

## Cities pay share

## County brings parks to your door

By TIM RICHARD

"A city in your circulation area announced its recreation schedule—swimming, roller skating and all—never even mentioned us."

The speaker was one of the workers seeking voter approval of a quarter-mile property tax for the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission. He was talking about the seven mobile units which the county makes available to communities, private parties and civic groups in the county.

Parks and Recreation Director Eric Reichel is philosophical enough to understand that "people don't care who provides it (meaning recreation services) as long as it's provided."

But the millage supporters are sensitive as the May 18 election draws near because the tax, if renewed, will support those mobile units. Hourly charges are made to municipalities and groups which bring in the mobile units, but Reichel said the charges cover only part of the operating costs and none of the capital costs.

OAKLAND COUNTY began the program in 1974 to bring recreation to residents unable to get to county parks.

"Local units of government can book these into their recreation programs," said Reichel. By renting county units and staff members, he said, local governments can save themselves the expense of starting their own programs from scratch.

"We hold the charges low to make the units more available," he said. "Every community in Oakland County has used one or another. So have individuals, private parties and neighborhood groups."

## MOBILE UNITS include

• Two swim-mobiles with heated and treated water and with bottoms that can be adjusted to three different levels. Charge for a two-hour visit is \$55.

• A mobile with a nature and daytime movie screen and 18 mm projector with films on nature and crafts. Charge for a two-hour visit with two staff members is \$45.

• A skate-mobile with 150 pairs of roller skates of all sizes and a mechanical sweeper, barricades and spotlights. A two-hour visit with three staff persons costs \$55.

• A puppet-mobile with shows and workshops. A one-hour visit costs \$30.

• A show-mobile with a "Group in Transit" of college drama and music students providing family entertainment. Prices depend on length of visit and kind of group.

• A fashion-mobile to teach sewing, makeup, grooming and hair styling. It includes a sink, reclining salon chair and shampoo attachment, mannequin table, portable hair dryer, mirrors and sewing machines. Charge for a two-hour visit is \$45.

and includes two staff members and materials. INITIAL FUNDING came from a U.S. Labor Department grant.

A second-year grant was received in 1975, and Reichel is confident more funding will come in 1976.

The mobile units are featured in a parks and recreation commission film being shown to Oakland service clubs as the commission votes for the May 18 ballot proposal.

Reichel and supporters of the millage won't go so far as to say the mobile units and the entire parks system will be shut down if the millage fails.

They do argue that the county general fund would be hard-pressed to continue development and the same scale of operations of the parks and recreation program without that special voted quarter-mill. The tax raises about \$1.8 million annually.

IN A SPEECH last week to an Optimist Club in Pontiac, Reichel agreed with a questioner that some camping facilities

were crowded and stifled, adding, "But you'd be surprised how many people like it that way."

He said camping is about "two or three years away" at Independence Oaks, the county's newest park scheduled to open on Memorial Day.

Independence Oaks is located on South above Road near Clarkston.

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## HCMA delegate deadline is today

A committee of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners has set May 10 as its deadline for receiving nominations to the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority (HCMA), the agency which runs nine metropolitan areas.

Robert A. Burton (D-Royal Oak), chairman of the general government committee of the county board, said incumbent HCMA board member James Clarkson was one of the names under consideration. Republican commissioners speculated Democrats might attempt to replace Clarkson as Oakland County's representative to the eight-member HCMA board.

CLARKSON, president and board chairman of First Federal Savings and Loan Association of Oakland, was appointed to the HCMA board in 1964 and reappointed in 1970. He is a Pontiac resident.

"It would be a shame if he weren't reappointed," said Commissioner Patrick Nowak (R-Farmington Hills). "He's not involved in any partisan activities."

Clarkson's appointment came when the Oakland County board was controlled by Republicans. With the recent party switch of two commissioners, the board this year has a 14-13 Democratic majority.

THE HCMA BOARD has eleven members, two appointed by the governor and one each by the boards of commissioners of the five member counties: Oakland,

## Oakland MAEDC meets May 13

Vocational Training for Emotionally Handicapped Children is the theme of the May 13 meeting of the Oakland County Chapter, Michigan Association for Emotionally Disturbed Children (MAEDC). The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. at the Jordan Vocational Center on Woodward Heights in Ferndale.

Vocational training is crucial to the future of many disturbed children and parents need to be aware of the vocational resources in the county and how their school district should be involved in this service.

Guest speakers are Roger Goodenough, department of vocational rehabilitation, and Mrs. Shari Wilkes, psychologist and curriculum consultant at the Jordan Vocational Center, Hazel Park School. The public is welcome.

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Typically, the appointments stir little controversy.

Lately, however, HCMA has been the target of criticism from rural residents who don't want to see metropolitan parks developed on their farmland and from Detroiters who argue metropolitan areas are inaccessible by public transportation.

A new bill by State Rep. Thomas Brown (D-Westland) would allow HCMA to operate or contract for the operation of transportation services to the parks.

Another Brown bill would allow expansion of the authority to include St. Clair and Monroe counties.

Still other bills in the legislative hopper would require HCMA to develop a metropolitan in Detroit and reorganize the board on a "one person, one vote" basis.

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