

Student panel takes aim at diversity debate Feb. 12

The Farmington/Farmington Hills Multicultural/Multiracial Community Council hosts its third annual student panel discussion at 8 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 12, in the Harrison High auditorium. This year's program, "S.T.A.N.D. - Students Talking and Interacting on Diversity," will feature students from Farmington, Harrison, North Farmington and Mercy High Schools. The program will also include an adult moderator panel. The panel will be moderated by C. Robert Maxfield, superintendent of Farmington Public Schools and Sister Regina Marie Doelker, principal of Mercy High School. The students will be encouraged to address a variety of topics concerning life in a diverse high school. The panel discussion will conclude no later than 9:30 a.m. Following this, students will participate in break-out sessions to continue the morning's discussion. Community members are invited to the panel discussion.

LCC, state offices to move here

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

A branch of state government and its 66 employees are moving their business to Farmington. The Michigan Liquor Control Commission, state Fire Safety and Occupational Health operations are relocating into the former Silicon Graphics building on Drake Road, south of Grand River. They're expected to be in their new place by mid-April, a state spokeswoman said. The office complex, owned by Grand River-Drake Properties, has been vacant since last summer when Silicon Graphics moved to 12 Mile in Farmington Hills.

"We think it's a nice addition to the community," Farmington City Manager Frank Laubhoff said. "In reality, it brings people to town. It makes it a destination place where a lot of people will be coming here." The Liquor Control Commission has warehouse and office facilities in Lincoln Park, but the state is trying to sell the building that was constructed in 1964. The commission no longer distributes liquor and doesn't need a storage facility. However, the commission's regulatory work remains. The 35-member staff will move from Lincoln Park to Farmington. The LCC will be joined by 22 employees from Occupational Health

division and seven from Fire Safety. All three operate under the state's Department of Consumer Industry Services or regulated by the state, we handle it," said Maura Campbell, department spokeswoman. State offices will occupy both floors of the building. LCC officials wanted to move Southeast Michigan operations to southern Oakland County, Campbell said. LCC Chairwoman Jackie Stewart also lives in Oakland County and commutes to Lansing. A bulk of the state liquor licenses - which are based on population - are issued in the

state's southeast region. "This geographical area makes sense in terms of serving our customers," she said. The state received four bids from property owners, but two dropped out. Owner of the Grand River-Drake Properties put in the lowest bid. Lease terms weren't available, but the state typically signs five-year agreements with a five-year option tacked on. The three agencies might have company, too. The state is looking at other ways to become more efficient, Campbell said. "We're looking at other ways where it makes sense to consolidate," she said.

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Worker kills himself on railroad tracks

BY KEVIN BROWN
STAFF WRITER

An people looked on, a Plymouth Township man on Monday got out of his truck, ran toward a passing train and killed himself by ducking under the wheels. "I keep seeing it in slow motion," said Nancy Greenow of Farmington Hills, who witnessed the incident. It happened at about 11:30 a.m. at the railroad crossing at northbound Ridge Road. The tracks cross Ridge about 130 yards south of Five Mile Road in Plymouth Township. The man, in a red 1995 Toyota pickup truck, was waiting at the

crossing gate for the train. He turned off his engine, got out of his truck and locked it. He pocketed his keys, police said. "They saw him run at the train. All indications were he put his head under the wheel," said Plymouth Township Police Sgt. Jim Jarvis. Police said the man was decapitated. The victim was Curtis Stucki, 34, an enrollment analyst with Mercy Health Plan of Farmington Hills. Stucki had stopped showing up for work on Jan. 20, his wife told police. He told her he just didn't feel like going. He was the father of a 16-month-old daughter. Stopped on southbound Ridge at the tracks as the train passed

was Greenow of Farmington Hills, in a car dealer courtesy van with the driver and another passenger. After the man stopped for the train, "He was in his car a few seconds then he got out, closed the door and started running, he hurled himself into it," Greenow said. Those in the van were able to see what was happening because flatbed freight cars that were passing were lightly loaded. "The driver said I wonder if he was for the train," like maybe he was trying to fix something," she said. But once the train passed, it was clear the man had died, Greenow said. Inside the truck, she said, "I saw the (child's) car seat with a little stuffed animal. I thought, 'Oh s---, he's got a kid.'" Police said he left no suicide note. In investigating why Stucki chose to commit suicide, police found a letter from a lawyer to Stucki, detailing the cost to file Chapter 7 bankruptcy proceedings. While the husband and wife had experienced some problems, they had begun talking again

and were back together, police said. The victim's wife told police "She has no clue" as to why he decided to kill himself. Stucki and his daughter on Saturday visited his parents in Fincley, and the parents told police he seemed fine. Police were called by a bystander with a portable phone. The victim wore a brown and orange Cleveland Browns jacket, a baseball hat, jeans and sneakers. Police Lt. Bob Smith said the train engineer didn't know of the incident until a repair crew trailing behind the train called. Upon notice of the incident the train stopped in Dearborn. It was traveling from Grand Rapids to Montreal. "Our chaplain has been in contact with the family," Lt. Smith said, adding the chaplain is made available to counsel witnesses of the suicide. Karen Martin, a manager with Mercy Health Plan, said, "Everybody here is pretty sad about the news. We have had some counseling for employees, he was in great standing with all the employees."

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