

Nobody Wants 'Eggs' Scrambled

By EMORY DANIELS

Two eggs have been placed in the judicial incubator. But when the heat's over, only one will hatch.

Sitting on both eggs is Oakland County Circuit Judge Frederick Ziem. It is now Ziem's task to insure that one egg hatches and that both do not become scrambled, poached or over-boiled.

Hopefully, when the hatching is complete everything will be sunny-side up.

THAT'S ABOUT the best way to summarize the pending lawsuits which are attempting

to unsnarl the boundary disputes in the Farmington Area.

There is a major difference between the two lawsuits but both seek the same result — an election to make Farmington Township and both villages a home-rule city.

There are now two separate lawsuits to be decided in one court, by one judge — Judge Ziem. Ziem must yet decide if he will hear both cases individually or together.

In legal terms, Robert McConnell and Farmington Township are both party plaintiffs, the State Boundary Commission and Oakland County Board of Supervisors are de-

fendants, and the City of Farmington is an interested party.

THE TOWNSHIP'S STRATEGY, being drawn up by Attorney Joseph T. Brennan, was to have McConnell join in as a co-plaintiff with the township against the two defending agencies.

Instead, McConnell on Feb. 17 filed a separate lawsuit which was assigned to Oakland County Circuit Judge Philip Pratt.

On the following day, Feb. 18, all parties involved (except Oakland County) met for a hearing by Ziem and agreed to consolidate both lawsuits.

Ziem has not announced a final decision yet, but it is

almost certain he will agree to hear both suits.

THE DIFFERENCE is that McConnell and Brennan each prefer a different procedure to obtain cityhood.

McConnell says he would like cityhood to be obtained through a consolidation election. If the courts rule a consolidation vote cannot be held, McConnell would hope the court would accept incorporation as an alternative.

The township's position is just the reverse, said McConnell. The township wants the cityhood vote to be an incorporation election with

consolidation being a second choice.

The lawsuit filed by Brennan for the township appeals the State Boundary Commission's rejection on Dec. 17 of petitions filed by McConnell Oct. 13 seeking an incorporation election.

Brennan also asked Ziem to issue an order preventing the Oakland County Board of Supervisors from acting on the city's petition to annex about half of the township.

Last Wednesday, Brennan expanded his suit by appealing the Boundary Commission's rejection on Jan. 21 of McConnell's substitute petition.

The substitute petition requested the Boundary Commission replace the word "incorporation" on the Oct. 13 petition with the word "consolidation."

In order of priority, the township's lawsuit is appealing (1) rejection of the Oct. 13 incorporation petition and (2) rejection of the Jan. 21 substitute.

McCONNELL'S SUIT, filed Feb. 17 takes the opposite approach.

It is first an appeal of the state's rejection of the substitute "consolidation" petition.

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today's
hot line

Vol. 82, No. 42 46 pages, 4 sections

what's inside

Boy Killed

A 14-year-old Clarenceville High School student was killed on his way to school Friday morning in a hit and run accident.

Farmington Township Police Sgt. Rusty Newell said Edward Wright, 21311 St. Francis, Farmington Township, was crossing West Eight Mile near Pearl Street when he was hit by a westbound car.

The youth was dead on arrival at Botsford General Hospital.

Police apprehended a person suspected of driving the hit and run car, but have made no charges pending further investigation.

Attorney Arraigned

An attorney defending clients charged with kidnaping a Farmington youth was arraigned Friday before Farmington District Judge Michael Hand on a charge of obstructing justice. A warrant has also been issued on the same charge against one of the defendant's father.

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Why Two Lawsuits?

Why is it necessary to have two lawsuits to settle boundary questions involving Farmington Township? An examination of the differences between the procedures of incorporation and consolidation gives an insight into the strategy behind each move.

