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The immigrant's story is an American legacy. For hundreds of years, immigrants have ventured to our shores in search of opportunity and freedom. Many have settled within our own communities. If you are an American by adoption, we want to hear your story for a special July 4th feature in our HomeTown Life section. Please contact Renee Skoglund at Observer Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150, (734) 953-2121, fax: (734) 591-7279, e-mail: rskoglund@oe.homecomm.net. We would like to hear from you as soon as possible. Pictures appreciated.

THE WEEK AHEAD

TUESDAY

Cafe society: Blue Circle will kick off this year's Café On the Porch at the historic Longacre House on Tuesday. Coffee, tea and cold beverages are provided in a get-away-from-it-all setting. The evening will include guest entertainers, and as always, the porch's basket of games, which includes cards, checkers, lawn ring toss, croquet, chalk and chalkboard for the little ones. In case of inclement weather, guests may use the sun porch and living room of The Longacre House. The Café will be open from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. The cost is \$5, which includes unlimited beverages. The Longacre House is located on Farmington Road between 10 Mile and 11 Mile Roads just south of Heritage Park in Farmington Hills.

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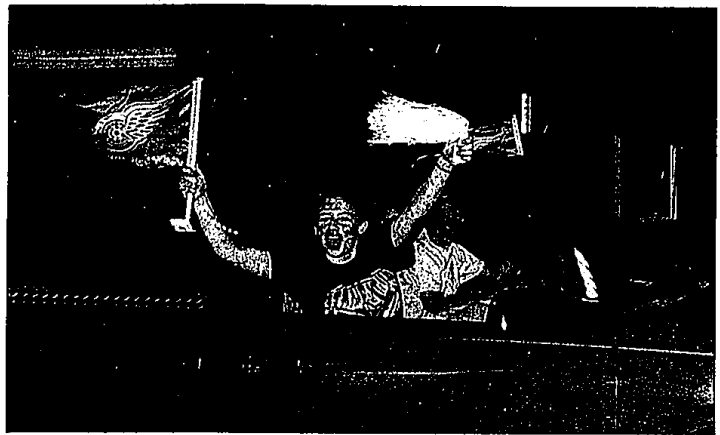
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Wing Nuts



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BEEZLEY

Party time: As parties raged in Detroit and Royal Oak, Downtown Farmington was pretty quiet after the Red Wing's Stanley Cup victory Thursday night. A few fans drove by honking horns, yelling and celebrating.

Locals join in Wings parade

The Parade Company has selected the Farmington Hills-based Mid American Pompon All Star Team to participate in Monday's Red Wing Victory Parade. "Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick told The Parade Company they could pick two entries," said Karen Blazaitis, president of mid american pompon. "The picked us and the briefcase guys from Plymouth." The pompon group performed in the past three Presidential Inaugural Parades. "We did two for Clinton and one for Bush," said Pat Kobylinski, who works in sales. The 225-member team annually performs in the Thanksgiving Parades in Detroit. The girls also performed in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Chicago and in Florida. Becoming a team member is competitive. Girls try out at summer camp. "We pick the elite of the elite," Kobylinski said. Team members live throughout Michigan.



Future Red Wing?: Nine week old Meagan Alice Cahill of Livonia thinks she would be perfect for the Detroit Red Wings because: 1. She has no teeth to lose. 2. She thinks she would fit perfectly in the Stanley Cup. 3. She is practicing fighting with her jersey pulled over her head. 4. She could be the youngest "Miss Hockeytown." 5. She is called MAC (her initials) just like her favorite No. 25, Darren McCarty. Meagan is the granddaughter of Frank and Christine Cahill of Farmington Hills.

- by staff writer Sue Buck

Poms and more

New studio offers a week of free classes

By SUE BUCK
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Karen Blazaitis, president of mid american pompon, wants potential clients to get a first-hand look at what her business has to offer.

So she's giving a free week of classes Monday, June 17, to Saturday, June 22, at her studio, which is at 24425 Indoplex Circle in Farmington Hills. Offered will be hip hop, pom, funk jazz, physio ball, Pilatos, sculpt/body conditioning, back-based yoga and cardio funk. Blazaitis is also offering high school pompon and cheer teams an opportunity to try out the studio and sound system free of charge. Poms usually practices in the cafeterias and hallways of their high schools, and are often the last group to get scheduled for gym time. "Very seldom do they have gym space," Blazaitis said. "They don't have mirrors to look at themselves so they



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BEEZLEY

Step class: Instructors Linda Karbo and Tracy Timmerman lead the class through a routine.

can perfect their routine. That's a big part of poms, that everyone looks the same. We have videotape capability here so they can videotape and play it back on the television." Teams that attend mid american's camps will get a cheaper rate for use of the studio and sound system. The studio has a sprung Robbins maple floor. "When you jump on it, it has a little bit of a spring to it," Blazaitis said. "It's



Karen Blazaitis

Please see POMS, A6

Hills protests aid cuts

Farmington Hills Mayor Nancy Bates says she'll travel to Lansing this week to protest a proposed cut in state aid that officials believe will be devastating to local budgets, at a time when cities are on the front lines of America's war on terrorism.

BY JONI HUBBED
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Farmington Hills Mayor Nancy Bates will take her argument against devastating cuts in state revenue sharing to Lansing Tuesday, and she's bringing along a little muscle.

Bates said Friday she plans to have Police Chief Bill Dwyer and Fire Chief Rich Marinucci along when she talks to lawmakers about a proposed 2 percent cut that would take \$180,000 from the city's general fund budget. There are additional proposals to help balance the state budget, but Bates doesn't plan to advocate for any one alternative.

"I'm not recommending anything except that they don't take our revenue sharing again," she said.

The Hills' budget took a \$237,000 hit when revenue sharing was cut last fall, bringing the total to nearly \$400,000 over two years, according to city staffer

Please see CUTS, A6

Garrison, Bibik win in school election

BY JONI HUBBED
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Incumbent Gary Garrison and challenger Kimberly Bibik took their oaths of office Thursday, having won Tuesday's Clarenceville School Board election.

The district serves students in Farmington Hills, Livonia and Redford.

Turnout was very light, but better than normal, according to District Business Services Director Dave Berggren. A total of 185 votes were cast, in a district with more than 5,000 registered voters.

Garrison said in the past two elections, he remembers fewer than 50 votes were cast. He came out on top this time around, with 101 votes.

Garrison was pleased that voters returned him to a third, four-year term. "It's nice to see people think I'm doing a good job," he said.

The Clarenceville graduate is employed by the City of Livonia. He and his wife, Lori, have two sons, Steve, a student at Clarenceville High and Mark, a Clarenceville grad who comes back to work in the auditorium.

Bibik, who received 69 votes, said she is purposefully taking time with her learning curve. She pored over the board packet and listened intently as officials discuss budget and other issues Thursday evening.

She'll officially take her seat at the board's July 18 reorganizational meeting.

"I'm looking at taking this at a slow pace, so I don't overwhelm myself and so I have a greater understanding," she said. "This is a wider spectrum of looking at everything."

Bibik and her husband, David, have four children in Clarenceville Schools. A freelance photographer, she considers her primary job being mom to Thad, 12, Jacob, 10, Reba, 8 and Aaron, 6. She is a 1979 Clarenceville graduate. Challenger Evonne Meili, who received 66 votes, co-owns a print shop with her husband, Ross. The couple has two children, Brian, 20 months and Sarah, 3, as well as Ross' children Caitlin, 12 and Nick, 15. She has lived in the district for six years.

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