

Officials approve golf course plan

By PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER
ppace@homecomm.net

More than three years in the making, the nine-hole expansion for the San Marino golf course appears on track, after the Farmington Hills City Council gave unanimous support to the latest design for the city-owned course.

Despite opposition by some residents who said they didn't want trees felled or more housing near their homes, council members said three years of fine-tuning the project to meet neighbors' concerns was sufficient.

After hearing from residents during a public hearing Monday, Councilman Jon Grant said that scaling the project from 660 homes to just 80 condominiums was the best compromise. It keeps development to a minimum

while still having a resource to help pay for the expansion, he said.

The city will be paid \$3.6 million for the 40-unit condominium development.

Councilman Jerry Ellis said allowing the development of 80 condos was the only way to make the expansion fiscally responsible. "If we eliminate the condos, we have no money," he said. "We need a way to pay for this and ask for the additional tax dollars (from property taxes). We have an obligation to proceed with this."

He said Hills residents passed three parks and recreation millages that included money earmarked for the expansion of the course. Those dollars add up to \$1.5 million.

The city spent \$4.2 million for the 11 Pines property at Halsted and 11 Mile and \$1.1 million for an addition-

al parcel, added to the 90-acre development.

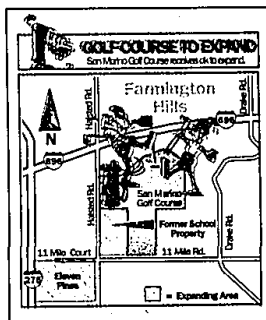
The project will include a diagonal tunnel that will snake below the intersection of Halsted 11 Mile and connect the new nine holes. It will be gated and secured and allow enough room for two-way golf cart traffic.

An earth cap is planned for the former landfill of the 11 Pines portion, which will include the new clubhouse, maintenance building, a driving range and nine holes.

The new club house will be 6,080 square feet with room for 120 seats, a full kitchen and parking for 228 cars. The north section will include 40 duplex condominiums west of the redesigned nine holes on the present course.

Project developer Albert Ludwig

Please see GOLF, A10



Subscribe and Win

Start 2002 off with a resolution to stay informed by subscribing to your hometown Observer Newspaper. Subscribe between now and March 31 and your name will be entered in a contest to win a golf getaway for two courtesy of Boyne Resorts USA and the Observer Newspapers.

Twelve other winners will enjoy gift cards to Kalk's, Best Buy and AMC Theaters offer applies to six-month and annual subscriptions only.

To subscribe and be entered into the contest for the golf trip package and gift cards, call the Observer circulation department at (734) 591-0500.

The contest is open to new and renewal subscriptions. Senior citizens rates are available.

IN THE PAPER TODAY

ARTS

Looking to the future: Community orchestras are changing fund-raising and marketing strategies in order to guarantee brighter seasons ahead. /B1

AT HOME

Step, step: For garden-lovers January is a busy month to plan their gardens for spring and summer months. And expected to be big again this year are stepping stones. /C1

HOMETOWN LIFE

Fighting chance: It takes a lot of guts to ask for financial help, especially when you've been a strong woman who has raised two daughters on her own. /C5

INDEX

Apartment/G4
At Home/C1
Automotive/G12
Classified/E,F,G,H
Classified
Index/G2
Crossword/G3
Arts &
Entertainment/B1

HomeTown
Life/C5
Jobs/G8
Obituaries/A6
Opinions/A8
Real Estate/G1
Service Guide/G11
Sports/D1

CLASSIFIED CHANGES
NEW LINES DEADLINES
TO SERVE YOU BETTER!

Starting January 13th the deadlines for all lines will be:

SUNDAY PAPER.....5:00PM Friday
THURSDAY PAPER.....5:30PM Tuesday

CLASSIFIEDS WORK!

