

**Tumbling**  
Gymnastics can help children develop physical and mental skills. C6

# FARMINGTON Observer

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## City manager interviews set for Dec. 7

BY SUE BUCK  
STAFF WRITER

When the Farmington City Council first talked about the qualities and management style they'd like in a new city manager, Councilman Arnold Campbell wondered aloud if they could just clone retiring Farmington City Manager Frank Laubhoff.

Others expressed their thoughts, which matched up well with a description of a manager who made his mark with a low-key style and an ability to get the job done in a way that made it appear the city had

few problems.

After sorting through several resumes Nov. 20, in both open and closed sessions because candidates had requested confidentiality, the council is ready to begin interviews at 8:30 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 7, at city hall. The city received 53 applications for the position, which will have a salary in the upper \$80,000 range. Laubhoff is paid \$91,600.

Frank Gerstenecker, a consultant with the Michigan Municipal League who is handling the search, found that the mean average salary of city managers who work

in similar cities with like populations, including Farmington, is \$89,500.

He suggested a Saturday for interviews to permit sufficient time to interview all semi-finalists on the same day.

"This more reasonably permits application of the same judgmental measures to all candidates."

Each interview will last an hour and a half. The meeting where interviews are conducted will be open to the public.

Gerstenecker, a former Troy city manager, recently led a successful search that led to Brent Morgan's appointment as

Farmington Downtown Development Authority executive director.

In October, Gerstenecker met with council and also individually with city department heads to discuss what traits and qualifications were important to each.

"I had a good afternoon," Gerstenecker said. "These are good people."

Laubhoff will retire Jan. 3, 2003. He was appointed city manager in January 1993.

The council will appoint a new city manager by mid-December; the successful applicant will start work by mid-January. [stuck@homecomm.net](mailto:stuck@homecomm.net) (248) 477-5450

Comment sought

The Farmington Area Founders Festival board of directors will hold its annual meeting on Wednesday, Dec. 4, to officially wrap up 2002 festival business and set strategic direction for the 2003 event, scheduled for July 17-19.

As plans are being made, public input is welcomed. Comments and ideas may be submitted in writing to the board using any of the following methods: e-mail to [info@foundersfestival.com](mailto:info@foundersfestival.com); fax to (248) 932-2540; or mail to FAFF Inc., P.O. Box 291, Farmington, MI 48332-0291. Please be sure to include your full name and contact information (address, phone, e-mail).

The Farmington Area Founders Festival is a not-for-profit 501(c)(4) organization that has been an annual tradition since 1955 thanks to the generosity of residents, businesses and friends. For more information, visit [www.foundersfestival.com](http://www.foundersfestival.com).

Christmas Cards

The Governor Warner Mansion is now selling Christmas cards with proceeds to benefit the mansion.



Cards are available for purchase 1-5 p.m. Wednesdays at the Mansion or can be ordered by calling Karen Kopicki at (248) 478-1015. The cost is \$10 for 10 cards.

The Governor Warner Mansion is located at 33805 Grand River in downtown Farmington.

Boys are back

Charity efforts are a way of life for the Boys of Boltsford, who are still giving away copies of their 2003 calendar with a \$10 donation to the Michael J. Fox Parkinson's Foundation.

The boys will host another one of their Saturday Night Dinners Dec. 7 for the residents of Boltsford, their fourth and last dinner for 2002. The residents will be treated to a shrimp cocktail along with sugar cured ham, all rotten potatoes and all sorts of fixins.

Each dinner the Boys of Boltsford have put on has raised money for their charity efforts. The prices of the dinners range from \$8 to \$10, a real bargain at today's prices and there is no tipping required even though the boys dress up in their Boys of Boltsford aprons and do all the serving and cooking for their guests.

## Mom-friendly

Republic honored among best 100 companies for working moms

BY PAUL R. PACE  
STAFF WRITER

Being a working mom is considered one of life's most difficult tasks.

And finding a company to work for that understands the struggles of raising a child is a true find, most moms would agree.

