

Thursday  
November 20, 1997  
SERVING THE COMMUNITY  
FOR 110 YEARS

# Farmington Observer

Putting You In Touch With Your World™

HomeTown  
COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK

VOLUME 111 NUMBER 16

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN • 100 PAGES • <http://observer.eccentric.com>

SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

© 1997 HomeTown Communications Network, Inc.

## GIVING THANKS

With Thanksgiving quickly approaching, we want to know what our Observer readers are thankful for this holiday season. In 25 words or less, please share your thoughts with us (neatly written or typed) and send them to our office by Friday, Nov. 21 at 5 p.m. You may mail them to us, fax them to our newsroom or E-mail them to us at the addresses or number below. Please include your name, address and daytime phone number for verification (we will only print your name). We will select some of the best responses for publication in our Thanksgiving edition.

■ The Farmington Observer  
33411 Grand River Ave.  
Farmington, MI 48335  
(248) 477-9722 (fax)  
newsroom@eccentric.com

## IN THE PAPER TODAY

Letter to a friend: Farmington High band members got a handwritten letter from Melissa Garr at their honors night. /A2

New park: Farmington DDA officials are talking about a new pedestrian park near city hall. /A10

## COUNTY

Details, details: School districts can count on payments due to the settlement of the Durant case, and the money is coming from the "rainy day" fund. /A5

## INDEX

■ Arts & Entertainment	E1
■ At Home	D
■ Beliefs & Values	B9-12
■ Community Life	B1
■ Calendar	C7
■ Classified	F-J
■ Autos for sale	J7
■ Crossword	H9
■ Employment	H7
■ Index	G9
■ Service Guide	J3
■ Real Estate	G9
■ Rentals	H4
■ Movie Guide	E6
■ Obituaries	A11
■ Police, fire calls	A16

## Hills set to try 'dry' ice events

By LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills Ice Arena won't be just for ice skaters in the future.

Farmington Hills City Council agreed to follow a parks and recreation subcommittee recommendation that will allow for dry floor activities — possibly festivals, display shows and music events — on one rink during the summer starting in 1999. Two ice rinks will remain in operation during the summer of 1998.

Non-ice events could bring additional revenue into the facility, city officials said. More so, dry floor activities will likely involve more residents who don't play hockey or figure skate.

After two years, city officials will then examine whether having two sheets of ice or dry floor activities during the summer makes sense on the balance sheet.

"It's time to put up or shut up," said Councilman Terry Sever on those who favor two ice rinks operating during the summer. It's the same scenario for proponents of dry floor activities, Sever added.

Sever believes the potential is there for staging non-ice related events in what is a 1,000-seat capacity, air conditioned venue. He'd like to see three- to four-day festivals as well as affordable rock 'n' roll and country music events.

Aside from special events, the arena could host indoor soccer, increases or gymnastics camps, inline skating, or community dance, a parks and recreation report said.

Please see ICE, A10

## One trophy to go



Regional champs: Farmington Harrison football captains No. 70 Mike Fisher and No. 7 Jared Hopkins, also the quarterback, along with No. 23 Zack Cornwell and the rest of the Hawks hoist the trophy and celebrate their regional championship win over Ypsilanti 38-0 last Saturday. The team plays Birmingham Seaholm on Saturday for the chance to play for the state championship in the Pontiac Silverdome on Nov. 28. For more information, see page C1.

STAFF PHOTO BY BRIAN MORTGAGE

## 200 at ball to 'make a difference'

By DAVE VARGA  
STAFF WRITER

The third annual Cornucopia Ball met organizers' expectations Saturday, giving 200 formally attired guests an elegant night of gourmet

food, fine music and a chance to participate in "The event of the year... for the cause of a lifetime."

Ball-goers savored the marinated apple-smoked tenderloin with lichenberry sauce and escarot in phyllo. They danced and tapped toes to the Mark Phillips Orchestra. And they bid on artwork, vacation trips and a suite at the Palace.

But the real reason they were there was clear. They paid \$100 a ticket and raised another \$13,000 at the auction, with a number of corporate sponsorships and contributions, all to fuel the Farmington Hills Community Foundation for Children, Youth and Families. The total

raised wasn't determined by press time.

Joanne Smith, former Farmington Hills mayor and ball co-chairwoman, told the gathering at the William Costick Center the event's purpose was to raise enough money to continue youth and family programs, especially teen centers that give youth a place to be during "those very critical hours after school."

