

Farmington Observer & Eccentric

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Field fires

Farmington Hills firemen doused flames that engulfed more than five acres Monday afternoon near Thirteen Mile and Farmington roads. Another field fire started at the same site the following day. The Farmington Hills Public Safety Department could not release any additional information regarding the fire. It was one of several field fires that has plagued the city this summer.

Photographs by Craig Newman

Court decision makes voter percentage low

By CARL STODDARD
FARMINGTON — Several thousand pages of history have been written since the primary election on Aug. 6.

Most of that history is concerned with the resignation of Richard Nixon and the succession of Gerald Ford.

Almost lost in the shuffle were the state representative, county commission and judgeship races in the Farmington area.

But despite the relatively little notice these races received, most people acknowledge that they are important. In fact, it can be argued that the persons elected to these local offices will have more direct effect on the Farmington area than the Presidency.

LOCAL PRIMARY RACES in Farmington included a judgeship race, two contested county commission races and a contested state representative race.

The outcome of these races, along with another county commission race and a state senate race will be decided in the November general election.

In the primary election, 9,105 of the 32,199 registered voters in Farmington and Farmington Hills voted. This represents about 28 percent of the registered voters.

In a breakdown by cities, slightly more than 36 percent of the registered voters in the City of Farmington voted. In Farmington Hills, just over 26 percent of the registered voters cast ballots.

Floyd Cairns, Farmington Hills city clerk, said he believed the turnout was about average for a primary election.

Cairns also noted that the percentage of voters would have been higher if he had been allowed to clear the "deadwood" from his files.

He said that a recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling stopped the practice of dropping persons from the voter rolls who have not voted in two years. Now, Cairns said, it is usually necessary to receive a death certificate before removing a name from the records.

STILL ON THE FILE are people who have moved away and not notified the clerk's office. Cairns said about two percent of the registered voters in Farmington Hills are, what he termed "deadwood."

In the race for the Republican nomination, for the 64th State Representative District, Wilbur V. "Sandy" Brotherton easily outdistanced the other three GOP candidates.

Brotherton won in both Farmington and Farmington Hills, with 882 and 1,083 votes respectively. His closest challenger, Farmington Hills City Councilman William Ortman received 134 votes in Farmington and 618 in his own city.

Brotherton had said earlier that he wondered how much voter support he would have in Farmington Hills. As it turned out, he bested Ortman in all but one of the 27 precincts.

In virtually every race, the voters of Farmington Hills and Farmington favored the same candidates.

Both cities decisively voted for Sander Levin to head the Democratic ticket in the state. In Farmington Hills, Levin lost only one precinct to Jerome Cavanaugh.

IN THE PRIMARY ELECTION for the 27th District County Commission seat, Gerald Farrell won the Democratic nomination with the most votes in both cities.

His Republican opponent this fall will be John J. McDonald, who received 295 votes in Farmington and 318 in Farmington Hills. McDonald was topped in Farmington by August Barbrick, who received 348 votes. But McDonald still succeeded, winning the nomination by nearly 200 votes.

In the judicial race, most political observers were surprised to see two women win out over a field of 10 men in the primary for the newly created judgeship in Farmington's 47th District Court.

Piling up the most votes in the primary were Margaret Schaeffer and Judith Ann Holtz.

Clair Carney received the most votes in the City of Farmington in the judgeship race, but failed to take a single precinct in the Hills. Ms. Holtz took nine of the 27 Hills precincts, with a total of 1,150 votes. Mrs. Schaeffer received 1,238 votes, taking 10 and tying for one of the precincts in the Hills.

In the overall vote for the Farmington area, Mrs. Schaeffer compiled 1,645 votes, 266 votes more than Ms. Holtz.

For the two county questions, both Farmington area cities voted the same. Like the rest of the county, Farmington residents favored the adoption of a unified form of city government.

And as did other county residents, they voted for a unified county government with an elected executive.

Planning commission studies master plan

FARMINGTON — A new land use plan has been proposed by the Farmington Planning Commission. The commission will hold a hearing on the plan on Sept. 9.

The first master plan for the city was prepared in 1966. Eighteen months ago, the planning commission reviewed the plan and decided an updated master plan was needed.

According to city officials, a number of changes have been incorporated into the updated plan, but the major goals and objectives of the 1966 plan have been preserved.

A major addition to the 1966 plan involves land annexed to the city since that time, west of Gill Road to Halstead Road.

Through a series of zoning decisions in recent years, the pattern of development in the annexed area has been largely determined. The new plan, officials said, will reflect these zoning changes.

as single family residential, while in the 1966 plan this area was designated for office development.

The planning commission found that the area, which showed signs of deterioration in the early 1960's, has improved in recent years.

Because of this improvement, the planning commission concluded that the existing predominantly residential character of this frontage should be protected by maintaining it for residential use.

Part of the Grand River frontage is also included in a historic district designated by the updated plan. This district is bounded by Grand River Avenue, Farmington and Shiawassee roads.

This historic district includes some of the oldest buildings in the city. Special development controls are needed to conserve and enhance the historical character of the area, the planning commission said.

A portion of Farmington Road between frontage extending from Freedom Drive north to the central business district, which in the 1966 plan was designated as single-family (See NEW, Page 2)

City council considers recreation vehicle law

FARMINGTON — A city ordinance regulating the storage of recreational vehicles in Farmington may be revised to allow residents to park the vehicles behind the front property line of their homes.

The current ordinance, which was criticized by residents at a recent city council meeting, states that all recreational vehicles must be parked to the rear of the rear building line. That ordinance is in effect now.

Commercial vehicles weighing less than one ton may currently park behind the front building line.

A group of Farmington residents attended the July 15 council meeting to ask the council to reconsider the ordinance, which they said was inconvenient for recreational vehicle owners.

The residents said they were attending the council meeting in reaction to a July 3 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting during which three requests for variances to the ordinance were denied.

THE COUNCIL held a special study session to consider the ordinance on Tuesday, Aug. 13.

At that meeting they decided to investigate the matter and consider enacting some revisions to the ordinance.

The council may also alter the ordinance by reducing the size allowance for the vehicles.

Currently, the vehicles may not be more than 32 feet long and eight feet wide.

to the rear of the rear building line on any lot, site field or tract of land within a residential district in the City of Farmington and behind the side yard building line on any corner lot in a residential district in the city of Farmington.

Other sections include: "Recreation and camping equipment may be parked anywhere on the owner's premises for loading or unloading purposes for a period of not more than 24 hours.

"At no time shall recreation equipment be used for living or housekeeping purposes nor may it be connected to water nor sanitary sewer facilities."

Under the ordinance travel, camp, or tent trailers, campers, pickup campers, utility trailers, boats and boat trailers, motor buses, floats and rafts are considered recreational vehicles.

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