

Environmentalists start  
3,000 mile trek, 1B



Mercy wins  
tourney, 1D

Student writers  
tackle interviews, 3A

# Farmington Observer

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## farmington FOCUS

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## New boundaries, additions eyed

Boundary proposal  
is detailed, 8A

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

An interim elementary school boundary plan for fall 1990 and immediate plans for a facilities study were both recommended Tuesday by Farmington school superintendent

Michael Flanagan.

If approved by the school board Jan. 23, the plan would fill the new Hillside Elementary, alleviate crowding at several other schools and would immediately focus on school additions, or even the possibility of another new elementary school, in other crowded schools in the 11,000-student district.

"We don't believe this is a permanent solution," Flanagan said in in-

roducing his boundary plan, based on a community study group's recommendation made in December. "If we didn't, we may have made a different choice. We can, at best, make an interim plan."

"If we thought this was long-term, we wouldn't be going into a facility study."

A facilities task force would likely be headed up by newly appointed director of operations, Don Cowan,

Flanagan said.

A \$7 MILLION bond issue for building a new school was approved by voters one year ago, allowing Hillside Elementary to be built on 11 Mile, east of Halsted. It is slated to open this fall.

But school officials are disappointed that a new school, which can house more than 600 students, will apparently not alleviate the elemen-

tary boom being felt in the district. If Flanagan's boundary proposal is approved, it appears big areas of crowding will remain in the west and southwest portions of the district.

With the exception of 550 students being sent to the new Hillside school, the proposed boundary plan will affect only 43 other students who now

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WHEN he became Farmington Hills mayor last January, councilman Terry Sever leaped to his feet in the council chambers to accept the challenge.

Monday night, as he stepped from the council bench to the chamber floor before turning over the gavel to Mayor-Elect Jean Fox, he joked: "This year, I'm stepping down to get rid of that challenge."

WITH the Rose Bowl now past, Farmington Hills-based Athletic Supporter Ltd., creator of the Detroit Pistons "Bad Boys" logo last year, has shifted its focus from the University of Michigan.

New logo designs for T-shirts and sweatshirts are on the drawing board "in case the Red Wings make the playoffs," said Bill Berris, president of the wholesale company. "A new 'Tigers' design also is in the works."

The 11-year-old company also "is working on a deal for a Barry Sanders caricature design," Berris said.

"We're always one step ahead," he said. "It teams do well, we do well also."

## QUOTE of the week

6 We shall endeavor as a council to work this year in some kind of harmony, so we do not become objects of satire or scorn.

— Jean Fox  
new Farmington Hills mayor; 1A



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

City Manager William Costick (left) presents Shirley Shottroff, Farmington Hills Employee of the Year, Monday night.

## Hills honors top employees

Farmington Hills held its 14th annual employee recognition awards night Monday in the city council chambers.

Top honors went to Shirley Shottroff of the public services department, employee of the year; Michael Farley, police officer of the year; and Don St. Clair, firefighter of the year.

"Shirley easily keeps a handle on all job duties," city manager Wil-

liam Costick said of Shottroff, administrative secretary in the public services department.

In addition to her own job duties, she put in long hours with the Year 2000 project and has long organized outings for fellow employees.

Honored by her peers, Shottroff is considered a "good listener, honest and very caring." She's known as a friend to fellow workers.

Honored as outstanding employ-

ees were: John Chalfour, public works division; Officer Bertie Cook, police department; Debra Howe, finance department; Walt Karolac, engineering division; and Judy Laidlaw, city manager's office. These five were nominated by their peers.

Many employees were honored for reaching service milestones.

"The real spokes of the wheel

that make this thing go around are the employees of the city," said outgoing Mayor Terry Sever.

THE POLICE officer of the year award recognizes valor in the performance of duty — where an officer is faced with the immediate threat of death or serious injury to himself/herself or others.

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## Status of court officer in limbo

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

A request by District Judge Fred Harris to depose his new court officer — something he labeled a top priority upon taking the bench — has been "turned back" to him, a spokeswoman from the Oakland County Sheriff's Department said last week.

But Harris said that was news to him — that he had not yet received word from the sheriff on his request. The county would not release information about what was contained in its response to Harris, calling it a "personal matter." The Observer this week filed a Freedom of Information request in an effort to obtain the information.

