



Farmlington Observer

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IN THE PAPER

TODAY

Chemical peril?: The Farmington Hills City Council has approved state guidelines on chemical lawn sprays. Some residents, however, want a tougher local ordinance. /4A

STREET SCENE

Wanted: When Jay Yarbrough needed some bandmates he put an ad in the classifieds. Luckily, Daryl Ropp and Kevin Mrah answered the call. The end result is the alternative group *The Mind*. /6A

COUNTY NEWS

Hitting home: Local legislators assess their constituents' reaction to President Clinton's economic package. /10A

TASTE

Winner Dinner: Take the plunge this week; serve fish for dinner. Nick Tringali will show you how easy it is to cook fish. /1B

Weighty decisions: Stop putting it off; there's no time like the present to make a commitment to losing weight by eating more low-fat foods. /1B

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

Keep on trunking: If you've never been to a trunk show, read all about it. /5B

SPORTS

High school skiling: Mercy's Niki Gable won the individual regional crown, and the Marlins qualified as a team for the state finals Thursday. /1C

Boys basketball: Farmington and North Farmington dueled on the hardwood Friday, while Harrison visited Plymouth Canton in the WLAA finals. /1C

CABLE TV WEEKLY

Local access: "Salon Glamor" will be presented on Channel 12. Check your cable guide for time and date.

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3rd clock ticks critics



BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

What time is it? That question can leave someone feeling confused in downtown Farmington.

There's a clock in front of Metro Bank. At least the time is accurate. That's more than can be said for the one at Village Commons, less than a mile east on Grand River.

The timepiece is missing hands on one side, its west face; the time is off by a couple of hours on the other side. Then there's the renowned Downtown Clock Plaza. A 28-foot tower would stand on the corner of Farmington and Grand River in front of the Masonic Temple.

That plan leaves some people with the same puzzled look as if they tried

to figure out the time on the Village Commons clock.

"What's the purpose?" asked Carole Lawson of Farmington Hills, an employee at a Village Commons eatery. "I'd prefer to see the money spent in a more practical fashion."

Added Louise Dexter of Detroit, who uses the Metro Bank clock to synchronize her Garfield watch to match the bus: "Why? One is enough, isn't it?"

Then there are those who think a third prominent clock would be a timely hat trick for downtown.

See **CLOCK**, 6A



Louise Dexter: "One (clock) is enough, isn't it?"



SHANON LEHMECK/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Tuned to baseball: Farmington Hills resident Ernie Harwell, 75, is looking forward to returning as Detroit Tigers radio announcer this season.

Simplicity is Ernie Harwell's secret

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

The resonant voice: So powerful, yet soothing. Ernie Harwell's mellow, reassuring cadence beckons spring on a cold February afternoon.

"He" describes his play-by-play style, but it says more about himself. "I think simplicity is the best

thing," said Harwell, 75, sitting on the couch in his Farmington Hills living room. "The more I do it I find simplicity is the best."

An old man in his stocking feet recalling grand and humorous moments in a boy's game. A black cat named Velvet prowls under feet as the sun sneaks through the blinds.

A Bible, a portable radio and a tape recorder sit on a table nearby — his tools to preserve a serene outlook.

Ernie's back!

Harwell returns this season as a Detroit Tigers radio announcer. He'll do play-by-play of the middle innings, culminating in what is a

happy ending to a controversy that thrust a self-effacing gentleman awkwardly into the center of attention.

Memories of Tom Monaghan, Bo Schembechler and his controversial firing have melted away like a gray fog pitted against a morning sunrise.

See **HARWELL**, 3A

Hills, Mercy Center agree on lease

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills has come up with at least a temporary solution to housing its senior programs.

After four months of negotiations with the Sisters of Mercy, the city has obtained an agreement on a two-year extension of its lease of the Mercy Center at 11 Mile east of Middlebelt. The city had considered asking for a longer lease — as much as six years — and is also looking into the possibility of buying land and building its own senior center.

"This will give us a greatly expanded area," said City Manager Bill Costick. "And it gives us the possibility of an extension."

The two-year lease will cost the city \$7 a square foot for space in the 52,169 area of the C Wing of the Mercy Center.

That first-year cost of \$365,183 will increase to about \$405,000 for the second year, said Steve Brock, assistant to the city manager. The increase for the second year is based on projections for inflation and expected increases in other operating costs, he

said. The center has operated in about 40,000 square feet of space, using different areas of the facility at different times. The increased space along with better hours for using it should help the program, Brock said.

"We're trying to minimize the amount of take-down and set-up," he said, referring to areas at the center where tables and other equipment must be taken down at the end of the day to make room for other night programs.

See **LEASE**, 2A

'We believe this agreement meets both the city's concern for providing for their senior citizens and our community's desire to insure the buildings will be used cost-effectively for needed programs.'

Marian Schultz
Mercy Center team

BABES needs volunteers

Volunteers are needed to present the BABES (Beginning Alcohol and Addiction Basic Education Studies) program to third-graders in the Farmington Public Schools. BABES is a seven-week substance abuse awareness course taught in half hour classes. Trained volunteers present information on feelings, peer pressure, decision making, alcohol and drugs, getting help with problems and sexual abuse.

Students have the opportunity to work with BABES puppets, activity pages, engage in discussions and ask questions. Volunteers are trained through BABESWORLD in Southfield, and the training is paid for by Farmington Families In Action. Volunteers are asked to make a two-year commitment,

FARMINGTON FOCUS

presenting at a minimum of two schools a year. Training sessions take place three or four times a year and require three days to complete. Anyone interested should call Cindi Helinek at 471-4475.

Barbershop goes to OCC

Barbershop harmony will be the subject of a free workshop sponsored by the Oakland Community College Community Chorus at 8:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 23, at the Student Center in Building J of OCC's Orchard Ridge campus in Farmington Hills.

The City Lights Chorus will perform and a video on barbershop quartet singing will be shown. The workshop/demonstration is open to the

Memory Lane

From the Feb. 19, 1953, edition of the Farmington Enterprise:

Only 779 of 5,540 registered voters turned out for the Farmington Township election. In trustee race, Fred Westlake led with 441 votes. Thomas Tardy was second with 433, and Ward Eagle had 373. All candidates were Republicans. There was no Democratic ticket.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21893 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, dropped off at the newspaper office, or faxed to 477-9722.