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# FARMINGTON Observer

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Tasty creations

Designer makes cakes that are equal parts fashion, savory. Taste, B1



## Our Towns

### Cops awarded

The Farmington Hills Police Department was among 18 state police agencies receiving a 2002 Award for Excellence in Traffic Safety from AAA Michigan.



For its traffic safety efforts, the department received a plaque, a \$4,000 grant and a 2002 Award for Excellence in Traffic Safety.

Some major traffic safety efforts by the Hills department include mobile traffic trailers, used to remind speeders not to go too fast; the Flasher Passer program, directed at school bus passing violations; and its volunteer program aimed at ticketing handicapped parking offenders, which issued more than 400 tickets in 2002. Its bicycle helmet distribution program also was praised by AAA.

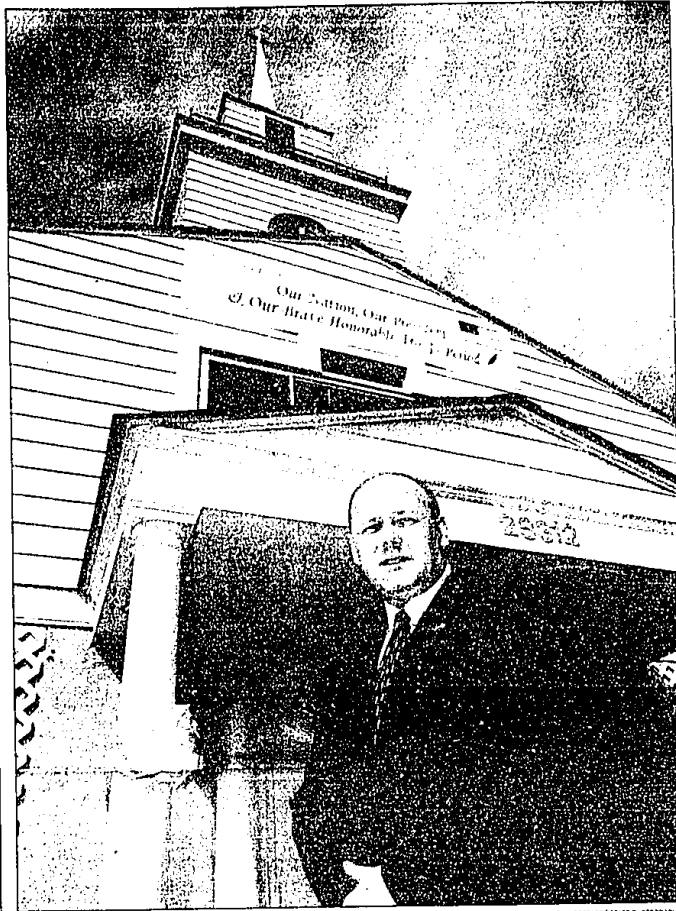
### Miss Purdue

Samantha Steckloff, a Purdue University freshman from Farmington Hills, recently won first runner-up honors at the annual Miss Purdue Scholarship pageant. Competing against 16 other women, Steckloff won \$500 in scholarship awards plus other prizes.

A 23-year-old veterinary medicine student, Sara Connolly, earned the title of Miss Purdue 2003 and the right to compete for Miss Indiana next summer. As first runner-up, Steckloff would assume the title and duties of Miss Purdue should Connolly be unable to fulfill them.

In her platform, "20-20 Vision Perfect Sight: Youth Involvement in the Community," Steckloff advocates engaging teenagers in community decisions and preparing teenagers for future leadership roles through the establishment of Youth Councils to advise local governmental bodies. The five-judge panel evaluated each contestant in four major categories: presentation and community achievement in interview, talent and artistic expression, lifestyle and fitness in swimsuit, and presence and poise in evening wear. A communications and theater major at Purdue, Steckloff sang "Someone Like You" from the musical "Jekyll and Hyde" for the talent portion of the pageant.

Steckloff is a member of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Commission on Youth Families and Children and was a founding member of the Mayor's Youth Council of Farmington Hills. She is a graduate of Harrison High School and the daughter of Mark Steckloff and Vicki Barnett of Farmington Hills.



