



## Signs of spring appear

Softly, it appears — almost imperceptibly at first, yearning for birth, for breakthrough.

The usual harbingers present themselves like clockwork: robins hopping gingerly across ground still hard, working diligently to find sustenance beneath the earth. Mourning doves begin their soulful cries that are carried on breezes barely detectable. Cardinals call to one another in their characteristic song amid the busy chatter of nest-building.

Forsythia stubbornly pushes forth from unyielding branches, and crocuses emerge even through snow's light dustings.

Air smells different: fresh and new. Earth's warming oozes, its quiet but certain presence bringing with it ever more daylight.

Trees begin to take on an appearance of readiness — nearly budding — and water-logged worms are displaced from the dirt to wet pavement when rains fall.

At long last, spring comes in all its glory, new life bursting forth everywhere. No longer is the cold remembered; winter's dirge is dead, forgotten. The fragrance of a new beginning clings in the wind; skies pinken with delight.

Rabbits abound, and the earth awakens in greenish hues where before existed dull gray and brown — it's like a miracle, the miracle life is. Rabbits of all sorts seem plentiful.

The season of growing comes; and hope is alive! Sun's character changes, and thoughts turn instinctively to breaking the ground, to feeling dirt in one's hands, to planting and growing new life. Little faces frown at the rain, impatient for the long, warm days to come. Yet, rain is the agent of change, from brown to green, dry to lush, and moist, from death to life.

A true sign of spring is the teenager's wardrobe: Sleeveless T-shirts and shorts are worn, even if frost still comes. It is their ever-present internal sense of knowing, not simply hoping, that warmer days will shortly follow. Car windows roll down and radios boom.

Spring is here when the sun's rays illuminate all the dust on my blinds and when the recognition occurs that every window in my home is dirty. Some days of note pass in spring: three of my babies' births — and I revisit each of them, remembering the cries of life and pain no more. For reasons unknown, St. Patrick's Day evokes some ancient longing pain, a cry of the soul within my being. Residual grief from my ancestors' certain struggles in Ireland, perhaps?

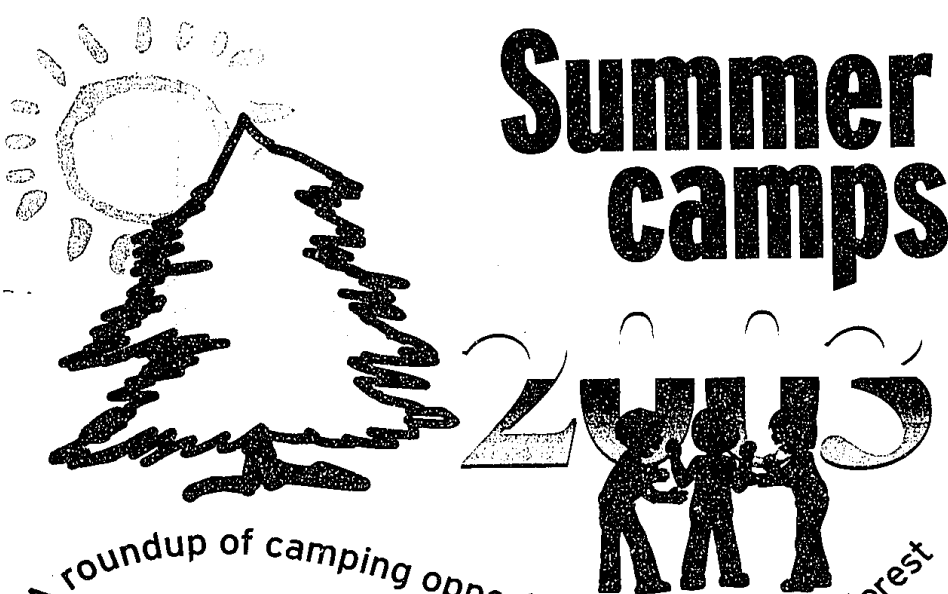
Spring life's weak other-wise would surely feel an unpeppable burden — almost as if a life is lifted away. My spirit shines anew; lighter, it freely soars past the cold numbness of winter.

My children smile blue-birds, building feeders and wooden beehives, though wrens usually come.

As another season settles, I ponder how quickly my children grow, my husband and I age, the world changes. Spring, soft and warm, infuses my soul with hope as I think of the barrenness and icy touch of Good Friday completely and forever forgotten by the time of rising promises fulfilled on Easter Sunday.

Happy Spring!

Kathie O'Donohue is a Farmington life resident and regular contributor to the Farmington Observer.



### ATHLETICS

Summer 2003 Gymnastics schedule at the Dickson Center  
Gymnastics room in Livonia starts June 16-Aug. 20 (Monday through Thursday). All levels (ages 3 1/2 to high school). Preschool half-day camps and grade one and up full and half-day camps.

Visit the UPS Community Education Enrichment Office, 1800 Newburgh, Livonia.

