

# Farmington Observer

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## IN THE PAPER TODAY

**Park celebration:** The dedication and ground-breaking of Memorial Park is scheduled for 1 p.m. The park is located at the southwest corner of 11 Mile-Middlebelt.

### MONDAY

**Moms and Tots:** The supervised session takes place from 10-11:30 a.m. at Hope Lutheran Church in Farmington Hills. Call 553-7170.

### TUESDAY

**Spike It:** Oakland Community College's women's volleyball team will have an open gym 6-8 p.m. for players interested in playing for OCC.

### WEDNESDAY

**Embroiderers:** The Farmington Hills EGA will meet at 9:30 a.m. at Faith Covenant Church.

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## Summer sounds abound



Tuned in: Aki Koide, 4, (left) dances with twin sisters Aka and Mino Kambe, 5, to the sounds of the Farmington Community Band at Heritage Park Thursday. At top, Jeff Barrett (left), tenor, Pat Authement, tenor, Ryan Smith, lead alto, Stephanie Basile, tenor, and Mike Wiese, baritone saxophone players help provide the music.

## Rainbow spawns anti-gay letters

A Farmington Hills resident wants a misguided letter writer to know he's not gay and, more so, he's tired of being harassed.

During the night of June 19-20, the Canfield Street resident received two threatening letters. He's been the recipient of six such letters and his mailbox has been smashed several times during the past two years, he said.

The victim believes a rainbow on his mailbox is prompting the harassment. A rainbow is commonly used as a symbol in the gay community.

Farmington Hills police are investigating the incidents.

One note stated, "Paint your f----- mailbox (it doesn't match your house)." The other stated, "Rainbow=gay you

Please see NOTES, A4

## Bakery-cafe could adorn crusty corner

The sights and smells near Joann Kop's Farmington home could soon get much better, thanks to a plan that would bring a national bakery-restaurant to the corner of Grand River-Whittaker.

During a recent Farmington City Council meeting, City Manager Frank Lushoff announced that the planning commission on July 13 will receive a site plan for what would be Panera Bread. If the green light is given, the company would lease a new 3,700-square-foot facility that the Southfield-based Kalabat Development Group would put up in place of what currently is there, two older retail buildings (one which is vacant) and a weed-dotted parking lot.

"It really is an eyesore," Kop, who moved into her home 32 years ago, said about the southeast corner of Grand River-Whittaker.

Please see BAKERY, A2

## Construction prompts city to move precinct

Ongoing construction at Longacre Elementary School is forcing Farmington city officials to move Precinct 5 to the upcoming primary and general elections to another location.

Residents who live in Precinct 5 will vote at the Farmington Training Center, 33000 Thomas St. - as will residents in Precinct 6, who vote there anyway, said Farmington City Clerk Patsy Cantrell.

There will be separate entrances for both precincts and voting will take place in different rooms, said Cantrell, adding that parking lot signs will help direct voters to the right polling places.

"It's because of the school construction," Cantrell said, referring to the expansion of Longacre, a project included in Farmington Public Schools' September 1997 bond issue. "There wasn't going to be enough parking and power for the (election) equipment."

Letters were to have been mailed Friday to the affected residents and a notice is expected to be aired on the city's Channel 15, Cantrell said. There are 1,376 residents in Precinct 5 and 1,606 residents in Precinct 6.

"That was a wise move," said Don Cowan, who as of Wednesday will officially leave his position as Farmington Public Schools' executive director of K-12 instruction and student services.

Cowan noted how bond issue construction at Longacre took a bite out of available parking for the June 8 Farmington school board election.

"We didn't want to do that (combine the precincts) because people sometimes get locked in and are so used to going to a particular place," Cowan explained. "But with the amount of work going on near there, it's the right thing to do."

And, Cantrell noted, the logistical situation is going to worsen with the Aug. 4 primary election and Nov. 3 general election.

## Residents push for park in southeast corner

When residents in southeast Farmington Hills want something done, they're not too shy to ask.