The editors of Working Mother magazine know this. That's why each year editors review and list the 100 best companies for working moms.

Republic Bancorp. and its better known subsidiary, Republic Bank, with a branch office in Farmington Hills along Northwestern Highway and 13 Mile, has been included in that special list for the second year in a row.

Making working moms' lives easier is the reason the bank has a higher employee retention rate than the industry average, said Denise Klepper, senior vice president of regional human resources for Republic Bank.

PLEASE SEE MOMS, A7



Yoshiko Glingerich and Claire Anderson (back) helped bring together a plan that allowed Christopher Clew (right) to give his brother, Matt, a thousand paper cranes.

## Cranes fulfill wish for luck

BY PAUL R. PACE  
STAFF WRITER

All Christopher Clew wanted to do was bring his older brother some good luck after he underwent brain surgery this past summer.

Christopher's brother, Matthew, 12, lost his sight after having a brain tumor removed just days after his eye doctor alerted the family that something may be wrong with his optic nerves, said his mother, Linda Clew.

Christopher's school, Beechview Elementary, and the Japanese community from the Farmington school district heard about Christopher's desire to create a paper crane for his big brother.

The idea was sparked after the second grader read "The Paper Crane" and told paraprofessional Claire Anderson he wished he had a paper crane to give his brother.

The paper cranes are known in Japanese culture to bring good luck, Chris said.

Word got to Yoshiko Gringerich, the school's Japanese translator, and she, in turn, let Japanese families in the school

PLEASE SEE CRANES, A5

## Corridor study nears completion

BY STACY JENKINS  
STAFF WRITER

Three years in the making, a planning guide for one of Oakland County's busiest thoroughfares is near completion.

A draft of the extensive Orchard Lake Road Corridor Study is being finalized and will soon be presented to officials in the six participating communities - West Bloomfield, Orchard Lake, Sylvan Lake, Keego Harbor, Farmington Hills and Bloomfield Township.

Coordinating enhancements, design standards for redevelopment and creating a common identity while maintaining the character of each community throughout the diverse corridor are among the goals of the study group.

"I'm feeling really good about it," said Marcella Montante, chairwoman of the group. "We've come up with what we think is a coordinated effort that can be implemented along the Orchard Lake corridor."

The 95-page report and large poster-size pamphlet containing maps and images of prospective design elements will be distributed to the six communities in the coming weeks.

### A USEFUL TOOL

The study will be a tool for future development, redevelopment and enhancement of the nine-mile stretch of roadway between I-696 and Telegraph that houses everything from small shops and diners to large strip malls, schools, places of worship, homes, wetlands and woodlands.

The project and the concept have potential for each community.

For West Bloomfield, the study will be especially handy in amending the township's overall master plan, a project that is currently under way. Planning Director Tom Bird said each community will be able to use the plan in its own way.

"Once this plan is completed, individual communities would utilize elements of it and use it in their own planning and development process," Bird said.

It could also prove useful in the extensive Northwestern Highway project at Orchard Lake Road and 14 Mile, Bird added.

For Bloomfield Township, the plan will enhance the Ward's Orchards

PLEASE SEE CORRIDOR, A9

## Trader Joe's opens Hills store

BY PAUL R. PACE  
STAFF WRITER

Trader Joe's has finally come to Michigan and to Farmington Hills.

The specialty foods grocery chain is for people who like to have fun shopping and enjoy foods free of preservatives and artificial colors.

"It's for people who enjoy an adventure in their foods," said store manager Rich Mills, who came to Farmington Hills after managing a store in New York.

Trader Joe's, 31221 W. 14 Mile, just west of Northwestern Highway, opened Friday. Another store opened in Royal Oak the same day.

Sure, the store has arias and marinara sauce amid its smartly displayed aisles, but it also offers those things with not-so-common ingredients. For instance,

PLEASE SEE JOE'S, A8

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**LOOKING AHEAD**  
Going for the green  
Coming in this week's At Home section: Harvesting your own Christmas tree is quicker and easier than you might think.

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