

Farmington Observer

Serving Farmington and Farmington Hills for 111 years

HomeTown
COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK
Putting you in touch
with your world

VOLUME 112 NUMBER 69

FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN • 70 PAGES • <http://observer-ccentric.com>

SEVENTEEN CENTS

THE WEEK AHEAD

MONDAY

HEADS UP: Starting Monday, Farmington Hills police will distribute bicycle safety helmets to children who need them at department headquarters on 11 Mile Road, west of Orchard Lake. Parents, who are otherwise unable to provide helmets to their children, can request one through the department's program. Parents must accompany any child seeking a helmet and show proof of Farmington Hills residency. Hills police bought a number of helmets through a block grant.

TUESDAY

Refugee help: Those interested in actively helping Kosovar refugees resettle in the Farmington Hills area can attend a meeting 7 p.m. Tuesday in St. Fabian Catholic Church Activity Hall on the north side of 12 Mile, between Farmington and Orchard Lake roads.

INDEX

■ Crossword	E7
■ Classified Index	E6
■ Autos	H19
■ Home & Service	H6
■ Jobs	G1
■ Rentals	E9
■ Sports	D1
■ Arts & Leisure	C1
■ Health & Fitness	B5

Kids will eat at school

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
tsmith@cc.hometown.com

Some Farmington district high school students might find it hard to swallow having to eat lunch on campus, said Bobbie Feldman, trustee on the Farmington Board of Education.

Feldman expressed her concerns following the board's OK last Tuesday of a committee's recommendation to begin work on a plan to require students to eat lunch on campus. The plan would take effect in 2000-2001.

"This issue is not going to be palatable for many students, food or otherwise," said Feldman, who did approve the recommendation but sees some public relations difficulty ahead for the district.

Feldman said her children attend middle and high school and aren't thrilled with the idea of closed campuses.

Student and parent input will help drive the final report from the open-closed campus committee, expected to be presented to the board in October, said Farmington schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield.

The report will also focus on issues such as cafeteria renovations and food offerings at Farmington, Harrison and North high schools.

Feldman stressed that, in creating a

Please see SCHOOLS, A3



6 53174 10005 4

Water, sewer rates to increase

■ Dig deeper into your pockets folks. It's that time of year when water and sewer rates are taking another jump.

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER
loconnor@cc.hometown.com

Farmington Hills property owners will pay more to take a bath or flush the toilet.

On July 1, water rates increase 29 cents - or 3.02 percent - from \$12.53 to \$12.82 for 1,000 cubic feet of water use. Homeowners are charged a minimum of \$20.51 quarterly plus a meter service fee.

For a homeowner who uses 5,000 cubic feet of water, that will mean \$5.80 more a year or an additional \$1.45 every quarter on their bill.

Tacked onto that will be \$3.46 more every three months for sewage disposal.

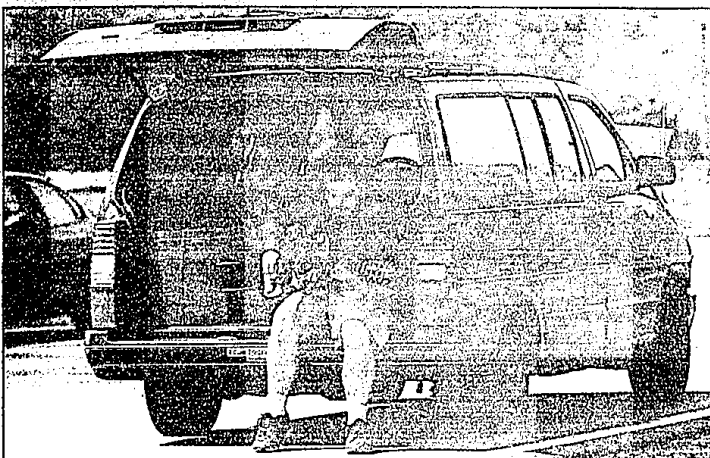
Also, basic rates for sewage disposal will go up 69 cents - or 6.8 percent - from \$11.77 to \$12.46 per 1,000 cubic feet on July 1.

However, a business like Farmington Hills-based Suburban Training Center is going to see a larger difference in bills.

The privately owned facility houses two ice rinks along with showers and restroom facilities. Last March, Suburban Training's water and sewer bill was \$1,585. In December, the company paid \$2,412 at the height of hothouse season.