Honorary chairwoman Dianna Lewis of WXYZ-TV, and a Farmington Hills resident, told guests: "Thank you for being here. We need your help and tonight will indeed make a difference." She turned over the auction to television news anchor and Farmington Hills resident Harry Hairston of WKBD-UPN 50, with the help of ball co-chairs Smith and Deborah Grant.

Among the big auction items including a homemade doll house for \$600 and a week's stay at a condominium on an exotic island that went for \$2,400.

Most interesting, though, was the political bread-breaking destined to take place after state Rep. Andrew Raczowski bid \$1,050 for a gourmet feast prepared and served by Hills Councilwoman Nancy Bates and her husband.

Please see BALL, A8



STAFF PHOTO BY BRIAN MORTGAGE

Making his bid: State Rep. Andrew Raczowski gets in on the live auction during the Cornucopia Ball Saturday. He paid \$1,050 to the charitable foundation for the chance to have Nancy and Charles Bates prepare and serve gourmet dinner for eight.

## Cable hike blamed on Fox Sports



By LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

With the latest cable rate increases, Time Warner officials are saying: The puck stops here.

Farmington area cable subscribers will see expanded rates increase from \$26.42 to \$29.09 a month starting Jan. 1. Increased program costs — mainly due to the addition of Fox Sports Detroit that carries the National Hockey League's Detroit Red Wings — are cited as the reason for the jump.

Fox Sports Detroit is costing Time Warner \$1.25 more per subscriber alone, Time Warner officials said. Fox, which is owned by Rupert Murdoch, won't allow cable systems to carry the channel as a premium service, as Pro-Am Sports Systems (PASS) was before it ceased operations last month.

Fox Sports Detroit carries Pistons basketball and Tigers baseball as well as the Stanley Cup-champion Red Wings.

"He (Murdoch) didn't care what he paid for it because he knew cable systems would have to buy it," said Bob McCann, Time Warner regional general manager to Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission members Tuesday. "You know if we didn't carry it, this room would be full of people demanding that we carry it."

Another cable system, Media One, faced public

Please see CABLE, A4

## New system revs drivers

Orchard Lake commute quicker

By GREG KOWALSKI  
STAFF WRITER

FAST-TRAC has cut commuter time and relieved traffic congestion on Orchard Lake Road, according to the Road Commission for Oakland County.

Earlier this year, FAST-TRAC monitors were installed at 23 intersections along Orchard Lake between 11 Mile in Farmington Hills to Long Lake Road in West Bloomfield.

The system gauges traffic flow and volume and adjusts timing of traffic lights to reduce delays.

On Friday, the road commission reported that a study of Orchard Lake Road has shown an improvement in travel times.

Reduction in travel time ranges from 6.5 percent to 31.8 percent, depending on times and directions, according to the report.

Surveys were taken from 7-9 a.m., 4-6 p.m. which are peak rush hour times and from 1-3 p.m.,

Please see COMMUTE, A8

## Talk about seniors ...

A Senior Task Force Hearing, featuring state Office of Services to the Aging Director Lynn Alexander, will be held at 10 a.m. Friday, Nov. 21, in the William Costick Center in Farmington Hills.

State Rep. Andrew Raczowski, R-Farmington Hills, will host. The group seeks public input on improving lives of senior citizens.

## Hospice Home Improvement

A bit of Farmington Hills' new Hospice Home residential facility made its way onto the "Home Improvement" television comedy that aired Tuesday, Nov. 18, on WXYZ-TV.

Hospice Home served as the model for creating a hospice residence that is part of the show. In the program, Tim Allen's TV son, Randy, volunteered at the hospice residence. The program focused on his

## FARMINGTON FOCUS

reaction to his patient's illness, and on expressions of spirituality.

Producers for "Home Improvement" contacted Hospice of Michigan (HOM) several months ago to ask for information about hospice care and about Hospice Home. HOM sent color photos of Hospice Home, which were used to construct the set for the program.

Hospice Home opened in June 1997 on Middlebelt Road, just south of 11 Mile. Licensed as an adult foster care facility, Hospice Home can house up to 40 residents in a home-like environment. All but two of the rooms are private, all have private baths,

and all have windows that open, individual temperature controls and views of nature.

Hospice of Michigan, formed in 1994 in a merger of 10 community-based hospices, is the largest non-profit provider of end-of-life care in the nation. HOM serves close to 1,000 patients every day throughout Michigan's Lower Peninsula.

## What's that number?

The recent report on the Farmington Hills Police Department's honor for Community Policing might have been confusing, since the National League of Cities honor was for cities with populations from 25,001 to 75,000.

Farmington Hills' population is now higher than that, but officials competed in the smaller category because program uses the most recent census figures.