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Spend some to save some

Computerized court eyed

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Farmington officials have only to give their nod of approval and the 47th District Court will soon join the computer age.

On Monday, Farmington Hills City

Council agreed to foot their share — approximately \$37,000 — of the cost of a \$45,000 minicomputer for the district court.

Final approval must come from the Farmington City Council, which is expected to decide Monday whether to

pay their approximately \$7,600 share for the computer.

If payment is approved, the court should have a new in-house minicomputer within 30-90 days. The system is made by Texas Instruments, with software (programs) developed by Horizon Systems Inc. of Farmington Hills. The

court also will get three display terminals and two character printers.

"It should expedite much of the paperwork," said District Judge Margaret Schaeffer. "And things are less likely to get lost between the cracks."

WITH THE computer, Schaeffer said, processing overdue traffic tickets will be simplified. The system will give an automatic printout of drivers having overdue tickets. Court employees now go through a lengthy process of contacting the secretary of state's office and then typing out overdue notices.

In reviewing which computer system would best serve the court, Southfield's Plante & Moran said courts in Taylor, Warren and East Detroit all had a system similar to the one the court is interested in buying. The system can process parking, traffic, monthly statistics and money matters.

Not all district courts in Michigan have switched yet to a computer system, Schaeffer said. But it is becoming a trend, particularly "for a high volume court like ours. It could keep track of a lot of things."

"It will also type out docket sheets (court case schedules)," she said, adding it will be easier for attorneys and judges to rearrange court schedules with the computer.

While the computer should streamline the court's paperwork, Schaeffer said it will not force any employee layoffs. But the computer, she added, will help avoid the need to hire additional employees in the future as the court's caseload grows.

Dentist monkeys around

By Sharon Dargay
staff writer

You can't make a monkey out of Washington Strangolia — even in the dentist's chair.

Facing a possible root canal and tooth extraction, the 7-month-old Ulica resident took his medicine like a trooper last week.

"We wanted to try a root canal to save the tooth, but it was fractured into five parts and we had to extract it," explained Robert Stone, Southfield veterinarian.

The 13-pound chimpanzee, owned by Ulica businessman Frank Strangolia, is doing fine, thanks to antibiotics, Stone's assistance and the surgical skill of Terry Myers.

The Farmington Hills dentist doesn't get much call for repairing animal choppers at his Walled Lake practice. But Myers has worked on the pearly whites of everything from antelopes to zebras at the Detroit Zoological Park during the past two years. Last week when Washington broke a baby tooth,

Stone consulted Myers.

"This is the first time I've worked on a privately owned pet. I got into the zoo work because I thought it would be interesting — working on lions and tigers — and it has been," Myers explained.

He said ape and chimpanzee teeth are "so much like a human's that it's scary." The anatomy is similar, although humans might take a cue from the chimp's sugarless diet for maintaining cavity-free teeth.

"APES NEED VERY LITTLE dental work as far as cavities are concerned. They might have trauma from falling against their cages. But they have fewer problems than people."

And they make better patients than some of their human counterparts, although Myers admits animals must be sedated for sophisticated dental work if the practitioner wants to keep all 10 fingers intact.

"Even our 7-month-old chimp was in dreamland when I worked on him. At the zoo, nothing life-threatening has happened, but you wonder sometimes if the animal really is out."

Few veterinarians or dentists specialize in animal teeth care, although the practice is "coming into its own," with the establishment of a nationwide veterinary dental society. Dental work is limited to cleaning and tooth extraction for cats and dogs in most veterinary offices. On the farm, animal doctors routinely cap cattle teeth that have been chewed to stubs.

"People will trap squirrels and bring them in to have their teeth filed," Stone noted. "Hamsters, gerbil and rodent teeth are always growing. Sometimes you have to grind them down. Filing an animal's tooth would be extraordinary."

"Dentistry isn't my favorite subject," he added.

Although 30 percent of Stone's practice involves exotic animals, he sees few monkeys or apes.

"We saw two monkeys last week. One was for a polio vaccine. There was a time when I'd see 25 to 30 a year. Now I see a few. You can breed them here, but they can't be brought into the country."



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

An electrician, Bill Piper, installs temporary lighting in the upstairs of the Haney home after it had been ravaged by fire caused by a fan.

Quick action saves house from ruin

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

A portable electric window fan that was left turned on appears to be the cause of an estimated \$60,000 house fire in Farmington Hills Monday evening, according to fire officials.

