

Farmington Observer

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SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

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TODAY

Rev it up: They're getting ready for the downtown Farmington Monday night classic car cruises. /A2

All-night long: Volunteers are needed to help supply prizes and put on the after graduation party for seniors. /A9

COMMUNITY LIFE

Giving back: Fraser Pomeroy's wife, Margaret, died last October in the Farmington Hills Hospice Home. Now the retiree, who is almost 90 years old, volunteers at the home for the terminally ill almost daily. /B1

SPORTS

Back to back: Farmington Hills Mercy's Girls Track Team snared its second Catholic League Championship. /C1

ENTERTAINMENT

Music festivals: Find out who's performing at Meadow Brook, Pine Knob and other summer music festival venues. /E1

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Teen working at Hills church electrocuted

An 18-year-old man died after being electrocuted while fixing a light fixture at a Farmington Hills church Sunday.
The victim is identified as Daniel Vail, 18, of Whitmore Lake.
Around 4:40 p.m., a woman in another room at the Seventh-Day Adventist Church on 10 Mile heard a thud and went in to find the man unconscious on the floor.
The victim's mother performed CPR until police and paramedics arrived. The man had no pulse and wasn't breathing, police reports said.
He was taken to Botsford Hospital where he was pronounced dead after doctors unsuccessfully tried to revive him.
Police said Vail was electrocuted after he touched a live metal conduit running to the light fixture.
He was on a ladder working in a room that is being remodeled in a separate building next to the church. The victim had been

Please see ELECTROCUTED, A4

Board cuts bond tax \$7.7 million via Durant

Average taxpayers will get a cut of \$15 a year in their school taxes, after the Farmington school board decided to use 81 percent of its \$9.5 million lump sum payoff of cash from the Durant lawsuit.



As late as Tuesday's public budget hearing, Farmington school district residents such as Arthur Damiani wanted all of the \$9.6 million Durant-case windfall returned to citizens.

"It belongs to the people," said Damiani, the only resident to speak during the hearing, which preceded a marathon regular meeting.

Damiani and others will have to settle for about 81 percent of it.

The Farmington Board of Education, near the conclusion of Tuesday's meeting, voted 6-1 to approve recommendations from the finance committee - returning \$7.7 million to residents and spending the rest on programs and projects it can't afford in the budget.

That amount will be used to reduce the Series 2 bond issue, which won't be issued until at least mid-1999, from \$26 million to more than \$18 million. All of the Durant money will be set aside in the building and site budget fund - drawing interest - until then, said Superintendent Bob Maxfield.

"We're being able to address significant educational and safety issues for children," said board Vice President and finance committee member Cathy Webb. "And by returning a portion ... we have heard from two very vocal and informed constituencies. I would hope that both would be satisfied by this."

Not everybody was. Jacqueline Katz, one of the challengers in the June 8 school board election, reiterated her campaign stance that "all of it" should have been returned.

Eighty-four Michigan districts received a total of \$212 million in mid-April, awarded by the state Supreme Court as settlement of the 18-year-old case.

Please see DURANT, A4

District advocate Webb runs on heart

There can be no questioning where Cathy Webb's public service heart is these days. It beats only for Farmington Public Schools.

Webb, who ran in 1996 for the 37th House District, could have opted to try for Lansing again this year. Judging by last week's filing deadline, races for some state and county seats will be hot and heavy. But the list of candidates does not include the Farmington Board of Education veteran.

Instead - and there is absolutely no reason to doubt her - Webb professes undying commitment to the present and future of a system striving to become what she called "a premier 21st Century school district."

It is why she never hesitated to file for the June 8 school board election, when she will be among five candidates running for a pair of four-year terms. Twelve of a system striving to become what she called "a premier 21st Century school district."

Asked during a recent interview at the Farmington Observer to give a letter grade to the job being done by



CANDIDATE PROFILE

■ Name: Cathy Webb
■ Age: 46
■ Family: Married; Sara James, 15; Matthew, 16; attend Farmington High School.

■ Occupation: Retail advertising artist.
■ Education: Bachelor of Science degree in political science at Eastern Michigan University.
■ Community: Farmington school board, 8 years - 2 years as president; 1995 Citizen of the Year; Commission on Children, Youth and Families; Community Foundation on Children, Youth and Families; chairperson, Cornucopia Ball 1998; etc.

Jaako and Anwar Mahmood.

