

John Nichols tapped as Hills top cop

Farmington Hills residents will get yet another celebrity law enforcement officer when Oakland County Under-Sheriff John Nichols takes over the reins as Hills police chief on Oct. 10.

The former Detroit police commissioner and mayoral candidate will replace George Halverson, who resigned his post after only 14 weeks on the job. Halverson, the former Michigan State Police director, cited personal reasons as his reason for leaving the Hills force.

A Farmington Hills official con-

firmed that Nichols, 58, was to replace Halverson after news of Nichols' resignation leaked at the Oakland County Sheriff headquarters.

The career law enforcement official will be the third chief the city has had in less than a year. Halverson was hired to replace Ron Holko, who resigned in January.

Nichols, who many persons speculated would win the job after Holko's resignation, is known as a disciplinarian who can handle many of the internal problems which presently

face the Hills department.

The official announcement of Nichols' hiring will be made by City Mgr. George Majors this Friday.

IN PAST years, the Hills department has been riddled with controversy relating to management-employee relations. Holko, who originally was the city's public safety director, had numerous problems with the city's volunteer fire department.

To alleviate the situation a fire chief was hired and Holko was made police chief.

But the internal problems of the police department were yet to be resolved with some of the infighting ranging back to township days.

Halverson was expected to be a strong influence in uniting the department. Majors credited Halverson with upgrading the department's training program and expressed disappointment at his resignation.

But sources close to Halverson maintain one of the reasons he left was because of the internal problems Nichols, who has had a checkered

career in law enforcement, rising from the ranks of the Detroit department and then being fired by then Detroit Mayor Roman Gribbs when Nichols declared as a mayoral candidate, also is known to have excellent relationships with rank and file officers and the public.

At one time during his tenure as Detroit police commissioner, Nichols had a weekly radio program called "Buzz the Fuzz" where residents could call in and ask him questions.



John Nichols

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Alkateeb versus Marks

Land rift heats up council race

By STEVE BARNABY
Farmington editor

Farmington Hills city council candidates Joe Alkateeb and Ben Marks have publicly squared off, leaving it up to voters to decide whether Marks will be in conflict of interest by being elected to the Hills legislative body.

The confrontation came at this week's council session when Marks, a land developer, came before council to ask that a parcel of land owned by him on the northwest corner of Orchard Lake and Eleven Mile be rezoned from single family to office zoning so he can build an office.

Marks already owns an office building on the southeast corner of that same intersection.

Alkateeb claimed that Marks is risking the appearance of "undue influence" because Marks is a co-chairman of the city's housing commission; he is a candidate for city council; and because his campaign manager is Councilmember Joanne Smith.

"SINCE MRS. SMITH is in such close association with Ben Marks, she should voluntarily abstain from voting on this request or the council should agree not to permit her to vote on this matter in accordance with the high ethical standards currently demanded from any public official," said Alkateeb, during the council session which

was attended by more than 100 city residents.

Alkateeb said he was especially concerned because the possibility might occur where Marks could go to court if his rezoning request was turned down and be involved in litigation against the same city in which he was a public official.

The council did turn down Marks' request but it was noncommittal to whether or not he would take court action.

While Alkateeb received applause from some members of the council gallery for his remarks, councilmembers in attendance at the meeting supported Mrs. Smith's right to vote on the issue.

Mayor Joan Dudley led the accolade of support for Mrs. Smith.

"I credit Mrs. Smith with the ability to decide zoning issues on the good and bad points in question," said Mrs. Dudley. "We cannot penalize our enemies by denying them. Likewise we cannot penalize our friends."

Councilmembers Keith Deacon and Jan Dolan also supported Mrs. Smith's right to vote on the issue.

Mrs. Smith defended herself by saying she had requested Vilcan-Leman officials, planning consultants for the city, to come to the meeting so that she could make a decision based on professional input.

Mrs. Smith voted against the rezoning request.

Marks lashed back at the Alkateeb offensive by saying he (Marks) had been open about his ownership of land in Farmington Hills and had even informed the newspapers that he was asking for this zoning change when he

declared himself as a candidate.

"I don't think a person who lives in the community should be penalized for doing something in the community. And to take a shot at Mrs. Smith was unkind," said Marks.

Alkateeb said later that he would pursue the issue on the campaign trail.

Cat burglars hit in dark of night

By LYNN ORR

Cary Grant immortalized the cat burglar in the 1950's movie "To Catch a Thief," but while the whole concept may sound romantic, a cat burglar's prowlings outside the realm of fiction can be scary—and expensive.

Last weekend at least eight Farmington area homes were invaded by a cat burglar, who gets that special tag via his or her modus operandi—entering an occupied home in the middle of the night, usually for the purpose of stealing cash.

While most thieves prefer to do their work in vacant homes, the cat burglar is bold enough to enter homes when the occupants are safely tucked in bed. And since stealth is the cat burglar's stock-in-trade, those sleeping victims are unaware of what's going on about them.

Five homes on Schulte St. in the Alta Loma subdivision were the target of a cat burglar last Sunday night, according to City of Farmington police, while Farmington Hills police had reports of three such incidents on Stockton, near Middlebelt and Tuck Rd.

Small amounts of cash, the largest reported as \$120, were taken from some homes, while other victims reported no thefts. Entering sliding doorways, unlocked doors or easily opened doors is usually how the thief gains access, says Lt. John Santamuro of the City of Farmington Public Safety Department.

A REPORT of a prowler was taken at 3:11 a.m., Sept. 19, but police were unable to locate anyone when they arrived at the Schulte St. area. They did find one shoe near State St. and Gill, leading to the assumption that a thief may have removed his shoes to enter his victims' homes quietly.

