

THE WEEK AHEAD

On a different porch: Cafe on the Porch will return to downtown Farmington Tuesday night, but in a different location. Join members of the Governor Warner Mansion Blue Circle from 7-11 p.m. at Farmington Bakery, 33250 Grand River, for light refreshments and conversation. Seating will be available inside, and there's plenty of parking in the rear. For information, call Brian Golden, 248-701-8112.

MONDAY

Hills council: Officials will consider establishing a Brownfield Redevelopment Zone in the 14 Mile / Orchard Lake / Northwestern area and discuss a development agreement for the 11 Pines property. The meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. in Council chambers at City Hall, 11 Mile and Orchard Lake Roads.

TUESDAY

Farmington School Board: Members will hold special meetings beginning at 5:30 p.m. to consider a student disciplinary action appeal and the superintendent's evaluation. Their regular agenda at 7:30 p.m. includes a legislative update. The meetings are held at the Administrative Center, 32500 Shiawassee.

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Djoumessis convicted of abuse



BY KEVIN BROWN
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Both sides claimed victory Friday in the case of the Farmington Hills couple accused of enslaving and abusing a Cameroon teenager.

"I'll tell her she conquered the beast," said Assistant Prosecutor Cheryl Matthews, speaking of victim Pridine Fru following the verdict.

After six days of deliberations, an Oakland County circuit jury found Joseph and Evelyn Djoumessis guilty on three of 11 counts they faced in connection with their treatment of Fru, who came to live with the couple in 1996, when she was 14.

The jury found the couple, also Cameroon natives, not guilty of kidnapping and conspiracy charges.

Joseph Djoumessis was found guilty of one count of third-degree criminal sexual conduct. The charge, which involves coercion of a minor to have sexual intercourse - Fru was 16 at the time - is punishable by up to 15 years in prison.

Both Joseph and Evelyn were found guilty on one count each of third-degree child abuse. This charge carries a maximum two-year sentence.

"I'm very grateful," said Ann Parker, Joseph Djoumessis's defense attorney. "He's very grateful for the jury," she said.

"I am surprised that the defense is claiming victory. I am claiming victory

in this case," said Assistant Prosecutor Cheryl Matthews.

Joseph Djoumessis was found not guilty on five of seven counts he faced. Matthews responded after the verdict was read, "He's going to jail."

The third-degree criminal sexual conduct charge carries a minimum jail term of "multiple years" in prison up to 15, according to court guidelines.

Joseph Djoumessis, wearing gold wire-rimmed glasses and his hair closely trimmed, wore a dark suit and white shirt in the courtroom Friday. He showed no emotion upon leaving. He

Please see TRIAL, A3

Opening Night



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BIRDAUER

An elite group: Nancy Coumoundouras (standing, at left) asked former artists-in-residence to show up for Thursday night's opening of the art gallery at the Costick Center. Pictured are Marjorie Chellstorp, Monte Nagler, Gwen Tomkow, Edee Joppich, Eve Samra, Gail Yurasek Piepenburg, Alice Nichols, (lower left) Kegham tazian, Walter Reddig and Tom Hale.

Gallery puts art in the spotlight

BY JON HUBBARD
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"They say if you live long enough, all your wishes will come true," said long-time Farmington area arts supporter Bev Ellis. "Those of you who know me, know I've lived long enough."

Ellis' wishes have long involved the promotion of arts in the Farmington/Farmington Hills area.

On Thursday night, she was present for the grand opening of an art gallery in the Hills' William B. Costick Center lobby.

The glass-enclosed room gives visitors a glimpse of paintings and sculptures from the moment they walk in the center's front doors.

"That's the real beauty is it's right

in the middle of the Activity Center," said Hills Cultural Arts Coordinator Nancy Coumoundouras. "People who wouldn't normally be exposed to art will see it. Especially young people."

