



Gas prices affect towing costs

■ The general manager of Hadley's Towing, which contracts with the city of Farmington Hills, wants some financial relief in light of higher than expected gasoline prices. The city council approved an emergency surcharge for 90 days.

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Hadley's Towing operates 150 trucks in the Farmington/Farmington Hills area, and they aren't what you'd call "fuel efficient" vehicles.

That's why general manager Mike Liess stood before Farmington Hills City Council members Monday night asking for emergency relief in the form of a gasoline surcharge. While officials didn't question the need, they did wonder what other requests might arise if

they approved the add-on.

"As reasonable as this is, I'm going to have a very hard time supporting it because of what it could open up for us," said council member Jerry Ellis.

At the time Liess and Director of Central Services Mike Lasley negotiated, the price of diesel has risen to \$1.78 a gallon, up from between \$1.20 and \$1.30 when the contract was signed three years ago.

Hadley's proposal, already endorsed by the city of Farmington and tacked

FARMINGTON HILLS

onto other commercial and private towing bills, provided for a \$2 surcharge when gas prices climbed to \$1.65, a \$3 charge at \$1.80 and an additional dollar for each 25-cent fuel price increase. Among the problems council member

Please see TOW, A7

Chamber wants to recruit merchants

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It was only mid-February when the long-dormant Downtown Farmington Business Association was re-formed, so that merchants could have a more direct say in pertinent issues such as the Farmington Area Family Fest.

BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Only several weeks later, there is speculation that the Farmington-Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce wants to recruit the association as a sub-committee. The chamber and members of the DFBA were scheduled to hold a meeting Wednesday night, probably to discuss just that subject.

"It's not a done deal," Carleigh Flaherty, president of the chamber, said Tuesday afternoon. "It may not be a done deal after (Wednesday) night. But

Please see RECRUIT, A11

IN THE PAPER TODAY

Colorful: A new mural in the atrium at St. Fabian Catholic School will be unveiled Sunday. / A9

ENTERTAINMENT

Somethin's cooking: Visit the new Farmington Schools central kitchen, which produces thousands of lunches a day. / B1

Learn: Miss Farmington contestants met to learn the ropes. / B1

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Making a point: Broadcaster and political analyst Tim Skubick fields a pithy question from Oakland County Commissioner Nancy Dingsclay.

Seminar demystifies the political process

So much for voter apathy. A workshop designed to help potential political candidates with the nuts and bolts of running for office drew more than 60 people to the William Costick Center in Farmington Hills Saturday morning, and organizers said they had to turn people away.

Expected turnout was 40-50 people, but the turnout was much higher, organizers said.

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Oakland Area League of Women Voters President Fran Packard. The League teamed with the Women Officials' Network to host the event, which was held on a sunny Saturday morning. "It's almost all the speakers wanted to be there," Packard said. "We've had a really good working committee of people from both organizations."

zens listened to advice on everything from organization to fundraising. "It's been a good mix because the Women Officials' Network has the campaign experience, and we have the more well-known name," Packard said. "We've had a really good working committee of people from both organizations."

Please see SEMINAR, A14



Lessons to learn: People gathered at the Costick Center in Farmington Hills to learn the ins and outs of getting elected.

Media guest speaker advises against 'spin'

Political correspondent Tim Skubick has had his finger on the pulse of the state Capitol for a long time. The only full-time Capitol reporter assigned in Lansing, Skubick has watched lawmakers and reporters come and go for more than a decade. He has distilled his collective wisdom about politicians and the media into these simple words: "Tell the truth. Be honest. Don't spin. Don't try to evade."

Please see SPIN, A11



Political talk: Leslie Ketren and Dawn Hurst converse during a break in the program.

Want to run? First take stock

David Flaisher has a pretty good idea why he's considering a run - if he runs at all - at a position in West Bloomfield township government.

"I feel we have no representation," he said. "They just do what they want to do."

According to experts who spoke at Saturday's "Money, Organization & Media: The Nuts and Bolts of Running for Public Office," Flaisher has taken one of the most important first steps in any political campaign. Simply put, their best advice is, "Know thyself."

Consultants Tim Donovan, Al Lanatra and Rich Polling all said it's important for a candidate to take personal stock of strengths and weaknesses before hitting the campaign trail. Donovan, who ran Nancy Dingsclay's (R-Wixom) campaign for election to the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, said she did exactly that, determining a campaign theme and identifying her strongest voter base - with great success.

"She was picked to finish third or fourth, and she ended up winning, much to the surprise of everyone, including herself," Donovan said.

Lanatra takes stock in every campaign as well. He draws a two-by-two square and lists both the candidate's strengths and weaknesses. Once those are identified, he formulates a campaign plan

that includes a budget, time lines for when funds will be needed, as well as plans for door-to-door visits, telephone and mailing solicitations.

"Every successful campaign has a campaign plan, and a thorough campaign plan," he said. Success also depends on having support from family and friends, which Polling called a candidate's greatest strength.

"There's a lot of emotional pressure on you. Your significant other and family members, and the spouse usually gets the worst of it," he said. "It is very rewarding to get elected, but you have to have strength at home."

Experts give suggestions for election success:

■ "When you're taking a stand on the issues, remember you have to get up in the morning and look at yourself in the mirror. The people in this state know what a demagogue is. Don't become one." - Rich Polling.

■ "Don't poll to determine how you feel about an issue. Poll so that you know the con-

Please see RUN, A14

Civic Theatre brochure targets hotels, businesses

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Area hotels and businesses are the primary targets of a slick new color brochure touting the Farmington Civic Theatre's "multipurpose conference facility."

The brochures, produced by Farmington-based Marketing Communications Counsel Inc., were delivered to MCC chairman Ron Baker on Tuesday morning. Baker was elated with the finished product, as was Farmington City Manager Frank Lauhoff. The city hired MCC to design and produce the

brochures.

"It's one piece of the total plan for the theater," Lauhoff said. "It's got to be marketed every way possible to meet the goals of city council. We're moving in that direction now."

Lauhoff flipped through the brochure and reiterated that Baker's company

did an excellent job procuring the services of a professional photographer and ultimately putting it all together. "We know if you walk into the theater that you're impressed with it," Lauhoff said, explaining the project.

Please see CIVIC, A7