

FARMINGTON Observer

Beyond basics

Squash:
It's more
than but-
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sugar. B1



City seeks search consultant

Officials will choose between two firms

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER

Next week, Farmington City Council will interview the interviewers.

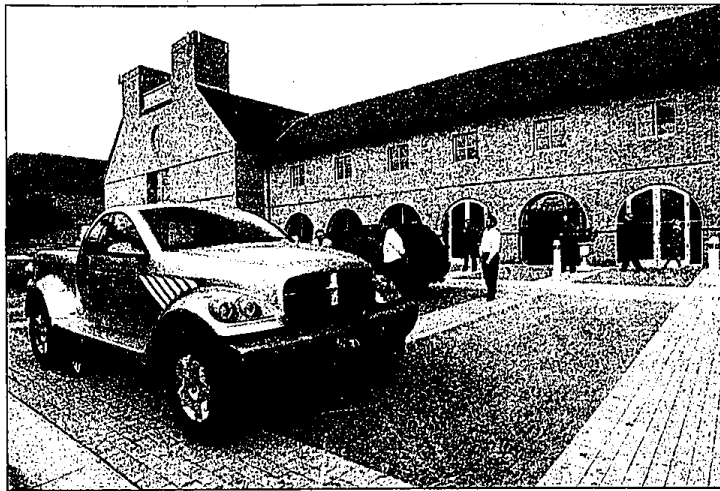
Officials will look at proposals from two executive consultants as they begin the search to replace Farmington City Manager Frank Lauhoff.

Lauhoff will retire Jan. 3, 2003. Council will interview Frank Gerstenecker, of the Ann Arbor-based Michigan Municipal League, a Troy resident and former Troy city manager, at 5 p.m. Sept. 23. Tom Dority, of Lansing-based The Mercer Group, a former East Lansing city manager, who resides in Colorado, meets with council at 4 p.m. Sept. 26. Both will be at Farmington City Hall on Liberty Street.

Council decided against meeting with The Rehmann Group, LLC, Saginaw, which charges by the hour. Because of possible and perceived conflict of interest it also decided against Langworthy, Strader, Leliane & Associates, Inc., Grand Rapids, its planning consultant; and Plante & Moran, LLP, Southfield, its auditor. Gerstenecker is handling the ongoing DDA interview process.

Council considered this list at a spe-

PLEASE SEE CONSULTANT, A7



Both concept and production vehicles were displayed on the grounds. This Dodge Power Wagon borrows from current pickups and Power Wagons first used in World War II.

DCX unveils new Hills facility

BY PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER

German accents were prevalent in Farmington Hills Thursday, as top executives from DaimlerChrysler headlined a dedication ceremony for the company's new North American financial services building, the former Michigan National Bank headquarters off Inkster Road, north of 11 Mile.

Completely redesigned inside and

out, the impressive 300,000-square-foot building is officially called DaimlerChrysler Services North America. It will house more than 1,200 employees who will handle the company's leasing and vehicle financing deals in the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

Klaus Mangold, a member of the DaimlerChrysler Board of Management and chairman of the Board of Management of DaimlerChrysler Services AG, based in

Berlin, said the Hills facility will join Berlin offices in handling \$112 billion in financing contracts, the world's third largest financial services provider.

On hand Thursday were Mayor Nancy Bates, city council members and administrative staff.

"This is not just good news for us, but for our state and the economy,"

PLEASE SEE DCX, A7

Jacobs: Cities are a microcosm | Wilkins looks to solve problems

BY JONI HUBBARD
STAFF WRITER

State Senate candidate Gilda Jacobs says Farmington and Farmington Hills aren't as far from the other communities in the newly drawn 14th District as they might seem.

Both cities are at the far western end of the 14th, which also includes Southfield, Southfield Township, Franklin, Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Huntington Woods, Pleasant Ridge, Hazel Park, Lathrup Village, Ferndale, Oak Park, Royal Oak Township and Pleasant Ridge. Jacobs points out the Farmington area is ethnically and economically diverse.

"I see it as a microcosm of the larger

district," said the Huntington Woods Democrat, who currently represents House District 37. "It's different geographically, but not in terms of diversity."

She's also familiar with the communities because her mother still owns a home in the Old Franklin subdivision.

The challenge of service such a broadly drawn district, Jacobs said, will be largely a matter of time. While she was able to attend many functions in her years as a state representative, she realizes that won't be possible if she's elected to a

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BY JONI HUBBARD
STAFF WRITER

Marc Wilkins is nothing if not honest.

The 43-year-old Farmington Hills resident admits he wasn't particularly interested in running for office when Jessica Fuller from the Michigan Republican Party called and asked whether he'd be willing to run in the 14th Senate District.

Fuller told him the party didn't think a Republican would win, and they just needed a name for the ballot.

While he was worried at first about the effect on his personal life, Wilkins now

considers it an honor to have been asked.

"I got involved in the process," he said. "I started thinking more about the responsibility of serving as a state senator."

Wilkins hit the Internet in search of more information. He felt if he was going to put his name on a ballot, he should have an understanding of the issues.

"This is a democracy, and our democracy is being challenged on a lot of fronts," Wilkins said. "Sacrifices have to be made."

A member of the parish council at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church, Wilkins earned his master's degree in English in 1998, by attending night

PLEASE SEE WILKINS, A8

Here's your chance to win a shopping spree

The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers and 12 area merchants are teaming up to send 12 lucky winners on home furnishings shopping sprees.

It's all part of Fabulous Furniture 2002 in our At Home section on Thursdays, Oct. 3, 10 and 17.

Twelve lucky winners will receive a \$1,000 gift certificate to shop at Avenue Gallery (Birmingham), Rochester, Ann Arbor and Novi locations, Classic Interiors (Livonia), Ellipse Window Tinting (Redford Township), Woven Treasures (Birmingham), William C. Franke Furniture (Wayne), Laurel Furniture (downtown Plymouth), N.A. Mans Building Center (Canton

Township), Newton Furniture (Bloomfield Hills, Livonia, Novi and Sterling Heights locations), Pine Tree Lighting (Lake Orion), Recherche (Waterford), Watch Hill Home Interiors (Birmingham) and Walker Buzenberg (Plymouth).

Winning is easy. Each participating merchant will have official Fabulous Furniture displays at their stores and entry forms available beginning Oct. 3. You may enter one time at each store. You'll want to visit each store (several merchants have multiple locations) and increase your chances of winning.

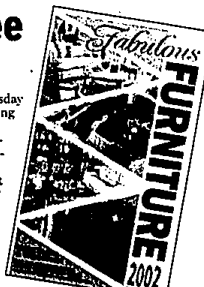
You must be at least 18 years old to enter. All entries have an equal chance of being

drawn. The deadline to enter is 5 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 24.

Look for the entry form in your Thursday and Sunday Observer and in participating stores beginning Thursday, Oct. 3.

Don't miss the Thursday, Oct. 3, edition on Dining Rooms and Kitchens followed by the Thursday, Oct. 10, edition which features Living Rooms and Great Rooms. The At Home section of Oct. 17 will highlight Bedrooms and Bathrooms.

Here's a chance to spruce up your home and read about the latest in furniture styles and decorating tips in At Home Fabulous Furniture 2002.



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LOOKING AHEAD
Chairs that care
Coming Thursday in the At Home
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Affair, an auction to benefit the
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