Schoolcraft College offers kids physical fitness classes including: Youth golf. This program is designed for boys and girls ages 7-14, who are beginning and advanced beginning junior golfers.

Instruction on pre-swing routine, the full swing, the short game, Junior development tennis: For beginning players ages 9-12 years old. Class will cover developmental skills, rules, etiquette, scoring and strategy.

Junior young stars tennis: An introduction to tennis for ages 5-7. Class will cover beginning skills, rules and etiquette.

Junior future stars tennis: For beginning players ages 7-9. Class will cover developmental skills, rules and etiquette.

Junior excellence tennis: Organized competitive play for both skill level I and advanced level II. Instructor permission is required for level II. Ages 8-10 are welcome.

Junior tennis camps: Designed to provide conditioning, drilling on serves, volleys, overheads and groundstrokes and match play. Ages 8-10 are welcome.

Karate for youth: Designed for children 6-12 years old interested in learning about karate self-defense techniques. Instruction will assist in the improvement of self-discipline, confidence, and good physical fitness.

Call (734) 462-4448 for information or visit [www.schoolcraft.edu](http://www.schoolcraft.edu)

**Wolverine Camp Schedule at University of Michigan**  
Baseball camp: Day camp (ages 7-10) July 7-10, \$150. Director Rich Maloney, (734) 647-4583

Boys basketball camp: Fundamental camp, June 22-26; and July 27-31. Director Billy Schmidt, (734) 763-5504

Size Governor girls basketball camp: Day camp (ages 7-16) June 16-19, \$275. Director Kelly Kenny, (734) 647-2918

Wolverine girls soccer day camp: Aug. 4-8, 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (ages 6-11) \$180. Director Carrie Malar Barker, (734) 763-7593

Boys lacrosse camp: Advanced skills camp Aug. 3-7 (high school varsity); and Youth skills camp Aug. 9-12 (boys ages 8-14). Advanced residential \$495, commuter \$375; youth commuter \$250. Director John Paul, (734) 622-9942

High school kicking camps: Teaching and training ninth-grade through high school senior punters and kickers. Wolverine Kicking camp was established to teach young punters and kickers how to reach their full potential as kickers. The staff consists of coaches and former professional and collegiate athletes eager to work with young athletes whose goals are to win a starting position at their school, earn a college scholarship or ultimately play professionally. June 20-22 at the University of Michigan. Contact Jim Bocher, Michigan Football Office, (734) 615-2730.

### Single Tennis Tournament for ages 7 and above will be held July 12-13 (ages 7-9); July 11-12 (ages 10-18); July 12-13 (ages 19-40) and July 12-13 (ages 41+).

The Canton Open will be held at Griffin Park July 11-13. Male and female divisions will be offered for each age group. Enjoy a Canton summer tradition. Cost is \$15 resident; and \$20 nonresident. Call (734) 394-5460.

World Series at the Canton Softball Center and Victory Park is for USSSA Boy's 14 and under who wish to participate in the Baseball World Series July 20-27 and/or USSSA 16 and under Girls Fast Pitch Softball World Series July 28-Aug. 3. Assist Leisure Services as they host over 75 teams from all over the country at Canton Softball Center. Call Pat VanDusen (734) 394-5193 or (734) 394-5460.

A free supervised Summer Park Program for Westland children from 5-12 years of age is conducted at four parks: Central City Park, Cayley East, Stottmeyer Park and Sam Corrado Park. Call the Bailey Recreation Center for information, (734) 722-7620.

Youth programs in Westland include soccer, offered through the Wayne-Westland Soccer Association, (734) 458-7786

Softball through the Dad's Athletic Club of Westland, Call (734) 729-5293

Baseball, basketball, cheerleading and volleyball through the Westland Youth Athletic Association. Call (734) 421-0540.

Summer programming through the City of Plymouth Recreation Department is listed at [www.ci.plymouth.mi.us](http://www.ci.plymouth.mi.us) or call (734) 455-6620 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Youth Soccer in Plymouth will be offered in the fall but registration is the entire month of June for children ages 5-12 to 16. Register at the Recreation Office during business hours.

TOPPS Soccer in Plymouth is for children ages 5-19 with disabilities. The program is open to children with autism, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome and other disabilities. Children who use walkers or wheelchairs are welcome. Cost is \$15 for the season. Call Carol Park, (734) 451-0071.

Junior-Bata preschool and beginning gymnastic in Plymouth will focus on body awareness, self-confidence, hand-eye coordination, inverted orientation and lateral awareness. Geared to children ages 3-10. Students should wear loose clothing such as leotards, shorts. Held at the Plymouth Cultural Center, Call Angela Jackson, (734) 981-9900. Ages 3-5 Thursday 4-4:45 p.m. June 5-July 10 and ages 6-10 Thursday 5:50 p.m. June 5-July 10.

