

Tag Days boost teen musicians, 1B



1st loss for Falcons, 1D

Sewer holding tank safety questioned, 6A

# Farmington Observer

Volume 99 Number 99

Thursday, September 15, 1988

Farmington, Michigan

88 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

© 1988 Suburban Communications Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

## farmington FOCUS

To write the Observer: 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024. To call: news line, 477-5450; sports line, 591-2312; home delivery, 591-0500; classified ads, 591-0900; display ads, 591-2300; fax line, 477-9722.

### HEART to heart.

Richard Headlee, a Farmington Hills insurance executive who underwent a heart transplant last October, visited the Farmington school board last week to talk about financing a planned westside elementary and other capital improvements.

The 1982 Republican gubernatorial candidate told trustees six of his nine children attended Farmington Public Schools. He said he and wife, Mary, have "a good feeling toward the schools."

"And although I've had a change of heart personally," he said, "I've not had a change of heart on my feelings toward the quality of schools in this town. It's first rate."

**RAISIN time.**

Andrea Corridore, 15, of Farmington Hills was one of two teenagers who played the Hardee's California Raisins at the Michigan State Fair in Detroit the week of Aug. 26.

She's a dancer from Sheryl's School of Dance in Livonia and has performed nationally.

She hopes to one day dance professionally.

### QUOTE of the week

It creates competition. We don't want other companies gambling on our knowledge.

— Peter Brimont, explaining why the natural gas and oil leasing company he works for would not release the name of the drilling companies it represents (see story this page).

### what's inside

- Around Farmington . . . 4B
- Business . . . . . C
- Cable connection . . . 6D
- Classifieds, Secs. C,E,G,H Index . . . . . 3G
- Auto . . . . . Secs. C,H
- Real estate . . . . . 2E
- Employment . . . . . G,H
- Creative living . . . . . E
- Crossword puzzle . . . 6H
- Entertainment . . . . . 8C
- Footprints in history . . 6B
- Obituaries . . . . . 12C
- Opinion . . . . . 14A
- Points of view . . . . . 15A
- Police/fire calls . . . . 6A
- Road watch . . . . . 6B
- Sports . . . . . D

Check Out the More Than 8 Pages of

In Today's Observer & Eccentric Newspapers!



FILE PHOTO

Farmington school officials are finding it costly to remove asbestos from areas of older school buildings. They would use revenue from a proposed \$27.25 million bond issue to address safety improvements such as these as well as do other remodeling. Facilities would be upgraded in three to four years.

## Economist faults schools for seeking bonds now

**Bond issue endorsed, 14A**  
By Casey Hans, staff writer

Because Farmington Public Schools financial statements are not yet complete, the district cannot be sure it needs a \$27.25 million bond issue to pay for desired capital improvements, local economist Patrick Anderson charged this week.

Deputy superintendent Michael Flanagan said financial figures are not due to be submitted to the state until Nov. 1 and that deciding to hold a bond election now was not

improper. He said the district was working with accurate, preliminary figures.

The bond issue is to be decided by voters in a special election Monday, Sept. 19. Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Anderson is concerned that the school board approved the election before having all its financial information from the 1987-88 fiscal year at hand.

"How can we decide on the need for a tax increase next year, when we don't even know the financial results from last year?" the economist for Alexander Hamilton Life

Insurance Co. of America, and a Farmington Hills resident, said in a prepared statement. "Until the district provides a complete accounting of their financial position, the voters cannot make an informed decision."

"We never, never have this information until October," Flanagan responded. "This is not an unusual year. The board was very proper in making that decision."

"We believe the bond issue is the only way to go."

Please turn to Page 4

## Petition drive intent: ending drilling plans

By Joanne Maliszewski, staff writer

Farmington Square resident Steve Faine believes a Marine City natural gas and oil leasing company is attempting to "divide and conquer" residents to secure leases for further gas and oil exploration.

At least 110 residents signed a petition opposing "the granting of any oil and gas lease which would affect respective property or commons area of our subdivision."

Spearheading the petition drive, resident Peggy DuPont recommends residents refrain from signing leases. "I think people have to evaluate the risks whether it's worth the financial gain."