Robert Mitchell, a retired Farmington public safety officer who left his job due to a "severe stress disorder" in 1988, according to city records, was hired in November to serve as court officer and clerk in Harris' courtroom in 47th District Court.

Beverly Aldrich, representing Sheriff John Nichols, had little to say about the request except to call it a "personal matter" to be dealt with by Harris. She said the request for deputization had been "turned back to him."

WHEN ASKED for a reason or clarification on the matter, she would not say why. "I can only indicate the information was sent to Judge Harris," she said.

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AND THURSDAY ISSUE

## Harmony key to Hills' future, mayor says

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Mayor Jean Fox's 1990 agenda serves as an example of how the mayor's role is clearly more than ceremonial, outgoing Farmington Hills Mayor Terry Sever said.

Other city officials, including Sever, are optimistic that with Fox's leadership, some tough issues — ethics, growth, aesthetics, traffic and roads — can be tackled with the spirit of cooperation.

"Every year the new mayor takes a new role and tends to feel they can accomplish a lot on their own," Sever said.

"She (Fox) is going to need to work diligently to get the support of the council. I think this reiterates that

the post is more than ceremonial." His example of one of Fox's goals that shows the mayor's role as more political is the proposed regulation of signs on store windows and outside walls.

"The question is does the majority of the council feel that way? She's settling the tone on that issue. That's not just a ceremonial tone. That's a challenge," said Sever, who argued through his mayoralty that the mayor's role must be strengthened.

MAYOR PRO TEM Aldo Vagnozzi disagreed.

"Jean is already consulting with council members. She stressed that the whole council is involved. That's important," he said.

"We shall endeavor as a council to

work this year in some kind of harmony, so we do not become objects of satire or scorn," Fox said. "But you must remember we are seven different people."

In a 29-minute-plus speech, Fox spoke Monday night of her goals for 1990.

HER ONLY promise was to ensure the continuance of democracy in the council's usual way — "without fanfare" — three Monday nights in between.

City Manager William Costick later hailed Fox's comments about "stopping back and being grateful for our freedom and doing something about it."

"I think the things she said are

very much on target."

FOX'S 1990 agenda is filled with tangible goals: building on the new ethics committee, cablecasting council meetings, relieving traffic woes without building a maze of four- and six-lane roads, improving the city's environment and aesthetic appearance and controlling growth.

Vagnozzi was delighted with Fox's determination to "build on our beginnings of the ethics committee."

"This city must pursue our tentative beginnings with the strongest campaign financing controls imposed by the people, who have a vested right in knowing before an election if candidates are responsible

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Jean Fox  
Farmington Hills mayor

## Fondling alleged in school case

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

A 28-year-old teacher's assistant at Kenbrook Elementary School in Farmington Hills was charged Tuesday with sexual assault in the alleged fondling of a student twice during a group testing session in November.

Arraigned before District Judge Margaret Schaeffer of Farmington, Rustum Dimosha of Detroit stood

mute to two counts of second-degree criminal sexual conduct, a felony carrying a penalty of up to 15 years in prison upon conviction. A not-guilty plea was entered on his behalf.

A student who police said is 11 said she was touched in the school's learning center the morning of Nov. 9. Dimosha was supervising a group of students being tested in the center at the time. At least one other adult was present, according to police re-

ports. Defense attorney Gail Benson of Detroit, who has handled similar cases, said she is "aghast" at the charges leveled against her client.

"He's absolutely a wonderful, wonderful man," she said. "He's highly regarded by everybody in his community. Most of the students know and care for him. It doesn't make sense."

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## Farmington Observer begins new features

The new year marks the addition of a new feature on Thursday and a new page on Monday in your hometown Farmington Observer.

On Thursday, Community Corner (Page 4A) provides a chance for Farmington and Farmington Hills residents, surveyed at a different site each week, to speak out on our question of the week. On Monday, we've added an

opinion page that'll include a combination of editorial comment, columnists and letters to the editor.

City Hall Newsletter (Page 6A) also is new. It will run periodically, offering news briefs from the Farmington and Farmington Hills city halls.

As always, we appreciate your feedback.

— Bob Sklar, editor