

Farmingington Observer

Volume 92 Number 36

Thursday, February 12, 1981

Farmingington, Michigan

60 Pages

Twenty-five cents

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Property tax assessments up 15 percent

By MARY GNIEWEK

ures for the past 30 months are used.

Although home sales dropped off last year, residential assessments were up an average of 14 percent in Farmington and 15 percent in Farmington Hills. Commercial and industrial property, assessed separately this year in accordance with a new state law, were up 11 percent and 10 percent respectively in Farmington.

In the Hills, where commercial activity has continued on a thriving level, the average assessment hike was 20 percent.

Farmingington assessment notices were mailed Tuesday. Farmington Hills notices will go out before the end of February.

Though it will be July before the first tax bill is due, the preceding months are set aside to give taxpayers time to contest assessments they feel unfair.

Farmingington's assessments are running closer to 50 percent of market value this year than in the past, according to John Sailor, city assessor.

The Farmington data was tallied by computer for the first time this year. A full description of the structure and property value were used to determine fair market price.

The sluggish real estate market in 1980 is only part of what's used to compute market price. Actually, sales fig-

A TYPICAL one-story ranch with one bathroom and three bedrooms in Farmington got a tax bill of \$1,162.65 last year. Assuming the average 14 percent hike, the same home tax bill would be \$1,323.89 in 1981.

The blow to taxpayers in both cities is being softened this year by the Farmington School District, which reduced its tax rate by three mills.

"The reduced millage rate is responsible for a smaller hike," Sailor said.

Assessment and millage rate are the two components which determine tax bill. Homeowners can estimate their tax bill for the whole year by multiplying their assessment by the tax rate, which is 56.57 mills in Farmington.

Assessor's hearings are scheduled Feb. 12, 13, 15 and 18 in Farmington. Taxpayers who want an explanation of their tax bill should attend.

If still unsatisfied, a Board of Review will examine cases in the city on March 9 and 10.

Farmingington Hills' Board of Review is scheduling hearings on March 16, 17 and 18. Additional days will be added if necessary.

Call 474-5500 in Farmington and 474-6115 in Farmington Hills for an appointment.



Farmingington resident Joe Zeboch found Farmington Road easier to maneuver than the unplowed sidewalks of downtown Farmington during Tuesday's snowstorm. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

Blizzard fizzles to rain drizzles

Winter roared with a vengeance Tuesday, paralyzing the metropolitan area under a foot of snow.

Farmingington responded by sending high school and middle school students home at 1 p.m. Elementary students followed on an earlier than usual bus schedule at 2 p.m.

City employees in Farmington Hills were sent home by mid afternoon, except for road crews which worked around the clock plowing and salting.

"We've had only two minor fender benders today," a Farmington police dispatcher reported at 4 p.m.

Farmingington Hills, its sprawling neighbor, had racked up 13 accidents by that time, mostly along I-696 and 12 Mile Road.

Lt. Ernest Miller, Hills police traffic supervisor, expected to handle the snowy roads with an average amount of patrol cars — seven.

"No one is on overtime at this time,"

Miller said.

MANY BUSINESSES dismissed employees early and stores in the Farmington downtown center reported slower activity than usual by mid-day.

The National Weather Service at Detroit Metropolitan Airport reported continuing snow Wednesday and heavy drifting from winds up to 44 miles per hour.

"We're going to stay with this thing

until we get it clean," said Earl Billings, Farmington DPW director.

The city had its army of three trucks, two tractors, two pickup trucks and a grader on the roads around the clock. Shifts were manned by overtime crews.

A plow weld broke loose on one of the trucks Tuesday, which put it out of commission for part of the afternoon.

The problem was corrected and the fleet was back at full force by 4 p.m.

Clinic specializes in mending broken hearts

By CRAIG PIECHURA

February is a month chock full of frilly valentine hearts. It's also the month the American Heart Association sets aside to foster heart disease awareness.



FLOYD CAIRNS

The message is simple: while hearts may be hearty you can't always mend a broken one.

Two Farmington Hills residents, the Rev. William Frayer and Farmington Hills City Clerk Floyd Cairns have recently gone through their second double bypass heart graft operations at the internationally-known Cleveland Clinic.

Bypass operations, once viewed as a medical marvel, are becoming almost commonplace for victims of coronary artery disease. Cleveland Clinic alone averages 15 such operations per day, according to hospital spokesman Marion Mobley.

Simply explained, a double bypass operation involves taking veins from the leg and grafting them onto the coronary arteries.

Rev. Frayer, 55, associate pastor at the Nardin Park Methodist Church for the past three years, had his first heart attack in 1964. He went in for his first bypass operation a little bit more than five years ago.