Kay Briggs, who along with Ellis and Haroun Alameddine were original Arts Commission members, said the commission has made a real

Please see ART, A3

Bones may solve eight-year-old mystery

■ Hills Police believe a skull and other remains found by a Detroit Police dive team are those of a Hills woman who has been missing for eight years. When the identification is official, they expect to press charges in connection with her death.

BY KEVIN BROWN
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The mystery of a Farmington Hills woman missing for eight years could be solved as soon as Monday.

A human skull found Sept. 5 in the Detroit River has been tentatively identified as the remains of Kristi Frontera. She was last seen March 20, 1993.

A Detroit police dive team on Wednesday found bones in 20-30 feet of water near the shore off of St. Aubin, just east of the Renaissance Center.

Farmington Hills Police Chief Bill Dwyer said that evidence collected over the years suggested Frontera's body was dumped in that section of the river.

After an initial search turned up no evidence, Farmington Hills police asked the Detroit Police dive team in January 2000 to schedule training runs along the stretch of river described as murky; where the river bottom is sometimes disturbed by ship propellers.

Divers found the human remains wrapped in a comforter and weighed down with cement blocks. "It supports all the information we have gathered through sources," Dwyer said.

Dentists with the Wayne County Medical Examiner's office have tentatively identified the remains as Frontera's. Police say a definitive ID could come Monday.

Dwyer said more tests are needed to

Please see BONES, A2

Here's your CHANCE TO WIN a furniture shopping spree

The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers and 12 area merchants are teaming up to send 12 lucky winners on a home furnishings shopping spree.

It's all part of Fabulous Furniture 2001 to be featured in our At Home section on Thursday, Oct. 4, 11 and 18.

Just think. You could be one of 12 lucky winners who will receive a \$1,000 gift certificate to shop at Newton Furniture (Bloomfield Hills, Livonia, Novi and Sterling Heights locations), Ethan Allen (Ann Arbor, Auburn Hills, Birmingham, Livonia and Novi locations), Classic Interiors (Livonia), Franks Furniture (Wayne), Laurel Furniture (downtown Plymouth), Walker/Busenberg (downtown Plymouth), In-Style Furniture (West Bloomfield), Sherwood Studios (West Bloomfield), Dalloy Carpet (locations in Livonia and Canton), Eclipse Window Tint (Redford Township), McLaughlin's (locations in Novi and Southgate) and Baker Furniture (downtown Birmingham).

Fun starts Oct. 4

Winning is easy. Each participating merchant will have official Fabulous Furniture entry forms available beginning Oct. 4. You may enter one time at each store. So you'll want to visit each store (several merchants have multiple locations) and increase your chances of winning.

You must be at least 18 years old to enter. All entries have an equal chance of being drawn. Deadline to enter is 6 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 25.

Look for the entry form in your Thursday and Sunday Observer or Eccentric edition and in participating merchants stores beginning Thursday, Oct. 4.

Don't miss the Oct. 4 At Home section which takes a look at dining rooms and kitchens. Look for tips on how to make your dining room a center for family gatherings. Read about what's new in kitchen flooring, cabinets and countertops. Read about how to unravel the mystery of furniture styles.

On Thursday, Oct. 11, At Home will feature living rooms and great rooms.

Find out how to make your living room reflect comfort not formality. Read about the latest choices in entertainment centers and how to use art as furniture.

To complete our series, the Observer will present bedrooms and bathrooms. Discover how to turn your bedroom into a retreat and what mattress to buy for a good night's sleep. Stories on new furniture styles, windows, oriental rugs, clocks, lighting and appliances are all part of the package.

A special "Designer's Corner" will offer decorating tips each week.

When you visit participating merchants be sure to look for the Fabulous Furniture in-store displays and entry forms. Contest details can also be found in your Observer every Thursday and Sunday. Or visit a nearby Observer office to pick up an entry form or copy of the newspaper for contest details.

Don't miss this chance to spruce up your home and read about the latest in furniture styles and decorating tips in Fabulous Furniture 2001.

