

# Farmington Observer

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## Soronen named mayor in split council vote

**By STEVE BARNABY**  
 Unity was shortlived for the newly elected Farmington Hills City Council. In the first meeting of the year, councilwoman Joanne Soronen on Monday was elected mayor in a 4-3 vote. Defeated was councilman Joe Alkateeb.

Supporting Mrs. Soronen were Jan Dolan, William Lange, Earl Oppertbauer and her. Voting for Alkateeb was him, Jack Burwell and Donn Wolf. Wolf was elected unanimously as mayor pro-tem.

The vote split the campaign alliance of Burwell, Lange and Wolf, who had run as a team during last year's election.

The mayoral vote was one of the few times Alkateeb and Soronen found themselves on the opposite side of an issue since being elected to council two years ago. They ran as a slate. Alkateeb expressed dismay at the de-

feat. Many, including Alkateeb, had expected him to be easily elected.

Although refusing to name names, Alkateeb accused some councilmembers of working against him on the basis of his ethnic background. He is Lebanese-American.

"There has been a question regarding my ancestral background. I'm not Iranian. I'm American first and Lebanese by ancestry," he told the audience after the vote.

Opponents to his mayoral bid denied they had ever brought up his ethnic background or said he was Iranian.

According to city hall watchers, the weekend was filled with phone calls and impromptu get-togethers among council members to line up support for one candidate or the other.

The swing vote rested with Lange, who ultimately seconded Mrs. Soronen's nomination. But the second didn't come until after some long moments

for Soronen supporters.

Mrs. Soronen was nominated by Mrs. Dolan. Oppertbauer was chairing the meeting. The seconding motion was up to Lange, who hesitated for at least five seconds before making the move.

**OUTGOING MAYOR** Earl Oppertbauer reflected on his past year as mayor — a year he labeled as turbulent.

The city's political scene culminated last November with the defeat of three incumbents who supported the controversial senior citizen/low income housing project on Freedom and Drake Road.

The newly elected councilmen, Burwell, Lange and Wolf, opposed the project.

Several stormy public sessions were conducted last year and a petition drive was launched opposing the project.

Last year's council finally backed off of its support of the project after advisory votes indicated that a majority of residents voting were opposed to the project.

"I think it was a mistake of the people of Farmington Hills not to support the program. At the same time it is a mistake of the federal government to impose on us," said Oppertbauer.

In order to garner funding for the project, the city was required to provide low income housing as well as senior citizen housing.

The housing defeat, said Oppertbauer, was the "biggest disappointment I've seen in 18 years in public office."

"One of the hardest things I had to do was to vote to kill the project."

The veteran councilman expressed hope that further attempts would be made to build senior citizen housing in Farmington Hills.



JOANNE SORONEN



DONN WOLF



The Holiday Inn of Farmington Hills will greet Republican delegates with its new Holiday Home Fun Center. The recreation area includes a swimming pool, whirlpool, putting greens, shuffleboard, pool table, ping pong, a game Arcade and a pool-side cafe. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

## Hotels are gearing up for Republican deluge

**By LOUISE OKRUTSKY**

Between July 14-18, hotel managers in Farmington Hills expect the Republican National Convention to hit the area like a herd of elephants.

"Everyone will be affected. From the owner of the little deli to the hotels," said Bobbie Sullivan, sales director for the Holiday Inn in Farmington Hills.

The Holiday Inn and Botsford Inn are among the 148 Detroit area hotels which will house the expected 11,000 Republicans, media members and hangers-on during the convention.

Spokespersons for both Farmington hotels say their task during the convention will be to please convention-goers and regular patrons alike. Both are keeping a few rooms open for non-convention business.

The Holiday Inn has pledged 150 double occupancy rooms in the 250-unit facility to the convention. Bots-

ford Inn has earmarked slightly less than half of its 85 rooms for Republican visitors.

Some of these rooms in Botsford are located in its new wing, still under construction but expected to be completed in early spring, according to owner John Anhut.

Anhut is counting on July to be a good month for the Inn. On either side of the week the Republicans will be conventioning. Anhut expects to see his regulars who have scheduled around the event.

"IT'S GOING to be a good summer," said Anhut, who's expecting a church convention after the politics leave.

Like their counterparts throughout the area, Botsford and Holiday Inn are planning to give their employees some extra training to carry them through the convention and assure that visitors leave with a good impression of Detroit.

