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McCain wins in Hills and city

Farmington and Farmington Hills helped statewide voters push Republican darkhorse candidate John McCain to the primary top.

BY TIM SMITH AND JONI HUBBARD
STAFF WRITERS

Farmington and Farmington Hills voters were among those in Michigan who put John McCain over the top in Tuesday's Presidential primary.

In both cities the battle between McCain and George W. Bush sparked voter interest - enough to, in Farmington, double the percentage turnout in the 1996 Presidential primary.

In 1996, said Farmington City Clerk Patsy Cantrell, about 13.3 percent of registered voters came out to the city's six precincts. Tuesday night's turnout was 27.68 percent. Of 7,728 registered voters, 2,139 voted, with virtually all (2,104) voting solely on the Republican Party ticket.

Nearly 95 percent of those who cast their ballots in Farmington Hills voted as Republicans, and 62 percent of those voted for McCain. The 26.76 percent turnout was higher than for the 1996 Presidential primary, when 18.6 per-



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRADLEY

Voting: Maribeth Knight prepares to vote at Precinct 2 in Farmington Hills Tuesday. Poll chairwoman Marie Cole checks her in.

cent of Hills' voters cast a ballot.

"We were steady all day," said city clerk Kathy Dornan.

Among Republicans who did their civic duty was Marion Ringe of Farmington. As Ringe left Precinct 1 at Farmington City Hall, she gave a solid endorsement for the man and party she voted for.

"I feel the Republican party has done

a good job for Michigan," Ringe said. "So I voted Republican."

She also predicted that the primary race between the Presidential candidates would go down to the wire. "It's going to be very close and hopefully the best man will win."

In her opinion, the best man is Bush. "From what I've heard from McCain, I don't like what he says and how he says it," Ringe said.

According to Farmington precinct totals, however, not enough concurred with Ringe as McCain bested Bush, 1,054-to-945.

In Farmington Hills, Precinct 16 recorded the largest number of votes overall (524) and Precinct 6, the lowest (134).

Precinct 1 had the biggest voter turnout in Farmington, with 31.82 percent participating.

The heated race brewing between McCain and Bush likely contributed to the larger-than-expected turnout, Cantrell said.

"Apparently people are more interested in it than in the previous primary," said Cantrell, adding that ballots had to be mimeographed to meet demand. "It's just the level of competition between the two candidates. There

2000 ELECTION RESULTS REPUBLICAN PRIMARY

The Farmington Vote:

- George W. Bush - 945
- Alan Keyes - 83
- John McCain - 1,044 ✓

The Farmington Hills Vote:

- George W. Bush - 6,043
- Alan Keyes - 461
- John McCain - 7,298 ✓

Unofficial vote totals.
Vote totals are for Farmington/Farmington Hills.
Check mark indicates statewide winner.

just seems to be an intense competition between Bush and McCain."

Six or fewer Democratic votes were cast in all Farmington Hills precincts, with 662 absentee ballots cast in that party's race.

The only named candidate, Lyndon

Please see PRIMARY, A5

'Customers only' parking pilot approved

BY TIM SMITH
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Spotting an empty parking space close to Salon LEGATO in downtown Farmington never is a chore for client Sharon Knapp.

"I have great parking karma," Knapp, a Farmington Hills resident, said Tuesday. "I never have problems finding a spot."

But, that apparently isn't the case for everybody. On Monday night, the Farmington City Council adopted a pilot ordinance restricting employees from parking in the up-front spots.

"For Customers Only" signs will soon go up designating a row of 18 spaces closest to the back entrances of stores on the north side of Grand River - from the Civic Theatre east to Clothes Encounters, said Farmington City Manager Frank Lauff. Violators stand to be issued tickets.

The spaces, part of a municipal lot located on the north side of those businesses, will be regularly monitored by the Farmington Public Safety Department, the same way they do other such lots.

"It's going to be interesting," Lauff said. "We're going to watch it and see what kind of reaction the customers give it. We'll get feedback from the businesses and evaluate it (the ordinance) in six months."

