

FARMINGTON Observer

Art fair
The Birmingham Fine Art Festival kicks off the summer season. Arts, B1



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OUT TOWNS

Hoop City

The 2003 Farmington Area Founders Festival has been selected by Palace Sports and Entertainment and the Detroit Pistons organization

FOUNDERS FESTIVAL



to host Hoop City, a new state-of-the-art mobile display unit, at the festival this July 19-20. The exhibit, sponsored by Delphi, showcases past and present Detroit Pistons memorabilia and life-like George Blaha animatronic figure calling the plays for the game running on a nearby video monitor. The exterior of the exhibit has several interactive demonstration stations including trivia, history and video games. Other highlights of Hoop City include six portable free-throw stations, where Ben Wallace wannabes get a shot to win Pistons merchandise and special appearances by Pistons notables such as Bill Laimbeer, Detroit Shock players, Hooper, the Pistons' mascot and the Automation Dance Team.

Helmet safety

The Farmington Hills Police Department is now offering free bicycle helmets to parents who are otherwise unable to provide helmets for their children. The helmets will be distributed at the police department command desk, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. A parent or legal guardian must accompany any child seeking a helmet and show proof of Farmington Hills residency. According to Blue Cross Blue Shield/Blue Care Network and Safe Michigan Partnership, bike accidents are the leading cause of traumatic head injuries among children. Helmets can reduce the risk of head injury by approximately 85 percent.

Food drive

The National Association of Letter Carriers' 11th Annual "Stamp Out Hunger" food drive will be conducted on Saturday, May 10. Residents may leave non-perishable food items in a bag near their mailboxes on Saturday. Letter carriers will pick up the donations, which will be taken to the local post office and then distributed to food banks. The NALC National Food Drive is the largest one-day food drive in the nation. Carriers collected 701 million pounds of food in last May's drive, bringing to 462.4 million pounds the total delivered to community food banks during the effort's first 10 years.



Ben Roach, Nick Hamlin, Kristin Lawrence and Nate Sarmento stain a section of fence.



Drew DeBorio replaces wood trim.

Volunteers bring a little Christmas to Farmington Hills neighborhoods

BY PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER

More than 120 people rolled up their sleeves Saturday to help their neighbors through the annual Christmas in April program. Jay Eldridge, a member of Orchard United Methodist Church in Farmington Hills and a board member of the Oakland County Christmas in April Committee, said six homes in Farmington Hills were fixed up by the volunteers. About 100 of those who pitched in were members of Orchard United. Rick Lampi, community development coordinator for the city of Farmington Hills, also helped coordinate the event. Volunteers devote one day of the year to help homeowners who are disabled and/or senior citizens, to keep up their homes. "The weather was perfect for outdoor projects," said Eldridge. "It was very much a success," he said of the day, which had been postponed to the first Saturday in May because of the Easter holiday. "We finished everything we wanted to fix. I'd say we had six very happy homeowners." One of the beneficiaries was Victoria Goad. "I never seen so many people

work so hard and so fast," she said. "My garage looks brand new and they put up fencing where it was damaged. Financially, I wasn't able to repair it. "It was a godsend," Goad said. "It chokes me up that there were so many different people doing different things."

Boy Scout Troop 230 provided food for the many volunteers. Among the local businesses helping with the event were Home Depot, Lowe's, Siding World, Carpet World, Aco Hardware, Steinkopf Nursery and Art's Rental Service.

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Attorney appointed to 47th court post

BY PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER

Now that former 47th District Court magistrate Jim Brady has taken office as the new judge, a new magistrate has been chosen by Chief Judge Maria Parker. Attorney Sheri Benkoff-Benchetrit was selected among several applicants late last month, said court administrator David Walsh.

Benkoff-Benchetrit is currently being trained for the part-time job and will soon join the court's other two magistrates, Dennis Pheny and Carl Christoph. Benkoff-Benchetrit, 36, is a sole practicing attorney who has been in the legal business a little over 10 years. "I have experienced many different aspects of law," she said. The attorney decided to apply for the position as a way to impact people's lives and expand her professional horizons. "It's nice to interact and look at both sides," she said. She and her husband, Michael, have three small children. The family resides in Farmington Hills. ppace@oe.hometowntoife.com | (248) 477-5450

ELECTION 2003

Farmington school board candidates

Bolsen brings experience, contacts

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER

Karen Bolsen, co-chair of the Multicultural/Multiracial Community Council for eight years, believes her business and community experience will benefit the Farmington school district. She's running June 9 to fill the seat left vacant by FPS board member Linda Enberg, who chose not to seek re-election.



Bolsen

open enrollment. "You can't say that until you're

While she has watched the board closely for quite some time, Bolsen couldn't say whether she would have made different decisions, even on controversial issues like work on.

Bolsen, 46, does diversity and management consulting for her company, Karen Bolsen Consulting, formed five years ago.

PLEASE SEE BOLSEN, A7

Goshorn advises selling ideas, concepts

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER

John Goshorn has spent a lot of time in sales and he believes the Farmington public school board needs to better sell its ideas and concepts. That's why he's running June 9 for the board position vacated by President Linda Enberg. "A lot of the things schools do



Goshorn

need to be marketed and explained," said Goshorn, 54, a commercial business manager for Ford. "This is his second bid for school board. He last ran in 2001. When asked what he would have done differently as a school board

member, he said before the board approved an open enrollment pilot program for out-of-district schools of choice, the district should have done a survey and come up with some alternatives. "They should have obtained some statistical input," Goshorn said. "Maybe that would have been a better idea. Part of the idea is to build

PLEASE SEE GOSHORN, A5

Swaim wants more open board debate

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER

Farmington school board candidate Cheryl Swaim wants to see more discussion at board meetings.



Swaim

She's among three candidates for the board seat vacated by Linda Enberg, who currently serves as board president. Elections will be held June 9. Swaim would like to hear the thought processes that went into board members' decisions and believes televising pre-meetings would help in that regard. Often, she said, officials have already received answers from staff and are ready to vote on an issue. "I would like to see more open debate during the meeting," said Swaim, 45, a Farmington Hills resident. "The taxpayers would feel more comfortable."

She wouldn't have any trouble being a part of that debate, either. Swaim would work to build consensus by first detailing what everyone agrees upon and then moving on to discuss areas of disagreement. She'd be willing to be the swing vote if it was in the best interest of the school district and wouldn't be afraid to cast a "no" vote if she felt she hadn't been given enough information. Swaim co-owns Falcon Stamping, Inc. in Howell with her brother, Mark. The company specializes in small metal stampings.

PLEASE SEE SWAIM, A4

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