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Delayed Reaction

Farmington Township taxpayers, who were unmoved after reading earlier reports about rising taxes, are becoming stirred after getting tax bills in the mail. Today's editorial page tells about the earlier warnings and includes advice on how distressed taxpayers can seek relief.

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New Living

You wouldn't think handicapped young people and geriatric patients have much in common, but it so happens that they're able to do each other a lot of good at an area nursing home. See the Sunday Feature Page for story and pictures.

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Exemption Tax Limit Relaxed

by WYLIE GERDES

Many Farmington Area residents older than 65 regained the opportunity to claim a property tax exemption when a new law became effective Friday.

The new provision removes the limit on how much property a person older than 65 may own and still claim a \$2,500 tax exemption.

The law previously in effect said persons older than 65 with less than \$10,000 State Equalized Valuation (SEV) worth of property and less than \$5,000 income could claim the exemption. All property in Michigan

be eligible now to claim the exemption.

The city has been accepting applications from any senior citizen who meets the income requirements in anticipation of the bill's passage, Brinkman commented.

City sources report 21 residents last year had applied since 1966 because the SEV of their property exceeded \$10,000. Presumably, at least those residents would again be eligible for the exemption.

Last year, 88 city residents

How To Apply

Applications for senior citizen 1970 property tax exemptions will be available and processed in the Assessors Office in the basement of the Farmington City Hall, 23600 Liberty, and at the Farmington Township Assessor's office in the Township Hall near 11 Mile and Orchard Lake Rds.

Residents should apply Monday through Friday before March 2.

If a resident applied for the exemption in 1969 and circumstances have not changed, a copy of the 1969 affidavit is all that is needed to apply for the exemption.

New applications for the exemption must bring legal proof of age (marriage license, baptismal certificate, birth certificate, citizenship papers, etc.). A driver's license is not legal proof of age.

A Social Security number will also be required.

owned was included in determining eligibility.

MICHIGAN USES the equalization factor to standardize property taxes over the state. The SEV is a product of the assessed value of the property and a factor established by the State Equalization Board.

The purpose of the state equalization factor is to assure each local government taxes property at 30% of its market value as required by law.

However, the effect of the procedure has been to make many senior citizens and others eligible lose their exemption without any improvements of their property.

For example, if the new bill had not gone into effect a residence in the City of Farmington assessed at \$7,800 probably would not have allowed its owner to qualify for its exemption this year. The equalization factor for the City of Farmington is expected to be more than 1.20, so an assessed valuation would have to be less than \$7,800 to be under the old \$10,000 SEV limit.

Besides eliminating the SEV limit, the new law raises the income limit from \$5,000 to \$6,000 per year.

ROBERT BRINKMAN of the city assessing department said it is difficult to estimate the number of persons who will

qualified for the senior citizen exemption.

FARMINGTON TOWNSHIP has also been accepting applications regardless of the SEV of property owned, according to Robert Rohmer, township assessor.

He said about 275 township residents qualified for the exemption last year. Some confusion exists about the filing deadline for the exemption. Rohmer noted the deadline under the old law was the last day on which the Board of Review may meet, April 1. He said the Board of Review usually adjourns after fulfilling its legal obligation to meet three times, March 3, 9 and 10.

The city assessing department likes to have all applications on file when the Board of Review convenes, Brinkman said, March 2 would be the last day for city residents to file an application before the Board of Review meets.

Rohmer said the new law might extend the filing deadline because its passage came so close to the date.

"We don't know whether they will be given a chance later on or not," Rohmer said. Documents needed to apply for the exemption are detailed in an accompanying article.

ALTHOUGH THE senior citizen
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BOY AND FRIENDS—Sammy, wearing glasses, is the most important person in this picture. Threatened with being sent to an institution because he is a retardate, Sammy stands with some Farmington High School friends

who raised enough money to keep him in a home environment for a while. In back are (from left) Debbie Mulcahy, Larry McArthur and Dawn Bower. At left, holding the check, is Mike Legg. (Ever photo)

Teens Rescue Sammy

By ELIZABETH WISSMAN

Sammy is safe for awhile. Nine-year-old Sammy is a mongoloid child. They put mongoloid children in institutions.

