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would be a shame to see (its history) go to the wayside."

Golden speaks passionately about the work that has gone into keeping the communities' history alive. Due to residents' efforts, there are 49 historical markers in the two communities, not to mention the preservation efforts involved with the Governor Warner Mansion in downtown Farmington.

Golden, in fact, has written three books on local history.

He said history can be fun because sometimes someone discovers something — like an old tombstone unearthed in a Farmington Hills back yard not too long ago — and it inspires people to dig for more facts.

"You find ways to bring the information to the surface," he said.

The Farmington Hills resident said he is looking for more members for the communities' historical groups and would particularly enjoy having younger people involved.

"I like sharing my passion for history and passing it along to the community," he said.

Fortunately, the groups work collectively and have a big helping hand through the Farmington Community Library.

The Heritage Collection at the main branch on 12 Mile is the cornerstone for the history collection. It is home to records and books involving the two cities, the county and Michigan.

The collection will expand once the new addition to the 12 Mile library is complete this year.

"It's going to be beautiful," Golden said of the plans to have a special Heritage Room

devoted to preserving some of the more fragile artifacts in a climate-controlled room.

The development of the collection is done cooperatively by the Farmington Genealogical Society, and the other local historical commissions.

The aim is to maintain an inclusive resource collection of Farmington and Farmington Hills.

Currently, the room in the library has only enough space for one-third of the materials to be on display, while the rest remains in storage.

The Robert B. Cook Collection contains extensive information about Farmington area families such as biographies and marriages from the late 1800s to the 1970s, including 10 binders of obituaries.

There are also cemetery records, four binders on marriages, and county histories, censuses, yearbooks, postcards, tax rolls, pictures, atlases, maps, gazetteers and church records.

The need for the archive was recognized due to the larger volume of historically valuable material collected or donated in past years. In June 1999, the library began to actively preserve these important and often fragile items.

The library has a part-time archivist, Peggy Brann, said Theeke. Both Golden and Theeke praised the great work Brann has done for the historical groups and genealogical society by keeping the documents in order.

The historical society helps the library by clipping newspaper articles and putting

them in binders by subject, Theeke noted.

Sue Cromwell, president of the Farmington Genealogical Society, said the group has been intact for 27 years. Nearly every month the group hosts meetings and guest speakers that bring out 60-75 members, Cromwell said.

She thinks the group is popular because people start to realize the importance of family history whenever they see distant relatives, especially after the September attacks.

She noted the Internet makes it easier for people to get a head start on family history research, but being part of a group to share the knowledge of research is the main benefit of the society.

The Farmington Historical Society holds meetings from January-April and September-October at 8 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of the month in the lower level of the Farmington Community Library's Farmington branch. For membership information, contact president Tracy Freeman, (248) 476-8323.

The Farmington Genealogical Society meets the third Tuesday of each month, September through May at 7 p.m. except in December at the Farmington Public Library in downtown Farmington. Anyone interested in genealogy is invited to attend. The next meeting, Feb. 19, will have guest speaker Jan Zaleski talk about tracing German ancestors back to the old country.

Inkswells



Showing spirit: Parade Honor Corps members Neel Chheda and Anita Shamoun show their North Farmington High School spirit as they pose in front of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Blue School House float, during the 2001 American Thanksgiving Day parade.

After-school theater seeks acting buffs

BY PAUL R. PACE
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Danielle Paccione is the new theater arts teacher in the After-School Youth Theater program, offered by the city of Farmington Hills Special Services Department, beginning Feb. 20.

She spent several years creating and directing youth theater programs for "Rising Star," Oakland County's only repertory theater for young people.

Danielle was nominated among the Best Cast Ensemble by a local newspaper in 1998 for her part in "Tony and Tina's Wedding," and has performed in 18 stage productions, including parts such as Eliza in "The King and I" and Annie Sullivan in "The Miracle Worker."

The classes are open to students in grades 5-9 and will be held twice a week for four weeks at the Farmington Hills branch of the Farmington Community Library on 12 Mile.

"One of the benefits of the program is that the number one fear people generally have is public

speaking," said Paccione. "This is a way to get students to overcome that fear, getting them comfortable in front of people."

Students will learn many aspects of theater arts including acting, make-up and improvisation in a structured environment. At the end of the series, the students will present a public performance. The cost for the series of classes, rehearsals and performance is \$60.

Paccione of Clarkston said young people not particularly interested in acting might enjoy the experience.

"Anybody who has an interest in acting, singing and dancing, or any kids who have a lot of creative energy" should apply, Paccione said. "It's something that let's them work with other kids. They learn to be disciplined yet creative."

The Youth Theater program is a joint venture between the Cultural Arts and Youth and Family Services divisions.

For information, call Youth and Family Services at (248) 473-1841.

Blue Circle to host transportation history series

BY PAUL R. PACE
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Interested in having fun learning about the history of transportation with a local angle?

The Blue Circle, a group recently organized to promote local cultural events, presents a four-part series entitled "Trains, Planes & Automobiles: A Historical Odyssey" starting this month.

It will be held on Tuesdays at 7 p.m. Feb. 19 and 26 and March 5 and 12 at the Big Apple Bagels, 23334 Farmington Road in downtown Farmington in the Farmington Plaza.

The series includes a special dinner-themed meal during the

last night.

■ On Feb. 19, the theme is local trolley history. Organizers will allow people to travel the streets of Farmington, Northville and West Bloomfield and ride the Detroit United Railways interurban with Brian Golden, author of "Farmington Junction, A Trolley History." Learn about local mass transit of the early 1900s.

■ On Feb. 26, the theme is about the 8,600 bombers built in Ypsilanti during World War II. The Yankee Air Museum's Todd Hackbarth will focus on the contributions of Willow Run Airport during the war. Discover fascinating tidbits about southeast-

ern Michigan's other airport where Rosie the Riveter once worked.

■ On March 5, the history of Michigan's railroads will be discussed. Look back at the rail history of Michigan with Richard Borsos who has 48 years' experience on the tracks as a rail fireman and engineer. He'll share colorful stories and photos that will awaken memories for some and spark an interest for others.

■ On March 12, the theme is "How automobile touring created the diner." Learn how travel habits and the move to suburbia affected this American original. Presented by Daniel Horschberg-

er, a local historian and specialist on automobile touring, roadside diners and roadside dining.

During the evening, a meal of typical diner foods will be served. Series tickets are \$39. Seating is limited. Tickets can be purchased at Big Apple Bagels or Books Abound. Call (248) 476-6500. The program is sponsored by Farmington Big Apple Bagels with support from Books Abound.

Blue Circle is a nonprofit, civic-minded group promoting cultural enhancement of the Farmington & Farmington Hills community by organizing and executing unique events and educational programs.

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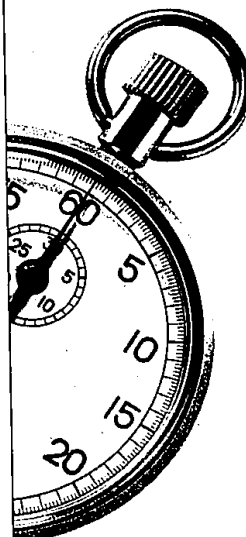
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