Neighbors said they first noticed flames shooting out of the northwest bedroom, just before 9 p.m., at the home of Frank Haney, 36220 Congress. The street is west of Drake, on the corner of 11 Mile and Old Homestead roads.

Haney and his family were not home when the fire broke out but returned as firefighters were cleaning up, said Farmington Hills Fire Department Lt. Richard Marinucci.

Most of the fire damage was confined to the northwest bedroom. The electric fan, which had been placed in a window, fell and started the carpeting on fire, Marinucci said.

The fire spread from the carpeting to the bed and "once that started, the heat

built up and started up the walls and across the ceiling," he added.

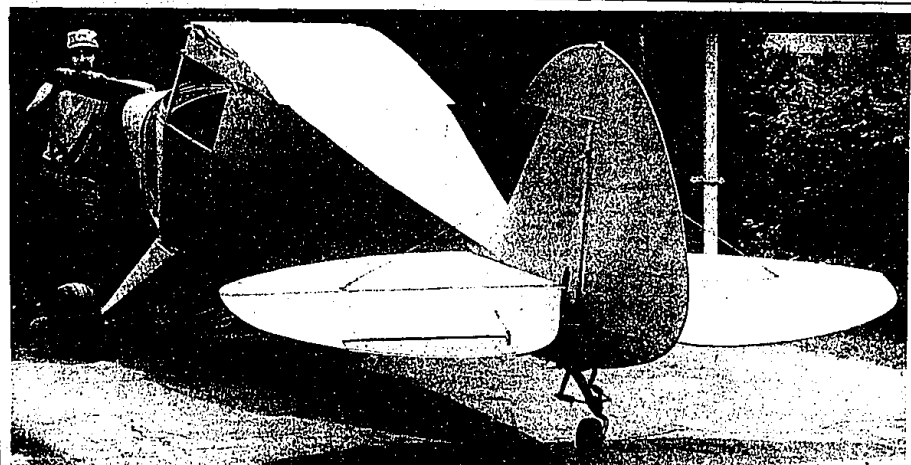
"It was going pretty good when we arrived," Marinucci said, adding that the fire was out within 15 minutes after firefighters from stations 1 and 4 arrived.

"Pretty much of the entire second story may have to be redone," he said. The first floor also suffered smoke and water damage.

NEIGHBORS said they heard a bang before they noticed flames coming from the house. But Marinucci said fire investigators could find no flammable liquids that could have caused the fire.

Marinucci urged residents to unplug motorized appliances that could overheat before they leave home, even for a short period of time.

"With a motor, it doesn't take a long time to get it (a fire) going," he said. He listed hair dryers, kitchen appliances and irons as household items that should be turned off and unplugged when not in use.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Seat-of-the-pants flying

Flying in a commercial jet just isn't good enough for Farmington Hills resident Steve Benesh. He wants to fly 'em, fix 'em and re-

model 'em all on his own. To see how flying can become a very personal experience, turn to Page 3A.

oral quarrel

What would you ask council candidates?

Everybody has got a question or two they would like to ask their city council representatives. Now that election time is rolling around, this is the time to give those questions some thought. We'll be interviewing candidates and hopefully we'll be able to use some of your questions.

So today's Oral Quarrel is:

WHAT QUESTION WOULD YOU ASK CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES IF YOU HAD A CHANCE?

To answer this question, call us at 477-5498. You will have until noon on Friday to answer this question. To see what your neighbors would ask, look in Monday's Farmington Observer.

what's inside

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EARLY DEADLINES

Due to the Labor Day Holiday, the Observer & Ecotimes Newspapers will be closed Monday, Sept. 5, 1983. Our classified line will be open Tuesday, Sept. 6, from 8-5:30 p.m. to place your classified ad for the Thursday, Sept. 8th issue. Remember...

One call does it all 
591-0900
Use your MasterCard or Visa

Mile road gets city attention

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Twelve Mile Road in Farmington Hills may be congested, but the Oakland County Road Commission now has no plans to do anything about it. Help may be coming from another source, however.

Farmington Hills officials will ask the road commission to apply for newly available federal highway grant dollars to pay 75 percent of the costs of widening and resurfacing the city's two-mile stretch on 12 Mile Road.

There is a catch. Should the money, available through the Federal Aid to Urban System Program (FAUS), come through, the city would be required to pay the remaining 25 percent share of road improvements.

City officials still do not have any final cost estimates, but they expect the project to range between \$1.6 and \$2 million.

"Oakland County said, 'okay, we'll apply (for the federal money) if you pay all the local share,'" said William

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