

# Primary

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to vote but is still undecided, although she's a registered Democrat.

"It's so hard to make a decision when we have to be so busy listening to them criticize one another," she said. "I don't think I'd base my opinion on whether they're Democrat or Republican."

Hills City Clerk Kathy Dorman estimated eight staffers, who will work on what should be the last day of a three-day weekend, will put in more than 300 hours counting absentee ballots, going through supply boxes, packing ballot box transfer cases and checking the myriad details that go along with giving voters a voice at the polls.

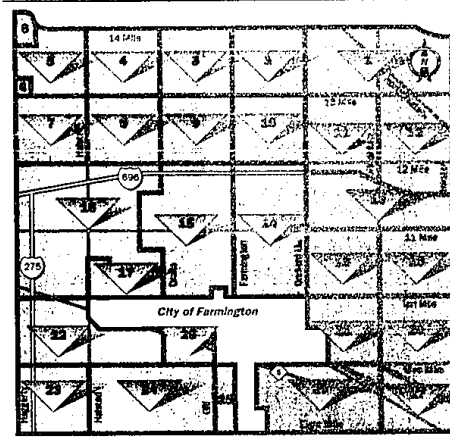
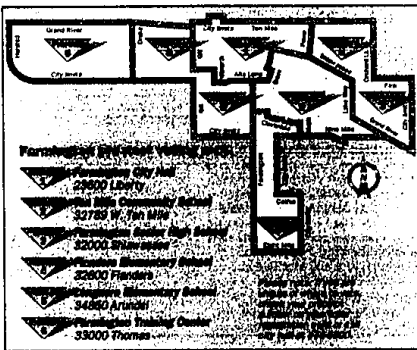
That's in addition to several hundred hours logged by temporary workers.

"We also have to be open, by law, on Saturday ... to accept absentee ballots," Dornan said.

Those have to be checked against the list of applications, then recorded. Part of the chore Monday will be processing those votes.

"People can return the absentee ballots on Tuesday, but we'd prefer it on Monday," she noted. "We have a drop box out front, and that's checked a few times a day."

The box sits next to the federal postal boxes on the island between city hall and the police department. Dornan urges resi-



- City of Farmington Hills PRECINCT VOTING MAP**
1. Fairview School • 28500 Oak Creek
  2. W. Farmington High School • 32000 Thicket Way
  3. Forest Elementary School • 34400 Oak Forest
  4. Park Community Church • 35140 Fairview Way
  5. Grace Chapel Church • 27900 Highland
  6. N. Congregational Church • 35220 Terrace Mall (located at top end)
  7. Holy Lutheran Church • 39200 W. Terrace Way
  8. Free Baptist Ch. • 28110 Oak Hill
  9. Church of the Redeemer • 21050 Terrace Hill
  10. Kettering Elementary School • 32130 Brown Hill
  11. Highview Community Center • 35170 Highview
  12. Woodmont Elementary School • 23420 Woodmont
  13. Farm Hills Activity Center • 29000 Elmwood Way
  14. Riverside School • 23000 Riverside
  15. First Presbyterian Church • 26155 Farrington
  16. Middle Elementary School • 30821 Lincoln Way
  17. Grace Chapel Church • 27998 Highland
  18. East Middle School • 25500 Woodmont
  19. East Middle School • 25500 Woodmont
  20. South Oak Hill School • 23040 Oak Hill
  21. Longfellow School • 23800 Oak
  22. French Center • 35200 Light Mile
  23. French Center • 35200 Light Mile
  24. Forest Middle School • 34400 Woodmont
  25. Oak Elementary School • 2118 Oak
  26. St. Paul's Lutheran Church • 20825 MacArthur
  27. St. Alexander's Church • 27825 Shawnee

dents to use it, particularly those who might have trouble getting in and out of their cars.

In both Farmington Hills and Farmington, the deadline for picking up a ballot was Saturday, Feb. 19. Both city halls were open to accommodate voters.

While Farmington City Hall is open the day before the primary - Monday, Feb. 21, also known as President's Day - Farmington Hills is not, officially. But for election purposes, the clerk's staff will be there from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Michigan Democrats will vote for their candidate in "Iowa

style" caucus meetings to be held around the state on March 11. Altogether in the room at the same time, Democrats will vote by raising their hands in those meetings.

The Reform Party isn't recognizing any individual state's results. Instead, it will hold its own national primary election later this year.

There is no law to prevent voters from casting ballots in both the primary and the March 11 caucuses. There is also no cross-checking system to determine if a voter casts ballots in both the Feb. 22 primary and the March 11 caucuses.

Any registered voter may participate in the primary. In the caucus, Democrats ask only that voters declare themselves as Democrats when registering. To participate in the caucus, voters need not be actual party members.

Metro Coney Island employee Colleen Speelman hasn't even registered to vote yet, so she won't be at the polls Tuesday. Her co-worker Andrea LaFrance will be, but she's not sure how she's going to vote yet.

