

# Farmington Observer

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## Elderly tenants get full service care at Hills inn

A private firm has opened a complex specializing in supervised housing for the elderly in the Farmington Hills area.

The Farmington Hills Inn on 12 Mile east of Orchard Lake Road offers housing for elderly persons who are unable to or don't want to continue independently maintaining their own homes but who don't require a nursing home.

The Inn's president, Carl Ruby of Birmingham, is associated also with the Arbor Inn on 14 Mile east of Schoenherr in Warren.

Ruby has been affiliated with supervised homes for the aged for 15 years, according to the Inn's administrator, Mary Sieger. Mrs. Sieger was an assistant administrator at the Arbor Inn before becoming administrator of the Farmington Hills complex.

Construction on the complex began last year but it wasn't opened until the beginning of this month. So far, the complex has two residents but Mrs. Sieger credits the holiday season with the slow start.

"People don't want to move during the holidays," she said.

Once they move into the 146-bed complex, residents will have their

cooking, laundry and cleaning chores taken care for them in addition to having the Inn's staff nurses dispense their medicine on schedule.

PERSONS older than 62 are eligible for the housing, which isn't covered by Medicare or most medical insurance, Mrs. Sieger said.

Rent is assessed on a daily basis. For a private room and bath, residents are charged \$44 a day. Persons who live in four-room suites are charged \$23 per day or \$713 for a 31-day month, Mrs. Sieger said.

Suites are comprised of two 15-by-15-foot rooms connected by a bathroom.

Rooms are decorated in brown, green or orange and contain two twin beds, two night stands, two chests, chairs and two closets. Residents are free to bring in their own furniture and accessories, Mrs. Sieger said.

Persons who rent private rooms can replace the complex's furniture with their own if they choose.

Residents are required to attend breakfast, lunch, dinner and an evening

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**A very fine house**

Inger Graf of Graf's Pastry Shop puts a finishing touch on a gingerbread house that has a cookie roof and icing snow. The gigantic cookie will be donated to Children's Hospital in Detroit on Christmas morning. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

## Rep blasts '81 tax freeze plan in Senate

By JACKIE KLEIN

A Republican opposed to a bill aimed at freezing property taxes in 1981 calls the measure "a thinly veiled, badly flawed plan offered by three liberal Senate Democrats."

The critic is State Rep. Wilbur Brotherton, R-Farmington, who says taxes would actually increase if the bill is passed and signed into law.

The Senate on Dec. 5 passed the three-package sponsor by Sen. Doug Ross, D-Southfield, Bill Huffman, D-Madison Heights, and William Faust, D-Westland. The bill has been sent to the House where it's expected to face stiff opposition.

Ross is optimistic about the proposals.

"Each bill of the package received lopsided, bipartisan majorities to halt the inflationary property tax spiral," Ross said. "Under the proposal property tax assessments couldn't be increased in 1981."

"This 1981 freeze will ease property taxes in 1981 and give the Legislature a chance to design a permanent and equitable solution to the problem."

It's estimated that the freeze will save residential and agricultural property owners \$280 million and business owners \$120 million, Ross said.

BROTHERTON, however, argues that the proposals could lead to increased taxes. Under the Headlee amendment, millages could be raised again without a vote of the people if an assessment freeze is imposed, he said.

The measure doesn't provide for any state reimbursement for revenue lost by school districts or local units of government, Brotherton said.

"The sponsors claim the three-bill package would save Michigan homeowners about \$417 million next year. And they're willing to make large cuts into school operating funds and other local services to do it," Brotherton said this week.

The House Republican caucus has agreed to go along with the cuts, but only if local units are reimbursed with state funds, according to Brotherton.

House Majority Floor Leader Joseph Forbes, D-Dak Park, was in session Tuesday and unavailable for comment. The representative's administrative assistant Win Rowe, however, said Forbes is "leaning against the measure."

"THE PACKAGE of bills is in the House tax committee and probably won't be addressed until the Legisla-

ture resumes sessions after the holidays," Rowe said. "Forbes has been getting calls from local officials who are concerned about the effect of the proposed freeze on their tax bases."

"Forbes believes the freeze may be devastating and he doesn't want to rush into an issue as complicated as this. He agrees that there's a need for some tax reform. But the proposed freeze would make local units bear the burden and the state would get off scot free."

Brotherton said he also finds fault with the plan because it would stop the new equalization by class provision. Under that provision, property is divided into six categories — industrial, commercial, agricultural, residential, timber-cutter and developmental — in each assessment district.

