

Cities consider youth ordinance



Continuing in their efforts to involve teens in government, the cities of Farmington Hills and Farmington are considering adoption of an ordinance that would permanently establish youth councils.

BY JON HUBERD
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An effort to get young people more involved in city government has taken another leap forward with the drafting of an ordinance that would permanently establish Mayor's Youth Councils in both Farmington Hills and Farmington.

Several teens met with Hills council members Monday night to iron out details of the ordinance, which will also be reviewed by officials in Farmington. The goal is to memorialize the council as an advisory board, so that the efforts the students have already made will continue even after they've graduated.

"The Youth Council is charged with

the authority and responsibility of making recommendations to the City Council concerning the needs of youth and community," the ordinance reads.

A large part of the discussion centered around how the council would be structured and governed. Josh Rabinowitz, who attends Harrison High, doesn't want to see it become like Student Council, a school organization operated largely in what he called a "popularity contest."

"We don't want to be like that," he said.

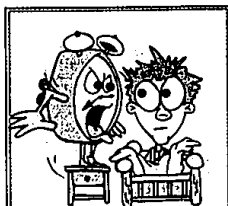
The Hills ordinance provides that each high school in the Hills would be represented. However, students said

they didn't want to exclude home-schooled students, those who attend private schools or those outside Farmington School District.

While students wanted governance centered in a board formed by up to one-fourth of the membership, officials urged them to set up a structure that included officers. Councilman Jerry Ellis said without a limit on numbers, a few hundred kids could show up at first, joining the organization to get it on their college resumes, but not enough would stay to do any work.

"I think you need a more structured;

Please see YOUTH, A2



Daylight saving time begins

Don't forget to turn your clock ahead one hour at 2 a.m. on Sunday, April 2 (or before you go to bed on Saturday, March 31.)

IN THE PAPER TODAY

Hometown Heroes: Do you know someone who goes above and beyond the call of duty? Nominations are being taken for our "Hometown Heroes" awards. /A3

Mother Goose on the Loose: A special Reading Month activity at Alameda Early Childhood Center had teachers playing the roles of many beloved characters. /A10

OPINION

Make some noise: It's time for state lawmakers to provide all homeowners with real relief from freeway noise. /A8

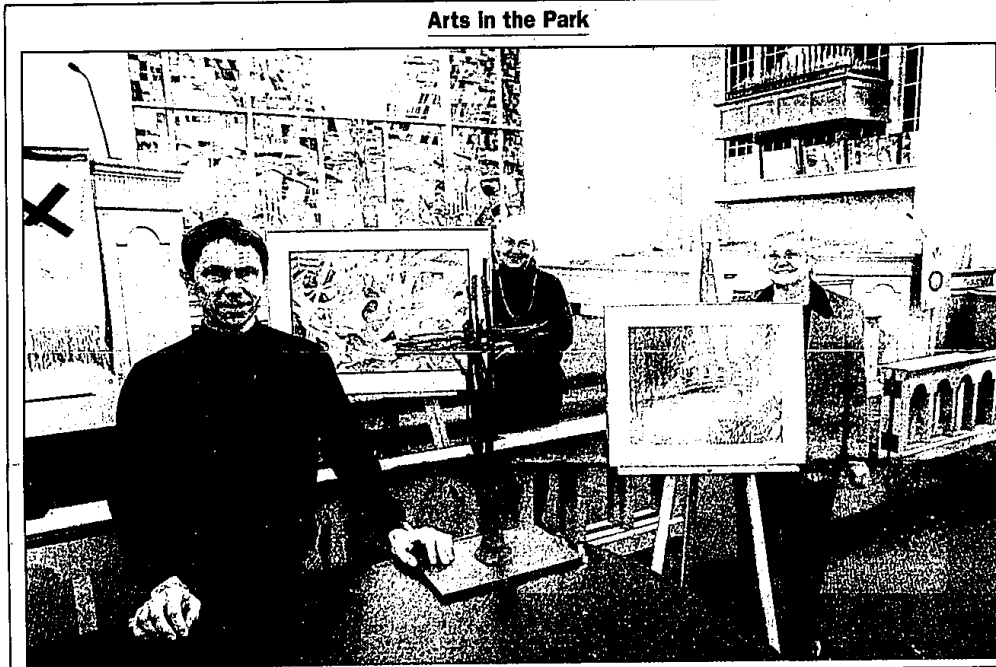
ARTS & LEISURE

Hot, hot, hot: Barbecue lovers may spend a little more for their new grills, but these models offer a solid construction and stainless steel. /C1

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Let Spirits Soar: The second annual celebration of the arts festival at Nardin Park United Methodist Church, 11 Mile west of Middlebelt, takes place Friday, March 30, through Sunday, April 1, with various events. Here metal worker Douglas Bacon and watercolorists Caroline Dunphy and Kay Rowe show examples of their work in Nardin Park's sanctuary. For the full story, see the HomeTown Life section, which starts on page C5.

All-year battle over Noise ideas get play

BY TIM SMITH
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Parents on Tuesday night almost begged Farmington school board members for just one more year to keep their cherished Gill Year-Round program alive.

Their heartfelt efforts fell short, however.

"There are so many positives," said Timothy Heffron, in a voice choked with emotion. "We as parents don't think asking for one more year to really give it one more shot is asking too much."

Heffron and several other parents

stated their case, hoping board members would then vote against Superintendent Bob Maxfield's recommendation to discontinue the nine-year-old school-of-choice program.

Deborah Jacob urged Farmington school board trustees to not forget about the children who love Gill Year-Round, which features an extended, non-traditional calendar and family atmosphere.

"It works and it can still work," Jacob said. "The children can't be here tonight. But if they could, boy, they'd really give you an earful."

Please see GILL, A4

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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The Michigan Department of Transportation has offered four options to lower I-275 freeway noise.

On top of that, two lawmakers have introduced a bill that would require sound abatement for areas where levels exceed 70 decibels.

Added up, Livonia and Farmington Hills residents who live along the stretch of freeway between Five and 10 Mile are cautiously optimistic.

An MDOT study measured sound levels ranging 75 to 91 decibels in November 1999, which followed a \$50

■ State Senator Bill Bullard will host a town meeting tonight. Related story, A2

million reconstruction of I-275. Residents blame the random skewed tined surface for the noise increase.

At its April 26 meeting, which takes place at the Macomb County Building in Mount Clemens, the Michigan Transportation Commission is expected to decide what measures will be taken.

"If they do something, we will be

Please see NOISE, A2

Hills officials consider benefits of more transports

BY JON HUBERD
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With an eye toward boosting revenues and providing better care for residents, the City of Farmington Hills has begun to take a serious look at its contract with Community Emergency Medical Services.

At a study session Monday, officials talked about the impact of having Hills Fire Department handle more "Priority 1" transports which involve the most critically ill patients. While the move probably won't be a big money maker, Fire Chief Rich Marinucci said it would likely shave precious minutes off the time it takes to transport

patients to area hospitals.

Of last year's 2,100 ambulance runs, about 500 were taken in Farmington Hills rescue vehicles, Marinucci said. Three hundred of those required advanced life support, which the department began to phase in three years ago.

Shifting toward handling more of those calls won't be difficult, since firefighters are trained and vehicles are licensed for transport, he added.

"We have to send a paramedic with the patients (transported by CEMS), so a unit is out of service anyway," he said.

The average billing for ALS

Please see AMBULANCE, A3



Urgent care: Community Emergency Medical Services ambulances like this one may not be making as many primary runs in the Hills.

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