



Pictured (left to right): North Farmington High School Scholar Athletes: Kyle Goldman, Zachary Yost, Will Hathaway (back), Christopher Doughty, Brad Stuber (back), Steve Kahn (holding plaque), Chris Cyrus (back), John Szymuslik (holding plaque), Ashwin Raghu, Salet Cummufija and NHFS Raider Coach Rich Burrell.

North Farmington High School players earn top scholastic honors

North Farmington High School players exemplifying the best in brains and brawn were saluted Tuesday evening at the high school and in a special presentation before the district Board of Education.

Eleven varsity Raider football players – all starters on offense, defense or special teams – were honored for their contributions on the field and in the classroom. Their cumulative grade point average of 3.89 earned

the team First Team Academic All State ranking by the Michigan High School Football Coaches Association.

The MHSFCA picks four teams in each division. The 11 players with the best academic records are nominated by their coach to represent the school.

"This season we won the OAA Division III Championship and qualified for the playoffs," noted Raider Coach and NHFS athletic

director Rich Burrell.

"This represents the ultimate achievement for our scholar athletes; the ability to be successful both on the gridiron and in the classroom. Our players demonstrated a first class attitude in everything they did. We are very proud of these young men and their ability to represent our football team, North Farmington High School, and the Farmington Public Schools," Burrell said.

Time Warner raises rates for extended basic

By now, many of you have received your first 2003 bill from Time Warner and noticed an increase in rates.

Those of you who subscribe only to the Basic Service (channels 1-23) will pay \$1 less, while homes with basic and Extended Basic, (the majority of subscribers) will pay an extra \$2.50 per month. This is a seven percent increase over

2002 rates. (Last year rates increased only 6 percent). Your new rate is \$37.75, not including converters, remotes or premium channels.

If you're not happy about that, what can you do? Unfortunately, very little. The FCC deregulated cable rates in 1999, so cable companies can charge whatever they like for the upper tiers of channels (anything above channel 23). Your city still regulates rates for basic service, and we were able to require a dollar reduction for that service. But, as you can see, that was more than compensated for by the

increase on the unregulated channels. The one bit of good news is that Disney, which was previously a pay channel, is now free on the Expanded Basic Service Tier.

Cable operators contend these increases are due to the increasingly high prices they pay for programs. From 2001 to 2002 program costs rose almost 12 percent with a comparable increase slated for this year. Sports program rights set the pace. For example, ESPN and ABC bid against each other for the NBA package which ended up at \$4.6 BILLION.

Since 2000, cable rates in Farmington, Farmington Hills and Novi have increased 18 percent for Expanded Basic Service. The national average for this tier is \$39.75 for 59 channels (\$.67 per channel). Our cost of 97.75 includes 77 channels (\$.99 per channel).

The rate regulation process is cumbersome and costly. That's one of the reasons why Congress called for rate regulation to end in 1999, when it thought there would be effective competition that would regulate rates.

But that competition has not really occurred. In the past, we could file with the FCC on your behalf. But that's no longer an option.

Many believe that competition is the answer. Yet there is very little cable competition across the country. In fact, no market has two true cable companies. There are some markets where the phone company is providing cable. That's the case here in Metro Detroit where Wide Open West (WOW) now holds franchises in what used to be Ameritech New Media cities. WOW just dropped rates in the cities they serve.

However, they have made no indication that they will expand into other cities.

We welcome competition through our non-exclusive contract with Time Warner.

Competition is also available through satellite dishes. A few years back, then-President Bill Clinton signed a bill enabling satellite providers to supply local broadcast channels, but the service is available only in a handful of cities. Cable is still the only place you can get the Public, Educational and Governmental Access channels.

Caren Collins is the Executive Director of the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission. The next CAC meeting is 7 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 11 at SWOCC Studios. The next SWOCC meeting is 4:30 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 29 at Farmington City Hall.

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HILLS POLICE CITATIONS

■ Officer Gary Lavin – citation: Lieutenant Douglas Anderson, sergeants Robert Burkart, Alan Soderlund and Charles Hubbard; officers Lawrence Fetherolf, Robert Tidewright, Scott Cronin, David Lee, James Knittel, Mark Mostek, Marc Haro, Paul Nicholas, Richard Welby; sergeant Michael Turner, officers Ibra Kane, Jeff Shade, Timothy Hamilton, Kurt Lawson, West Bloomfield Township Police Department officers, Randy Mince, Larry Lernerand, Novi Police Department – unit citation

On Sept. 24, 2002, a bank robbery occurred at Comerica, inside the Kroger, 11 Mile and Middlebelt.

Kroger bagger chased the robber, observed the escape vehicle, and provided a description and license plate number to officer Lavin.

Officer Lavin ran variations of the plate number until found one that matched the the escape vehicle.

Acting on this information Farmington Hills investigators and SONIC officers conducted a 28-hour investigation/ manhunt that resulted in the arrest of the perpetrator in Saginaw.

■ Officer Hndar Saad – citation

While on routine patrol, Oct. 11, 2002, officer Saad observed a driver watching him as the vehicle rapidly left a gas station lot. A subsequent stop for equipment violations and field interrogation resulted in arrest for false ID. Search incident to arrest discovered stolen credit cards, belonging to a Detroit police officer, taken in an as yet undiscovered home invasion. His actions resulted in discovery of a home invasion that had just occurred, arrest of the perpetrator, and recovery of all stolen property.

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