"My mom and I are debating about McCain. That's the big issue," she said, explaining she is a registered Democrat. "I was going for Goro. I was pleased with some of the things he did in the past. But we'll see."

Local clerks also remind voters that the Feb. 22 primary in Farmington and Farmington Hills is for the nomination for president only.



STAFF PHOTOS BY BILL DAVENPORT

**Uncommitted:** Colleen Speelman says she's not registered to vote in Tuesday's primary election.



**Independent:** Shirley Noyse of Farmington Hills said she had no opinions about the upcoming Republican primary election on Tuesday.

## Officer of the Year

Veteran puts his life on the line

BY JONI HUBRED  
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Working in jail taught Farmington Hills police officer Mike Farley a thing or two about the criminal mind.

"I feel comfortable mingling with the criminal element," said the Hills' 1999 Police Officer of the Year. "It doesn't make me nervous."

That's a good thing, considering how closely Farley works with the bad guys. A member of the South Oakland Narcotics Investigation Consortium - consisting of officers from Farmington Hills, Novi and West Bloomfield - he regularly buys and sells drugs undercover.

Four years of working as a guard at the Oakland County Jail left him with little fear and lots of opportunities to observe the people who spend much of their time on the wrong side of the law.

"They don't necessarily intimidate me," Farley said. "If I don't throw off the aura of being afraid, they don't detect I'm a cop."

Though he's a law enforcement veteran with 16 years in the Hills, he also eschews standard cop lingo, like referring to an automobile as a "vehicle." A single mistake in casual conversation could jeopardize an arrest or even someone's life.

With scruffy, average-guy looks, Farley has had quite a bit of success in the underworld. He has bought and sold large quantities of drugs, once turning the sale of 500 pounds of marijuana into an immediate arrest.

Just in the past year, Farley made more than 50 narcotics "buys," putting his life on the line with characters who are increasingly apprehensive about sting operations and thus armed with increasingly more dangerous weapons.

But it was as much his relationships within the department as success in the field that garnered Farley his second "Officer of the Year" award.

Chief Bill Dwyer said Farley was chosen by a panel of administrators and his peers, through the department's honors and awards board. Hills police consider the city award their top honor.

"He truly represents an officer who has put his life on the line and worked deep undercover," Dwyer said. "Not only as a police officer, but as a husband and father, he has illustrated all of the attributes you'd want to see in a police officer ... integrity and professionalism. He does it all, and he does it extremely well."

A department veteran, Farley has nothing but high praise for Dwyer and his fellow officers as



well. He particularly enjoys helping younger officers learn the ins and outs of the business.

The training offered in places like the Detroit Police Narcotics School, he said, is only a small part of what it takes to be a good narcotics officer.

"It's not like it's an exact science," Farley commented. "Ninety percent of it is learning on the job."

He attributes part of his success to the kinds of basic values to which Dwyer alluded, values he has seen play an integral role in people's lives. Men and women brought up in families or neighborhoods where violence and drug abuse are a daily experience often end up tangled in a web of addiction and the cycle of criminal behavior that often accompanies it.

Farley tries to take that into account, no matter how bad the bad guys seem.

"I'm not an angel by any means, but as far as not wanting to hurt people, you have to value that," he said. "Although I don't care for drug dealers, I don't treat them badly. They do what they do for reasons."

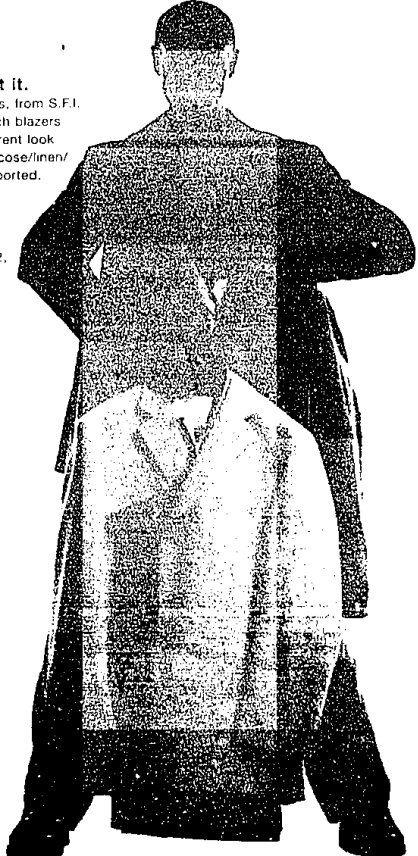
While it's difficult to work every day in society's dark side, Farley remains hopeful the work he's doing has a purpose. The drug dealers he meets are always nervous, worried they're going to get caught.

"I really believe in what we're doing here," he said. "If we weren't out there, they wouldn't even be cautious. They know cops are keeping an eye on them."

**I'm not an angel by any means, but as far as not wanting to hurt people, you have to value that. Although I don't care for drug dealers, I don't treat them badly. They do what they do for reasons.**

**Mike Farley**  
—SONIC officer

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