1-800-579-SELL



To place a classified ad: 1-800-579-SELL

New Year's Baby Grows Up



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL DRENNER

Oh, baby! Kiara Bartlett, who just celebrated her first birthday, plays with Kiefer, one of her big brothers, as mom Neysa watches. Kiara was the first baby born at Botsford Hospital in 2001, and according to mom, who is a Botsford physician, her first year has been healthy and happy. Read more about the Bartletts in our Community Life section.

Boundary review committee findings expected shortly

By SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER
sbuck@homecomm.net

An attendance area boundary review committee for Farmington Public Schools will soon issue its findings.

Only elementary school attendance areas are under consideration. A review of high school boundaries will not be done this year.

Sue Zurvalce, assistant superintendent for staff and community services, said the district included representatives from each school. Zurvalce co-chairs the committee with Cheryl Cannon, assistant superintendent for business, finance and operations.

"Each school has an equal vote," she said.

The committee meets on a regular

basis to consider overcrowding or building utilization issues, and determine whether attendance areas need to be adjusted. Each elementary school sends a staff member, usually a principal, who also designates a parent representative.

The group is studying data and options, listing strengths and challenges, Zurvalce said.

The committee will relay its recommendations at an open, public forum 7 p.m. Jan. 31 at East Middle School, 25000 Middlebelt.

The study group will then talk to the Farmington School Board about its recommendations at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 19 at the Lewis Schulman Administrative Center, located at 32500 Shiawassee.

"We're here to do our best thinking for the board," Zurvalce said.

"The board of education has the absolute right to change whatever we come up with. We might change what we come up with after we hear from the broader audience. This is very fluid."

Cannon said Tuesday the board needs to have all the appropriate information available before making decisions. These include the budget, boundary study recommendations and a study of early childhood programs, presented Jan. 15 prior to the board meeting.

"By mid-March we will know everything," Cannon said.

In the meantime, the small committee group will meet again at 7 p.m. Jan. 17 at the Farmington Training Center. All meetings are open to the public.

Please see BOUNDARIES, A10

Libraries launch 'Pay it Forward'

By JONI HUBRED
STAFF WRITER
jhubred@homecomm.net

"Really, the idea is to make it a sense of community."

That's how Farmington librarian Annette Weiss describes "Everybody's Reading: Pay it Forward," which kicks off Jan. 21 at libraries in Farmington, Canton, West Bloomfield, Bloomfield, Southfield and Independence Township.

The community-wide reading program will include on-line discussion groups, greater availability of the novel, Pay it Forward by Catherine Ryan Hyde and other events that are "still in the hoping stage," Weiss said.

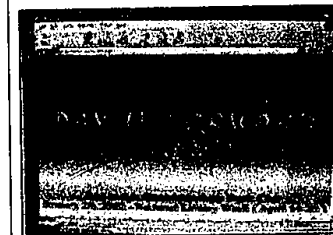
The author has been scheduled to speak at the Canton and West Bloomfield libraries on April 18.

Everyone who participates will receive a button they can wear. Weiss said organizers hope people will spot each other as they're out in the community and take a moment to say hello.

"They'll see that they have this one thing in common," she said.

The book relates the story of 12-year-old Trevor McQueen, the only child of a single mother struggling with alcoholism and an abusive father who's never around. Trevor develops a relationship with teacher Reuben St. Clair, a scarred Viet Nam veter-

Please see LIBRARIES, A7



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL DRENNER

Everybody's reading: Pay It Forward is a popular book and the name of a new library program.

Sunday walk, program will honor King

The Farmington/Farmington Hills Multicultural/Multiracial Community Council will hold its annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Candlelight Walk Sunday, Jan. 20, beginning at 5 p.m. at the Costick Activities Center in Farmington Hills.

The O.E. Dunckel Middle School jazz band will kick off the event at 4:30 p.m. with musical selections. At 5 p.m., prayers will be offered by Souheil Kahn of the Tavneed Center, Rabbi Nevins of Adat Shalom and Rev. Dr. Sue Melrose, 1st Presbyterian Church.

An important change this year will make the event weather-proof, said MCMR co-chair Karen Bolson.

"Last year in the wind and rain the candles

Please see KING, A3