

# the farmington enterprise & observer

YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

Weekend of September 26-27, 1970

15c a Copy

today's  
**hot line**

Vol. 82, No. 103 28 pages, 3 sections

upcoming

**OCTOBER WILL** mark the beginning of the annual fall special trash pickup conducted by Farmington Township. Residents will have the opportunity to get rid of old appliances, water heaters, junk cars, unwanted furniture (if broken down) and other large, unwanted junk items.

Obtain a copy of Wednesday's Farmington Enterprise & Observer which will include a map indicating the date pickups will be made in your neighborhood.

what's inside

## Peacemaker Leaves

The fact-finder called in to help settle negotiations between Farmington teachers and the administration has left. The investigation of facts behind disputed issues is completed, and a report expected in two weeks. Teachers are awaiting that report while continuing to work without a contract.

Page 2A

## Whither Sports?

High school coaches tell Sports Editor George Maskin that fewer and fewer boys are turning out for sports. Why? One reason may be that the athlete isn't the village hero that he used to be.

Page 10A

## 'Senior Power'

That's the political movement of 1970-71, and the state and federal governments are encouraging senior citizens to flex their political muscles. Leonard Pogor saw it first-hand.

Page 9A

## First Tests

After two non-league games, Observerland high school football teams are starting their league schedules. The chips are down, and here are the prospects.

Page 11A

Amusements	8A
Bowling	10A
Churches in Action	12-13A
Feature Page	7A
Sports-Prep and Pro	10-11A
Spotlight on Women	12-13A

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On  
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# Court Clears Sonnenberg Of Second Degree Murder



William Sonnenberg Jr., former Farmington Township patrolman, has been cleared of second degree murder charges in the slaying of Harold Braun. Murder charges against Sonnenberg were dismissed Tuesday by visiting Livonia District Judge James McCann at the conclusion of the pre-trial exam held in Farmington District Court.

McCann said he dismissed the case after hearing all the testimony because it was not established that the elements of the crime existed.

McCann explained that the elements of second degree murder are that it is a "willful, malicious and felonious" murder.

Testimony given by prosecution witnesses was

consistent, McCann added, and did not reveal the shooting was willful, malicious or felonious. "And so I determined there was no basis for second degree murder."

For three days (Sept. 18, 21, 22) the prosecution called five persons to the witness stand to testify about their knowledge of Braun's death the night of July 3 at the Braun's Johnstown street residence in Farmington Township.

JOHN DAVEY, assistant prosecutor assigned to the case, called his last witness to the stand at 2 p.m. Tuesday.

"When Davey pronounced he had no further witnesses to call to the stand, defense attorney Noel Gage asked McCann to dismiss the charge."

McCann granted Gage's

dismissal request and the examination abruptly ended. A longer examination was anticipated because it was reported Gage was planning on calling defense witnesses.

Purpose of a pre-trial examination is to determine if there is reasonable cause that a crime had been committed. By granting dismissal, McCann was acknowledging that Davey had failed to establish there was any reasonable cause that second degree murder had been committed.

DAVEY SAYS the Sonnenberg case was and will be processed in the same manner as any other charge handled by the prosecutor's office.

The judge's decision has been submitted to the appellate division of the prosecutor's

office for review, a step taken in all legal cases. Davey said.

Gage represented Sonnenberg as attorney for the Farmington Township Police Officers' Association. Sonnenberg had already submitted his resignation from the police force before the shooting, and a couple days afterwards retired to operate a party store in Ulica.

First witness called by Davey was Dr. Gilbert Corrigan, medical examiner, who performed the autopsy on Braun and determined cause of death.

Corrigan testified it was his opinion death was caused by a head injury resulting from a gunshot entering and leaving the skull.

Continued on Page 4A

# Annexation Drive Starts With South End Debate

By LIZ WISSMAN

Annexation is a good or bad thing for the southern end of Farmington Township depending on whom you listened to at Tuesday night's meeting of the Farmington Township Road & Civic Association.

Representing the city's view for annexation were Mayor Wilbur V. Brotherton, Councilmen Ralph Yoder and John Richardson and DPW chief George Vondrak.