Bill Briesler/Staff Photographer

To support Rev. Brian Brewer's son Chad, and others who are serving in the war, Victory Baptist Church displays a banner.

## Family ties that bind

### Brewers keep in touch with airman son via Net

BY PAUL R. PACE  
STAFF WRITER

On Sept. 12, 2001, Farmington High School graduate Chad Brewer re-enlisted in the military to show his support for his country in a time of great need.

Now the 25-year-old Senior Airman serves with the U.S. Air Force and is doing his part in Iraq.

His father, Pastor Brian Brewer of Victory Baptist Church in Farmington Hills, said faith in God comforts the Brewer family during Chad's involvement in the conflict.

Brian keeps in contact with his son nearly every day through e-mail.

Chad told his father being able to communicate with loved ones through e-mail during the war has boosted morale among his command unit.

Chad has said faith in his fellow members in the armed forces, but above all faith in God, is keeping him positive while he works nearly 15-hour days keeping Air Force jets on the ready.

PLEASE SEE FAMILY, A7

## Hills workers keep in touch

BY PAUL R. PACE  
STAFF WRITER

Workers in Farmington Hills are showing their support for folks in the Armed Forces who are or may be involved in the war in Iraq.

E-mail gives local folks the ability to keep in contact with co-workers or relatives to show their support.

At Farmington Hills' Community Emergency Medical Service, part of Botsford Hospital, co-workers of Norm Fabian, a paramedic and a major in the Army Reserve are exchanging e-mails with him while

PLEASE SEE WORKERS, A7

## Employees honored for saving a life

BY PAUL R. PACE  
STAFF WRITER

Wendy Mieske and Laura Caster are lifesavers.

Just ask Farmington Hills resident Joe Slivinski.

"If it had not been for those girls, I probably wouldn't be here," said Slivinski, 76.

Mieske and Caster work at the Farmington Family YMCA. They performed CPR on Slivinski when he collapsed from a heart attack after trying one of the fitness facility's treadmills.

The two women, who teach CPR, knew what to do when they spotted Slivinski. They also used the Y's automatic defibrillator, which helps

PLEASE SEE LIFE, A6

## Hills man sentenced in Internet case

BY PAUL R. PACE  
STAFF WRITER

A Farmington Hills man convicted of having a sexual relationship with an 11-year-old girl in 2001 was sentenced to 50 years in jail.

According to Oakland County Assistant Prosecutor Deanna Kelley, Joshua Bandi pled guilty to seven counts of first-degree criminal sexual conduct, four counts of second degree criminal sexual conduct, and using the Internet to

commit a crime. He was sentenced March 24 before Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Fred Mester.

Kelley said in 2001, the 11-year-old girl, who does not live in Oakland County, made ini-

tial contact with Bandi, who was 28 at the time, through an Internet chat room.

"She gave him her phone number and they started talking on the phone and they

PLEASE SEE INTERNET, A6

## Family loses all in house fire

BY PAUL R. PACE  
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills firefighters responded to a two-story house fire in the 29100 block of Bantlewood Friday morning.

No one was home at the time. The fire was called in by a neighbor around 8:45 a.m.

Extensive fire damaged all three levels of the home, and one firefighter was treated for heat exhaustion, said Battalion Chief John Wells.

The cause of the fire remains under investigation, he said.

Extensive fire damaged all three levels of the home, and one firefighter was treated for heat exhaustion.

The homeowners, Fulton and Tameka Jackson, were at the scene Friday.

Fulton Jackson said he and his wife

PLEASE SEE FIRE, A6



Bill Briesler/Staff Photographer

Neighbor Barbara Diem hugs fire victims Fulton and Tamika Jackson. Diem offered them shelter in her home. Diem, who lives behind the Jackson family, said that "I opened a bedroom window and could feel the heat."

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**LOOKING AHEAD**

**Floor show**  
Competition showcases creative arrangements with carpets and surrounding decor. In Thursday's At Home section.



If it's important to you, it's important to us. For totally local news, Read on...