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SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

WEEK AHEAD

TODAY

Hot stuff: You're invited to the Farmington-Farmington Hills Fourth Annual Chili Cook Off 2-4 p.m. at Pages Food and Spirits on Farmington Road in Farmington.

MONDAY

Court: The Farmington and Farmington Hills city councils will meet with 47th District Court officials to discuss an expanded courthouse at 5:30 p.m. The meeting is open to the public. Call either city hall for more information.

Light up: Residents are invited to meet with Detroit Edison representatives, as well as those from Consumers Energy at 7:30 p.m. Call Farmington Hills City Hall at 474-6115 for location.

TUESDAY

DDA: Farmington's DDA will meet at 8 a.m. at city hall, 23600 Liberty.

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Ohio man charged in road rage

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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A man involved in a road rage accident on I-275 has been formally charged with leaving the scene of a crash resulting in a fatality.

Brian Bowser of Dayton, Ohio, was arraigned Thursday on the felony count in 47th District Court. Judge Marla Parker set personal bond at \$25,000.

Preliminary exam is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 10. If convicted, the charge carries up to five years in jail.

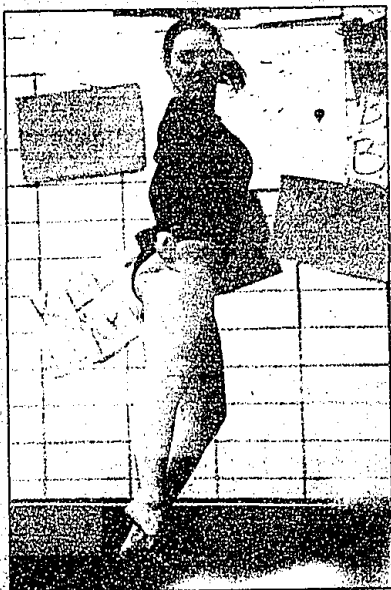
Terence Salisbury of West Bloomfield was killed after his Mercury Sable, going south on I-275 near 10 Mile, crossed the median and collided with a northbound meat truck Oct. 6.

Salisbury had been battling with the driver of a blue pickup truck for lane position, witnesses said. Police believe Salisbury initiated contact that sent his car out of control.

Bowser later turned himself into police at the Eight Mile exit where traffic had been

Please see PAGE A4

Last home performance



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRADLEY

Home: Farmington High School gymnast Anna Clark performs a floor exercise at the Western Lakes Activities Association meet. This was Anna's last meet on her home floor. For more meet coverage, turn to the Sports & Recreation section, D, in today's Farmington Observer.

Block scheduling passes board muster

BY TIM SMITH
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With virtually no opposition, a proposal to go to block scheduling at North and Harrison high schools was presented Tuesday to the Farmington Board of Education.

It is expected that the plan will be

approved at the board's next meeting, scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 9, at the Lewis Schulman Administrative Center.

"When it's all said and done, there's nothing magic about 84 minutes or 90 minutes versus 45 or 50," said schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield, following the presentation. "But when you

hear the kinds of commitment these (teachers) are making, that tells me that achievement is going to go up, because they are invested and believe in their hearts and souls that this is going to work."

The proposal from the district's support council: detailed rationale behind the move from traditional scheduling;

outlined implementation details; and sketched out differences between North's and Harrison's schedules. Both high schools have unique, but similar, schedules, incorporating an additional course as well as an "optional" block for various enrichment opportunities.

Please see BLOCK, A4

Mayor: Could ALS offer better cash return?

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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While Farmington Hills Fire Department's Advance Life Support service is deemed a success by all accounts in its first year, a Farmington Hills official wonders if the financial return could be better.

Hills fire department started ALS March 2, 1998 — six months ahead of schedule. Firefighters, who are trained paramedics, are now able to provide critical care immediately.

Emergency medical and injuries account for 65 percent of all fire department runs. Of those, 71 percent — or roughly five patients a day — require advanced life support from paramedics.

Through ALS, Hills fire paramedics are able to provide that critical care 21/2 to three minutes faster than waiting to arrive at a hospital. Through an agreement with Community EMS, which bills patients, pays \$67.50 per ALS call to the city of Farmington Hills for its paramedic services.

Vagnozzi thinks the fee paid to the city should be increased, perhaps even doubled. He asked Fire Chief Rich Manucci to look into the issue as during the department's annual report to Farmington Hills City Council Feb. 22.

"Two firefighters have to go with patient and stay at the hospital. That alone almost wipes out the \$50," Vagnozzi said. "I think we need a larger amount."