Speaking against annexation and representing the township were William Hatton, candidate for trustee and charter member of the road group; Aldo Vagnozzi, school board member; and Earl Teeple, township supervisor-elect.

HATTON set the tone of the meeting with a prepared statement against annexation.

He said: "The people of the south end are, in a sizable number, permanent, long-time residents of the township in contrast to the more transient residents of the north."

"They are the real residents of the township and identify themselves as such—not by the pretty-named subdivisions in which they live."

"We in the south end are asked to sell the city out of

this unfavorable situation which is their own doing. It was abundantly clear after the consolidation election, that the township would incorporate and the city will be landlocked."

"The city has a nucleus for providing municipal services, but the idea that a favorable vote on annexation will produce 'instant city' for the township portion is a fallacy."

"City services such as streets and sidewalks will take time and money. For the most part this money will come from benefitting property owners alone."

HATTON broke down facts and figures:

"Township population in the south end is 17,000 to 18,000. The total township population is about 45,000. Thus the south end represented 38-40 per cent of the total."

"Township assessed valuation is \$28 million, and the proposed annexed area is \$71 million, or 25% of the total township's valuation."

"The proposed township area to be annexed is about 10 square miles, and the present city is about 2 1/2 square miles. The area of the township is about 33 square miles of which the proposed annexed portion represents 30%."

The statement continued: "The township had an opportunity to postpone the annexation election when the matter came before the Board of County Commissioners."

"A suggestion was made by Phil Maslin that a public hearing on the matter be permitted. The township administration had a representative present but failed to make a request for a public hearing. These facts tend to give me a feeling of rejection by the township."

HATTON took a swipe at the city charter as it now stands: "I would not want the charter revised at ANY time; I would want it revised as soon as I come under its jurisdiction. The city has not given us any guarantee in this regard."

"Before Aug. 4 the people of the south end had little hope of receiving representative government from the township administration and might have considered the fire of the city as acceptable as the frying pan of the township."

"The results of the primary have given rise to new hope of a more fair and just township administration."

Hatton concluded, "Annexation at this time quite possibly will prove to be an extremely expensive lesson in trusting

the city when any such trust in the past has been previously betrayed."

IN REPLY, Brotherton said the city is looking into the possibility of amending the charter provision on the number of councilmen and residency requirements.

"We now have five councilmen but feel that seven is a reasonable number. And we're looking into the possibility of changing the charter to less than a year's residency to be a councilman."

"I guess you could say 'how many people have you got on the township board from this area?'"

He added, "While we might not provide 'instant city,' we would provide rubbish pickup, littering and graveling of roads, snow removal and an increased amount of fire and police protection."

TEEPLES made an emotional, rapid-fire presentation.

"I happen to live as far away from the City of Farmington as you can get. We used to have to go into the city or Birmingham to shop."

"Now a lot of things have come out to us in the township, and that's good planning. We have become an urban community only by accident."

"We need you and you need us—we refuse to let you gobble us up. I think the things we've planned, worked for and paid for with our sweat should belong to us."

IN HIS STATEMENT, Vagnozzi was something of a peace-maker. "One of the things I hope we don't do is make statements and charges that would hurt both of us."

Then he noted the trouble the Farmington Area Advisory Council is having getting permission from the city to locate a drug center on school property near the administration building.

"There has been opposition raised to the building by the council on the grounds that it is a modular building. This raises the question as to whether the trailer park in the south end which the city is trying to annex. People live in those trailers who can't afford to live in the north end."

"Then," said Vagnozzi, there is the consolidation issue. We could have had the best of both city and township and cut out the duplication of services. Forces in the city defeated that move."

"On the question of the morality of grabbing township funds," said Vagnozzi, "I agree that it's a land grab—at the point where part of it becomes lucrative to grab."

"Wouldn't it be tragic if we finally got a responsive government in the township and the south end ends up annexed to the city?"



LIFELIKE DECOY — The ancient craft of wood carving is being taught at the center this fall by Mrs. Loretta Hawkinson. She is putting the finishing touches on a realistic duck, one of the objects her class may select to manufacture. (Evert photo)