



Praise Mom with a poem

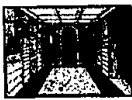
Celebrate your mother with a poem and win a prize for her courtesy of the Observer Newspapers. We're inviting our young readers, 18 and under, to submit a poem in praise of their mother. The poem can take any form from haiku to sonnet to free verse. A panel of judges will select their favorite. Seven winning poets will win a gift for mom. The prizes include an 11- by 14-inch portrait for up to 14 people from Focal Point Photography in Farmington and Canton (sitting fee is included), \$100 gift certificate to Ernesto's Restaurant in Plymouth Township, \$100 gift certificate to Antonio's Italian Cucina in Farmington Hills, \$100 gift certificate to Sendtraps in Livonia, and more. We'll publish the winning entry and other entries on Mother's Day. Entries are due to The Observer by Monday, May 6. Send entries to Mother's Day Contest, Observer Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150, or fax to (734)591-7279 or e-mail to hgallagher@oe.homecomm.net.

IN THE PAPER TODAY

ARTS

Getting to know you: Arts and cultural groups are learning more about the state's new Department of Art, History and Libraries. /B1

AT HOME



By design: Students try their hand at designing a room with carpets as the focal point. /C1

INDEX

Apartments/G4 HomeTown Life/C4
Arts/B1 Jobs/G6
At Home/C1 Obituaries/A7
Automotive/G12 Police Calls/A2
Classified/E,F,G,H Real Estate/G1
Classified Index/G1 Service Guide/G10
Crossword/G2 Sports/D1

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Officer injured in 'smash and grab'

BY PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER
ppace@oe.homecomm.net

Early Sunday morning, a Farmington Hills police officer scuffled with a man observed moments earlier stealing cigarette cartons from a Hills gas station.

The uniformed officer suffered minor injuries after he confronted Dylan H. Stephens, whom the officer had seen breaking into the Sunoco gas station at 12 Mile and Middlebelt at 6:30 a.m. Police say local businesses have been hit with a dozen "smash and

grab" robberies in the last month.

Stephens was arraigned Monday at 47th District Court and charged with two felonies, intent to do great bodily harm less than murder, punishable by up to 10 years in prison and breaking and entering, also a 10-year sentence. He is also charged with operating a vehicle with a suspended license, a 1-year misdemeanor.

According to Hills police, Stephens attempted to drive away from the building when the driver saw the officer approaching. Stephens drove his

vehicle into the officer's unmarked police car, striking the driver's side door.

The officer was able to move out of the way and lunge into the suspect's partially open window to grab for the ignition, police said. Stephens began driving wildly, dragging the officer outside the fleeing vehicle's door. The officer fell free of the car as the suspect attempted to drag him onto Middlebelt, then fled northbound.

The officer was treated for multiple scrapes and bruises and released from

Botsford Hospital.

Due to the fact the officer positively identified the man from a previous arrest for an outstanding warrant, the South Oakland Narcotics Intelligence Consortium of which the Hills police are members, along with the help from Detroit police, found Stephens later that day in a suspected crack house in Detroit.

Stephens plead not guilty at his arraignment. His preliminary exam is set before Judge Maria Parker at 8:30 a.m. April 15.

Be if it ever so humble...



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BASSLER

Terry Deichert, Ray Okonski, Valerie Knol, Denise Tawyea, Tracy Freeman, Jeff Ferrari and Brian Golden gathered on the sunporch of the Longacre House to announce the new location and dates for the Blue Circle's Cafe on the Porch program.

Longacre House will be Cafe's new home

BY JONI HUBBARD
STAFF WRITER
jhubbard@oe.homecomm.net

After a successful inaugural season, the Blue Circle's "Cafe on the Porch" will return June 18, but in a different venue.

"Cafe on the Porch has come to the Longacre House," Blue Circle member Tracey Freeman announced Wednesday morning.

At a press conference held in a sun porch that overlooks the Longacre House's rolling grounds and gardens, Freeman explained the Cafe would continue on Tuesday nights, from 7-10 p.m., in much the same way as it was presented on the porch of the

Governor Warner Mansion last summer. At times, more than 60 guests paid a \$5 cover charge to enjoy tea, coffee, lemonade and desserts, play board or lawn games or just enjoy the quiet, outdoor atmosphere.

At Longacre, there's room for seating indoors in inclement weather, or outdoors on benches or chairs set on a brick patio framed by gardens. The enclosed porch overlooks a small hill, at the bottom of which is a bandshell that supporters plan to renovate this year, according to Longacre Board member Ray Okonski.

It should be ready in time for the Blue Circle's proposed fall festival,

which will be held in late September or early October.

"That's a hidden asset of the Longacre House that has been underutilized," Okonski said.

And the Longacre House is a hidden asset in Farmington Hills, according to interim executive director Terry Deichert. "We're thrilled," she said of the new partnership with Blue Circle. "It's a win-win situation for the house. That's what our long-term goal is, to bring the community in more."

The House also hopes to work out

Please see CAFE, A4

Inclusion explored at local conference

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER
sbuck@oe.homecomm.net

"Because We Can Change the World: Building an Inclusive Community for Everyone" is a conference offered to both educators and people in the community this weekend.

The conference will be held 8 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Saturday, April 13 at the Farmington Training Center, 33000 Thomas in Farmington.

Participants will explore concepts of social justice, community building and the importance of inclusion in neighborhoods, schools and work.

"The schools are really pushing it," said Michele Meyers, interim principal of Fairview Early Childhood Center. "We have an outstanding speaker who

Please see INCLUSION, A5

Inch, Webb alone on June 10

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER
sbuck@oe.homecomm.net

R. Jack Inch and Cathy Webb, veteran Farmington Public Schools board members, will run for re-election uncontested on the Monday, June 10 ballot.

Inch, 70, and Webb, 50, currently hold the two, four-year seats which are up for election. Inch has served continuously since 1978; Webb since 1990.

The Farmington Board of Education meets regularly on the first and third Tuesdays of each month.

Board members are paid \$30 for a public meeting. This cannot exceed one meeting a night or 62 meetings a year.

The district encompasses the city of Farmington, most of the city of Farmington Hills and a portion of West Bloomfield Township, north of 14 Mile between Inkster and Middlebelt. It serves more than 12,000 students with about a \$130 million budget.

With Harrison spring musical, Anything Goes

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER
sbuck@oe.homecomm.net

What happens when a young Wall Street broker falls in love with a New York socialite?

"Anything Goes" — as those who attend Farmington Harrison High School's production of the Cole Porter musical will learn. The play will be presented at 7:30 p.m. April 19, 19 and 20 in the school auditorium.

The comedy about young Wall Street broker, Billy Crocker, goes awry as the star-crossed lovers travel by ship, said Chuck Mullen, co-drama director with Michelle Harris. Both are teachers.

"The problem is the socialite is engaged and sailing to be married to an English Lord in England," Mullen continued. "Throw in a former evangelist turned night club singer, a couple of gangsters, a nosey would-be mother-in-law Billy's cantankerous boss and you have the makings of a hilarious good time. Be prepared to laugh as we see just how far Billy will



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BASSLER

Hooftin' It: The Harrison High orchestra provides the music for the dancers who are "Doing the Heaven Hop" during rehearsals for the Cole Porter musical "Anything Goes."

go to get his girl." The main roles include Sir Evelyn Oakleigh played by senior Mark Shirey; Hope Harcourt, senior Stephanie Weessies; Billy Crocker, sophomore Alex Springer and Moonface Martin, senior Rob Gutman. Tickets are \$8 for students and \$10 for adults. Call 489-3499 for more information.

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