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COMMUNITY LIFE

Dark days: Light therapy is helping local people suffering from Seasonal Affective Disorder. /B1

SPORTS

Bragging rights: Farmington, Harrison's teamwork was enough to win against its crosstown rivals on the basketball court Tuesday. /C1

ENTERTAINMENT

Folk Music: Tommy Makem, the Godfather of Irish Music, will perform Friday, Feb. 20, at the Mercy High School Auditorium in Farmington Hills. /E1

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Elementary plan OK'd; foreign language added

BY TIM SMITH

STAFF WRITER

Farmington school board members Tuesday night approved a sprawling blueprint for elementary education in the 21st century. A foreign language pilot program is part of the package.

After school board members were assured by administrators that the core curriculum would remain the driving force behind elementary education, they unanimously OK'd the Mission 2007 recommendations assembled by a 70-member committee, chaired by Hillsdale Elementary Principal Jan Colliton.

"One of the recommendations," said Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services Judith White, answering a question, "... is that it defines the core curriculum, it embraces the framework that you've embraced."

The next step, White said later, is to find out how much of the plan can be funded for the 1998-99 school year.

"Then, we will begin the process of planning training and move forward this summer," White explained. "I'll (also) do a whole parent and community awareness package."

White emphasized that each elementary school will have autonomy, to implement only those portions of the plan that make the most sense for them.

"I'm going to be asking (principals) ... which sites are ready and interested in becoming the first sites to begin the process," Colliton, following board approval of the recommendations, said she thought chances are "excellent" that the recommendations can be successfully implemented in the schools.

In addition to foreign language, changes include: inclusion, where special ed students are mainstreamed into general classes, and technology, such as helping third graders learn to use a computer keyboard or adding interactive learning.

Kenbrook principal Peggy McKimley, who chaired the technology sub-committee, said students can become adept at various word processing functions (cut and paste, for example) that will help them throughout

Please see ELEMENTARY, A2

'Soccer moms' still getting their kicks



PHOTO BY BILL HANSEN

Kids at heart: Lisa Clark (left) battles an opponent at a recent match for the over-30 Farmington Angels soccer team. Many players are moms who bring their kids to the Sunday night games, but they're serious enough to listen to their coach, Ben Stomber, above right.

Love of sport keeps F'ton Angels soaring

BY LARRY O'CONNOR

STAFF WRITER

While watching women play indoor soccer, a novel idea for a horror film comes to mind.

In this supposed plot, a swarm of normally passive soccer moms become enraged at hearing how the man they helped elect president becomes embroiled in a tawdry sex scandal.

To exact their revenge, they depart in a convoy of mini-vans to the nation's capital where the mob overtakes the White House and vents its collective anger by kicking the heck out of the politician's backside. "Wrath of the Soccer Moms" is

not hard to imagine, especially for those who witness these over-30 women passionately putting the boot to a regulation size 5 ball at Beechwood Arena in Southfield on Sunday nights.

The Farmington Angels - aptly named for their sweet demeanor off the field - are all business come game time.

Daughters are provided coloring books and money for concessions; husbands are hustled off to the bleachers. This is their moment to compete at center circle.

"Everyone is in the same boat and we have families," said forward Sue Schrauben, who lives in Lake Orion.

"Everyone is competitive ... and we don't feel like we're just moms."

The team is a collection of engineers, teachers, nurses and telemarketers, who continue to play the game they love. Many pursued soccer as girls, indicative of the sport's early boom in the late 1970s. Others gave the game a try as adults, seeing it as a way to stay fit.

The Angels are given advice by a pair of Charlies - Sean Magee and Ben Stomber, who live in Farmington and Farmington Hills respectively.

Stomber, 53, handles the first team while Magee, who played soccer

Please see SOCCER MOMS, A4

Hills gives Bosch a break

6-year tax cut aims to keep firm's expansion right here



BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

After handing Bosch Corporation its coveted six-year tax abatement, Farmington Hills Councilman Terry Sever shook the hand of a company official afterward.

"Now put that shovel in the ground and quit talking about Indiana," Sever said.

The threat of a multi-national firm moving its braking division headquarters was laid in Farmington Hills City Council member's laps at Monday's meeting. As a result, the council went against its policy of granting tax breaks.

Council members approved the abatement in two separate 6-1 votes, with Councilwoman Nancy Bates casting no votes in both.

Bosch needed the city to comply with \$400,000 of its taxes - in order to qualify for larger credits of \$30 million through the Michigan Economic Growth Authority. MEGA grants tax breaks to companies who stay put and create new jobs.

Bosch officials haven't ripped up the

Please see TAX BREAK, A7

Parents admit guilt for serving teens beer

BY TIM SMITH

STAFF WRITER

The parents charged with serving alcohol to minors at an Oct. 25 beer keg party in Farmington's Chatham Hills subdivision pleaded guilty Monday morning in 47th District Court.

Kevin Alexander and Michelle Griffith both appeared remorseful about how a party celebrating their son's selection as Homecoming King turned into an out-of-control bash that enraged many in the community.

The recent "Call to Action Summit," sponsored by Farmington Families in Action, was at least partly inspired by negative reaction to the beer party - where more than 100 FHS students paid \$5 to drink as much as they wanted to, according to Farmington Public Safety Department accounts of the evening.

Both will be sentenced at 8:30 a.m. April 1 in front of 47th District Judge Marla Parker, who upon accepting the defendants' guilty pleas said, "I know many parents are concerned there's a message nothing like this occurs again."

They could each receive a maximum penalty of 30 days in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

Griffith spoke first to the judge. "We know we made a mistake ... We let it

Please see TEEN PARTY, A7

Wishes come true

A story on the front page of the Observer on Jan. 4 asked folks in Farmington and Farmington Hills about their New Year's wishes.

Among those interviewed for the story was Eve Cinato, district manager at Village Shoe Inn in downtown Farmington. "I wish I could get some employees," she said. "It's so hard to find help. All the stores around here have 'Help Wanted' signs. Other than that, I'm real happy here."

Two people who had seen the story applied for jobs, were hired and are doing a great job, Cinato recently reported, proving this New Year's wishes really do come true.

Progressive price

The Gov. Warner Mansion ... Home of Farmington History may be the new name for it. And a new

FARMINGTON FOCUS

committee may be studying its future.

But history buffs who've read about the mansion and want some good old-fashioned detail about the Farmington area's only governor can get a good deal from the Farmington Hills Historical Commission.

"I Went to the People ..." Fred M. Warner, Progressive Governor is the title of a book by former Hills mayor Jean Fox that the historical commission is now selling for only \$12.50.

The 483-page tome originally sold for twice that price. It's available either at the museum or at the Hills Treasurer's Office in city hall. For more details or other historical publications, call (248) 474-4608.

Stirring sounds

Farmington Hills-based Yessian Music will play a part in the 1998 Winter Olympic Games telecasts on CBS's Channel 9.

Dan Yessian and his songwriting collaborators David Barrett and Kurt Schreitmuller wrote and produced the song, "You Believe in Me," an uplifting ballad featuring vocals by Helen Darling and a 12-member gospel choir.

"The song is an emotionally stirring tribute to Olympic athletes," said Yessian, a native Detroit. "It is a song about love and it reflects the athletes' relationships with family, friends and coaches who have given unflinching support to them as they've struggled to achieve their dreams."

Listen for the song during CBS telecasts and during its highlights of the Nagano Games.