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THE WEEK AHEAD

SUNDAY

Celebrate: Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church parish will dedicate its new family center after the 11:15 a.m. Mass.

WEDNESDAY

Job Fair: More than 100 companies will recruit employees at the Fall Job Fair sponsored by The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers and the HomeTown Newspapers. The job fair will be 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. in the Laurel Manor Banquet and Video Conference Center, 39000 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia.

INDEX

Arts	C1
Classified Index	E3
Autos	H7
Home & Service	H5
Jobs	G1
Rentals	E8
Crossword	E6
Health	D4
Movies	C4
New Homes	E1
Obituaries	A6
Real Estate	E1
Sports	B1
Taste	D1
Travel	C8

Deja vu: Yet another python found

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM
STAFF WRITER

One python slithering around a Farmington Hills neighborhood 2 1/2 weeks ago was strange enough.

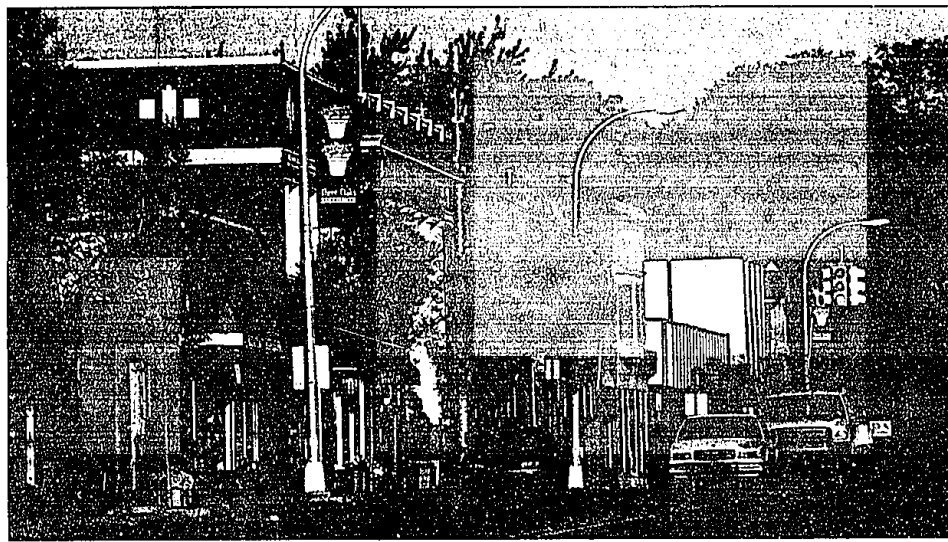
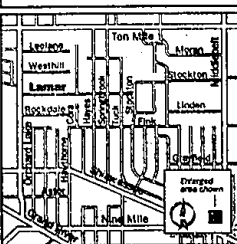
A second one discovered in the same area crossed the realm of strange and became downright creepy for Farmington Hills residents living nearby.

A 10-foot long Burmese python was captured by Farmington Hills police Wednesday in the 31000 block of Lamar, according to Cmdr. Dennis Rochford, who heads the Hills Police Department's patrol division.

From there the snake was picked up by the Oakland County Sheriff's Depart-

Please see PYTHON, A4

Python found
A 10-foot long Burmese python was captured by Farmington Hills police Wednesday in the 31000 block of Lamar.



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRISLER

Afoot: Consultants who toured downtown Farmington say the area is a "great place" but could, nonetheless, use some improvements to make pedestrians safer and happier.

Pedestrian friendly

Consultants suggest changes in both cities



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRISLER

Wow! Pedestrians face heavy traffic when crossing the street at the 12 Mile and Orchard Lake intersection. Consultants weren't telling city officials anything they didn't know. One of the consultants said it is the worst intersection he has ever seen.

Fine tuning would improve a 'great place'

BY TIM SMITH
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Don't expect to see a traffic roundabout at the intersection of Grand River-Farmington, which something like 60,000 vehicles pass through during a 24-hour period.

But raised platform crosswalks and an enlarged fountain area in the Downtown Farmington Center could be among future "tweaking" of downtown pedestrian routes and parking areas.

That's according to national consultants Dan Burden and Charlie Gandy, who Friday

morning conducted a half-day audit to determine whether the city is "walkable, bikeable and pedestrian friendly."

Burden and Gandy met with Farmington city officials, community leaders and residents as part of Southeast Michigan Council of Governments' Toward Walkable Communities project.

The consultants also visited Farmington Hills for a similar session Friday afternoon and will compile a massive report by the end of October, detailing findings from 17 community audits done this month.

Please see CITY, A8

Challenge: Try crossing 12 Mile-Orchard Lake

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM
STAFF WRITER

Trying to navigate the busy intersection of 12 Mile and Orchard Lake while encased in the steel frame of a vehicle is challenging enough. Trying to cross one of the roads while walking, pushing a stroller or riding a bicycle is nearly impossible and very dangerous.

That's according to a pair of traffic consultants who visited Farmington Hills Thursday afternoon to evaluate the city's roads for

pedestrian safety.

"That's one of the worst intersections I've ever seen," said consultant Charles Gandy. Another trouble spot consultants pointed out was the intersection in front of Harrison High, between Orchard Lake and Middlebelt.

The team, Don Burden and Gandy, consultants for the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, said Farmington Hills has a long way to go in creating pedestrian-friendly

Please see HILLS, A8



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRISLER

We're here: A busload of local officials and citizens arrived at the state Capitol shortly before 11 a.m. Wednesday ready to do battle

Elected leaders trounce legislation

BY RICHARD PEARL
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A rally in Lansing last week by municipal leaders from across Michigan intended to halt a bill seen as a major threat to communities' right to self-government appears to be working.

One of House Bill 4777's co-sponsors, state Rep. Andrew Raczowski, R-Farmington Hills, told officials from Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties Wednesday that it likely will be changed or allowed to die.

Raczowski, who also is majority House floor leader, schedules the

HOUSE BILL 4777

House voting agenda.

However, he warned, there likely will be new legislation retaining "the flavor" of House Bill 4777.

The bill originally was aimed at killing Detroit's "living wage" provision in its contracts and preventing other municipalities from instituting it.

But the Michigan Chamber of Commerce - spurred by Marquette's smoking ban - added 21 provisions. The bill

Please see CASE, A7