Before she died a few weeks ago, Sammy's mother's last wish was that her child not be put in an institution. Sammy's father is also dead.

Sammy is now living at the Mongoloid Achievement Foundation home in Detroit. He can stay there as long as \$211.50 lasts for his support.

TWO WEEKS AGO Sammy didn't have \$211.50. He had nothing for his support, nothing to keep him living in the home environment of the foundation.

Then the three English classes and the yearbook class at Farmington High School went to work.

The boys and girls, about 100 in all, sold bows and lengths of ribbons for Valentine's Day throughout

the school. They only charged 15 and 25 cents, but enough kids thought enough about Sammy and his immediate future to buy \$211.50 worth.

THE ENGLISH and yearbook classes are taught by Terry Naull, who has long been interested in retarded children because she has a sister who is a retardate.

Miss Naull became interested in the Mongoloid Achievement Foundation through Marjorie Buresh, the foundation's coordinator-consultant.

Miss Buresh says she will stretch the \$211.50 as far as possible, make it last as long as she can to keep Sammy out of an institution.

A big part of that money, \$50 of it, came from the Farmington Chapter DeMolay. That might be because Mike Legg and Mike Schlaff, both DeMolays, are editor and business manager respectively of the yearbook.

Investors Give Up On Southfield Dome

Homeowners in Southfield and Farmington Township upset by the prospect of a domed stadium locating in Southfield may take a deep breath.

Investors wishing to build a stadium in Southfield for the Tigers and Lions have announced their withdrawal from competition for the stadium.

Instead, the 203-acre site bounded by Telegraph, 11 Mile, Inkster and I-96 will be used for a commercial development.

THIS WILL EASE the concern of those Southfield homeowners who last summer led a petition drive opposing location of a stadium in Southfield.

A similar drive was held by Farmington Township residents who viewed unfavorable construction of a stadium on

the township's western boundary.

Gerald Bartush, Southfield attorney representing the investors, said a number of corporations have already approached his group about the 203-acre site which will now enjoy a commercial use.

This switch in land use plans by the investors agrees with Southfield planners who feel the site should be part of a new downtown area.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE pullout from the stadium race was made by the investors, headed by Robert Forte of Farmington Township, on Feb. 18.

Bartush told The Observer the Southfield site was dropped not because Detroit has a better plan, but because of rising construction and interest costs. Since the investors first

begin considering the project in December 1968, Bartush explained, construction costs have gone up 10-12% and interest has increased 2 1/2%.

"We were planning a stadium which would cost \$100 million," he said, "which means the cost of our project has gone up some \$12 million because of delays."

After waiting for months, Bartush said, the investors could no longer afford to allow such a large tract of land to remain vacant.

"We said 11 months ago we would move quickly on the stadium or rising costs would stop us," Bartush said, "and this is what has happened."

THE STADIUM QUESTION has become a political football and real action on picking a site cannot be delayed, he added.

"I hope the leaders move quickly. If Detroit cannot do it the Detroit promoters should admit it and turn the job over to someone else."

At some point, nobody will be able to build a stadium with either private or public financing because of rising costs, Bartush predicted. Every year construction of the stadium is delayed, he added, cost will jump up 10% or 15% million for a \$100 million complex.

He noted the Southfield promoters have spent \$100,000 attempting to get the stadium, half of that amount for a feasibility study.

When asked if his group would be willing to help finance a stadium at the Cobo Hall site, Bartush replied: "If we were given free rein in Detroit, we might be able to come up with a workable plan

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He's in Business On...
...your neighborhood boy...
...business training through his...
...you pay him each month...
...description Plan assures his...
...venture. Be sure to...
...guarantee delivery of...