

FARMINGTON Observer



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Our Towns

Hail to the victors

The first ever Gov. Warner Mansion Croquet Match between the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills took place Saturday afternoon. Dressed in by-gone era garb, former Farmington Hills Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi shared the play-by-play microphone with State Rep. Andrew Raczkowski and 47th District Court Administrator David Walsh, was, what else... the referee.

According to Vagnozzi, Farmington Hills beat Farmington 41-37. The players were made up of Farmington Hills Mayor Pro-Tem Christopher McRae, City Manager Steve Brock and councilman Barry Bricker. Farmington council members Mary Bush, Mike Harrison and Mayor Jim Mitchell.



DAVE FRECHETTE'S CORRESPONDENT

Colonial gets cup

Founders Cup Winner for best float in Saturday's parade was Colonial Car Wash in Farmington. Pictured above are owners Mark and Holly Owen.

Employees along with the adjoining oil change spent three days putting the float together, said Holly, parade co-chairwoman. She credited Kevin Allen, assistant manager and employee Robin Baefler with their big help. "It felt like the Stanley Cup for us," she said.

The float was chosen as most original and fun complete with a "car wash" theme made up of plastic wrap, balloons, and construction barrels. It even squirted water.

Other floats were from the Farmington Players, Metrobank, Harvest Ministries, the Governor Warner Mansion, Farmington First United Methodist Church, Green Hill Explorers Club, and the Farmington Hills Church of Christ.

City officials deny racial profiling charge

BY PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER

Racial profiling by the Farmington Hills Police Department is going on, says one resident.

Mark Gordanier, who has offered a \$10,000 reward to anyone who can provide proof of wrong-doing by city officials or staff including law enforcement, said as a member of the

Farmington Area Republican Club he interviewed along with nine others in the group candidates running for 47th District Court Judge.

One of group members' questions was whether racial profiling was done by the police, said Gordanier. He said two of the candidates said yes. Gordanier refused to name which of the five candidates interviewed made the statement.

"Anyone who denies it is lying," Gordanier told the council during its public questions and comments portion at a late June meeting. "I think it's something that needs to be addressed - that there is a problem here in Farmington Hills."

Gordanier on Friday said he would contact the two candidates to contact the Observer if they wanted to make their identity public.

As of Wednesday, no candidate responded to his request.

At the Farmington Hills City Council meeting on July 15, city manager Steve Brock highlighted a report written by Police Chief William Dwyer concerning that accusation and several others made by Gordanier.

Brock said he believes the department is one of the best in the city and

PLEASE SEE CHARGE, A4

Perfect weather, smiles greet parade watchers

BY PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER

The family tradition of attending Farmington's Botsford Parade lives on for generations.

That was evident by the many families who said they attend faithfully every year and even enjoy seeing their friends in the parade lineup.

Harrison High alumna Susan Mueller of Novi was there with her kids, Michelle, 8, and Christie, 10 and their cousins Thomas, 11, and Matthew, 13. Mehall and her grandmother Pat Mehall of Farmington Hills, who said she enjoys the parade every year.

Matthew said he likes the fire trucks and bands that play. Thomas said he enjoys the motorcycle brigades and clowns. Both Pat and her daughter commented on the great weather Saturday morning, with clear skies and pleasant temperatures.

"It was a great parade," Pat said. Susan said she remembers when she used to march in the parade for Harrison High School.

Farmington Hills resident LoriAnn Spudeman got the wrong end of a water gun by a few passing clowns in the parade.

PLEASE SEE PARADE, A3



The Barbara Hatch School of Dance float made an appearance at this year's Founders Festival Botsford Parade, filled with her students of all ages.

KATY BAIKOFF | OBSERVER

Song is over for Harmony House

Farmington, Hills locations to close by year's end

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM
STAFF WRITER

The Harmony House stores in Farmington and Hills will be closed by this fall, as the company prepares to cease operations by the year's end because of flagging profits and increased competition from larger, more generalized retailers.

The Farmington store, located in the Downtown Farmington Center at 3371

Grand River and the Hills store, located at 30830 Orchard Lake between 13 and 14 Mile, will be among 21 of the chain's stores to close, according to published reports.

The first Harmony House store opened in Hazel Park in 1947.

The company expanded to 38 stores at its peak, but 18 stores, including one in Livonia and one in Westland, were closed in recent years.

All remaining stores are expected to close by the year's end.

Increased competition from electronics superstores and discount retailers, flagging profits and music downloading from the

Internet have been blamed for the chain's demise.

Calls to Harmony House's corporate offices were not returned.

The downtown Farmington store has been open for 24 years, and the Hills store for 15 years.

A manager at the Hills store, who asked not to be named, said that the store would probably be closed fairly soon, as will about half of the remaining Harmony House stores.

Customers shopping at the downtown store during the recent Founders Festival

PLEASE SEE SONG, A4

Oldest Hills fire station gets a new look

BY PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills Fire Station No. 3 is the city's oldest fire station, but it's about to get a makeover and expansion.

The city council recently approved a contract to buy the business next to the station, Duffy's Plumbing at 29280 Grand River, for \$400,000.

City Manager Steve Brock said the city is in negotiations to buy the business across the street as well, but if that deal doesn't materialize, the city will still be able to close off Wheeler and expand the fire station across the street behind the business.

The city has already acquired the property immediately across the street from the fire station.

The last of the city's five fire stations is in need of

PLEASE SEE STATION, A3

Hills approves new communications tower

BY CHRISTINE BRODA
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills will be among the first communities in Oakland County to install a new communications tower that will greatly improve communication among safety officials.

At the Hills City Council meeting Monday, members unanimously approved the location of a Public Safety Radio Tower on the City Hall campus, located at 11 Mile and Orchard

Lake.

Hills Deputy Fire Chief Pete Baldwin announced that, after consideration of alternative locations at Oakland Community College and Heritage Park, the best place to erect the 199-foot tower was just west of Fire Station No. Five.

The tower, which will be used to coordinate communication between all police and fire departments in Oakland County, is one of 36 such structures proposed for the county.

Following Monday's discussion of the tower concept, city attorney John Donohue will amend the current proposal to insure that the county will pay for the cost of the tower. He will also add language that will allow the city to re-open the contract if other communities don't agree or follow through with the proposed placement of their towers.

According to City Clerk Kathryn Dorman, the amended contract will come before the

council at a future meeting.

Patricia Coates, the Court and Law Enforcement Management Information System (CLEMIS) administrator for Oakland County, said the Farmington Hills tower is scheduled to be one of the first towers built in the county. Although construction may begin as early as November, no plans will move forward until contracts for all 36 towers are secure.

The Farmington Hills tower

PLEASE SEE TOWER, A3

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LOOKING AHEAD
Retired Farmington Hills Marine Kenneth Krell is finally honored. Read about it in Sunday's Farmington Observer.



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Pled for by David N. Galloway for State Senate, 5423 Grand Park, Clarkston, MI

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