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Twenty Five Cents



The works goes on and on

Work continues this week on paving Grand River between Drake and I-96 as asphalt crews smooth a section of roadway in downtown Farmington. City officials say the resurfacing project should be completed by mid-June.

while crews fix the curbs and complete the several layers of asphalt along the four-mile section of Grand River. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

CONFLICT

Cops face pay showdown

By RON GARRETT

A three-year dispute over the wording of the Farmington Hills police officers' contract has forced the City of Farmington Hills to take its patrolmen to court over the police's cost-of-living adjustment.

If the patrolmen are successful in their defense, top pay for an officer would increase by as much as \$4,000, retroactive to the police's ratification in 1972.

This means the department's top pay for patrolmen would increase from \$17,800 to \$21,800. Starting pay is \$14,000.

That, according to Hills City Manager George Majors, was not the purpose or the city's intent when it presented the contract to the officers.

"As far as the city is concerned, the patrolmen have received all the money from the cost-of-living adjustment that they are entitled to under the contract," Majors says.

Patrolmen and their union officials, however, don't agree with Majors' statement. Hills officers maintain they haven't received the cost-of-living adjustment due them as they interpret the contract.

THE CITY claims it doesn't have to pay that adjustment. It's a matter of interpretation.

The case is pending before Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Robert Temple, but has been postponed until June 7 because of court scheduling priorities.

"The city's sole defense in the case is that a mistake was made in the wording of the officer's present contract," claims Joseph Valenti, president of Farmington Local 214, the union representing the Hills patrolmen.

"THAT MISTAKE," as Valenti explains it, "was in the wording of the cost-of-living adjustment, even though the city's lawyer insisted he knew what he was doing when he wrote the terms of the pact back in 1972."

"At no time during the contract did the city attempt to change the wording. Only in the third year, when the city realized it couldn't be protected by the federal price and wage board, did it claim a mistake was made," Valenti continues.

Majors disagrees. "If read in a certain way, it has the effect of doubling or adding up the cost-of-living adjustments," Majors says.

As the contract presently reads, the officers would get an annual one per cent cost-of-living raise for each point the consumer price index rose during the year.

This cost-of-living adjustment would be made every six months under the ratified contract.

The price index reflects the increase in prices and purchasing power of consumers in the Detroit metropolitan area.

Officers would absorb the first annual 25 per cent increase during the year. The city then would make pay adjustments after subtracting that 25 from the year's total increase in the price index.

THIS IS WHERE both parties say the interpretation confusion begins.

Officers say the contract requires the city to use the consumer price index level that was prevailing at the time the contract was signed, Valenti says.

This means the cost-of-living adjustment would be compounded or totaled during the term of the three-year contract.

The city claims, however, the rate paid out under the adjustment should start with a new consumer price index base level after the most recent pay adjustment is made, Majors explains.

This way, the cost-of-living adjustment rate wouldn't be compounded, and a lower price index would be the basis for the pay adjustment every six months.

In 1973-74, the federal government imposed a price freeze on all employee contracts in the United States.

"In April 1973, the men were to get their first cost-of-living increase," explains Valenti, "but the federal price and wage freeze came on."

"WHEN THE FREEZE came on, (City Attorney Terry) Brennan went before the board on three separate occasions and told them that the city owed to patrolmen a cost-of-living adjustment."

"Twice the board wrote back and said the city didn't have to pay the increase," Valenti says, paraphrasing testimony given in the case.

Brennan was unavailable for comment. (Continued on page 11)

Union chief seeks action... 'Van' says farewell

By STEVE BARNARD
Farmington editor

Teacher unions are facing a critical transition which will affect educators' relationships with students in the classroom, school board members and residents in the community.

That's the word from newly elected Farmington Education Association President Ken Barry, 32, who will take the leadership reins from Gerald Kaplan this week.

"Teachers are facing an identity crisis. They feel pushed into reacting in a union sense, rather than acting and reacting as do others in the professional community," explained Barry, who is the FEA's first president to be elected for a two-year term.

"After all, they don't control their own profession. The only way they have any input is through the association."

