

# Farmington Observer

Volume 43 Number 18

Monday, December 30, 1974

Farmington, Michigan

22 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

## Council ponders police chief's future

By STEVE BARNABY

Farmington Editor

Farmington Hills Police Chief Ronald Holko will be leaving the department within the next month according to a source close to city hall.

Council members are remaining closed-mouthed about speculation over Holko's exit, refusing either to confirm or deny that they have discussed the situation with City Mgr. George Majors.

Holko also refused to discuss whether or not he will be leaving the department.

"You'll have to talk to the city manager about it," said Holko during a phone conversation with the Farmington Observer last week.

"I don't have anything to say yet," he added.

A call was placed to the city manager's office concerning Holko's pending resignation or dismissal. Mayor Keith Deaton returned the call, saying he had talked with Majors and they had decided an official statement would be withheld until a later time.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS MET** with Majors last week after their regularly scheduled council session to discuss the matter, according to sources. Under state law, city council members are allowed to discuss personnel matters in executive session—exclusive of the public.

The matter of Holko leaving the police force has been delayed because of his heavy involvement in arbitration talks with the police union, surmised a source.

But he has given his testimony, and

**'I know a lot of guys around city hall feel that Ron is a good cop. It's just that he was put in an impossible situation with his men and you just can't fire the whole police department.'**

now he no longer is needed," the source speculated.

Presently, the city is in arbitration with the city police union in an attempt to come to an agreement on a contract settlement.

Holko's deteriorating relationship with police department personnel spurred Majors to ask for Holko's resignation, according to a source.

It was a situation concerning Holko's

report with his men. He just didn't have it," said the source.

**HOLKO'S MOST RECENT** fray with city personnel came last summer during the debate over whether the city should have a private ambulance company or the city volunteers provide emergency medical service.

During the debate many volunteers admitted that much of their concern was

aimed towards Holko who, they said, wasn't sympathetic to their problems. Shortly afterwards, Holko's public safety director designation was taken away and Fire Chief John Van De Voort was hired to administer the fire department. Holko was retained as police chief.

In 1974 an even more dramatic situation occurred when Holko's personal secretary was put on trial for embezzlement of funds. Two city employees were temporarily dismissed from the department by Holko, and the city union took the side of the employees. Since that time, employee resentment has continued to escalate.

A minor flap occurred last July when it was revealed that Holko was part owner of a private security agency. But Holko's involvement was deemed legal and done

with Majors' approval. But the incident did leave another scar on Holko's battered standing with city personnel.

Some sources say that the city manager already has another person in mind for the police chief's spot. But the name is being kept under tight wraps because that person presently has a job with another police agency, according to the sources.

Although Holko has had problems with his personnel, sources say that he generally is respected for the modern innovations he has made in technical aspects of police enforcement.

"I know a lot of guys around city hall feel that Ron is a good cop. It's just that he was put in an impossible situation with his men and you just can't fire the whole police department," said a source.

## Superintendent says,

## Financing is biggest challenge

A millage renewal, improvements in the district's curriculum, the problem of declining enrollment and diminishing funds were on Farmington School Supt. Lewis Schulman's mind as he looked back on his year at the helm of the system.

Schulman, whose contract was recently extended to three years by the school board, is hopeful that the district's community education program can be expanded in the coming year.

But the financial situation of the Farmington system was tagged by Schulman as the district's most pressing problem.

"We have four mills up for renewal this coming year," he said. "These are crucial. But I think that they will pass. The board has exhibited its responsibility to the public by giving the district a good school year without an extra millage," he said.

"We have started to develop next year's budget, based on retaining what we like in our educational system and reducing those things which we would like to have," he continued.

But with budgeting comes restraint. "Our approach to the budget must include serious consideration of our priorities. We have to be circumspect in spending our money," he cautioned.

**DECLINING FUNDS ARE LINKED** to smaller enrollment in the Farmington schools, since state aid is based on the number of students within a school district, Schulman explained.

"Declining enrollments and the financial situation in the schools are the two biggest problems in our system," he said.

"The local state school population has declined since 1971. In other states, such as New York, the school system has completely emancipated its programs."

"This hasn't hit us and we can't allow it to," he said.

However, Schulman is hopeful that it won't happen in Farmington. He credits the school board with moving the district ahead.

"I think the board is working in a splendid fashion, in a harmonious manner and with a reduction in friction," he said. He is pleased with the work of the board, such as its move to revise and update the district's policies.

The committee headed by Michael Schepere is doing a splendid job," he said. He hopes that the result will be the same in the district's community education programs.

"We've only scratched the surface with community education programs. I'd like to see some pre-school programs and programs for senior citizens."

**THE TAKE-A-SURVEY** among junior high school students asking them what they would like to see in after-school programs. The youngsters are interested in



LEWIS SCHULMAN

hobby-type programs, but they also want programs that would allow them to use special skills," he said.

He would like to see the district have mandatory programs for bright and gifted students.

Courses in commercial foods and building trades would be desirable but depend on the financial situation of the district, Schulman said.

Farmington's curriculum could, some day include an assessment test for 10th grade students as well as fourth to seventh grade youngsters who are presently examined to check the development of their basic academic skills, the traditional triad of reading, writing and arithmetic.

Declining scores throughout the country have prompted a look into further testing, although Farmington has done well in the national averages, according to Schulman.

"We're looking into exit competency tests," he said.

The district would tests students scheduled to graduate the following year on their ability to solve practical problems, such as balancing a checkbook.