Rockets Soccer Camp July 14-18 from 1:30-4 p.m. Cost is \$140 per camper (each additional family/team member will receive \$10 regular price). Held at the Thomas Brown Central City Park by qualified instructors (professional and college players). Camps are designed for boys and girls ages 4-14 of all skill levels. Call (734) 427-0071. Early registration discount is \$10. Must register by May 1.

**THEATER/ART**  
Performing arts, show choir, visual arts and youngest artist camps are scheduled for this summer at the Plymouth Community Arts Council (774 N. Sheldon). Kids ages 5-18 can participate in these weeklong camps starting June 23 from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., with fees starting at \$60 for PACC members. Call (734) 416-4278 or visit [www.plymoutharts.com](http://www.plymoutharts.com).

The Shog String Theatre will offer Drama and Art Camp (half-days) from 9:30 a.m. to noon (drama) and 12:30-3 p.m. (art). After camp care is available 3-5 p.m. at the Bailey Center in Westland. Drama camps include pantomime, improvisation and storytelling. An informal performance will be held on the last day of class. Arts and

crafts camp includes printmaking, stenciling, jewelry, stamping and more. Call (734) 427-6017

The historic Northville Marquis Theatre (135 E. Main, Northville) offers Theatre Day Camp for children (boys and girls) ages 7-14. Professional theatrical instruction is offered in a fun environment where children learn a wide range of theatrical skills and are part of a big musical production using Broadway and musical tunes from the past and present.

Kids have the chance to learn singing, acting and improvisation. Teachers will be professionals with guest artists. Enrollments are now being accepted. Call (248) 349-8110 or visit [www.northvillamarquistheatre.com](http://www.northvillamarquistheatre.com).

Once Upon an Esel will host the annual Summer Art Camp Mania, July 21-25 for ages 6-10. Your child will enhance his or her creativity while making multimedia art themed "Celebrate America." This one-week camp by D & M Art Studio will explore art materials such as paper mache, pastels, painting, charcoal, ceramics, cartooning and more. Prices include a T-shirt and materials. Fee is \$129 resident and \$149 nonresident. Class meets 9 a.m. to noon or 1-4 p.m. for one week. Call (734) 394-5460.

A similar Summer Art Camp program for children ages 3-6 will be offered Monday through Friday, July 7-11. Cost is \$79.

member; \$79 resident; and \$99 nonresident. Call (734) 394-5460.

Ceramics workshops for children ages 3 and up are invited to paint fun ceramic pieces in these one-day workshops held at the Plymouth Cultural Center, May 3 from 11 a.m. to noon and June 7 11 a.m. to noon. \$10 per workshop. Call Angela Jackson, (734) 981-9900

**MUSIC**  
The National Music Workshop DAYJAMS will host a Rock 'n' Roll Day Camp for absolute beginners and experienced music students through the Rudolph Steiner School in Ann Arbor. Available for one-to-two weeks in guitar, bass, drums, keyboards and vocals from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. July 7-11 and July 14-18. Extended drop-off and pickup hours provided. Call (800) 295-5956 or visit [www.dayjams.com](http://www.dayjams.com).

**TECHNOLOGY**  
ID Tech Camps at the University of Michigan follow an innovative and challenging curriculum where students are immersed in creative and fun learning, enabling them to harness the power of technology while having a blast. All courses are designed with a focus on a final project. Multimedia and game creation for ages 8-17. July 27-Aug. 1 and

Aug. 3-8. Web design and graphic arts for ages 8-17 has openings in sessions beginning July 13, July 20, July 27-Aug. 1 and Aug. 3-8.

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## Highmeadow Elementary students lock in for reading

One hundred of Highmeadow Elementary's 310 students chose to participate in the school's first ever "Lock-In To Reading" fundraising event on Friday, March 21, from 6-8:30 p.m.

Students who had gathered a minimum of \$5 in donations from friends or family members were placed in small groups headed by an adult volunteer.

During the evening, the small groups rotated among various reading related activity rooms — including silent reading, an art project and reading using computers in the lab.

In addition, Amb Beaver and Alyssa Gale, forensic science team members from Birmingham Groves High School, shared their storytelling talents.

Each child had the opportunity to win over 50 raffle prizes donated by local merchants and book publishers. The top six fund-raisers, who each raised from \$180 - \$318, earned the opportunity to go out for lunch in a limo on March 27, courtesy Adventure Limo of Farmington.

The project was suggested by Kay Bostwick, a Highmeadow

parent, who had heard about a similar project at another elementary school. She enlisted the help of Merle Glickman as co-chair and together they pulled this event together.

Over 30 parent volunteers helped the night of the event, to help raise \$3,000.

A portion of the proceeds will be presented to Seeding, an

organization that makes books in Braille for sight-impaired children.

The lock-in also raised money for Highmeadow's Literacy Closet, which provides teachers with fiction and non-fiction book sets that are thematically related, but written at different levels, to meet the needs of all students in the classroom.

PLEASE SEE CAMPS, C6