But at least a dozen leases were

signed by residents in southwest Farmington Hills, particularly Farmington Square subdivision, during a Sunday morning meeting with the lease acquisition company at the Radisson Suites Hotel, Farmington Hills.

"If they truly believe this is an informational meeting, they should disband (void the signed leases) and get an informational meeting where everything is explained. Then they can ask us to sign leases," said Faine, a Farmington Square resident.

Michael O'Connor of M.J. O'Connor & Associates Inc., believes that's unnecessary. "The people who signed the leases have sufficient in-

Please turn to Page 4

## Lease request received coolly

By Joanne Maliszewski, staff writer

Farmington Square Homeowners Association president Keith Davey expected residents to react negatively to requests for oil and gas leases in their subdivision.

"Frankly, I expected that reaction," Davey said. "I don't expect the project to continue. The majority will rule. The state Department of Natural Resources will require about 80 percent participation (before drilling is allowed). That's highly unlikely they'll get anywhere near that."

Much to many residents' chagrin, the homeowners association board of directors already signed a gas and oil rights lease for the subdivision's commons area with the Marine City-

based M.J. O'Connor & Associates Inc. The homeowners association received \$3,300 when it signed the lease.

Residents said the board had no authority to sign the lease and that it signed without full information. In a letter to the Observer Sept. 6, some residents wrote of their anger toward the board.

"We the Farmington Square residents of 350-plus have been sold out by our board members who took it upon themselves without our knowledge to lease our commons area (which belongs to all of us since we are taxed equally for this property)," according to the unsigned letter.

BUT DAVEY disagrees.

Please turn to Page 4

## State test changes raising questions among educators

By Casey Hans, staff writer

Changes to the Michigan Educational Assessment Program would be "nothing but a positive" for Farmington students, according to the testing coordinator for Farmington Public Schools.

But a school trustee who has voiced concerns about the MEAP test said that although the changes appeared positive, he hoped they would not encourage more comparison of scores between districts.

The statewide changes, proposed to begin next fall, include one new test offering and stagger grade levels for testing. With the changes, students could possibly be tested annually between grades three and 11.

The changes were approved in July by the state Department of Education, which is still awaiting financial approval from the state Legislature.

Carolyn Malalek, testing Jack Inch coordinator for the Farmington school district, said she is watching the changes "with interest," as are coordinators in other specialty areas of the district.

"It's certainly going to make a difference, but definitely just for the better," she said. "It's an advantage. Nothing but a positive."

Please turn to Page 2

## Trailer park rezoning confounds council

By Joanne Maliszewski, staff writer

After 1 1/2 hours of discussion and five votes, the Farmington Hills City Council came up empty-handed in trying to rezone the longstanding Pleasant Trailer Park.

Residents near the trailer park were pleased with the council's lack of action Monday. Some said it buys time to reconsider what would be the best land use for the park, on the east side of Middlebelt, just north of Nine Mile.

Despite five votes, the council

couldn't agree on the best zoning for the mobile home park, currently divided into three separate zoning districts — mobile home, single family residential and general business.

The Farmington Hills Planning Commission recommended the council rezone the residential and general business parcels to the mobile home zone to reflect existing use. The member land-use plan designates the area as mobile home, single family residential.

The council made it clear they wanted to be sure they had further information on the mobile

home park, most of which is considered non-conforming because it existed prior to city ordinances.

"I don't see legitimizing this whole thing down there," councilwoman Jean Fox said, preferring to rezone the area for cluster housing.

**COUNCILMAN JOE** Altshoff suggested rezoning to mobile. "I personally don't want to see a mobile home park," he said, adding that much of the property along the east side of Middlebelt, north of Nine Mile, already is mobile housing.

City attorney Paul Bibeau told council members that whatever the zone, the mobile home park would continue as a non-conforming use — at least in the business and residential zones.

The mobile home zone, the vacant northern portion of the park's property, would fall under ordinance re-zoning. Council members have presented a plan for rezoning to add more mobile homes on the northern parcel. These homes would fall under the mobile home ordinance.

Please turn to Page 3

### Rezoning rejected