Last fall Rev. Frayer began noticing that the least bit of physical activity left him exhausted. He went to the clinic for tests done through cardiac catheterization. A long tube is inserted in the arm or groin and passed through the blood vessels into the heart and monitored along the way under X-ray. Tests showed total blockage in the main artery, Rev. Frayer said, and 80 percent blockage in the other two. His operation was Jan. 20 and already Rev. Frayer is pedaling four miles at a clip on his exercise bike at home.

"I'M NOT ready for the four-minute mile but already I feel much stronger," Rev. Frayer said. "This morning I went up and rode the bike for 15 minutes at a pace I couldn't possibly have kept up before the operation. And my heart rate didn't go up appreciably and it dropped back down again almost immediately. Before the operation my heart rate would've gone up sky-high after one-tenth of a mile on that bike."

Cairns' operation was done the day before Thanksgiving and he returned to

the clerk's office Jan. 19 to work about four or five hours daily. Last week he went back to full-time duty.

As part of the recuperation process, doctors have urged both men to walk daily at a brisk pace. Cairns does his walking at the YMCA or the Tel-Twelve shopping mall. Twice around the mall, Cairns said, is a distance of two miles.

"I paced it off," Cairns said. "It's two miles if you start at Montgomery Woods."

Rev. Frayer does his daily jaunt at the Twelve Oaks Mall.

Since it was the second bypass operation for both men, they both expected the exercise regimen. But neither anticipated having to return to the hospital for their second bypass.

"I LEARNED a lesson that even though you get a bypass you're not home free for life," Rev. Frayer said. "You really need to follow the diet, plus the factors of exercise, the factors of rest and relaxation. Because in just five years, mine plugged up completely."

Frayer said he's sworn off sweets and is trying to follow the doctor's directions to a "T." But there are heart patients at the Cleveland Clinic, he said, who went to the lounge to light up "one cigarette after another" immediately following their bypass operation.

"They'd say 'I know I can quit, but right now I'm under too much stress to give it up.'"

Since his heart troubles began, Cairns said he has changed his eating

habits and no longer even misses fatty red meat.

"I eat a lot of tuna fish," Cairns said. "In the last 10 years I've probably had more tuna fish sandwiches than any other guy in the country. When I walk into a restaurant the waitress has it ready for me. I don't even have to ask for it."

It takes an amount of courage to prepare yourself for heart surgery, Cairns

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Flanked by Livonia detective sergeants Shirley Garrison (left) and Jesse Bartlett, Wade Gregg enters 16th District Court prior to his Tuesday arraignment on four felony charges stemming from Sunday morning's murder-rape. (Staff Photo by Art Emanuele)

Hills man held in fatal knifing

By MIKE SCANLON

A 22-year-old Farmington Hills man has been charged with the rape-slaying Sunday morning of a 45-year-old Livonia woman, the attempted rape of her daughter and the stabbing of a second daughter's boyfriend.

Wade Gregg, 22, of 33983 Kirby in Farmington Hills, was arraigned Tuesday on four felony charges in 16th District Court. He is being held without bond. Examination of the charges has been scheduled for Feb. 24 in district court.

Killed in an attack in her home was Juanita Waluzak of 17960 Floral. Livonia Det. Sgt. Jesse Bartlett said police believe Mrs. Waluzak, who is separated from her husband, met her suspected slayer when an unknown third-party asked for Gregg's assistance in helping Mrs. Waluzak walk across the street from a Livonia bar about 3 a.m. Sunday.

Investigators said Gregg then apparently accompanied Mrs. Waluzak home. One of Mrs. Waluzak's daughters told police she saw them drinking in the kitchen of their home shortly after 3 a.m.

6 a.m. Officers found Mrs. Waluzak's partially nude, blood-stained body on a living room couch.

Gregg was arrested about 6:05 a.m. Sunday as he walked on Inkster Road about a mile south of the murder scene. Police said both of Gregg's arms were bloodstained to the elbows when he was arrested.

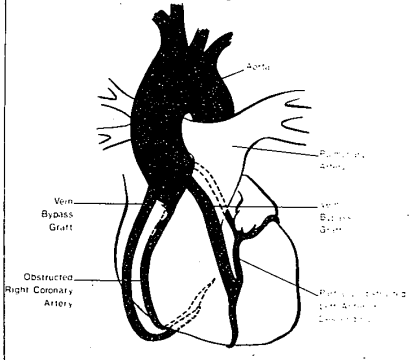
AT TUESDAY'S arraignment, Bartlett testified that, while autopsy results are incomplete, preliminary findings indicate Mrs. Waluzak died of 12 stab wounds to the neck and throat. Her neck was broken and she had apparently been strangled.

Police said they followed footprints through freshly fallen snow from the point where Gregg was arrested to the Waluzak residence. En route, police found indications at two different points that someone had attempted to remove the blood from his hands and arms by washing them in snow.

Officers also discovered a 13-inch butcher knife and a large, two-pronged meat fork in a snowbank about a block from the murder scene. Police believe they are the weapons used in killing

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Vein Bypass Grafts for Coronary Artery Disease



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