Lauff said the lack of parking in downtown, particularly north of Grand River and east of Farmington, continues to be an issue that the city

Please see PARKING, A5

Former Compuware worker charged with weapons violations

BY JONI HUBBARD
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Two thousand rounds of ammunition, 800 of them armor-piercing.

Two FNPAF & LIAI automatic weapons, disassembled.

A speed-loader.

A bandolier.

Compuware headquarters, home to several hundred employees and dozens of children in a day care center.

Farmington Hills Police believe 40-year-old Kevin Peter Olender would have completed that recipe for disaster last week, before he was arrested at his home Feb. 18.

Instead, the former Compuware employee was arraigned Monday in Remulus, via videotape, on charges of possession of an illegal firearm, a felony punishable by up to five years in prison, and possession of a firearm by a felon, punishable by up to



Kevin Peter Olender

two years in prison.

Olender has been on probation since being convicted of assault with a deadly weapon in 1995 and was ineligible to possess a weapon, according to Hills Police Chief Bill Dwyer. That didn't stop him from purchasing most of the hardware to build two automatic weapons, which Internet sources indicate can circumvent federal firearms bans.

"He had the gun up on the computer screen at work and told co-workers he was building one like it at home," Dwyer said.

Though Olender was prepared to make bail Tuesday, representatives from Hills and Wyandotte police and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms appeared in district court in Wyandotte Wednesday to ask that he be held pending hearings on his parole violation, as well as federal charges stemming from possession of ammunition, Dwyer said. Olender will be held another 14 days.

"We got excellent cooperation from prosecutors in Oakland and Wayne Counties and the ATF," Dwyer commented. "We're very pleased."

Please see WEAPONS, A5

Second floor of theater tapped for next phase

BY JONI HUBBARD
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When Farmington Mayor Bill Hartsock went to the movies over the weekend, he got an idea what regular folks think of the newly renovated Civic Theater.

"We overheard people saying 'Look at this theater. It's almost too good for us,'" he said at a council work session Monday night.

Officials were meeting to determine whether to proceed on the second phase of renovations to this historic movie house, which is now a city-owned property. Making it good enough for residents seemed foremost on their minds as they directed City Manager Frank Lauff to move forward with plans to add a wheelchair lift and expand the upstairs lobby area.

"The theater has been renovated certainly to an extent where the public likes what's been done," he said. "Upstairs is not the quality the public that's leasing or renting would expect."

Officials have already received numerous requests to rent the Civic, for everything from a church-sponsored showing of "The Ten Commandments" to school events. Within the next few weeks, the Downtown Development



Authority will help distribute promotional brochures to area hotels.

Second-phase construction, which construction managers anticipate will take about six weeks, is designed to complete the renovation project. It will require a loan of about \$400,000 from the city's capital improvement fund, Lauff said.

In addition to the lift, workers would replace outdated electrical lines on the second floor, to match new wiring installed downstairs. They'll also have to relocate the back door of an adjacent business, Books Abound, to accommodate the shaft for the lift and a new rear entrance for the theater.

Because the change will make his door less visible, owner Skip Rosenthal asked whether the city could provide a sign for the new entrance letting people know his business is there, too.

Please see CIVIC, A5



Underwater: Kelley Pitts of Mercy High School will take a 100-foot dive to an underwater laboratory. Titanic explorer Dr. Robert Ballard will join her.

Exploring Student will dive into the deep extreme

BY TIM SMITH
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When it comes to exploring and learning, Kelley Pitts likes to dive right in - literally.

And that modus operandi applies to everything from household appliances to the deep, deep sea. Later this month, Pitts, a scuba-diving freshman at Mercy High School in Farmington Hills, will take the plunge for science during JASON XI "Going to Extremes," scheduled from Monday, Feb. 28 through Friday, March 10.

The 15-year-old Pitts, a student Argonaut sponsored by Electronic

Kelley Pitts will dive more than 100 feet below sea level to an underwater laboratory.

Data Systems Corp., is one of seven divers selected to go more than 100 feet below sea level to the Aquarius Underwater Laboratory in Key Largo, Fla. Her dives down to the base of the Aquarius dome, accompanied by professionals including Dr. Robert Ballard, will be viewed

Please see JASON, A5



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