

Deluxe tux: Cornucopia Ball organizer Todd Lipa receives help with his bow tie from colleague Deborah Grant before last year's inaugural event.

FILE PHOTO



## Organizers get ball rolling for Cornucopia

As one organizer of the Cornucopia Ball said it, "we started working on the next one right after the first one."

It may be summer, but plans for the second Cornucopia Ball, to raise money for the Farmington Community Foundation, are under way.

"We're sending out invitations to businesses," said Deborah Grant, one of the event's organizers. The group is also sending out letters soliciting items for the silent auction. They should reach mailboxes the week of July 15.

The ball, which will feature music and elegant dining for guests at the William Costick Center on 11 Mile, raised about \$37,000 last year for the foundation, which uses the money for youth programs in Farmington Hills.

Hills.

In addition to the \$100 tickets, with two-thirds of the ticket money going directly to the program, money is raised through a silent auction.

Last year's auction items included: art from local artists, a boat, jewelry, vacation packages and more. Items for this year are still coming in, but organizers are expecting some repeats. At least one organizer is hoping for a car, too.

"It's an elegant event," said co-organizer and former Mayor Joanne Smith. "And by attending, a person is going to give the children of Farmington and Farmington Hills an opportunity."

The opportunity comes in the form of playing sports, watching

television, listening to music - all under the supervision of the program's 10 staff members and half-dozen volunteers.

"But not everyone is used every night," explained Todd Lipa, program director. He estimates volunteers and staff supervise approximately 150 children per day.

The charity fund raiser has been part of an effort to support the foundation on a continuing basis in order to continue youth programs in the city. Such programs can be a godsend for two-income families, or single parents concerned about the whereabouts of their children while they are at work.

"It's about the decisions they make while left on their own, and oftentimes they are poor

choices," said Grant, referring to the children who are home by themselves between 2:30 and 5 p.m. "Our youth need to be off the streets."

The decentralized youth program, which caters primarily to children between 11 and 17-years-old, runs at least during the school year with the possibility of summer hours. The program began last March at the William Costick Center and will

be at the YMCA on Farmington and another location this coming year.

Parks and Recreation millage money of \$200,000 and a \$385,000 federal grant got the program off the ground. The foundation will raise money to make sure the program continues.

"It's a high risk time (for children)," said Smith, a retired

social worker and youth counselor. "The foundation raises money and gives to important programs."

Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi vowed that he'd be the first to buy a ticket, but there will be plenty of others available. Dianna Lewis of Channel 7 will host the event.

For volunteer information or to buy tickets, call 473-1841.

## District plans sell job for another bond issue

BY TIM SMITH  
STAFF WRITER

More of a "grassroots" approach probably will be taken by Walled Lake school officials when campaigning begins this summer to back what will be the fourth major bond issue in three years.

The Walled Lake district includes a northwest portion of Farmington Hills.

The Walled Lake Board of Education unanimously OK'd a recommendation by Superintendent James Geisler to begin the multi-step bond application process. Although subject to change, Geisler said the district desperately needs a \$117 million bond issue to be approved by voters in the fall.

"The alternative is chaos," Geisler said. "We are approaching the last year we can have a successful bond issue without the need for double shifts."

School board trustee Marc Stogler said the grassroots approach entails getting parents out to the polls.

Officials are confident they can convince parents about the growing need. Without new classroom space, the district might need to significantly increase class sizes, go to year-round school or double shift classes.

The district is already resorting to Band-Aid tactics, such as

the leasing of Meadow Lake Elementary School, from the Birmingham school district.

With the initial go-ahead given, the bond issue timetable as spelled out by Geisler is as follows: July 8, ballot language must be finalized; July 17, approval of the bond application to the state treasury department, including ballot language, must be OK'd; Aug. 15, the board must call the election and set a date.

The bond, Geisler said, would increase the debt retirement by 2.7 mills instead of the 3.52 mills called for in the last proposal, narrowly defeated in February 1995.

The owner of a \$100,000 home would have an annual tax increase of \$135; the previous proposal would have boosted that tax bill by \$176.

(With the 2.3 mills for debt retirement approved Thursday as part of the district's \$104 million operating budget for 1996-97, the resulting 5.0 mills would be less than that now in place at a handful of Oakland County districts, said Geisler.)

Reducing that tax burden is the fact several components of the \$116 million February 1995 bond were cut from the pending proposal. Those include the fol-

lowing: the district is leasing computers, instead of asking for money to buy them; renovations to certain elementary schools, originally slated for bond money, are being handled out of the general fund.

Although the total amount of the current proposal is virtually identical to the most recent try, that is due to inflation.

According to the district, the following projects would be completed if the bond proposal is successful:

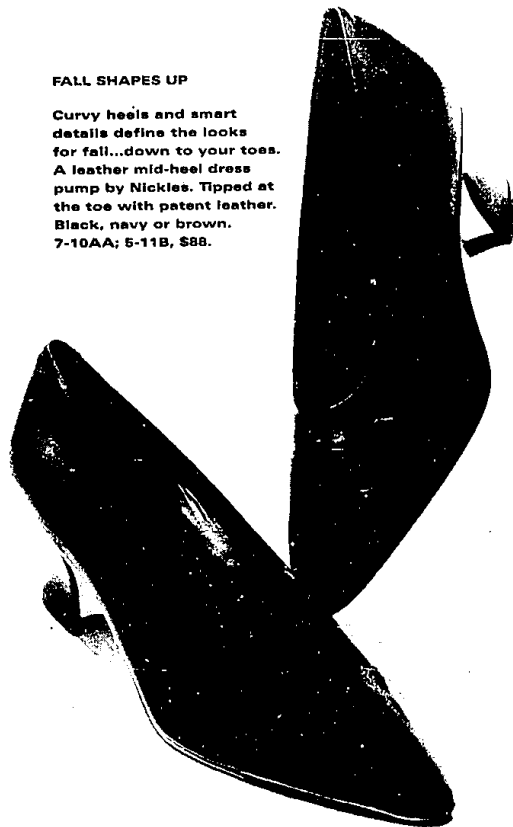
- a new elementary school at Meadowbrook-13 Mile roads;
- a middle school at Charming Road near Wixom;
- a middle school on the east side of the district, either in the central or northern portions;
- seven elementary school multi-purpose rooms;
- rebuilding and expanding of Walled Lake Central High School, featuring 27 new classrooms, additional parking and improved athletic fields;
- addition of 11 classrooms and an auxiliary gymnasium at Walled Lake Western High School, plus other remodeling;
- structural repairs, heating and ventilation work and electrical replacement at the Community Education Center.

For information call 478-8800.

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## Hills ice arena sets new rate schedule

The Farmington Hills City Council has set the Ice Arena rates for 1996-97.

The rates for open skating are \$3 per session for residents and \$5 per session for non-residents.

Figure skating rates are \$4.50 per session for residents, \$5 per session for non-residents, and \$6 per session for drop-in skating.

Shift hockey is \$6 per session. Learn to skate programs are \$50 for residents and \$60 for non-residents. Skate rental remains \$2.

The rate schedule for ice rental is as follows:

Monday-Friday, 4 p.m. to 11:30 p.m., \$160/hour.  
Monday-Friday, Midnight to 3:30 p.m., \$125/hour.

Saturday-Sunday, 6 a.m. to 11:30 p.m., \$150/hour.

Saturday-Sunday, Midnight to 5:30 p.m., \$125/hour.

The Farmington Hills Ice Arena is located at Founders Sports Park on Eight Mile Road between Farmington and Halsted Roads.

For information call 478-8800.