

## THE WEEK AHEAD

**Last chance:** The last special section in *At Home's Fabulous Furniture series* will run Thursday. This will be your final opportunity to win in *The Observer & Eccentric's \$12,000 furniture contest*. Entry forms can be found inside today's newspaper.

### MONDAY

**Farmington Council:** Officials will consider approving purchase of patrol cars, a bid award for road salt and a contract for concrete road repairs on their 8 p.m. agenda. The meeting is held at City Hall, 23600 Liberty Street.

**Farmington Hills Council:** Officials will hear a legislative update from Paul Welday, assistant to Congressman Joe Knollenberg, and consider the purchase of land and a house at 21439 Wheeler Street. The meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. in City Hall, 11 Mile and Orchard Lake Roads.

### TUESDAY

**Candidate forum:** Farmington Hills city council and mayoral candidates will express their views in a forum held at 7 p.m. tonight at Hills City Hall, 11 Mile and Orchard Lake roads. Another candidates' night is scheduled October 24.

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## Mayoral candidates sound off

### Bates seeking final term Oliverio wants openness

BY KEVIN BROWN  
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Ask Mayor Nancy Bates why she's running for re-election, and you'll get a simple answer.



Nancy Bates

"I really care what happens in this community. I've done a good job as mayor," she said. "Things that matter to me in the community are doing well," she said. That includes the Youth and Family Services Program, a pet pro-

ject of sorts for Bates. It has become a national model.

She also points to a recent city audit performed by DMG Maximus: "It finds Farmington Hills could be a model for other cities. That's a wonderful thing to hear about your city."

"I provide good leadership for this community," Bates said, adding council "does what the community wants us to do."

She said an example involves the 11 Pines golf course expansion project. Local government noted to buy the former landfill property to make expan-

Please see BATES, A2

BY KEVIN BROWN  
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Mayoral candidate Ron Oliverio says Farmington Hills' mayor and council are cliquish and not open enough with the public.



Ron Oliverio

A director with Bonal Technologies and retired senior vice president of First of Michigan Bank, Oliverio has served on city committees, including

the ethics committee. He has special concern about the 11 Pines project, which involved the purchase of land at 11 Mile and Halsted several years ago and its subsequent development.

"The main problem with 11 Pines is the city has spent for too much time in executive session," Oliverio said, of the proposal, which includes expansion of the San Marino Golf Course from nine to 18 holes.

"They have not been up-front about many issues. They have been deceptive about ownership. They've been decep-

Please see OLIVERIO, A2

### Zoning issue?



**Negh-borly:** These horses are stabled next door to Freedom Square Apartments, where residents say they've been assaulted by odors. City officials will take another look at whether the use of the property is in keeping with city ordinances, despite the fact that existing zoning allows the owners to have stables. Below, Barbara Argue can't use her patio in summer, because of the odors that waft in on the breeze when the wind is right.

STAFF PHOTOS BY BILL BAERLEN

## Horse of a different color

### Residents tired of living near 'urban ranch'

BY KEVIN BROWN  
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Getting close to nature is good. But getting too close makes some people uncomfortable.

Barbara Argue said that since moving to Farmington Hills in April, she enjoyed her patio at the Freedom Square Apartments, on Freedom Road west of Farmington.

"I'm an outdoor person. I use my patio a lot," she said.

That was until the horses arrived.

"The smell is so horrid and so unsanitary we cannot even open our windows or doors most of the time," Argue wrote in a letter to Mayor Nancy Bates, on behalf of tenants.

"I'd just like to see the horses gone. There's a rooster that crows incessantly all day long. I just don't understand the city of Farmington Hills allowing such a thing. I moved here to be in the city," Argue said.

While the smell was not noticeable on a recent rainy weekday, neighbor Lloyd Clark agreed that there is a noticeable odor. "When the wind is right."

The new wood horse fence is just east of a thicket of sumac, berry bushes and scrub trees blocking much of the view of the neighboring property.

It was in early July, Argue said, that neighbors began fencing a third of their 2.3 acre lot. "I thought it was for a dog."

But soon, she had a roan horse and a gray horse for neighbors.

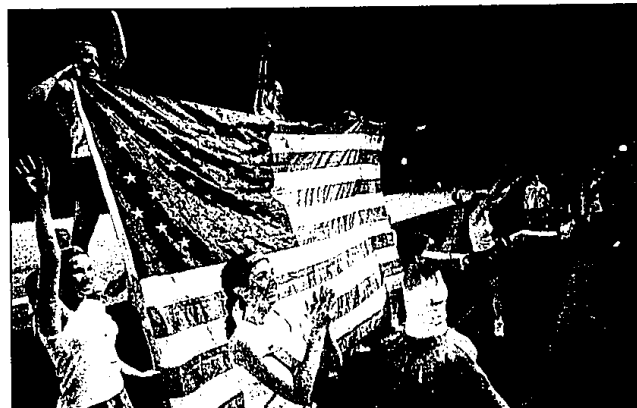
"It's 20 to 25 feet from my bedroom window and patio," she said.

"When I first called the city because the smell was so bad, they said they had to see if it was grandfathered in," Argue said.

"Grandfathered" is a term municipal officials use to describe existing activities that are allowed to continue, even though new ordinances prohibit the activity. Argue said she learned that use of a stable on the site predated the current single-family home zoning.

But municipalities can also rule a grandfathered clause is void once the activity stops. That would suggest that once horses were removed from the property, to return them would violate the

Please see HORSES, A5



## NFHS Raiders rally

**Pep it up:** North Farmington High School's varsity cheer squad (left) ended their routine with a patriotic theme at Friday's Homecoming pep rally. Students also presented plaques to Hills police and fire departments, their "everyday heroes." Below, the Flag Corps performed at a bonfire, capping off the evening. The Raiders' celebration continued Saturday.

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