

THE WEEK AHEAD MONDAY

Still talking: A developer and neighboring homeowners meet at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 10 with Farmington Hills City Council over a subdivision planned at 13 Mile and Orchard Lake.

TUESDAY

Calling subs: The Council of Homeowners Associations meets at 7 p.m. Nov. 11 at the Farmington Hills Fire Station, Orchard Lake Road near 11 Mile.

WEDNESDAY

Get your shots: The Oakland County Health Division offers an immunization clinic from 9 a.m. to noon Nov. 12 at the Clarenceville United Methodist Church. Please bring your immunization records.

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Lewis to emcee benefit ball

Diana Lewis is used to being under the spotlight and in front of the microphone, and Saturday will be no different.

The WXYZ-TV Channel 7 news anchor who began her career at the station 20 years ago will emcee and conduct the auction for the third annual Cornucopia Ball benefit for the Farmington/Farmington Hills Community Foundation for Children, Youth and Families.

Lewis, who lives in Farmington Hills with her husband, Glenn, and two daughters, isn't just making another guest appearance. She serves as honorary chairperson of the Cornucopia Ball. The gala ball benefits the city's youth centers by creating a foundation to help pay operating costs, in addition to paying for other programs for children, youth and families. The foundation is aiming to raise \$100,000 through the ball.

Highlights of the ball feature a five-course gourmet dinner, music and dancing to the Mark Phillips Orchestra and a silent and live auction of many unique items - including a handmade doll house, tickets to sporting events, a hot air balloon ride, deluxe resort accommodations and much more.

The gala evening is considered by many to be the start of the holiday season for the Farmington area with the William Costick Center sparkling and twinkling for the event, according to Joanne Smith, who is co-chairing the event with Deborah Grant. Honorary hosts of the ball are Botsford General Hospital, Michigan National Bank and The Farmington Observer.

Tickets are \$100. For reservations, contributions or more information, call the Foundation at 473-1841.



Diana Lewis

Parents dispute high school test



By TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Some Farmington parents question whether benefits of the controversial High School Proficiency Test will last as long as the HSPT seal likely to be stamped onto their children's transcripts.

A series of proposed legislative changes impacting the HSPT, including one that would have transcripts stamped instead of diplomas, were outlined at Tuesday's Farmington Board

of Education meeting by 37th District state Rep. Andrew Rackowski. He ran through a synopsis of House Bills 5228-5235, along with HB 4828.

"We'd hate to see a child labeled," said Irene Klegon, a North Farmington High School parent. Klegon, part of a grassroots, fact-finding group with parents from all three high schools, isn't crazy about the test itself, let alone where the test stamps will go.

Another member of the informal group, Harrison High School parent Aimee Ergas, said it is unfair for a student's permanent record to bear the

stamp of something that is constantly "in flux."

"I think this test can be valid, and it is an important tool, but at the moment it hasn't jelled up yet," Ergas said. "Until that happens, it shouldn't be on their permanent record."

Permanence isn't the only worry for the parents. A decision prohibiting them from opting their children out of the test could be made Nov. 12, when the Senate Committee on Education, chaired by state Sen. Joanne Emmons, is expected to meet on the topic.

And parents such as Klegon and

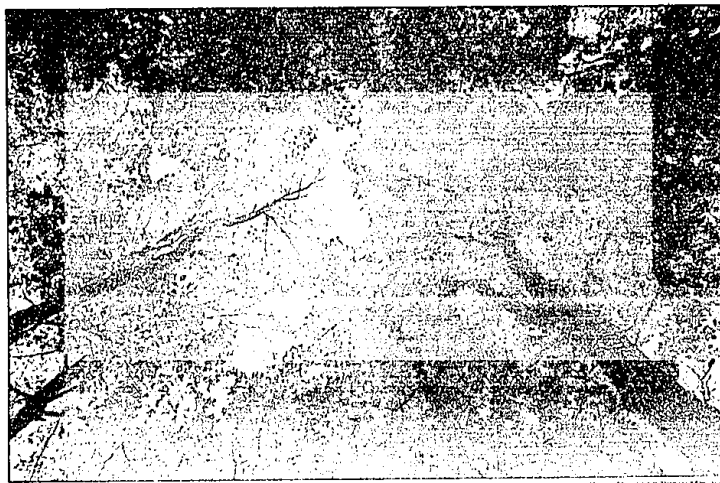
Ergas want other parents to call Emmons (517-373-3760) to give their input before the committee meets.

"While it's a work in progress, we want voices to be heard about how they feel about it," Klegon said. "Even in our committee, people have a different bent. We're not trying to sway a group. We just want to get information out there."

Stamping diplomas caused an uproar last year in the Birmingham school district, with a flood of parents pulling their children out of taking the test.

Please see TEST, A6

Golden vista



STAFF PHOTO BY BRIAN MITCHELL

Glorious glow: Some of the trees at Woodland Hills Nature Park hit peak color last week, at the same time that Farmington Hills voters were deciding - by a huge margin - to protect the park as a passive site. Now, the park will remain undeveloped unless future city voters decide to make a change. The park is west of Farmington Road and south of I-696.