Please see RATES, A3

Kicking back



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BREKLEN
Strumming: There's an old tune that speaks of making the best of a bad situation... Bill Jennings was on his way to work at William Tyndale College last Thursday when his van broke down. He called for a tow truck then serenaded the Farmington Road traffic.

Joke leads to suspension

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
tsmith@cc.hometown.com

It might have been a joke to two Farmington High School freshmen when they recently scrawled something on a bathroom stall door.

But the students can't be laughing now, having been suspended indefinitely and also facing charges in 47th District Court.

"There were two girls who wrote something on the stall door of a bathroom," said Farmington High Principal John Barrett. "It was a vague bomb threat. But they were watched."

Barrett said somebody "saw them do it" and notified school officials, who quickly tracked down the girls.

"It was a prank," the principal continued. "But we're taking these kinds of things very seriously."

That the two students face court appearances and the possibility of further punishment is something Barrett hopes will stop others from making such ill-advised stabs at humor. "It's a harsh lesson."

Several other FHS students have been suspended since the Littleton, Colo., high school shootings and both Harrison and North high schools last week were the targets of either rumors or threats.

Please see SUSPEND, A7



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BREKLEN
Clean up: An road commission worker picks up debris from a pileup on I-696 near Drake early Friday morning. Four people remained in stable condition at Botsford Hospital following the accident.

Girl injured when van rolls

An 8-year-old girl was injured after the van she and her parents were in became involved in a crash on I-696 Friday morning. A side of their van was sheered off after rolling over once and colliding with a tow truck during morning rush-hour. The girl appeared to have suffered a broken leg, paramedics said.

Farmington Hills fire paramedics

took four people to Botsford Hospital. A fifth person was treated and released.

On Friday afternoon, four remained in stable condition, a Botsford Hospital spokeswoman said. Their injuries are not believed to be life-threatening.

"The whole side was gone," Farmington Hills fire Inspector Bruce Bel-

sky said. "It was literally ripped off."

The van's driver was buckled in but still thrown from the vehicle.

The multi-vehicle accident tied up traffic on westbound I-696, past Drake near the exit for I-275, around 8:30 a.m. Only the left lane remained open while emergency crews cleared the scene.

Woman scammed

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER
loconnor@cc.hometown.com

Police and utility officials are warning residents to be wary of people portraying themselves as gas or electrical employees.

The urging comes after a reported

CON ARTISTS

incident in Farmington Hills. Though they only got away with a small amount, the outcome could have been worse.

A man and woman posing as Detroit Edison employees took \$20 from an 84-year-old Hills resident May 19. The pair approached the woman as she was leaving her Collax Street home. They said they needed to check her electrical wires due to recent storm damage.

The woman gave her keys to the man, who offered to pull her car back into the driveway. Neither person had Detroit Edison clothing or identification.

"First of all, our people in the field have pictured identification and the vehicles they drive are usually clearly marked," said Scott Simons, Detroit Edison spokesman. "If they haven't requested a service call or have a suspicion about the person involved, they can call our 800-number (1-800-477-4747)."

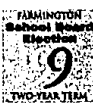
Please see SCAMS, A7

She's unopposed, but still campaigning hard

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
tsmith@cc.hometown.com

Although Linda Enberg doesn't have to lift a finger this year to be re-elected to the Farmington Board of Education, she is hard at work on the campaign trail.

That's because Enberg, unopposed in the June 14 election for a four-year seat, is completely dedicated to public education and to her job as a school



board member.

"Even though I'm unopposed I didn't just want to sit back and say, 'Thank you very much,'" said Enberg, a 15-year

resident of the district. "I want to take this opportunity that comes every four years to communicate with the public. They have a right to know who it is that's repre-

senting them."

Enberg, who served as board president in 1997-98, is shaking hands and distributing campaign literature based on the simple premise of doing "what is right for kids."

Many residents in



Linda Enberg

Farmington Public Schools already know about Enberg's dedication to the job - which she won in June 1995, besting Jennifer Levin for an open seat.

But Enberg still is surprised nobody is challenging her.

"I would not presume to guess what's going on in the mind of the public," she said. "I would hope it partly reflects general support of the direction of district programming."

Please see ENBERG, A7