"Too high or too low assessments can be adjusted by class of property rather than across-the-board as has been the case in the past," Brotherton said. "This makes for more uniform and fair assessments and I wouldn't like to see the program snuffed out."

FREEZING PROPERTY assessments at 1980 levels is probably unconstitutional because it wouldn't allow assessors to provide uniformity by making adjustments where necessary, according to Oakland County Equalization Director Herman Stephens.

State Rep. Charles Varnum, R-Manistee, introduced a measure which Brotherton said contains many provisions omitted in the Senate proposal.

"Varnum's bill would give Michigan property owners a reprieve from higher tax bills in both 1981 and 1982," Brotherton said.

"But Varnum says he will attempt to amend the bill to include the provisions for reimbursement — equal to the amount of revenue lost by local units as a result of the freeze — when it comes up for debate in the House."

Under the measure, all new construction and property improvements would be assessed according to 1980 levels, Brotherton said. And unlike the Senate bill, any removal or destruction of property would be subtracted from the assessment rolls.

Brotherton contends House Republicans believe the Varnum proposal is superior to the Senate measure plan.

"If we're forced to vote on only the Senate proposal, we'll support any cut and then make every effort to cut state spending and reimburse local units without a state tax increase," Brotherton said.

## Woman wants justice

# Bum rap takes a year-long toll

By MARY GNIEWEK

Gayna Willing is fighting to clear her name.

Life was good for the 21-year-old woman last December. She was employed as a police dispatcher for the city of Farmington Hills and pursuing a career in law enforcement.

Her parents had just moved from Farmington to Mount Clemens, leaving her a house trailer in Novi so she could be close to her job.

She was studying criminology at Oakland Community College, dating a police officer and planning a vacation.

Then on Dec. 11, 1979, she was accused of stealing \$900 from a co-worker and life changed drastically.

She was arrested at work on Dec. 23 and charged with larceny over \$100, a felony that could net an offender four years in prison.

Her parents, Joseph and Velma Willing, a retired couple who had lived in Farmington Hills eight years, brought her out of the Oakland County Jail on Christmas Eve.

Following a preliminary hearing in Farmington's 47th District Court on Jan. 4, she was bound over for trial and also fired from her job.

ton High School and a member of the U.S. Army Reserves; was found guilty by Oakland County Circuit Judge Richard Kahn in a trial that concluded on Oct. 24 after five postponements.

Today, the tall, blonde, blue-eyed coed is unemployed and unsure of being able to pursue her dream career, though she still attends OCC full time.

HER FAMILY IS looking for retribution from what they describe as "a gross injustice."

"This has changed our whole lives completely," said Mrs. Willing, Gayna's mother.

"We are still trying to clear her name."

Gayna was hired under Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) guidelines, which include being unemployed 15 weeks before date of hire and economically disadvantaged.

CETA is handling her grievance procedure for restitution of lost wages. Ms. Willing was nine months into the 18-month job program when the incident occurred.

"I don't like coming to conclusions before hearing both sides of the story," said Russ Hernandez, CETA grievance officer, who interviewed Gayna last week.

Hernandez was scheduled to meet with representatives of the Farmington Hills police department Tuesday. An informal review with both sides present will take place within 10 days, he said.

Ms. Willing and her parents say they're contemplating a lawsuit against the police department for false arrest.

AT LEAST ONE attorney who screened the Willing case was hesitant to accept it.

"Arrests cannot be used as a basis for firing a person — except in law-enforcement agencies," said Susan Winshall, a Southfield attorney.

She was referring to the Elliot-Larsen law, enacted by the state Legislature on March 31, 1977.

"The Legislature feels law-enforcement agencies are entitled to a higher-standard employee," Winshall said.

"Arrest is grounds for dismissal." Even though Ms. Willing was found not guilty by the court, the police department was acting within its rights.

The law has been a bitter pill for the Willing family to swallow.

"I'm always for the police," Mrs. Willing said. "I believe they should have a lot of power."

"But after the pretrial, I couldn't see where they had proof Gayna was able to take the money. Wasn't she entitled to some protection from the department itself?"

Ms. Willing was accused of taking the money from the purse of a fellow dispatcher while she was alone in the dispatch room, according to testimony at the pretrial hearing.

The plaintiff claimed she was carrying the large sum of cash because she was planning to buy a car from a police officer that day.

A THIRD DISPATCHER who proved to be a key witness admitted that Gayna was never alone in the dispatch room, where incoming police and fire calls are answered, in subsequent testimony.

