



Happy Father's Day: Read touching tributes to dads as we unveil the entries in our "My Dad's the Best" contest / A6

THE WEEK AHEAD

Farmington City Council: Officials will be introduced to this year's Miss Farmington / Oakland County contestants during their June 18 meeting, which begins at 8 p.m. in chambers at City Hall, 23600 Liberty Street. They'll consider amendments to water and sewer rates.

MONDAY

Hills Council: Two public hearings, on road improvements for Stockton Ave. and Spring Valley Drive, are on the 7:30 p.m. agenda, as well as a number of ordinance enactments. Officials may also reconsider the Alycehay / Highmeadow Road improvement issue. At 6 p.m., officials will open bids for the new 47th District Court Building. Both meetings are open to the public and held at City Hall, 11 Mile and Orchard Lake Roads.

INDEX

- Apartments/E9
- Arts/C1
- Automotive/D10
- Classified/E,Q,H
- Classified
- Index/E4
- Crossword
- Puzzle/E5
- Jobs/G1
- Malls/C6
- Movies/C4
- New Homes/E1
- Obituaries/A7
- Real Estate/E1
- Service Guide/G8
- Sports/B1
- Taste/D1
- Travel/C8

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Child care: Ethan Beerbower, 22 months, spent some time with President George W. Bush at the Rome Peach Festival.

Local family goes to D.C.

Beerbowers represent state as 'typical' tax family

BY SUE BUCK
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Meet the Beerbowers — Wayne, Catherine, Chase, 5, and Ethan, 2. Because they're much like the typical family next door, in Farmington Hills and throughout the nation, they've achieved recognition as one of President George W. Bush's tax families. The family represented Michigan at the signing of the federal tax relief bill June 7 in Washington D. C.

State Rep. Andrew Rackowski (R-Farmington Hills) nominated the Beerbowers. "He's a union household who sup-

ported President Bush," said Rackowski. "They fit the criteria of a family or four or more who would benefit from this tax cut."

It all began last fall when Bush's election committee looked for representative families in the city where he campaigned. The focus was that his tax program would return more money to families than one proposed by presidential candidate Al Gore.

The Beerbowers' middle class status and income level netted them the distinction. Wayne Beerbower is a 21-year Farmington Hills police officer and president of the Farmington Hills Police Officers Association. He also

works as a vice-president for the Police Officers Association of Michigan, which is based in Redford Township.

Catherine, who worked 20 years for Comerica Bank, gave up her job as a bank officer to become a stay-at-home mom.

Both the Farmington Hills POA and POAM, endorsed Rackowski in his election bids. "During that time, he and I became personal friends, as well," Beerbower said. "We support whoever we feel supports law enforcement issues. We are an issue-oriented

Please see TAX FAMILY, A3

Welcoming honor



Signs of success: Surrounded by family members and friends, former Farmington Hills Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi learned Tuesday night that the Visitors Center in the Historic Spicer House at Heritage Park has been renamed in his honor.

Speechless

Visitors Center renamed to honor Vagnozzi

BY JONI HUBBRED
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It takes a lot to leave Aldo Vagnozzi speechless. About 400 Farmington Hills residents, family and friends accomplished that Tuesday night, surprising the former mayor with the announcement that the Visitors Center in the Historic Spicer House at Heritage Park had been renamed the "Vagnozzi Visitors Center." Everyone invited managed to keep the secret from him, which was no small accomplishment but easier than one co-con-

spirator anticipated. "Apparently, it wasn't as tough as I thought," said council member and long-time Vagnozzi friend Vicki Barnett. "Everyone was good about it." Barnett and councilman Barry Brickner came up with the idea last winter, and Brickner brought it to city manager Steve Brock prior to the council's goal-setting session. Then all the two had to do and open meetings — without Vagnozzi catching wind of it. "Our thought was, nothing says welcome more in

Farmington Hills than Aldo Vagnozzi," Barnett said. Apparently, others charged with making the naming decision agreed, including members of the Parks and Recreation Commission. "Every vote that was on it was unanimous," Brickner said. The plan was to set up a memorial tree planting in honor of Aldo's wife, Lois, who died in November 1999. And that's how the ceremony started at 6 p.m. Tuesday evening. Mayor Nancy Bates read a

Please see VAGNOZZI, A2

Sledgehammer burglar charged

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM
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A 17-year-old Livonia man dubbed the "Sledgehammer Burglar" by Farmington Hills police was arraigned Wednesday in connection with a series of business break-ins and the theft of laptop computers. Lavinio Buzlo was arraigned at Farmington Hills' 47th District Court by visiting Judge John Dillon, who imposed a \$7,500 cash surety bond. Buzlo's next court date is a preliminary exam, scheduled for 8:30 a.m. Friday, June 22. He stood mute on both charges. The business break-ins occurred in

Please see BURGLAR, A2

Hills couple welcome chief NWF naturalist

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM
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A Farmington Hills naturalist last week had the opportunity to show off his butterfly-attracting milkweed, stinging nettles and frog pond to the chief naturalist for a national organization. Craig Tufts, chief naturalist for the National Wildlife Federation, stopped by to visit Joe Derek, Hills naturalist Friday, June 15. Tufts was in town because of a scheduled biodiversity speech at Cranbrook Institute, but said he wanted to see Derek's "habitat," which he'd read about in a local

Please see NATURALIST, A3



Naturally: A frog rests on a lily pad in the pond at Joe and Judy Derek's home in Farmington Hills.

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