

## Recalling their roots

## Harrison program parades area's cultural diversity



Larkshire Elementary second graders Mershia Cunmuljaj



Tracy L. Parker, a sophomore, transforms into the Queen of Sheba from northern Africa.

That it's time we're aware, It's a small world after all,"
— from the song "It's a Small World"

By Casey Hans



T WAS A night to recognize the many cultures of the Farmington area, and a time for some to recall their rotes. When I went to elementary school, we learned all kids could grow up to be President — then we were told on the side 'ever-body but Catholics,' "said Farmington school Superintendent Michael Flanagan. That soon ended,' he added, talking about religious persecution of the

That soon ended," he added, talk-ing about religious persecution of the Irish Catholius and how proud be and his family were when fellow Irish-man John F. Kennedy made it to the White House. Flanagan told a crowd of hun-dreds at a recent multicultural event about his family's struggle to come to America from Ireland in the 1800s

Growing new roots in Farmington and Farmington Hills

and make something of themselves.
"We even had a group who tried to
keep us out," he sold. "My grandparents were told 'no Irish need
apply."

parents were told 'no Irish need apply.'

THEN FLANAGAN brought message back home to the peoples of Arabic, Albanian, Jewish, Spanish, Scottish and other descents who illied the itarrison High School audicum for the annual Farinington-area 'Celebration of Our Diversity' on April 2." Can assure you that' a president of the property of the control of the property of the

cultural event has been held in the Farmington school district, and the



Mercy High School students Anandini Sekhar (front) and Valshali Shah join in the public school celebration of cultures. The Rejesthani dance is a tradition from southern India.

first year it has been hosted at Harfirst, Year it has been hosted at Harfirst, High. This year's celebration,
was sponsored by the Farmington.
Public Schools and the Multicultural.
Community Council, a group represented by, government, business and
religious groups.
Officials from throughout Southcast Michigan and the state attended
the event, as well as many families.
Featured were entertainment and
dood of the many cultures represented in the community.
This year's program included a
skit showing a traditional Chaldean
marriage proposal, a Middle East
historical lesson and fashion show, a
rendition of the traditional Mexican
hat dance and many other tradition-

al dances and songs.

"One of the great joys for me is watching the great cultural diversity—that mosale," which makes up the Farmington community. "Flanagan said. "The most important thing we have as a nation is our cultural diversity. It's our strength."

Haroune Alameddine, billingual director for the Farmington school system, said Farmington, was preparing to welcome some 11 aes students. From Japan and the Milddle

paring to welcome some 13 new stu-dents. from Japan and the Middle cast the week following the cultural event, additions to the growing num-ber of people of varied descents moving into the area.

"We have new students coming in

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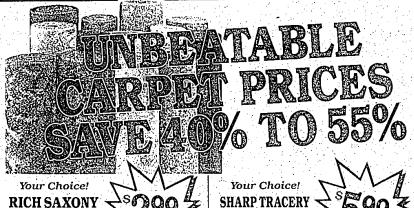


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