Student with knife at school faces expulsion, criminal charges

By RICHARD PEARL
STAFF WRITER

A 16-year-old North Farmington High School student who brought a knife to school has been suspended for 10 days and faces both criminal charges and possible expulsion.

Because he is a juvenile, police will be filing a petition with the juvenile division of the Oakland County probate court requesting the youth be charged with possessing a concealed weapon, which is a felony, and a misdemeanor charge of possessing a mechanical knife.

The teen-ager also faces an expulsion hearing before Don Cowan, executive director of instruction and student services, for violating the school code of conduct regarding its being a weapons-free zone. A first offense of the code also is a misdemeanor.

According to a Farmington Hills police report, the student was being questioned Oct. 30 in the office of assistant principal Ron Jones as part of an investigation into the theft of numerous

The youth said he used it to cut boxes at his job.

calculators from the school when he volunteered to empty his pockets to support of his claim of innocence.

In the process, the teen-ager pulled out the knife, according to the report by Farmington Hills police Officer Duane Fox, a liaison officer who had been asked to handle the investigation by school officials. The knife was described as a mechanical folding knife with a stainless steel blade, which sprang out when a clip-like portion of the knife was pulled.

The youth said he used it to cut boxes at his job.

Bringing a weapon to school is in violation of state law which mandates a sentence of up to 180 days suspension.

"A lot depends on what the item was in school for," said Cowan on Friday, adding he is awaiting reports he needs before the hearing is scheduled.

Man hurt in mobile home fire

By RICHARD PEARL
STAFF WRITER

A 39-year-old man was listed in critical condition at the University of Michigan Burn Center Friday after he was burned in a mobile home fire early Friday morning.

Fire investigators said Buckley W. Bake, who suffered second- and third-degree burns from the waist up, was injured when he escaped the burning mobile home at the Farmington Mobile Manor, 30030 Eight Mile, by jumping through a window close to the fire.

First taken to Botsford Hospital, he was then transferred by helicopter to U-M and is expected to survive.

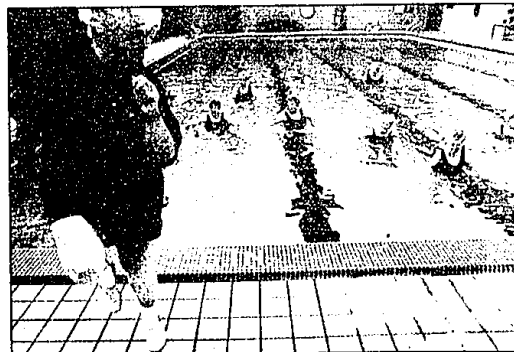
The fire destroyed the mobile home, according to a spokesman at Mobile Manor. Fire reports said the blaze may have been started by a cigarette, with a sofa and chairs as the first items to ignite.

Police said they were told the injured man is a heavy smoker who has no permanent address and had been staying at the mobile home as a guest of his renter, Michael P. Bowman.

Bowman told police he and Bake had been drinking earlier and that Bowman passed out on the couch about 12:30 a.m. Bowman said he left the

Please see FIRE, A2

Dancin' in the pool



STAFF PHOTO BY BRIAN MITCHELL

Pool steps: They call it liquid line dancing, a water fitness class for senior citizens at the William Costick Center pool every Thursday at 2 p.m. Above, class instructor Maggie Loidas shows the class the moves set to country music while students do them in the water. The last class for this session will be the Nov. 20, but the program is scheduled to start up again in January.

Helping Goodfellows

There are a couple activities planned for the next couple weeks to help the Goodfellows do what they do best every holiday season - successfully collect canned goods and raise money to buy food for the needy.

First of all, every building in the Farmington Public School District will have a designated spot for the dropoff of canned goods, beginning tomorrow and continuing through Tuesday, Nov. 26.

Last year, more than 24,000 cans were collected in the district from students, parents and employees.

Bonaventure Skating Center is hosting its annual "Skate for Farmington Area Goodfellows" from 6:30-9 p.m. Monday, Nov. 17. According to Bonaventure's Chuck Findlay, participants must bring one canned food good item and pay \$2 admission. All food and admission proceeds will go to the Goodfellows. Skate rentals are \$2, for blades or skates. There also will be a drawing for five Beanie

FARMINGTON FOCUS

Babes.

Findlay said 400 skaters took part in the event last year.

Bonaventure is located at 24505 Halsted. For more information, call 476-2200.

Arts and crafts for schools

School boosters get out your checkbooks for a few upcoming craft fairs.

The Farmington High School Football Backers will host its Eighth Annual Art & Craft Show from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 15, at Farmington High School.

A week later, North Farmington High School

Band and Orchestra Boosters is presenting its Winter Arts & Crafts Fair from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 22. Admission is \$2. The high school is located at 32900 W. 13 Mile. Proceeds will help fund student scholarships, band camps, educational trips, musical equipment and other worthwhile activities, said spokeswoman Sue Leon.

Heroic story

Author Patricia Polacco visited students at Hillside and Wood Creek elementary schools late last week, as part of the Authors in Autumn program. Polacco, a dyslexic who didn't learn how to read until age 14, presented her "My Heroes" theme.

Polacco, described as an uplifting speaker by school officials, also gave a presentation to district faculty members Thursday at the Farmington Training Center.