

the farmington

enterprise & observer

YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

15¢ a Copy

Wednesday, March 22, 1972

Henry Trombley Retirement Ends 47-Year Postal Career



By SANDRA ARMBRUSTER

An era in Farmington history will come to a close soon when Henry L. Trombley, postmaster of Farmington, retires March 31.

"I've seen quite a lot of the goings on in the business of this town," explained Trombley. After originally joining the post office department in Detroit in 1925, Trombley transferred to Farmington in 1927 as a clerk.

LATER in 1952, Trombley was appointed as assistant postmaster and in 1958 he was promoted to postmaster.

Trombley's most impressive memories record historical events during the past 40 years which have affected the post office. One of his more significant memories is of the depression years in Farmington. Like elsewhere, the banks failed in Farmington and business was conducted through local post offices.

Later, when the U.S. government switched from gold to silver currency, the Farmington Post Office was involved in the exchange. Further innovations in money orders, particularly the \$10 postal note, left memorable impressions with Trombley. All of Trombley's historical memories aren't pleasant ones.

"There was a terrible fire on a below-zero night which

burned through two stores and then the post office.

That was when the post office was located on Grand River. We had to get out to save the records and files by carrying them out in the middle of the night," explained Trombley.

THE HISTORY of Farmington is also recorded in the growth of its post office since Trombley joined the staff.

In 1927, Farmington boasted it had three rural carriers, two clerks and a postmaster. In 1958, the postal service moved to its present location with a staff of 39 employees. After 40 years, Trombley said his staff has grown to a total of 134.

Under Trombley's direction, the post office has increased its volume of business to the present rate of a \$1 million annual sales category, and a payroll of \$1.5 million. Other than technical improvements in post office procedure, Trombley said his job has been "directed by the department, the public and now the unions. All you can do is get in there and referee the best you can."

TROMBLEY has lived in Farmington with his wife, Beulah, and a son and a daughter since about 1930. Mrs. Trombley retired two years ago as municipal and district clerk for Farmington.

His family history is also deeply involved in the early

life of Farmington. About 93 years ago, Trombley's mother journeyed from New York past his Shiawassee home by horse and buggy with six other families.

Before joining the post office, Trombley worked with his father on a dairy farm, and sold Warner Dairy products to Farmington residents.

With so many historical memories, Trombley and his wife are not about to leave their home in Farmington after retirement. "We plan to do a little traveling spasmodically to California

and Florida," added Trombley.

Trombley will trade the "headaches of being boss" with work with Farmington's historical society when he retires. Such hobbies as dancing, refinishing antiques and woodwork will also be keeping Trombley busy in the future.

Trombley's retirement will begin with a grand opening when fellow employees honor him with a dinner-dance at Roma Hall, 2777 Schoolcraft, Livonia, on April 1.

Smolek Quits As President



WILLIAM B. SMOLEK

William B. Smolek resigned effective Monday as president of the Village of Wood Creek Farms.

His unexpected resignation followed a week after the March 13 village elections which resulted in election of two councilmen opposed to rezoning of Outlot D.

Smolek, who favored rezoning and supported the council's 3-2 vote on that issue, interpreted the March 13 balloting as a mandate by residents against the rezoning.

A REPLACEMENT for Smolek will be named by the new council to serve his unexpired term.

That action could be taken at a special meeting or at the next regular meeting on Tuesday, April 4, at 8 p.m. in the Sarah Fisher Home.

With Smolek's resignation, those opposed to rezoning Outlot D now hold a majority on the council, and so it is expected the new village president to be appointed might be David Goldman who led the field March 13.

Goldman resigned as village attorney in January because the council had rezoned Outlot D without holding the second public hearing which Goldman felt was required.

OUTLOT D on Northwestern Highway has been rezoned from residential to office as requested by Roger Wardle, a Farmington Township attorney representing a Detroit law firm and Paul Iman Assoc. of Wood Creek Farms.

A lawsuit filed by village residents is pending in Oakland County Circuit Court,

and the village has been temporarily restrained from issuing a building permit for the two-story office building Wardle and Iman want to construct.

"The results of last Monday's election very clearly indicated that the majority of our residents are opposed to the rezoning of Outlot D, and they want a council which feels likewise, said Smolek. "I favor rezoning and realize that this conviction will only deepen the chasm already existing and curtail my effectiveness as village president."

"I, therefore, resign effective today in the hope that progress might be accomplished in uniting this village."

SMOLEK CONCLUDED that it has been an enjoyable seven years working on the village council and added he hopes "the old esprit de corps can be restored."

Smolek, 53, is president of Air-Matic Products Co., Inc., of 22215 Telegraph, Southfield. He is a graduate of Northwestern University, life member of the American Ordnance Assn.

today's hot line

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what's inside

5,000 Unconcerned

A school request for new millage is usually considered a matter important to all residents, but in Farmington there are some 5,000 persons who could care less. That's the estimated number of eligible voters who have yet to register for the April millage vote.

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National Winner

A Farmington senior has won a national award for a research paper she wrote on the availability of jobs in the Farmington area for the handicapped.

Page 4A

Bussing Writer

Journalists attending a press conference held by Brooks Patterson, NAG attorney, heard him say the anti-bussing cause needs the aid of the news media. And so one student journalist submitted a news story which this media has printed.

