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Our Towns

LaCasse new job

Paul E. LaCasse, D.O., M.P.H., vice president and chief medical officer of Betsford General Hospital, was installed as chairman of the Board of Directors of the Michigan Health and Hospital Association during the association's annual meeting at Mackinac Island. Dr. LaCasse is the first osteopathic physician elected to the position and only the second chairman who is not a hospital CEO.

Dr. LaCasse is a strong advocate of a "patient's and communities first" philosophy for Michigan hospitals. "The reason for being of Michigan's charitable, non-profit hospitals is only to serve our patients and communities," LaCasse said. "Putting patients and communities first has been, is, and should be, our measure of success."

In his inaugural remarks to the association, Dr. LaCasse addressed some of the challenges facing Michigan hospitals. These include patient safety, quality care, emergency preparedness, health status and funding.

"How we respond to these issues and the hundreds of other issues we deal with daily becomes clear when viewed through the best interests of our patients and communities."

Dr. LaCasse is a graduate of the University of Michigan and the Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine. He also earned a masters degree in public health, health services management and policy from the University of Michigan School of Public Health.

Still open

Tom Petros, owner of the Cigar Emporium in the Downtown Farmington Business Center, was a little surprised this week to find customers and other folks around town thought he was going out of business.



Even the teller at his bank questioned why he needed to be there on Tuesday morning, because she'd heard he was out of business. Petros later learned an article published in a local newspaper inadvertently gave people the impression he had gone out of business, when in fact, he had only consolidated his store from two to one units in the center. A new pizzeria will be going in next door.

City manager resigns, citing health concerns

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER

Farmington City Manager Frank Lauhoff, who quietly led the city for almost a decade with unwavering pride in Farmington's progress, resigned Tuesday.

His resignation is effective Jan. 3, 2003.

Reading a short, prepared statement before Farmington City Council, Lauhoff paused several times.

"The community has been our

home and my family and I have a great deal of pride and satisfaction having been part of this great city," said Lauhoff, 60. "But, the time has come to move on. I want to thank the city council for your professionalism, your patience and your friendship, all of which have made it a pleasure, working together to serve the Farmington community."

At Wednesday's Farmington Downtown Development Authority meeting, Lauhoff further explained his decision.

"Everybody knows I've been dealing with a couple back surgeries in the last five years," he said. Lauhoff hopes with exercise and a reduction in stress, he may avoid a third surgery.

He talked to the council last weekend and they were gracious, he said.

"It's been a real pleasure working with you folks," he told the DDA board. "You always like to go at a time when you think everything is done. I figured out there really is never a really good time to

do anything. There will always be one more project."

Council members lauded Lauhoff's dedication. "Frank has always been very proactive," said Farmington Mayor Jim Mitchell. "He didn't wait until it happened. He dealt with it before it happened. The community is going to know how much they miss Frank."

Though sad, Councilwoman JoAnne McShane said this was a bittersweet time for Lauhoff



PLEASE SEE LAUHOFF, A5

Lauhoff



Karen McRae and her children Lindsay, Courtney and Ryan talk with their hero, Joe Lapinski. Other than feeling a little itchy, everyone has recovered from the ordeal.

Neighbor steps in when bees sting

BY PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER

Thanks to the help of a brave citizen, three Farmington Hills children will recover after being swarmed and stung repeatedly, apparently by yellow jackets Monday afternoon.

The children stumbled upon the 8-inch active hive accidentally on Westmeath near Beechview Elementary School by Middlebelt and 11 Mile Roads.

Farmington Hills resident Joe Lapinski was driving by and noticed Karen McRae and her three young children swarmed by the stinging insects and the kids screaming in pain.

He raced out of his truck and managed to remove the youngest girl who was frozen in fear.

Lapinski himself suffered more than a

PLEASE SEE BEES, A8

Farmer's Market moves for one day

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER

The Farmington Farmer's Market will be moved for one day only this Saturday into the Farmington Downtown Center near Dress Barn at Grand River and Grove. The hours will be 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Farmers originally thought the market could be moved to another part of the Village Commons parking lot on Grand River during paving this weekend but were later told the market would be canceled.

Manchester farmer, vendor and producer Mike Fuziller came to Farmington City Council Tuesday asking that the market not be canceled even for one day. Farmers are burgeoning with produce at this time, he said, and not holding the market is detrimental.

PLEASE SEE MARKET, A8

Posthumus visits cities, 'working families'

BY PAUL R. PACE
AND SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITERS

Republican gubernatorial candidate Dick Posthumus was in the Farmington area Tuesday, talking with law enforcement officers and firefighters, as well as visiting other establishments.

"I'm here to take some time with law enforcement folks and getting input from them across the state," he said at the Farmington Hills Police Department, where he met with officers and Police Chief William Dwyer.

The homeland security issue taking

shape across the U.S. involves local emergency services personnel, the lieutenant governor said. Knowing their concerns and issues is important as governor, he said.

He faces Attorney General Jennifer Granholm, a Democrat, in November.

Posthumus said as past senate majority leader, he has been instrumental in introducing criminal justice laws that have made the state safer.

He said that's evident in the drop in crimes for the past several years.

Posthumus said even though he's Republican, his roots are blue collar. He

said that's why he visited such places as the Ford Wixom plant earlier Tuesday.

"I'm for working families," he said. "I understand these values. I'm a different kind of Republican."

He was asked whether he supported the recent move by local police chiefs, including Farmington Hills Chief William Dwyer, to start a death penalty initiative for a ballot proposal in 2004.

Posthumus said he supports life terms and tough restrictions for these convicted of murder, "but I'm not ready to place capital punishment on the agenda, there

PLEASE SEE POSTHUMUS, A8

We want to know: What do you think?

The Observer wants to know what you think.

The Observer is conducting a local reader survey online and would appreciate your opinion on the content of the newspaper.

The survey also asks questions about your spending habits, where you like to shop and what type of items you most frequently purchase.

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To access the survey online, go to

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The survey site is secure and takes about 10 minutes. Log on and tell us what you think.

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LOOKING AHEAD
Kicker M
Slacy Potrykus played soccer overseas this summer. Watch for her story Sunday.

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