst remembers thinking about the dead and homeless and trying to imagine the extent of the devastation.

Edwards immediately thought about the Olancho region of Honduras, where he spent the summers of 1993 and 1994. "The devastation from flash flooding and mud slides was terrible," he said. "Rivers that were 150 feet wide suddenly became 10 miles wide. Entire villages no longer existed."

Their reactions were similar. Without knowing what the other was doing, Bakst and Edwards started making phone calls. "We were calling the same people," said Bakst. "It was amazing."

Equally amazing, Edwards said, was the response. "Everybody wanted to help," he said. "There wasn't one negative reaction."

The two chefs decided they and their friends must do what chefs do best: Cook.

They formed "Chefs for Humanity" — about 30 chefs from the metro area committed to helping storm victims in Honduras.

The number 30 isn't magical, it's a workable cut-off point. "We could have gotten more chefs," said Bakst, "but 30 is all we can handle."

Furthermore, the chefs are not run of the mill cooks on leave from fast-food eateries. They're some of the best in the metro area. They're so good, according to Bakst and Edwards, knowledgeable diners are willing to pay \$150 to sample their wares.

Details haven't been worked out. But preliminary plans call for the chefs to

Please see CHEFS, A6



STAFF PHOTO BY ELIZABETH CARLONE

Looking ahead: Walking down the colorful, innovative "Hall of Murals" they created are Farmington High School art students (from left) Lyndsay Dusek, Lisa Grentzel, Jennifer Reese and Akil Dawkins.

## Transformation Students turn drywall into Hall of Murals

BY TIM SMITH  
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What once was a blank, 300-foot-long stretch of drywall at Farmington High School now is a student-created pop art gallery, called the "Hall of Murals."

Students, under the direction of art teacher Gail Piepenburg, were almost allowed creative free rein to cover the wall with something substantive — and to eliminate the potential for ugly, negative graffiti to blanket it. Workers put up the wall in the first place for a bond issue construction project, to expand band and music facilities.

"It came about because once the dry wall went up, little writings started appearing on the wall," said Piepenburg, emphasizing that most of the graffiti was harmless. "I was approached (by school administrators) to do something and I jumped at the chance."

Piepenburg said the original idea was to transform the empty wall between the auditorium and main office into a mural of graffiti-style art. But that would have been too time-consuming to complete; the "pop art" mural that emerged was done in part because of a two-week deadline. Prin-

Please see MURAL, A7