

Oakland Forming New Grand Jury

Creation of a 17-man citizen grand jury to investigate individual and organized crime in Oakland County was announced Monday by County Prosecutor Thomas G. Plunkett.

Plunkett petitioned the Oakland County Circuit Court last week to impanel the jury, stating he has received information from reliable sources and has conducted investigations into complaints of criminal conduct in the county.

Plunkett says certain persons having knowledge of the criminal conduct would be able to give material evidence before the grand jury with proper safeguards of secrecy and immunity. He adds that law enforcement officers of the state have had difficulty solving crimes and persons having knowledge of crimes are unwilling to volunteer information.

Given the grand jury's subpoena power, Plunkett said, law enforcement officers will be able to apprehend suspects and bring them before the appropriate court for disposition.

Plunkett described as "wide open" corruption of public officials and organized crime in the area of drug traffic, murder, and the Costa Nostra.

"These cases are ready-made for the grand jury," Plunkett said Monday. He said there have been two cases of "murder for hire" in the county in the past four years.

"The crime problem in Oakland County is not more severe or widespread than anywhere else," Plunkett said, "but we're kidding ourselves in the suburbs if we think the crime problem exists only in Wayne County. Our fight against crime is as intense as the fight in the inner city."

Plunkett said that every major state has a citizen grand jury and only in Michigan have the courts taken so long to use the jury as an effective law-enforcement tool. Since last March, when the new Grand Jury Bill was signed, juries have

been impaneled in Wayne, Genesee and Jackson counties.

Plunkett said it would be a violation of law to reveal cases or individuals which may be investigated when the grand jury is impaneled before the end of the year.

The prosecutor indicated that drug sale statutory violations would be among priority investigations.

Plunkett said that evidence from Peter Lazarus, alleged Mafia informer, would probably not be investigated by the grand jury.

"There comes a point when a matter can be beaten to death," he said. "Federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies have examined evidence, but there have been no prosecutions. A great deal of evidence in the Lazarus case was obtained in the secrecy of a one-man judicial investigation."

Plunkett said the jury would be impaneled within a week, if budgetary red tape can be cut, and at the latest by the end of the year. Plunkett will be prosecuting attorney for the panel and will try some of the cases.

The jury will be impaneled at all times and will sit as needed at a cost of \$25,000 to \$50,000 per year.

Plunkett said the jury will investigate evidence of corruption among public officials, homicides and conspiracy to murder. The decision to indict will be up to nine of the 17 persons on the grand jury.



MIKE KLEPINGER peers over his glasses in his role of Grandpa Vanderhof for the production of "You Can't Take It With You" to be presented at Farmington High School Dec. 10 and 12. (Evert photo)

Clark Hospitalized

Dr. Ronald Clark is suffering from a bleeding ulcer and is in Jackson State Prison hospital receiving treatments. Clark suffered an attack on Thursday, Dec. 3, as he was being removed from Jackson to go to Marshall, Mich., for his preliminary examination.

Dr. Clark is standing trial on a manslaughter charge in connection with the death of his former office manager, Hannah Bowerbank. Clark is serving a 3-15 year sentence in Jackson after being convicted of manslaughter in the death of his former nurse, Grace Neil of Livonia.

Time For Singing

The advent of Christmas brings with it a wide selection of concerts featuring winter and Yule music. In addition to the Sunday concert in Farmington Senior High, coming up are presentations by Harrison High School, O.E. Dunckel Junior High and the Farmington Musicale.

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Almanac

The Farmer's Almanac may tell you everything about the weather but you will have to consult Farmington's Almanac, the Farmington Enterprise & Observer, to keep up with the local news and events. Check inside your weekend almanac for such regular features as the Community Calendar, Local News and Wood Creek Farms.

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ONE AND ONLY—There are 151 district judges in Michigan and the only one selected to receive a citation from the Michigan District Judges Association was Farmington District Judge Michael Hand. Presenting the plaque in recognition of Hand's chairmanship of the rules committee of the district courts was Judge Alice Gilbert, president of the state judges association. The ceremony took place at Boyne Mountain during the annual district judges conference.

New Horizons Plans Event

New Horizons of Oakland County, Inc. a rehabilitation facility for the handicapped, will hold open house from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Dec. 16 at its Farmington office, 35100 Grand River at Drake.

New Horizons of Oakland County is a community-based program providing vocational training and employment opportunities for the handicapped in Oakland County.

The first workshop opened its doors in January of 1965. It was located in a small building in Royal Oak with the capacity to serve 30 people on a daily basis. Today, the three workshops have the capacity to serve 275 disabled people daily.

The disabled person at New Horizons is gaining vocational experience while working on sub-contract work obtained from many industrial plants and businesses in the community. While serving the disabled, New Horizons also provides manpower for a growing number of businesses in the community. The worker at New Horizons is receiving intensive vocational training and close supervision, and as a result, quality control is practiced at all times.

If you are interested in having New Horizons do sub-contract work, contact the main office at Madison Heights. The telephone number is 585-9593.

By LYNNE LUTHER

"Housing for our senior citizens is one of our prime concerns," former Farmington Township Supervisor Curtis Hall told the Farmington Enterprise & Observer.

Since old-timers with incomes of less than \$3,000 make up about eight per cent of the population of section 36 alone, two district housing projects have been proposed in the township.

ONE, according to attorney Harold A. Larson, will see construction begin on an 82-unit retirement center and infirmary on 13 Mile Road near Middle Belt, directly across from the Glen Oak Country Club.

The proposed retirement center is sponsored by the Detroit Baptists Manor, a Michigan non-profit organiza-

[Following is the sixth in a series of articles written by Lynne Luther concerning living conditions in Farmington Township's Section 36, a one-square-mile area which includes the largest concentration of poverty in western Oakland County.]

tion, and affiliated with the American Baptist Churches of Detroit and the American Baptist Home Mission Societies.

Larson said construction should begin within the "next three months" and that "this is only the beginning." He said the structure will probably be expanded in the future.

ANOTHER SENIOR citizens' housing plan is still "up in the air," according to Earl C. Opperhauser, trustee and chairman of the township's housing commission.

"We applied to HUD (the

township to bail them out. We don't have funds for that purpose."

"FRANKLY," he went on, "we're probably going to take the route most satisfactory to these people and give them a break."

"Now with the annexation question settled, we may be able to take care of the drains by financing on a millage basis."

"That way, the people who can afford to pay will pay the most and it will also require industries to pay on a pro-rated basis on the assessment ratio."

Opperhauser said cityhood would probably have a good effect on Section 36 as well as the rest of the township because "taxes against property will probably be greater

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PILES OF TRASH mar an otherwise grassy, uncluttered landscape in fields around the Eight Mile-

Middle Belt-Grand River area. (Evert photo)



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