The reports of the B&E's on Schulte started coming in Monday morning, Santamuro explains.

A purse was found in the backyard of one home, missing the \$35 the owner left in it the night before, while \$10 was missing from a purse in another home. While nothing appears to have been taken from three other homes, a \$60 check was taken from a wallet in one home. One member of the family was asleep in the room when the check was removed, Santamuro reported.

"You just don't find this type of thing too often," he said. And he warns Farmington residents to minimize their chances of such a theft by securing all doors and windows.

Sliding doorways can be protected by putting a long stick at the bottom of the track, so the window can't be opened easily, he added.

That's also the opinion of Capt. Russell Conway of the Farmington Hills police department, who explained that his department had recorded "three similar reports."

"A cat burglar doesn't like to be heard," he says. "If he has to make noise to get in, then he's going to leave and go to the next place."



Look at the birdie

Russ Button waits for the right moment to snap the shutter as he watches the fun at the Farmington High School reunion. Whatever happened to the class of 1925? Button found out and you can, too, by turning to page 3A. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

Priest's lawyer gags press again

A second charge of criminal sexual misconduct against a Farmington Roman Catholic priest has once again embroiled 47th District Judge Michael Hand in a controversy over the media's right to report such cases.

A second suppression order was demanded by the priest's lawyer, James Lawson, but most newspapers and television news departments went ahead and reported that Our Lady of Sorrows Assistant Pastor Father Gary Berthiaume, 35, was charged on a warrant and released on a \$50,000 bond.

Oakland County Prosecutor Brooks Patterson was the first public official

to reveal that the warrant would be issued for an incident which allegedly took place on July 1 of this year.

At the same time Patterson announced the new warrant, he said Sanitae County officials were investigating allegations that the priest was involved in yet a third sexual misconduct incident at a boy's camp.

Patterson also announced that the priest had been cleared as a suspect in the Oakland County child murders after passing a lie detector test administered by the State Police.

Berthiaume's pre-trial exam on the first charge of second degree sexual misconduct is scheduled for Friday.

He was charged with the first count on Sept. 2

Whether that pre-trial exam will be conducted in public will depend on results of a federal court hearing today before U.S. District Judge James Churchill. A temporary restraining order was issued last week prohibiting enforcement of Hand's gag order on details of the first charge against Berthiaume.

IN BOTH charges Hand has acted under the 1974 Michigan Criminal Sexual Conduct Act which allows a defendant or victim to request that proceedings in district court be suppressed. After the district court pro-

ceedings are held, the presiding judge determines there is reason to believe the accused committed the crime, he would be bound over to circuit court, for arraignment.

Only then would the gag order be lifted under stipulations of the statute. Lawson admitted that he had trouble deciding whether to demand the suppression order on the second charge.

"I debated the question since the warrant had been broadcast on the radio even before we got to court. But then I decided to ask for it anyway because I have asked for it in every case of this kind and I might as well be consistent," said Lawson.

Kids get word on fire prevention

Farmington youngsters have a chance to wear the red hat of a Junior Fire Marshall during Fire Prevention Week, October 9-15.

New to Farmington, the program will try to involve parents and children in making the city more aware of fire prevention and coping with house fires, according to Farmington Fire Marshall Norm Maddison.

Students in the kindergarten to third grade in Our Lady of Sorrows, Long-acre and Flanders elementary schools will become acquainted with Sebastian Mole and his little friends during the program. Through cartoons and a Junior Fire Marshall newsletter, students will learn to stop, drop and roll on the ground if their clothing catches on fire.

Children will get a chance to own a replica of a fireman's hat after they complete the program, which includes mapping out an emergency exit at home and filling out a fire safety report.

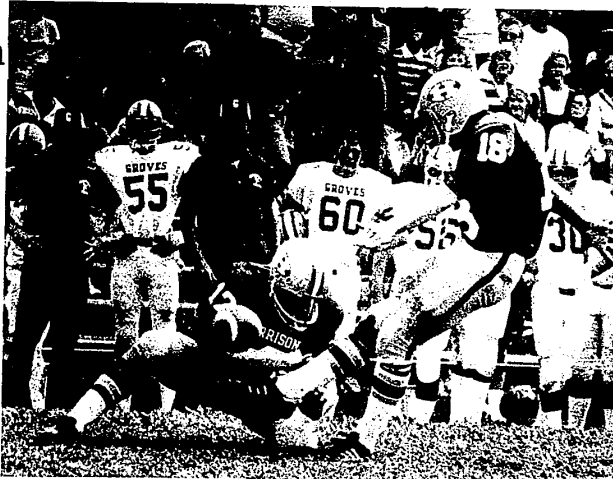
THE PROGRAM TRIES TO MAKE the early elementary student aware of safe practices.

"It's more effective to reach the younger kids than the older ones," said Maddison. "At that age kids can relate more to the teacher, the program and the fire department. They

don't have a negative attitude toward authority yet."

In the 30 years that the nation-wide program has reached Junior Fire Marshalls, about 75 million youngsters in the United States and overseas have listened to its advice, according to Maddison.

The program, which introduces children to their local fire marshalls as well as safety practices, is aimed at reducing the number of youngsters who are seriously injured in home accidents, each year. Last year more than 100,000 children in the United States were seriously injured at home, according to Maddison.



A record kick

Farmington Harrison quarterback Brett Homovec was inaugurated into the record book last Saturday by kicking two record breaking field goals in the game against Birmingham Groves. To read the details, turn to the sports section. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

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