"My future is, obviously, being in this community," said Webb, 46, a board member since 1990. "I ran for the first time eight years ago on a very simple platform - that I had a positive attitude and cared for kids."

"I turned that positive attitude into being an advocate for Farmington Public Schools."

Webb is an advocate, without jumping up and waving the purple "Team Farmington" pennant at board meetings. But she emphatically leads the charge for the district and its students.

Asked during a recent interview at the Farmington Observer to give a letter grade to the job being done by

Please see WEBB, A4

Pooch patrol



Muzzle nuzzle: Ashlynn Faulkner, 1½, gets a friendly hiss from Kilo, a 4½-month-old German Shepherd police dog, at the Farmington Hills Police Department's 11th annual Open House Sunday. The K-9 Unit was one of many highlights at the open house. For more on the day's events, please turn to Page A11.

Human touch

Athena Award winner Ural honored for serving people, business needs



newsroom in the Farmington area, not in terms of cut-throat practices or shrewd dealings, but as a caring community member.

Ural will receive the award sponsored by Bob Saks Oldsmobile today during the Athena Awards Dinner at the Botsford Inn.

The Farmington Hills resident helps a number of charitable organizations, including Special Olympics. One major contribution to businesswomen came in the form of a round table discussion group that Ural started.

"I felt there were a lot of women who were stressed out and who were juggling a lot of different things such as children, husbands and jobs," said Ural, who was born in Turkey. "I felt

they needed some support where they could get together and talk about their difficulties."

"I enjoy my business a lot, but I've sacrificed a lot of things having my own business. It's not a place where you work 9-to-5 and go home."

In 19 years of operating an interior design business, Ural hurdled numerous obstacles.

She weathered the recession in the early 1990s, which consumed about 90 percent of her competition. She survived by venturing into different types of design and services, she said.

Ural, whose family moved to the U.S. when she was 4, has a bachelor's and master's in interior design from Michigan State. She is a Redford Thurston High graduate.

Her versatility paid dividends as her business grew to include 25 employees and major clients such as Kelsey-Hayes, Pepsi and Frank's Nursery. With that growth also came respect.

Some 20 states require interior design specialists to be licensed. Michigan is working on licensing standards, Ural said.

"My industry 20 years ago wasn't considered as a profession. People thought you did (interior design) for

Please see ATHENA, A2

Honest job

"Uncle Jack" Curd wants folks to know he did something dumb and a man at the 7-Eleven on Farmington Road did something honorable.

Seems Curd was planning to get to the bank Monday, so on Sunday night he made out a check to cash for \$600. During his errands Monday, Curd visited the 7-Eleven. "I guess I dropped it when I went to get a quart of milk," he said.

Later in the day, he went back and the young man at the register gave him back the check. As a reward, Curd said, "I offered him \$20 and he wouldn't take it." The man said he was just doing his job. And a good job it was.

Red Cross raves

Let's hear it for Tony Osentoski and other Farmington High School student council members who led the successful 1998 blood drive for the American Red Cross.

FARMINGTON FOCUS

The blood drive, chaired by Osentoski, a junior, was the school's best ever. American Red Cross Director Elizabeth Dole presented the awards May 12 at MacKenzie High School in Detroit.

Caring about Motown

Who says suburbanites don't care about Detroit? On May 9, members of the Farmington Area Jaycees helped clean up Salsinger Park at Linwood and Fenkell streets. The beautification project is part of a national partnership between True Value Hardware, the U.S. Junior Chamber of Commerce and major league baseball. The third-year program is designed to give urban children a clean, safe place to play.

Nutter tee tribute

There still is time - but not much - to sign up for the second annual Lynn G. Nutter Memorial Golf Outing, scheduled for Monday, June 15, at Kensington Golf Course. Anyone interested should call Rich Nutter by Friday, May 22, at (616) 676-3242.

For \$75, participants can enjoy an 18-hole, four-person golf scramble and dinner, not to mention cold beverages and munchies on the course. Cost for the barbecue dinner only is \$35. Tee times are at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. with dinner from 6-8 p.m. Highlights will include closest-to-the-pin and longest-drive contests, prizes and a 50-50 raffle.

Proceeds will go to the Lynn G. Nutter Continuing Education Scholarship Fund at North Farmington, Harrison and Farmington high schools. Lynn Nutter, who died in December 1996, was a longtime principal at North Farmington and an assistant superintendent in Farmington schools.

