

Observer & Eccentric | Thursday, March 13, 2003

Farmington City Hanager Bill Richards takes his love of music to the stage at the Civic Theater, performing before Saturday matinees.

RICHARDS

FROM PAGE AT

Saturday matinees.
Skip Rosenthal, who owns
Books Abound on Grand River,
will continue his Friday and
Saturday evening banjo per-

Saturday evening banja performances.

"Skip has been an inspiration," said Richards, who began performing with Rosenthal's full support.

While Richards enjoys performing and his friendly banter with the audience, his real love lies in composine.

"I'm more of a songwriter," said Richards, who has written it songs since September.

"There's value in the words. The lyrics are innortant. To me, the storytelling communicates with people."

storytelling communeates with people.

The public will hear love bal-lads written for his wife, Carol, and songs about what's impor-tant in life.

Richards began playing the guitar at age 12. For the next 12 years, he played in bands that

opened for legendary singers like Bob Seger and Alice

Cooper.
After Richards married, he gave up much of this nightlife, though Carol often came to listen to him play while they

ten to nim play wime they dated.
Until this past January,
Richards played mainly for family and friends. His local public "debut" happened at former City Manager Frank
Luthoff a retirement roast.
Richards entertained more than 250 people as a musical tribute to his long-time boss and friend.

Richards has a collection of

Richards has a collection of Gibson guitars, including one Carol gave him early in their marriage. Three years ago, he kept alive the family tradition, buying a guitar for his son Jeff, a sophomore at Northville High School

School.
The Richards' daughter,
Alison, a sophomore at the
University of Michigan, plays
the guitar, too.



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Speaking publicly is a job skill and these developmentally and physically disabled students want to share who they are with the entire community.

The men — Miller, B. J.

Morton, Aaron Corrie, Abdul Halley and Daniel Perry — plan to visit as many Parmington Public Schools as possible. They also visited Levy Middle School in the Southfield Public School District.

Breides teacher Joyce Rice, they were accompanied.

Besides teacher Joyce
Rice, they were accompanied by paraprofessional
Namcy Odom; Sue Smith, a
speech pathologist; and
Sherri Paquette, a
Farmington High School
student who is in a work
study program.
Miller talked about being
a team leader and enjoying
his job at the Rudisson
Suite Hotel in Farmington
Hillis.

Hills.
"I like to mop," Miller said,
also announcing he has a girl-

friend.
Morton led the classes in
the song It's a Wonderful
World, made famous by Jazz
legend Louis Armstrong.
After that, everyone clapped

Michael Brown figures out how to open a door while in a wheelchaid. and sang We Are Family. The presentation was n to the school's disabilities students. There are about 30 professional teaching staff members and ancillary staff to

members and ancidary stan to meet special needs. Students from Oakland County school districts are assigned to Visions Unlimited through the special education Individual Educational Planning Committee (IEPC) process. awareness program, which has been offered in previous years.
Students without disabili-Studenta without disabilities are given the opportunity to get a feel for what it's like to have physical limitations. For example, they may have to try opening a door or using the drinking fountain while in a wheelchair. In some exercises, they are allowed to use only one hand.

process.
Student achievement is measured and reported using situational work sites, as well as a universal work skills form, in addition to the progress on individualized

BILL BRESSER ESTATE PHOTOGRAPHER

goals and objectives developed through the IPPC process, according to department information. Visions Unlimited is part of the Oskland Intermediate School District Mandatory Special Education Plan, which is approved by the State Board of Education every three years. three years. Students who attend

Students who attend Visions Unlimited don't "graduate" in the traditional sense. Services are available through age 25, but may be terminated earlier if the student has completed all identified goals and objec-tives, or is competently employed.

tives, or is competently employed.

The program has established number of community partnerships, and students have onstributed to the community in a fund-raising project for the familles of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The typical school day for Visions Unlimited students focuses on developing transitional skills from school to work Emphasis is given to improving the students' life and work skills, through classroom and community-based instruction.

on. Visions Unlimited is located at 23761 Research Drive in Farmington Hills.

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Mame (Erin Brolley) is ready to raise nephew Patrick (Dylan Stec) as a man of the world.

Mercy theater presents 'Mame' March 21-23

BY SUE BUCK STAFF WRITER

The high-spirited antics of Auntie Mame sets the tone for Mame, a play performed at Mercy High School March 21-23. The title character is charged with raising her nephew but not without the criticisms of others, according to director Kathy Sill. The production is based on the novel by Patrick Dennis and the play, Auntie Mame. Music and Lyrics are by Jerry Herman.

The school is located on 11 Mile Ruad, just east of

Mile Road, just east of Middlebelt in Farmington

The play will be per-formed at 8 p.m. on both Friday, March 21 and Saturday, March 22 and at 2 p.m. Sunday, March 23. Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$8 for students and children.

and \$8 for students and children.
Starring in some of the main roles are Dylan Stee as Patrick Dennis, age 10; Emily Harpe, as Agnes Gooch; Sara Wiercioch as Vera Charles; Erin Brolley as Mame Dennis; Alex Davidson as Ralph Devine; Joe Obeldi as M. Lindsay Wessleys and Brendan Woolsey and Brendan Dudley as Ito.

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Annual Modern Tunage band battle slated Friday

The annual Modern Tunage
Battle of the Bands takes place
at 7:30 p.m. Friday at the
Costick Activities Center, 11
Mile, east of Middlebelt.
Four local high school bands
will perform for a \$500 top
prize provided by Guitar Center
and Axis Music. The bands
scheduled to perform are
Squeezebox, Twentyl Away,
Brutally Frank and All Rights
Reserved.

The event is sponsored by the Farmington Hills Special Services Department and the Mayors Youth Council.

Bryan Farmer of the Special Services Department said members of the Mayors Youth Council will be providing entertainment between band sets.

Advance tickets are \$8. Call Farmer at (248) 473-1805 for more information.



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