The most humiliating part of her ordeal occurred after her Dec. 23 arrest, Ms. Willing said. She was told to turn in her identification card, uniform and badge.

She says she was handcuffed and placed in a holding cell for two hours at the station near 11 Mile and Orchard Lake roads before being transferred to the Oakland County jail, where she was held overnight.

"IT'S A personal thing," he said. "I respect him and what he stood for. I think the man had a deep appreciation of love for many things. In his involvement with his wife (Yoko Ono), that showed very clearly. I didn't think she was an extremely great talent but I respect her because of the way John felt."

"She probably influenced him more than any other person, or he wouldn't have went through so much with her. He had the security of money but he needed someone," Caruso said.

Caruso believes Lennon's new album, "Let It Be... Again," the first album he has released in six years, will be a classic.

By Tuesday afternoon Marty's Records in Birmingham had sold every copy of every Lennon album in stock and had only one cassette tape left.

The news of Lennon's murder spread quickly. Friends called each other on the telephone to relay the news late Monday night. Lunchtime talk overheard Tuesday afternoon was invariably about the sudden loss. Even older folks whose musical tastes are closer to Mantovani talked about what an awful thing had happened and what a vital impact Lennon's music had on the world.

TV NETWORKS eulogized the Beatles more than Lennon. Rock radio stations such as WRIF, WABX and WYWW played special tributes during the day and a wake of sorts was held Tuesday night at the Roostertail Super Club.

Caruso, who left the record store empty handed, said he admired Lennon for the strength of his convictions as well as his songwriting ability.

## Fans remember John Lennon, mourn ex-Beatle's death

By CRAIG PIECHURA

John Lennon's words and music struck a responsive chord in millions. His sudden and unresponsible death has struck another chord.

Throughout the metropolitan area, people went on with their lives. But for the last few days they went on while talking about John Lennon, the Beatles, their music, and the loss of a man of Lennon's abilities and stature.

Area residents interviewed by reporters spoke again and again about the tragedy of the incident Monday night in front of Lennon's apartment house residence in New York City.

The most frequently used word was "waste" — the waste of a life of a 40-year-old man and nine months of a great talent. Those interviewed talked about the senselessness of someone killing a man who had contributed much to the

world and who now asked for only peace from it.

"They talked as if they had lost a friend, not heard about the death of an entertainer. The interviewees — mostly between 25 and 40, the Beatle generation — talked of Lennon's influence on everything from eyeglasses to non-violence."

Mark Pasman, 25, spilled bits of tape thought Tuesday afternoon on WRIF-FM for a special program on Lennon's life and spoke of the significance of Lennon on his own life.

"WHEN THE Beatles came out in '63-'64 I was eight or nine," Pasman said. "I knew the minute I saw them on Ed Sullivan I'd be in this business. They just grabbed you."

It was the intimacy, the way they affected people. Few entertainers, maybe Elvis, can generate that kind of response with people."

Pasman said legions of fans grew up on the Beatles and were greatly affected by them. The Beatle influence showed in hair styles and clothing styles, in music and in the politics that became popular among the young.

Frank Caruso, 39, of Birmingham heard about Lennon being murdered while watching Monday Night Football. Caruso, owner of the "It's the Kitz" resale shop in Ed Farmington, said he felt a great emptiness.

Caruso, who left the record store empty handed, said he admired Lennon for the strength of his convictions as well as his songwriting ability.

persons in the building when the blaze began.

The fire started in some deep fryers and spread through the grill area of the kitchen to the ceiling. Flames were visible from the roof.

The fire was extinguished at 6 a.m. and firefighters, including some from Farmington Hills, worked until 7:10 a.m. to clean the smoke-damaged building.

The Michigan Bell Telephone Center office which shares a common wall with the Washing Well sustained minor smoke damage. No one was in that building when the fire erupted.

With fire confined to the kitchen, damage was reported at \$15,000; \$10,000 for equipment and another \$5,000 in structural damages.

## Owner injured in restaurant fire

The owner of the Washing Well, 23334 Farmington Road, in the downtown center is in fair condition at the Ann Arbor Burn Center after trying to extinguish a kitchen fire at the restaurant early Monday.

John Grezema of Northville received burns over 25 percent of his body, mostly to his upper torso when he tried to smother the flames with a wall extinguisher.

His wife escaped uninjured. Grezema reported the fire to Farmington Public Safety at 5:30 a.m. Nineteen regulars and six reserve officers fought the blaze.

Grezema and his wife were working in the kitchen area and were the only

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