

Dia from page A1

those in the audience at Farmington City Hall. "You saved my life."

Overcoming great adversity

With the status, the family can apply in one year for a green card and then, in 2005, can file for permanent U.S. citizenship.

According to Dadisman, had Dia failed to earn the cherished asylum status and was forced to return to Kosovo, "she would be persecuted and in fear of death. This isn't about economic opportunity, or living the good life. It's about survival."

One member of the city council who particularly took an interest in helping Dia was Mayor Bill Hartsock, who noted that the happy ending only came about because of the effort shown by many since publicity in the spring of 1999 about how the immigrant feared for their family and worried about potential deportation.

Later, Hartsock said the Vilasaliu "bucked all of the odds" in getting asylum status, which means they would not be persecuted if they ever returned to Kosovo; other family members cannot be put in peril.

"The whole saga of them turning to people for help and being misled, lied to and bilked out of their money ... they persevered," Hartsock said. "Fortunately, they were able to get the help they deserve."

Their nightmare began shortly after arriving in New York City on July 4, 1995.

Dadisman said the family spent about \$12,000 with three individuals they entrusted to file for asylum status with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. Those people did not come through, and the one-year deadline to file came and went. That was one reason the Vilasaliu worried about potential deportation.

But in March 1999, a letter about that unfortunate experience was hand delivered on the family's behalf to U.S. Sen. Carl Levin from Hartsock and then-Farmington Mayor Mary Bush, currently still on the city council.

A groundswell of community support followed, including "volumes" of mail from concerned citizens, Dadisman said.

Dia, in a March 28, 1999, Farmington Observer article, also showed her concern about the safety of her family left behind in Kosovo, with the bombing of her homeland imminent. "I have family there ... my dad, everybody. I'm afraid. What can I say?"

There were large odds against the Vilasaliu family in the quest for asylum status, Dadisman said. But the community support had a "tremendous impact" on their receiving a fair hearing.

Usually, there is a 28 percent chance of asylum status being granted, but there is only a 1-in-



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL KNOX

Finally: Dia Vilasaliu receives an American flag from U.S. Rep. Joe Knollenberg. The flag flew over the U.S. Capitol to signify her freedom.

■ 'The whole saga of them turning to people for help and being misled, lied to and bilked out of their money ... they persevered. Fortunately, they were able to get the help they deserve.'

Bill Hartsock
—Farmington mayor

10 chance in cases "of her extraordinary circumstances," Dadisman emphasized.

Without asylum status, the

attorney continued, Dia and the rest of her family surely would have been deported.



CITY OF FARMINGTON SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING STUDY SESSION (Summary)

A special meeting of the Farmington City Council was called to order by Mayor Hartsock at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, April 17, 2000 in Council Chambers, 23800 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan. Notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with Public Act 267-1976.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Dush, Campbell, Hartsock, McShane, Mitchell.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: U.S. Representative Joseph Knollenberg.

Council met with Representative Knollenberg to discuss federal legislation and funding of importance to the City including funding for improvements to the Farmington-Evergreen Sewer System; community development block grant funding; funding for reconstruction of Farmington Road; federal legislation to regulate the cable television industry; and to hear updates on pending federal legislation in other areas.

Meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

WILLIAM S. HARTSOCK, Mayor
PATSY K. KANTRELL, City Clerk/Treasurer

Published: April 23, 2000

CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS 31555 ELEVEN MILE ROAD FARMINGTON HILLS, MI 48336-1165 (248) 474-8115

ADVERTISEMENT

The City of Farmington Hills Purchasing Division will solicit sealed bids during the next thirty (30) days for the following products and/or services:

Pavement Management System

Specifications may be obtained by contacting the Central Services Department. All bids must be submitted in accordance with the bid specifications.

The City of Farmington Hills reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, either in part or in whole, to waive any formalities and to accept the bid which it believes to be in the best interest of the City.

KATHRYN A. DORNAN
City Clerk

Published: April 23, 2000

TOTAL LIQUIDITY

ADVANTAGE SAVINGS

\$25,000 + **5.25%** APY
\$10,000 - \$24,999 **5.00%** APY

Park your money where great rates and total liquidity give you a clear savings advantage.