Page 3A

Be Influential

Do you wish you had something to say about the kind of movies being produced today? A famous lady of the screen says you do. Read how she explained it to a Farmington Town Hall audience last week.

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Open Auditions

If you've an urge to act, Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge campus offers a good opportunity to get started. Open auditions are being held this week for three plays.

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observer newspapers

Local Youths Are Defendants In Detroit Segregation Suit

Three Farmington children, attending Longacre Elementary School of Farmington schools, have been entered as defendants by Tri-County Citizens in the Detroit school segregation lawsuit being heard by Federal Judge Steven Roth.

The three are Deborah, 10, Patricia, 8, and Denise, 5, children of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Rossman of 35205 Oakland, Farmington.

Rossman is employed by Chrysler Corp. and his wife, Mary Ann, has been an active participant with Tri-County Citizens for Intervention in Federal School Action 35257.

THE THREE Rossman children have entered as defendants along with dozens of other children living in

Oakland, Wayne and Macomb counties.

The children are intervening because they would become the victims of any alleged dangers or loss in educational quality if Roth orders cross-district bussing. Tri-County Citizens has been allowed by Roth to intervene in the lawsuit along with a number of suburban school districts including Southfield, Allen Park, Grosse Pointe and Royal Oak.

When Roth allowed Tri-County to intervene on March 15 he also denied an intervention request from the City of Warren and from individuals on the basis that their interests were adequately represented by parties now entered in the suit.

In asking for intervention,

Tri-County Citizens challenged the authority of the court to consider a metropolitan plan without suburban participation. "This would be like a trial without a defendant," says Robert Lord, attorney for Tri-County Citizens.

Lord, whose offices are in Roseville, adds "It is a fact that a suburban desegregation plan would more directly affect suburban school children and parents than school district officials."

WHILE ALLOWING intervention by Tri-County Citizens, Roth established that the group may not:

1. Assert any claim or cause previously decided by the court;
2. Reopen any question or issue previously decided;

3. Seek a delay of any proceeding. They shall be bound by the brief and hearing schedules already established.

4. File counterclaims or cross-complaints or ask for intervention of additional parties or dismissal of present parties unless proving such action will not result in delay.

Roth said the group could intervene to advise the court of the legal propriety of considering a metropolitan plan and to submit objections, suggested modifications, or alternatives to a metropolitan plan.

In filing for intervention, Lord argued that the State of Michigan and Detroit school board inadequately represent the interest of the 27,000 suburban residents who have

City Votes To Pave Drake Rd., But Residents Threaten Lawsuit

Final hearings have been held, and Drake Road will be paved in the City of Farmington, barring any successful court action taken by opposing residents.

That timetable should proceed unless opposing residents obtain a court restraining order to determine if the council action was proper.

THE HEARING Monday night established that cost of improving Drake would be borne by those whose property fronts or sides on Drake.

Cost of the paving is estimated at \$46,400 with \$33,640 being provided by the special assessment district and about \$12,760 by general obligation bonds.

Assessment was established by the council at \$7 per front foot to all property owners fronting Drake. For persons whose property sides on Drake, the assessment formula will be one-half the depth of the lot or \$700 on a 200-foot deep lot.

RESIDENTS living on Drake will be assessed as well as businesses, apartments and the Drake Road Park. Left off the assessment roll, however, were residents living within Drake Heights subdivision

whose only exit is Drake Rd. The improvement will be seven-inch, deep-strength asphalt with a five-year guarantee and 20-year expected life. The roadway would be 22 feet wide.

The project does not include curbs, gutters and enclosed drains, which are projected to be added in the future when Drake may be classified as a major road and thereby be eligible for state gas and weight tax rebate revenues.

ROBIN CHAMPNESS, a resident with frontage on Drake, told councilmen a lawsuit would be taken once the final votes were taken to confirm the assessment roll.

Champness claims that when the majority of residents in an assessment district oppose paving, the project cannot proceed unless four of the five councilmen vote favorably. The vote at the necessary hearing was 3-1 with one councilman absent.

Petitions objecting to paving Drake were presented to councilmen signed by 11 persons. Also presented was a letter stating opposition to paving signed by nine residents on Drake Road.

Residents signing the letter stated: "We suggest that the present situation reflects a public need, not one created by the residents of Drake Rd. We believe that public needs

should be gratified by public funds and not the 'Robin Hood' approach of payment by a select few."

They argued Drake is in good condition during summer months when the park is used and suggested Drake Heights residents share the paving costs.

THE COUNCIL, at one time, was considering assessing only major users and leaving the Drake Road residents off the assessment roll. Under this plan, the city at-large would pay the expenses, which would have been assessed against Drake Road homeowners.

That plan, however, was

ruled improper by the city's bonding attorneys and opposed in principle by some councilmen.

Champness observed the city had conflicting engineering reports on the asphalt project and should avoid making any improvement until the city was able to pay for concrete paving of Drake.

Robert Tilley, a Drake Road resident, said he felt the assessment district was unfair because it left out the 44 homes in Drake Heights whose only exit was Drake. Councilman John Allen pointed out that the city will be paying about 25 per cent of the total paving costs.