Vagnozzi said he would stipulate those costs wouldn't be passed onto patients.

"I'm not talking about charging the patients," Vagnozzi said. "My concern is that not everybody has insurance coverage."

Additional money would help offset costs the city has paid for new equipment and training. The department spent \$95,000 in equipment and \$50,000 in training for ALS.

However, revenue from ALS calls exceeded initial first-year projections, which Interim Fire Chief Peter Baldwin termed "as very conservative."

"We're going to look into the cost arrangement to determine if the money we receive for our portion of the treatment is appropriate," Baldwin said.

A fire official who oversees ALS service is talking with CEMS. An increase is expected, but it's not as simple as asking for half of the overall ambulance fee, EMS coordinator Kevin Borscho said.

Please see ALS, A5

Obstacles slow district progress

Moving ahead in Farmington central business district sometimes can be tough as evidenced by discarded plans by a Dearborn area grocer to move downtown. But optimism still reigns as city officials continue working with landlords and interested businesses.



BY TIM SMITH
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Progress for Farmington's central business district isn't coming without some bumps in the road.

A prospective grocer now established in the Dearborn area — lined up for the vacant Farmer Jack in the Downtown Farmington Center — recently decided against moving to the city, said Frank Lauhoff, Farmington city manager.

"We're very disappointed," Lauhoff said, adding that negotiations had been progressing between Farmer Jack's parent, Greater Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company, the center's landlord, Ohio-based Kimco Realty Corp., and the independent grocer.

Meanwhile, several reliable sources said that Kimco officials are trying to legally expedite the exit of the 99 Cent Store to make way for the Great Harvest Bread Company — which apparently has a long-term lease but nowhere to go just yet.

Kimco's Frank Descenzo couldn't be reached for comment last week about the status of the 99 Cent Store, which is thought to have a month-to-month lease.

Roger Novelly of Great Harvest said store owners were informed they could take over the building on Feb. 15; but as of Friday, there were no signs of any tenant switch.

"Yes they (Great Harvest) have a lease on a building in the downtown center," Lauhoff

"They were very appreciative of the assistance from Kimco in setting up a lease arrangement. But when it came down to making a decision, they were hesitant to expand into this kind of an area."

Frank Lauhoff
— Farmington city manager

confirmed. "But what we've been informed of is they are still waiting for that person to vacate that store. It is now in the hands of Kimco and their legal advisors."

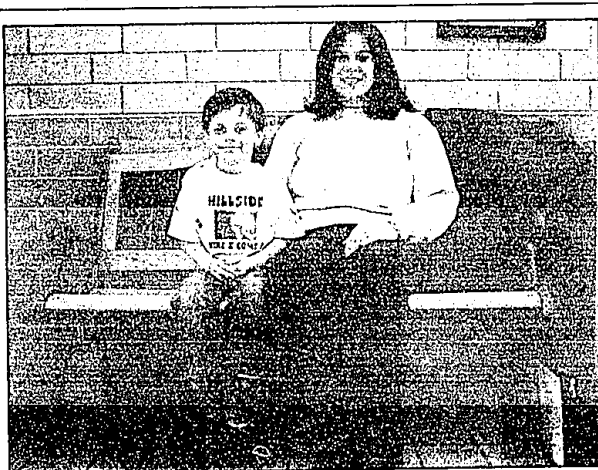
It could take 60-to-90 days for the matter to be resolved through legal channels, Lauhoff added.

About the failed attempt to bring a new grocer to the old Farmer Jack location, Lauhoff said the prospective tenants probably got cold feet.

"They were very appreciative of the assistance from Kimco in setting up a lease arrangement," Lauhoff said. "But when it came down to making a decision, they were hesitant to expand into this kind of an area."

The name of the grocer wasn't disclosed. Lauhoff said the owners were planning to

Please see OBSTACLES, A4



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRADLEY

Anticipation: Sorley MacDonald and his mom Vicky wait to register for kindergarten at Hillside Elementary.

Hillside-bound The last one goes to school

BY TIM SMITH
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"He's the last," beamed proud but wistful Farmington Hills parent Vicky MacDonald.

Across the table in the main lobby at Hillside Elementary School, office assistant Beth Rajkovich officially registered Sorley, 4, the

youngest of Vicky and Bill MacDonald's seven children, into kindergarten.

"You're the last of all those MacDonalds, huh?" queried Rajkovich to cool, calm and collected Sorley, proudly wearing a white Hillside T-shirt with the words "Here I Come!"

The office staffer and



Ho hum: Sorley MacDonald turns away with a yawn.

Please see HILLSIDE, A5



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