**STUDENTS WOULD** be required to pass the test before they would be allowed to graduate.

"I'm not so sure that a written test can measure citizenship and the ability of high school students to relate to one another. But life competency skills are important enough for us to try," he said.

Currently, students are required to pass a mathematical competency test before graduation.

"I would also like to see consumers' economics skills, such as money management and understanding contracts included as part of the mandatory curriculum in the schools," he said. "Half of our seniors are 18 years old when they graduate from high school."

He believes that the district has a moral commitment to the changes in curriculum now required by federal funding legislation in the area of sexual equality. "We are working toward Title Nine in good faith," he said of the measure which guarantees equal opportunity for boys and girls in school activities.

"Our problem may be how to cut back on the district's expenses while trying to bring girls' sports up to snuff. What do you do?" You have to consider if the cuts are fair," he explained.

"YOU DON'T improve one phase of the program at the expense of the other," he said.

The district will try to avoid cutting the budget of the boys' programs to improve the girls'.

## Santa waits for kids' calls on hotline to North Pole

Until the Wednesday before Christmas, Santa Claus will stay near the phone in the evening, so he'll be able to talk to all his friends in Farmington.

He plans to sit in his favorite easy chair near the phone from 4:30-10 p.m. answering calls which will be channeled to him by the Farmington Area Recreation Commission.

Lucky callers might even be able to catch Mrs. Claus as she bustles about the kitchen preparing a gigantic holiday feast for Santa, the elves and the reindeer, according to Jeff Farland of FARC.

Since the project started last Monday, we've received about 500 phone calls for Santa," said Farland, who is coordinating the direct line to the North Pole.

By dialing 478-7015, kids of all ages can speak to the jolly old elf.

Some children find it hard to believe that they've reached the Man, himself, according to Farland.

"THEY SAY, 'Santa! Are you Santa?'" reports Farland.

After the first shock of recognition, some of the little callers are polite enough to inquire about the health of the elves, the reindeer and Mrs. Claus.

Some of them have even spoken to Mrs. Claus," said Farland. "She told them that she was cooking in the kitchen, preparing for Christmas," Farland said.

Other callers are worried that Santa will find it difficult to enter their house with all these toys because their homes don't have chimneys.

"Santa comes in through the door, then," Farland reassured.

Santa also finds himself dealing with sceptics who wonder why he doesn't remember getting their letters or talking with them.

"There are just so many children, that Santa can't remember all of them," Far-

land explained.

After such opening formalities, the callers usually get down to the business of telling Santa what they would like to see under the tree and in the stockings on Christmas morning.

"Santa can't promise anything," Farland said. "He has to wait and see what the elves come up with."

**AMONG THE** top 10 requests to the North Pole this year are dolls for girls and boys.

Even Knave dolls, Bonnie Man and Bonnie Woman dolls are popular this year," said Farland, who's Santa's right hand man in Farmington.

But young tastes haven't changed drastically. Children are asking for the things their parents asked for, too.

The ever popular baby doll and army gear are among this year's requests to Santa.



The spirit of Christmas

Youngsters in St. Fabian Elementary School shared the spirit of Christmas with senior citizens this week who were invited to the Farmington school for the students' Christmas program. Cathy O'Malley (at left) and Kenneth Sorel took the part of Mary and Joseph in the Christmas play that was but one portion of a program which included choral readings, Christmas songs and even a ballet. (Photo by Jack Margolis)

## Can drive brings cheer for holiday

Students in Farmington High Schools are helping the Goodfellows keep their promise of every child having a Christmas. All three of the area's high schools have collected canned goods, toys or money to give to needy Farmington families through the Goodfellows.

North Farmington High School collected \$200 worth of canned goods, and toys to give two families a Christmas, in the third year of the school's holiday drive.

The students who donated the goods were given a description of the families that would receive the packages.

The drive is sponsored by the National Honor Society.

"We never know the full name of the family, just the ages of the children," said Mary Keene, faculty supervisor of the National Honor Society at the school.

The families will receive three boxes of canned goods, fresh fruits and a turkey with the trimmings.

Each child will receive two school outfits, underwear and a toy. Older children will receive games and the girls will be given dolls.

**THE GIFT GIVING** will include the adults in the families. Women will receive a blouse and a bottle of perfume. Men will be given a pair of gloves and a scarf.

The students earned money for the gifts by selling submarine sandwiches from door to door and by collecting money during football games.

Various school organizations contributed to the fund. The North Farmington Parent Teacher Organization gave \$50 to the campaign.

The school-wide effort began three years ago, according to Mrs. Keene.

"We knew about the Goodfellows and their canned goods drive. But the kids didn't feel involved," she said.

"So the kids began to adopt families and supply the entire holiday for them," she said.

Their counterparts in Farmington High School spent their last month at school busily collecting over 2,000 cans of food to give to the Goodfellows.

To make the campaign more interesting, its sponsors, the Student Council, allowed given dolls.

(Continued on page 4C)



Lynette Seiner, one of the project coordinators of Farmington High School's food drive packs away the cans which were donated to the Goodfellows.



Sue Falcott (left) and Kim Moore, North Farmington High School seniors, sort through canned foods and toys which students donated to insure that a needy Farmington family will have a Christmas. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

## inside

- News
- Crackbarrel Debate
- Sullivan's Life
- Community calendar
- Sports
- Classifieds

- Section A
- Section B
- Section C
- Sections C, D

In the Case of Freddy the Pierce  
Return to the Forever Forest to help Harry and Cleo look for Freddy the Fire in the second installment of the Farmington Observer's Christmas saga on Page 4A.