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1990 Suburban Communications Corporation

Hills officials react to paper's series

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

The debut of the Detroit News' six-part series on suburban public officials and their business interests had officials in Farmington Hills buzzing Monday.

Given a starring role in the series' first installment Sunday was councilman Ben Marks, who has asked city attorney John Donohue for a legal opinion about his alleged conflict of interest reported in the continuing series. While some city officials quietly criticized

the News' series, the stories, particularly those that spotlighted Marks, prompted Mayor Jean Fox to suggest a resurrection of the city's former ethics code committee. "Farmington Hills has once again made the headlines," Fox said. "I was a bit perturbed. This is an ethics story and it is alleged to involve Farmington Hills."

The mayor promised that in November she will provide proposals "to deal with this situation," which she fears will "damage us all," impugn government and which "brings cynicism to the public."

None of the council members opposed Fox's suggestions and none were publicly critical of Marks, described in the series as a councilman who twice voted for low-interest loans for a "longtime business partner."

PUBLICLY, MARKS said little Monday. He later told the Observer that the series failed to mention the number of times he has voted against developers and builders, including those with which he has or has had financial or business relationships. Marks also said he has always admitted that builders and developers

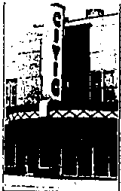
are major contributors to his political campaigns.

"They don't give you the impression everyone voted in concert," Marks said, adding that he was not the only council member to vote on requests or projects described in the series.

The Farmington Hills city charter prohibits members of the council and city boards and commissions from voting on issues in which they have a financial stake.

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FARMINGTON



FOCUS

OFF TO jail with him! The gendarmes showed up at the Farmington Hills City Hall Tuesday morning and left with city assessor Dean Babb in handcuffs. Babb was hauled off to the hoosegow... in Southfield's Tel-12 Mall, of all places.

There he was photographed and hauled was set. The charges were unclear, but there was something said about "drinking too much coffee" at work.

Now, before the lawyers start opening their briefcases, Babb wasn't really arrested. It was all part of a fundraiser for the March of Dimes. Prominent people were "jailed" at the mall. The "bail" they raised went to the charity.

Babb's "arrest," however, created quite a stir around City Hall. He was pulled out of a meeting with the city manager and other department heads.

"There was a lot of booing and hollering," said Bob Boschna, an appraiser for the city.

As of Tuesday morning, there was no word on the amount of Babb's bail — or if he could raise it.

TRICK-OR-treating, an institution for Farmington-area youngsters, can be a fun experience and goblins keep safety in mind.

As part of its "Light Up A Life" program, AAA Michigan offers safety tips to ensure a safe Halloween. Some tips:

- Trick-or-treat while it is still light outside.
- Wear bright costumes with reflective paint or tape and short enough to prevent tripping.
- Wear face makeup instead of a mask.
- Only visit houses with lighted porch lights. Never enter a stranger's house.
- Carry a flashlight to light the way and alert motorists.
- Cross streets at corners and look for traffic in all directions before stepping off a curb.
- If there is no sidewalk, walk facing traffic.
- Adults should chaperone young children on their Halloween rounds and inspect candy before it is eaten.
- Motorists can help make sure that Halloween is safe for children by being alert while driving and by limiting their speed to 15 miles per hour during trick-or-treat hours. Headlights, of course, should be switched on at twilight.

MEMORY LANE — From the Oct. 25, 1990, Farmington Enterprise: Only \$750 had been collected in the United Fund and Community Chest quota of \$7,500 for the Farmington area... Attractions at the Civic Theatre were "Rock Island Trail" with Forrest Tucker and "Captive Girl" with Buster Crabbe... Classified items: "Room for Gentleman. Phone 6994-W."

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 2189 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, or dropped off at the newspaper office.



ART EMANUELE/staff photographer

The car that went shopping

Farmington Hills police say the driver of this car stepped on the gas pedal instead of the brakes at 12:30 p.m. Saturday, which sent her car crashing through the front window of Mar-me! Gifts and Toys, at 28857 Orchard Lake Road. Though the store was filled with shoppers young and old alike, no one was injured inside. The driver was treated for minor injuries.

