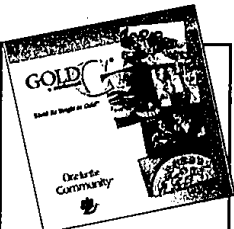


THE WEEK AHEAD

Hills budget work: City Council members will hold a series of budget study sessions Monday at 6 p.m., Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. and 6 p.m. Thursday at City Hall.

Meet and Greet: The Farmington Area Jaycees are hosting a Wine & Cheese Social on Wednesday, May 9, 7-9 p.m. at the Drakehire Apartments Clubhouse. For more information call (248) 477-JCCS or visit their Web site www.fajc.freesevers.com.



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Susan Rosiek
Susan Rosiek
Publisher

Rocky adds clout to rape law



By TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
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Rape victims such as a Ferndale woman who testified recently before the state House Criminal Justice Committee now have more clout when it comes to convicting their assailants, with a big assist from Farmington Hills state Rep. Andrew Raczkowski.

An amendment offered by State Rep. Andrew Raczkowski has helped strengthen the cases of rape victims whose assailants may take years to find and bring to trial, by extending the statute of limitations for such crimes.

The 37th House District Republican apparently played a crucial role in tacking on an amendment to new legislation that offers further protection for the victims of violent crime. That amendment totally eliminates the statute of limitations for first-degree criminal sexual assault. "I am ecstatic," said Raczkowski Wednesday, several hours after state

Lt. Gov. Dick Posthumus signed the bill into law. "That is a big piece of legislation. ... Michigan is now in the forefront" of those states with such a measure.

Meanwhile, Senate Bill 1, sponsored by state Sen. Shirley Johnson, extends from six-to-10 years the statute of limitations for second-, third- and fourth-degree criminal sexual conduct, attempted murder and manslaughter and holds the statute of limitations for crimes where there are no suspects matching available DNA evidence.

Senate Bill 1 was signed into law Wednesday by Lt. Gov. Dick Posthumus.

Raczkowski's amendment added attempted murder, manslaughter and first-degree home invasion to the list.

At the time Johnson's bill was being reviewed by the Criminal Justice Committee earlier this year, Raczkowski gave it the support it needed to become law. Hearing the testimony of Ferndale woman Johnene Barr apparently was enough for Raczkowski to become involved.

"Senator Johnson always wanted there to be no statute of limitations on rape cases," said Stacey Hanyak, a legislative aide for the senator. "That's

Please see LAW, A2

Senior prom



Once around the floor

Mary Orlowski and David Peterson (left) danced the afternoon away at the Student-Senior Prom held this week. The annual event brings high school students and senior citizens together for an afternoon of socializing, dancing and refreshments. Below, left, everyone joined in a square dance session, and below right, Amanda Baranowski and David Fetting take a turn around the dance floor to the sounds of the Farmington High School Jazz Ensemble.

STAFF PHOTOS BY BILL BRUNLER



INDEX

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Apartments/E9 | Malls/C6 |
| Arts/C1 | Movies/C4 |
| Automotive/H1 | New Homes/E10 |
| Classified/E, G, H | Obituaries/A6 |
| Classified | Real Estate/E1 |
| Index/E3 | Service Guide/G8 |
| Crossword | Sports/B1 |
| Puzzle/E3 | Taste/D1 |
| Jobs/G1 | Travel/C8 |

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Extreme talent show expands to include four high schools

By SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER
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Brian Gaughan will take it to the extreme again this year - Farmington Extreme.

Gaughan hopes to build on last year's districtwide variety show, which includes acts by students in the Farmington/Farmington Hills area. He called last year's show, the first, a success.

The benefit concert for Neighborhood House, a local charity that links people in need to food, clothing and shelter,

took in more than \$800 last year, Gaughan said.

"We hope to get a bigger audience this year," said the 18-year-old Farmington High senior. "Mercy High School wasn't involved last year."

The show combines the talent of students from Farmington, Harrison, North Farmington and Mercy High schools. He contacted students he knew through other events to get more acts on board.

"There has never been an event

Please see EXTREME, A3

Honor mom at blood drive

By TIM SMITH
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People have a chance to give a unique Mother's Day gift - by donating blood Wednesday afternoon at the Farmington Hills Ice Arena.

According to Amy Neale of the American Red Cross, the goal is for at least 70 people to donate at the 2-8 p.m. open blood drive, the first held at the Eight Mile Road arena. Blood is needed to help stock up for

the summer months, when supplies are impacted by vacations and holidays.

"With holidays coming up and schools going on vacation, we have to fill that void somehow," Neale said. "We just need help getting a jump on the holidays and this is perfect timing for that."

Donors also can donate in Mom's honor, as there will be Mother's Day gift cards available from the

Please see DRIVE, A3

Try-outs: The local band Bessie auditioned this week for Farmington Extreme, a talent/variety show and fund-raiser.

STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRUNLER

