

Rotary president welcomes women

By Bob Sklar
staff writer

No women who qualify would be denied membership in Farmington Rotary because of their sex.

"We're actively soliciting members all the time," said Robert Gardner, president of Farmington Rotary, whose 45 members include businessmen, professional men and public officials.

"Until we get direction from the district level, I wouldn't suggest we actively solicit women members," the Farmington Hills resident said. "But we certainly wouldn't turn any qualified applicants down."

Although some prefer the all-male

club, Gardner said he and other Rotarians would welcome women members. No women have applied for membership in Farmington Rotary.

"Frankly, I'm surprised," Gardner said.

Gardner's comments came in the wake of a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that said states may force Rotary clubs to admit women.

ON MAY 4, the justices upheld a California law that bars Rotary International from excluding local chapters that have women members.

Writing for the court, Justice Lewis Powell said California law does not interfere with the constitutional

rights of Rotarians to associate freely.

Although surprised, Rotary International President M.A.T. Caparas said Rotary will abide by the court's decision.

"We will continue to follow all admission requirements for members other than the male-only provision in those places where this provision is determined to be contrary to the law," he said.

FARMINGTON ROTARY raises money throughout the year to help support such community services as the Sarah Fisher Home for Children, the Salvation Army, the YMCA, the Easter Seal Society, the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and Eagle Ele-

mentary's special education program.

On a worldwide scale, Farmington Rotary helps fund Rotary International's polio immunization program in developing countries.

It also participates in Rotary International's high school student and graduate student exchange programs. This year, for example, the club is hosting a Swedish student at North Farmington High.

POWELL COMPARED Rotary clubs to public accommodations in rejecting arguments that Rotarians have a First Amendment right to bar women.

The clubs are sizeable, have a high turnover rate, engage in public ac-

tivities, encourage participation by non-members and welcome news media coverage of many activities, he said.

"The evidence in this case indicates that the relationship among Rotary club members is not the kind of intimate or private relation that warrants constitutional protection," Powell said.

"The membership undertakes a variety of service projects designed to aid the community, to raise the standards of the members' businesses and professions and to improve international relations," he said.

"In sum, Rotary Clubs, rather than carrying on their activities in an atmosphere of privacy, seek to keep their 'windows and doors open to the whole world,'" Powell said.

While its ruling reinforced the power of states to curb sex discrimination, the court provided no checklist on what other organizations might be affected.

POWELL SUGGESTED that it requires a case-by-case analysis to determine whether an organization is sufficiently private to base membership on gender.

In 1984, the justices ruled that the Jaycees may be forced by states to admit women as full members. That decision said a Minnesota law banning discrimination by "public accommodations" applies to the Jaycees.

Today, the Farmington Area Jaycees has several women members and a woman president, Louise Coleman.

The court ruling does not answer

the question of whether state public accommodations laws may apply to such groups as the Kiwanis, Lions, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

Rotary International has nearly 1 million members in 20,000 clubs in 54 nations.

The Associated Press contributed to this story.

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Roads topic of public hearing

By Joanne Maliszowski
staff writer

Taxpayers will have a chance to learn and to provide suggestions and opinions on a variety of options for financing \$700 million in improvements on Oakland County roads.

Interested residents may attend a public hearing scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, in the Farmington Hills City Council chambers, 31555 11 Mile.

The public hearing is sponsored by the Oakland County Board of Com-

missioner's relatively new five-member transportation committee led by commissioner John McDonald, R-Farmington.

"We'll take questions and suggestions. We have sent out letters to various people and groups. I hope we get some input from all of these meetings," McDonald said.

The Farmington Hills meeting is the first of 11 public hearings scheduled throughout May and June in Oakland County communities. When the hearings are completed, the transportation committee is expect-

ed to provide a recommendation to the county board of commissioners on which financing methods should be pursued, McDonald said.

An Oakland County Road Commission representative will be on hand Tuesday to explain proposals developed by commissioners and how much money would be generated from the various options, McDonald said.

JIM BRENNAN, county board of commissioners' researcher, also will explain the county's economic boom

and resulting road problems — and what money is available to attack the problem.

The road commission's program is a two-pronged approach that involves action on both the county and state level.

A property tax increase — levying an additional 62 cents per \$1,000 in assessed value — is the only tool available to the county without the state Legislature's help. If approved, the tax increase would generate about \$10 million.

The legislature is working on a bill that would allow local communities to levy economic impact fees on business developers.

The legislature also is working on local-voted tax options, such as a tax on motor vehicle fuels sold in Oakland County.

THE SECOND major thrust of the road program would rely on the state. If a local gas tax is approved, the road commission would request an adjustment in the way gas tax revenues are distributed to counties.

A statewide gas tax increase apparently is out of the question. "Blanchard has taken a position saying he would not support such a thing," McDonald said.

Local reaction at the scheduled public hearings will help commissioners determine which plan, if any, will be placed on the ballot.

He's remembered as a gentleman

By Bob Sklar
staff writer

He was always a gentleman. He was always a professional. And he always treated kids fairly and with respect.

Warner Middle School principal Walter Scobie was talking about Eddy E. Ellegood, a longtime Farmington Public Schools teacher, who died May 4, 1987, at Providence Hospital, Southfield. He was 57.

The Farmington resident taught in the district for 29 years — music at O.E. Dunckel Middle School from 1957 to 1973 and English at Warner Middle School from 1973 until his re-

irement in 1986.

"Students always knew what you could expect from Eddy and he was expected of them," said Scobie, a former Dunckel assistant principal.

Scobie characterized Ellegood as "a person whose primary concern was to help and prepare them for the kind of challenges they'd meet educationally in high school and college."

AT A memorial service Thursday night at Ted C. Sullivan Funeral Home in Novi, several of Ellegood's former students spoke.

"One of his students last year stated how important Eddy had been to her in developing her English

skills," Scobie said.

The Lowes, Ky., native is a 1955 graduate of Murray State University, Murray, Ky. He earned a master's degree from Wayne State University in 1966.

His civic involvement included membership in the Farmington Players.

Survivors include his wife, Mary Ann; his mother, Ellen Ward; and one brother, James.

Burial was in Lowes Cemetery, Lowes, Ky.

The family asks that memorials be made to the Eddy E. Ellegood Memorial Fund through Farmington Public Schools.

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