Making a good impression on guests is the major concern of Wayne S. Doran, chairman of the Republican Party's hotel subcommittee. Doran sees the convention as a chance to have the Detroit area shine. He's gathering hotel managers and owners together at a Jan. 15 meeting to discuss problems and answer questions.

Doran plans on distributing a written manual for training hotel and restaurant employees.

He plans to cover such items as making sure hotel coffee shops extend hours to accommodate Republicans returning from late-night meetings. In some instances, Doran suggests alteration of dinner hours to accommodate meetings which run past noon or 6 p.m. meal hours.

"We need good communications. We need a good training program. We need to convince people they can hurt or help us just as much as any

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John Anhut's Botsford Inn is getting in on the Republican delegate action by building a new addition with its historical structure. (Staff photo)

## Tighter economy filters down to local governments

**By MARY GNIEWEK**

Michigan's sagging economy shouldn't adversely affect local government in the coming year, but a sharp cutback in federal Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) funds could be trouble.

Finance spokesmen for the cities of Farmington, Farmington Hills and the Farmington Public Schools say there will be some belt-tightening in 1981 if things don't improve.

"We're not projecting any lay-offs,

but as most cities around the state, we rely on state revenue sharing," said Robert Deadman, Farmington city manager.

"I've got to believe state revenue sharing will be affected by Chrysler, lay-offs, and the slowdown of the state economy."

"We're waiting for December projections from the Michigan Department of the Treasury."

State revenue sharing is generated from income tax and sales tax and is distributed locally on the basis of popu-

lation and taxes.

Twenty percent of Farmington's \$2.2 million budget is state shared revenue funds. In Farmington Hills, 15 percent of its \$11.7 million budget is state financed.

Farmington projects it will receive \$389,000 in state shared revenues this year.

"We're normally conservative when we consider what we'll get from the state," Deadman said.

"Because we don't have a lot of debt, we have historically operated close to

the belt. We do have minor surpluses from last year.

"IF IT'S A long term recession as it was back in 1973, then of course we'd feel it just as badly as anybody."

Farmington Hills acting budget director Chuck Rosch expects \$1.8 million in state shared revenues this year.

"It looks like our projections will hold up pretty much as forecasted," he said. "At the present time, we don't contemplate cutbacks."

But the city's involvement with CETA is a financial question mark right now. CETA, a federally funded program which provides employment for qualified residents for 18 months, accounts for 37 employees in Farmington Hills city government.

This year allocations were cut to \$287,000, nearly a third of last year's amount.

"We put a freeze on hiring just before Thanksgiving because allocations from the federal government are much lower," said Helen Scott, personnel office supervisor.

"We hope to hold off on future hiring until we can lower the employment level by attrition. We hope the federal government will see the error of its ways and bail us out," she continued.

CETA ACCOUNTS for 11 employees in the police department, nine in public services, four in the city man-

ager's office, four in parks and recreation, three in the library, three in finance, two in the fire department, and one on the Farmington Area Advisory Council.

"I don't know if we'll have slack in the budget to absorb CETA people if they can't continue in the program," Rosch said.

In the City of Farmington, CETA funds were also cut to a third of last

year's allocation.

"We were down to three (CETA workers) when the funds came through at \$29,886 this year. It was just enough for three, so we kept them," said Jerry Horner, an administrative assistant.

William Prisk, assistant supervisor of finance for the Farmington Public Schools, said the district's status as "out of formula" this year makes it less

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LEO HARRAWOOD

## New Shriner leader is Farmington man

Leo E. Harrawood, a long-time Farmington resident, will be installed as illustrious Potentate of Moslem Shrine Temple Jan. 8 in ceremonies to be held at Masonic Temple in Detroit.

Harrawood, 59, will be the leader of about 17,000 Shriners in 11 southern Michigan counties.

All Shriners are members of the Masonic fraternity and Moslem Temple is one of 183 Temples constituting the Ancient Arabic Order, Nobles for the Mystic Shrine for North America.

18 orthopedic units and three burn institutes — in the U.S., Canada and Mexico. Support is derived from several sources, including the Moslem Shrine Circus held annually at Detroit's State Fair Grounds.

Harrawood is a member of Walled Lake Lodge No. 528, P.E.M., the Farmington Elks Lodge, St. John's Lutheran Church in Farmington and the Novi Rotary Club, where he is a charter member and past president with 21 years perfect attendance.

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