Chief: Neutral in local elections

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Despite the photo in Judge Fred Harris' campaign literature, Farmington Hills police Chief William Dwyer says he does not make public endorsements of political candidates.

"I wasn't even aware of the literature until someone brought it to my attention," said Dwyer, who posed for the photograph when Gov. James Blanchard visited the police department earlier in the political season to acknowledge endorsements from police unions.

"I'm non-partisan. I don't support or endorse anyone," Dwyer said. "Nowhere in his literature is my name mentioned, I'm not concerned."

But a few residents, who would not identify themselves, expressed concern to the Observer that the police chief's photo is included in campaign literature.

Harris' campaign manager Al Holtz said he doesn't believe there is any significance to the few concerns, and he wondered whether they were the concerns of supporters of Harris'.

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Families in Action founder to be honored



Betty Nicolay
Citizen of the Year

By Casey Hans
staff writer

It's a timely honor.

Betty Nicolay, chairwoman of the board and founder of the anti-drug action group Farmington Families in Action, will be honored tonight as the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce 1990 Citizen of the Year.

The award comes during Substance Abuse Awareness Month, celebrated widely throughout October in the Farmington community. "I wasn't aware that my name had been entered," said Nicolay, 60, who has lived in the Farmington area for 33 years. She recently learned of the honor. "I'm really deeply, deeply honored."

know your neighbor

Nicolay will receive her award tonight at the group's annual banquet, being held at the Clarion Hotel in Farmington Hills.

Philip Power — chairman of Suburban Communications Corp., which owns the Farmington Observer — will speak at the banquet.

THE COMMUNITY activist and mother of three said she has seen a big change in the awareness level about drugs since forming FFIA seven years ago but said a continued effort is needed because the problem

will never be totally gone. "The best we can do is to be honest and truthful with young people and adults," she said. "Hopefully we can delay (drug) use by the kids."

"I think the fact the schools are trying to put together a health curriculum and drug awareness program is good. I hope kids see the community really cares about them."

Nicolay was nominated for the annual honor by a number of community leaders, including FFIA president Sue Dolesh, Farmington City Coun-

cilwoman and FFIA board member JoAnne McShane, parent activist and past FFIA president Tina Jensen, State Rep. Jan Dolan, Farmington school superintendent Michael Flanagan, Farmington Hills Police Chief William Dwyer, 4th District Court Judge Frederick Harris, Nardin Park United Methodist Church minister William Ritter and Farmington Hills City Councilman Terry Sever.

"Not many volunteers can hold a candle to her years of selfless dedication to eradicate substance abuse in our community," said Jensen.

McShane said "I don't feel there's a more deserving person for this honor," and Flanagan called Nicolay

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The CLASSIFIEDS

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As U.S. budget crisis worsens, local anger, discontent grows

By Darrell Clom
staff writer

Intense bleking among U.S. legislators over deficit-reduction measures has sparked a backlash of criticism from Oakland County residents who labeled Congress' actions "a disgrace" and "irresponsible."

A survey conducted Monday by The Observer & Eccentric revealed sweeping condemnation of the Congressional squabbling over tax increases and spending cuts aimed at reducing the deficit. The informal survey was conducted at the Birmingham Post Office, the Southfield Civic Center, Troy's



Somerset Mall and the West Bloomfield Township Public Library.

"I THINK THE legislators have been very inefficient," said Tom Williams, Southfield parks supervisor. "They should have had the budget

problems worked out a long time ago. It's a mess."

The budget crisis marked the first time since World War II that Congress had been in session this late in an election year. The stormy negotiations reinforced what Irene Seaver-Habowski already believed — that U.S. legislators should be limited to three terms.

"By then they're so influenced by lobbyists and special interest groups that they lose sight of the fact that their job is to serve the people," said the West Bloomfield resident, who

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