Farmington Hills city officials heard numerous concerns, fielded questions and even had a few compliments thrown their way during a quadrant meeting at St. Alexander Catholic Church Thursday.

The town hall allows residents to voice concerns in a less formal setting than city council meetings. This one covered the southeast quadrant, which is between Eight Mile and 11 Mile and Farmington and Inkster roads.

Residents want more park space. They're also worried about Boteford Hospital's possible expansion plans and rumors of a Super Kmart.

Parks provoked the most discussion. "This is an area that needs it," said George Semerjian, who lives on Ryan Drive.

Semerjian and other residents questioned why the city was able to pay \$4.5 million for 92 acres, which will allow San Marino Golf Course to expand from nine to 18 holes, and not find land to buy for a park in the southeast corner.

It's not from a lack of effort, city officials said.

Attempts have been made to buy land from the Bernadine Sisters on 10 Mile, Boys & Girls Republic on Nine Mile and the Knights of Columbus on Middlebelt, but these fell through.

In the case of the K of C, the price was well above the \$40,000-\$50,000 an acre the city is willing to pay, Councilman Terry Sever said. Land grants from the state also help with such pur-

Please see PARK, A2

## New Hills nightspot provides handy excuse for enjoyment



This Alibi doesn't need one, but perhaps several, to cover the new nightspot's multiple personalities.

Operating in the former Cadillac Cafe, The Alibi's owners are doing many things to put a new face on the city nightspot. The newly named business on Grand River and Freedom opened this month.

In the main area, the bar has been refurbished, dance floor extended and hardwood floor redone.

Upstairs, stogies and olives rule as The Alibi boasts a new cigar and martini bar. Patrons are able to relax in plush leather couches while listening to the unwinding sounds of swing or jazz.

Outside, reggae music permeates the two-level wood deck for a laidback Florida-type party-scapes. All that's missing are surfboards and sand.

"Obviously, we're not an ocean so it's hard to duplicate," said Jim Kurstich, who is running The Alibi with brother-in-law Butch Beslach.

In The Alibi, the pair see waves of opportunity. This venture is un-navigated territory for

Please see THE ALIBI, A2



Olive complexion: Bartender Karena Katchuba (right) serves up cocktails in the "Step Above" cigar and martini bar upstairs at The Alibi on Grand River in Farmington Hills.

### New dog in town

Fans of the Ask Bristol pet column which runs every other Thursday in the Farmington Observer Community Life section may be interested in knowing that columnist Bev Cornell has a new pup in the family.

Cornell, a licensed wildlife rehabilitator and former veterinary aide, and her husband, Tom, welcomed Marbles, a 6-week-old collie.

On a visit to the newspaper office last week, young Marbles showed a lot of spunk and vigor. Cornell reports he is already socializing with the other neighborhood dogs, and survived a thump from one of the couple's two cats - Teddy Bear and Georgie Girl - when he couldn't resist playing with her

## FARMINGTON FOCUS

swishing tail.

Marbles will make his first public appearance 2 p.m. Tuesday, July 21, in the downtown branch of the Farmington Community Library.

**Garden walk dedication**

Hundreds of metro residents will gather at Hospice Home in Farmington Hills this Sunday afternoon for the dedication of bricks inscribed with the names of their loved ones.

The bricks, with messages created by donors to Hospice of Michigan, form the Garden Walk at the 40-bed Hospice Home at 25911 Middlebelt, south of 11 Mile. The dedication begins at 3 p.m. and will include refreshments.

Donors purchased bricks with contributions of \$100 or more. Many are inscribed in memory or in honor of loved ones. Some also contain brief messages. The garden walk has raised more than \$74,000 for Hospice of Michigan so far. Nearly 500 bricks have been installed. Additional sections will be added as more bricks are sold.

Hospice of Michigan, the largest nonprofit hospice in the U.S., serves more than 6,000 terminally ill patients and their families every year throughout the Lower Peninsula.

