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SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

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A note to our readers:

Road construction and traffic jams are companions in Oakland County this construction season. The residential and commercial development boom sweeping the county has left many roads clogged for much of the workday, not just during rush hour. We live and work in a 900-square-mile county with 1.16-million residents and an even bigger daytime population. To help motorists navigate the detours, The Observer today presents on Page 24A an informational package that includes a color map and chart of selected road-improvement projects. We know it'll prove helpful in trying to wend your way around the county over the summer. If you have a road-construction experience you'd like to share with other readers, write or fax us: Oakland County Editor, Farmington Observer, 33411 Grand River, Farmington, 48335, fax (810) 477-9722. We always welcome letters to the editor. Meanwhile, drive defensively!

Tom Beech
Editor

IN THE PAPER TODAY

'Bucs' stop here: It's budget time, and Captain and City Manager Frank Lauhoff and deckhands are keeping the pirates at bay. /2A

Deserves a Diamond: Bette Strauch's first reaction to being named the 1995 Diamond Award recipient was "I don't deserve it. Give it to someone else." /3A

Turning right: The head of the national ACLU gave heart, perspective to local liberals in a Farmington Hills talk Monday. /3A

If you build it: Wayne State University expects 10,000 students at its Farmington Hills location on 12 Mile Road. /10A

COMMUNITY LIFE

Fit for exercise: American House residents are feeling the results of fitness classes. /13A

At your service: Student Andrew Tomasin: Would mandatory community service hurt so much? /13A

OPINION

Bucolic billing: That "Natural Beauty" setting on Power Road north of 11 Mile is worth saving. Let's hope something can be worked out. /22A

SPORTS

Hawks in charge: Harrison High moved closer to a division baseball title Monday by routing Plymouth Canton. /1C

Playoff upset: Mercy High was eliminated in the first round of the Catholic League softball tournament Monday. /1C

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Lichtman's job raises eyebrows



Farmington Hills Councilman Larry Lichtman has created yet another stir by joining a law firm that represents the developer of the controversial Timbercrest project.

By MARY RODRIGUE
STAFF WRITER

A Farmington Hills councilman's new job has caused a stir among some of his peers and some residents of the community, who are calling it a major conflict of interest.

Councilman Larry Lichtman joined

the Birmingham law firm of Carson Fischer on May 1. The firm represents the Joma Company, developer of the controversial Timbercrest development at 12 Mile and Middlebelt roads.

Lichtman was the first councilman to support the residential/commercial

development which was vehemently opposed by a group of area residents. He also accepted campaign contributions from the developer. As a result, he was the target of an unsuccessful recall campaign.

"Larry sent (council) a memo in our packets over the weekend saying he had switched jobs," said Councilman Terry Sewer. "A few of us are very concerned about the public perception this might have on the City Council. It's very tough to stay above the doubt the public already has of government."

Contacted in his new office —

where he specializes in bankruptcy, business reorganization and commercial law — Lichtman says his job won't compromise his integrity as a councilman.

He has served on the Farmington Hills City Council since 1989 and spent a year as mayor in 1994.

"The primary reason I informed the council was to let them know I will abstain from any vote regarding this developer," Lichtman said. "I have switched law firms; that's a matter of my personal business. The only

See COUNCIL, 5A

Defending their 'Natural Beauty'



SHARON LAMBERT/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Relying 'round: Power Road residents (from left) Irene and Sy Kernicky, Maureen Theiring, Dr. Alan Ackroyd, Marty Salata and Jim Theiring will be at a Planning Commission meeting at 7:30 p.m. tonight at the Farmington Hills City Hall, 11 Mile and Orchard Lake. They're concerned about a residential development planned for their "Natural Beauty Road." An editorial on the issue is on page 22A.

Candidate seeks to serve

By LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Her calendar speaks more about her than Linda Enberg will say about herself.

The date sheet resembles a one-sided tic-tac-toe game. Several dates are crossed off, noting meetings and appointments scheduled with many of the groups for which she volunteers.

Enberg, 49, wants another assignment: To serve on the Farmington Board of Education. She is one of two candidates vying for an open seat in the June 12 school election.

Enberg is not a boisterous candidate. She chooses her words as carefully as picking apples from a roadside stand.

In her view, service speaks louder than campaign promises.

"I guess my main background has been as a parent with children," said Enberg, who has two sons, including one attending Farmington High. "I've always had a little broader interest because I've done a lot of community work."

Enberg is co-president of Farmington Families in Action. She is an instructor in Talking With Your Kids About Alcohol.

Her school involvement list is more extensive.

Enberg is president of the Farmington High Advisory Board. She is serving on the Mission 2007 Planning Team, which is analyzing reports on what will be the district's future

Marching orders.

She's also been on the School Community Forum and was on the Schools of Choice Student Committee.

She betrays her knowledge of district affairs in subtle ways.

When talking about basic education, she mentions how phonics are taught in the district's Alpha program. She wonders about the state's recently mandated high school proficiency tests, noting how writing samples will be contracted to an outside firm to be graded.

"I think we should be able to do this locally at a lot less money," Enberg said.

When discussing the financial picture, she quickly cites the expectant



Linda Enberg

1.6-percent annual increases in state funding. That won't keep up with in-

See ENBERG, 2A

Councilman to call it quits after 21 years

By LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Farmington's most- outspoken council member has quietly said he's not going to seek re-election.

Dick Tupper's two-year term expires this fall. After Monday's council meeting, Tupper admitted privately he'll likely close out 21 years on the Farmington City Council.

"I've been on long enough," Tupper said. "We have to break some new people in."

Tupper, 62, plans to eventually retire from his Farmington-based business, Tupper Associates. Tupper and his wife, Donna, will spend more time at their condominium in Palm Beach Shores, Fla., when his council term concludes.

Tupper's tenure has been marked by being a ferocious defender of city ordinances, and by his candor.

He's taken others to task, including one contractor on the city's \$13 million sewer separation project. He also has not been afraid to be on the wrong side of a 4-1 vote on the five-member council.

At times, others have grimaced or rolled their eyes at some of Tupper's humor — if not biting — observations. A source of Tupper's jokes said his style will be missed "tremendously."

"He's mentioned before that he's not going to run," Councilman William Hartcock said. "But I think this time he's serious."

Tupper has lived in Farmington for 58 years and graduated from Farmington High in 1960. He has been elected to three four-year terms and three two-year terms.

Tupper was appointed in 1971 to fill the term of Wilbur Brotherton,

who was elected to the County Commission.

His father, Bayard Tupper, was appointed to his seat when Dick resigned to pursue business interests in 1982. Dick joined the council again in 1985.

In 1993, Tupper tied with Mary Bush for second place in the city election behind Arnie Campbell. The pair had to draw out of a hat to see who'd get the four- or two-year term.

"You probably didn't know it at the time, but I was hoping I'd get the two-year term," Tupper said. "That's about all the time I wanted to serve."

"The city attorney said, 'No, you can't take the two-year term.' When Mary got the four-year term, I said, 'fine. If I would have gotten the four-year term, I would have served it.'"



Dick Tupper

See TUPPER, 2A