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SPORTS, B2

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LINK**

Website makeover

Have you seen the Observer & Eccentric's new website yet? The new Hometownlife.com is easy to navigate so readers will see more headlines, photos and videos right on our homepage. Our Top News category features the biggest stories of the day and right below that is a Community News section that displays content according to your reading habits. If you live in Farmington, select it from the list of communities and stories about Farmington will appear in the Community News section every day.

That means there is no longer a need to navigate through various communities to find coverage of the people and places that matter most to you – content from the Farmington Observer will display right on the homepage of Hometownlife.com.

We've also improved our photo galleries, social media components and the functionality of our reader comments. We welcome your feedback about the new site – e-mail Web editor Larry Ruehlen, at lruehlen@hometownlife.com or talk to us on our Facebook page at Hometownlife.com/facebook.

Social networking

Parents will not want to miss this informative presentation and discussion on Monday, Feb. 21, in the East Middle School cafeteria. "Social Networking," co-hosted by Power and East PTSAs, will explore the Who, What, Why of social media communications such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Parents will learn about a variety of types of social media, their benefits and concerns about their use. Tips will be provided to help address appropriate use with children.

The forum will be facilitated by Oakland Schools consultants Judy Hauser and Lynn Lieberman. The forum begins at 7 p.m. East Middle School is located at 25000 Middlebelt in Farmington Hills. Light refreshments will be provided. The forum is sponsored by the Farmington Area PTA Council and Farmington Public Schools.

Chili cookoff

It's time to dust off that killer chili recipe and enter it into the 16th annual Page's All Star Chili Cookoff, set for 1-4 p.m., Sunday, March 6 at Page's Food and Spirits in downtown Farmington. It's only \$10 to become a chili contestant. Pick up an application and a set of rules at Page's, located on Farmington Road, just south of Grand River. It's a fun, family event, featuring a celebrity panel of judges, a 50/50 raffle and lots of raffle prizes. Proceeds from this year's cookoff will benefit the Longacre House. For more information, contact Ginny Morris at (248) 471-9042.



Paul and Nancy Berrigan, of Farmington Hills, dig their shovels into the ground in Chelekira, a remote area in Uganda, where a new science and library building will be added to the campus of their John Paul School. Monsignor John Kauta stands nearby. He sparked their interest in building the school during a talk at St. Fabian Catholic Church in Farmington Hills in 2005. Kauta works in Uganda's capital city of Kampala.

**'We are connected
to these people'**

**Hills couple builds school –
and friendships – in Africa**

BY STACY JENKINS
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

Paul and Nancy Berrigan didn't know that a Sunday morning Mass in July 2005 would change their lives.

A missionary spoke that morning – not an unusual occurrence at St. Fabian Catholic Church in Farmington Hills. But, this time something was different.

The words of Monsignor John Kauta, from Uganda, seemed to be directed at the Farmington Hills couple.

"He touched us," said Nancy Berrigan, telling the story of how Kauta talked about Pagan Babies, a fund-raising effort she was involved in when she was just a little



The people of Chelekira, and beyond, brought gifts to the Berrigans during the dedication of the school building. The gifts included their prized possessions such as their goats, chickens, turkeys and more.

Please see **SCHOOL, A2**

BY SUSAN STEINMUELLER
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

**City to
issue
bonds**

To pay for water,
sewer, roads

The City of Farmington is issuing some \$2.25 million in bonds to pay for capital improvements that include better water flow readings from a water tower, a sewer liner project and a road paving project.

City Manager Vince Pastue said it's unusual to issue capital improvement bonds, because such improvements are usually paid with money in the city budget.

"We don't do many bond issues, but because of the nature of the projects we have and the numbers, it's important, and it's why we are issuing bonds," he said.

Primarily the bond issue is driven by the \$1.3 million needed to pay for a new storm water collection system in Floral Park, Pastue said.

The subdivision is east of Orchard Lake and north of Grand River. Its aging sewer system runs behind houses and city crews must spend time cutting tree roots that block the lines, he said at a recent council meeting.

Deferring it might result in greater expense later, he added.

The council has approved the 2011 bond issue, which includes some \$90,000 in expenses related to it, such as a financial adviser and a bond counsel.

At a special meeting at 7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 7, in City Council chambers, the council will consider accepting PFM Group as the financial advisor for the 2011 capital improvements bond issue at a cost of some \$8,250; and Miller, Canfield,

Please see **BONDS, A7**

Only the truly hearty took 'snow day' to heart

See more weather photos on Page A6.



PHOTOS BY JOHN STORMZAND | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Sledders, from left, Natalie Girbach, 11, her sister, Claire, 5, Julia Szwarc, 11 and Dana Matson, also 11 years old, cruise down the Shiawassee hill in Farmington on Wednesday's "snow day."

While most adults faced Wednesday's snow day with the dread of shoveling or driving on snow-covered roads, kids in the Farmington area were anxious to make it the best day, ever.

They took the *chill* out of winter and replaced it with the *thrill* of winter.

Many convinced their die-hard parents to take them to the area's most popular sledding hill, at the Farmington Public Schools' administration building and bus yard at Shiawassee and Farmington Road.

Braving the frigid temperatures and blowing wind, kids of all ages enjoyed the pure thrill of racing down the hill, then running back up again. We're sure plenty of hot chocolate was on the agenda later that afternoon.



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INDEX

APARTMENTS ... C3
AUTOMOTIVE ... C3
CAREER BUILDER ... C1
COMMUNITY LIFE ... B6
CROSSWORD PUZZLE ... C3
OBITUARIES ... B9
HEALTH ... B10
REAL ESTATE ... C2
SPORTS ... B1

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