Rates available for new deposits only.



Bloomfield Hills • 1700 N. Woodward, Suite B (248) 258-5300
Farmington Hills • 31155 Northwestern Highway (248) 737-0444
Plymouth • 186 S. Main Street (734) 459-7800
Northville • 39901 W. Eight Mile Road (248) 735-0775

1-800-758-0753

Annual Percentage Yield (APY) as of 4/1/00: \$10,000 minimum to open account. \$1-25,000 earn 2.25% APY. For any money savings. Variable rates subject to change without notice. Limited to six transfers per month, of which no more than three to third parties. No limit on transactions made to person. Limited time offer, may be withdrawn at any time.

Banked 100%
in the future
100%
FORTUNE

Selection and Style for the Season

We Have Southeast Michigan's Largest Selection of Quality Patio Furniture!

Come In and be Surprised

- Patio Furniture
- Patio Accessories
- Swimming Pools
- Pool Accessories

OUR
38th
YEAR!

Cornwell Pool & Patio carries the nation's most elegant brands and models of outdoor furniture like Winston, Homcrest, Hatteras, Woodward wrought Iron, Lloyd-Flanders wicker and aluminum and more!

ANN ARBOR
3500 Pontiac Trail
(734) 662-3117

PLYMOUTH
874 W. Ann Arbor Road
(734) 459-7410

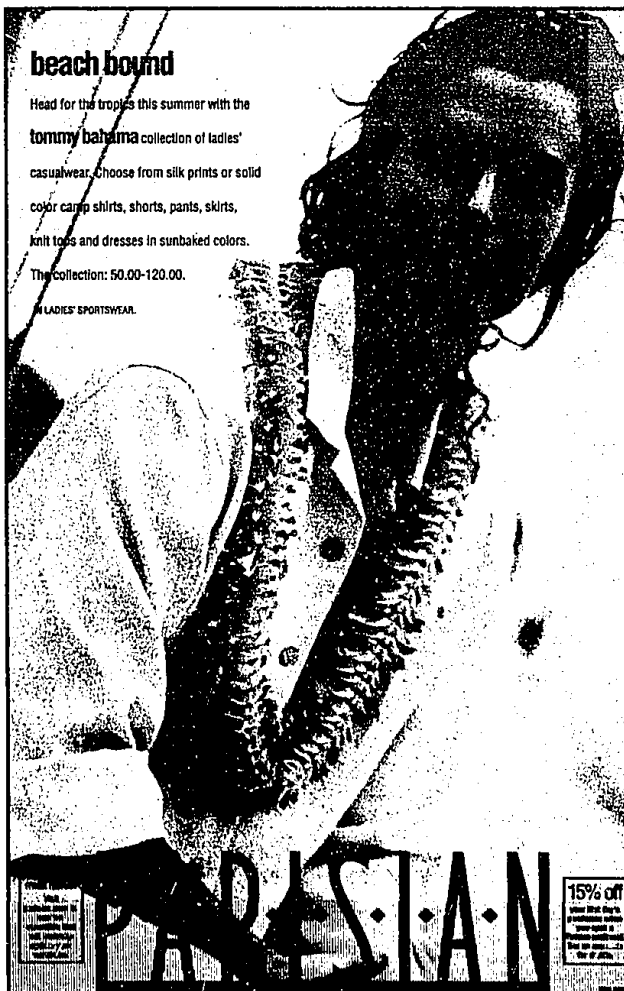
Store Hours: Mon., Tues., Thurs. & Fri. 10-8; Sat. 10-6; Sun. 12-4 Closed Wed.

beach bound

Head for the tropics this summer with the tommy bahama collection of ladies' casualwear. Choose from silk prints or solid color camp shirts, shorts, pants, skirts, knit tops and dresses in sunbaked colors.

The collection: 50.00-120.00.

LADIES' SPORTSWEAR.



15% off
on all
purchases
of \$50 or
more
on all
items
except
sale
items
&
taxes