Because of this situation, Barry believes that the teacher union should remodel itself and concentrate more heavily on the professional aspects of teaching.

That's not to say there is anything wrong with the union concept but only that it deals with a contract and its maintenance with contract and professional development," said Barry, who has taught in the district for the past eight years.

Barry says the education association is working nationally towards concentrating



KEN BARRY

on professional development. Workshops, he said, are being developed to make teachers better educators. Locally, teachers are building on their skills to become more professional.

Presently, he is a biology teacher at North Farmington High School.

Barry would like to see more educators run for school board posts, saying that more persons are needed on boards who

'Teachers are facing an identity crisis. They feel pushed into reacting in a union sense...'

—Ken Barry
FEA president

understand educational objectives. "I don't think having educators on school boards conflicts at all with the idea of locally controlled school boards," he said.

"After all, the board is a two-way street. It must not only listen to the people of the community. But, it must also provide leadership."

The board must turn away from the idea of being an adversary to the teachers, he said.

Barry is optimistic about the general community's attitude towards teachers, saying that his personal contact with parents has demonstrated positive response.

What does trouble him is the state legislature's reluctance to provide solutions to the question of allowing teachers the right to strike.

"What happens to teachers who work without contracts?" he said. "Can they strike or is it going to be the same story as in the past?"

The legislature must allow teachers the right to strike or present an alternative before communities become overly disrupted by conflict strike situations, he said.

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By RON GARRETT

His smile never fades. Remembering the joy, did Santa Claus, he is always looking out for his "boys and girls."

For 40 years, Marinus Van Ameyde has delighted at witnessing educational programs improve.

In the past 15 years, he has served for the betterment of instructional activities in the Farmington School District.

But in July, the district will bid farewell. If only in contractual terms, to Van Ameyde because he returns from school administration after 4 1/2 years as the district's superintendent.

"It has been a challenging 40 years. In my short tenure as superintendent, everything has happened to me. You name it, it's happened. The 61-year-old superintendent recalls.

"I can't think of a thing nationally that has happened in some other school district that hasn't happened while I have been at the head of this district."

"TRAGEDIES and problems might have been experienced singly by other school districts in the country, but I don't think another has experienced what we have in the past four years," Van Ameyde says.

To name a few, he has experienced an employee strike, a school fire, declining enrollments, cutbacks in state school aid, a tragic student electrocution, the Detroit bombing episode and the community's reaction to student closings and program curtailments.

"It's been a lifetime of experiences in just four years. As I share my experiences



MARINUS VAN AMEYDE

with other superintendents, I find that my tenure as superintendent has been rather unusual.

"These happenings have made me a better person and, I can proudly say, I have maintained my composure most of the time through these changes."

"While they all have been challenging and have taken up much time and effort, we have taken them on stride because it's just all part of the job," the district's head administrator explains.

"In December, when I announced my plans to retire, I didn't anticipate all the problems the district is experiencing now. Maybe if I did, I would have stayed on and taken care of them," he continues.

"I would hope that sometime, somewhere in the future of the district, someone could generate people to serve on the board of education who respect the dignity and humanness of fellows."

--Marinus Van Ameyde

"But I thought I was leaving the district in best of shape, but that all has changed since then."

While Van Ameyde has steered the district over its corporate money trail, he has always emphasized that "boys and girls of the district are his most precious element."

And just watching students and staff grow intellectually in his greatest thrill.

"I GET EXCITED when I see growth in people, watching others doing a better job and becoming more sophisticated in their work," he says.

"When students and staff do a better job, then the educational program improves and learning benefits," he continues. "and that is the real reason for having the boys and girls in school."

"I'm delighted to watch my staff have the opportunity now to take part in the board of education, rather than have everything filtered to the trustees by the superintendent."

"And that has paid the district dividends because everyone is benefiting from this and something is being done for the students."

During his 40-year education career, he has taught every grade from kindergarten all the way up to graduate seminars and workshops.

Prior to taking over in Farmington, Van Ameyde served as principal at Southfield. (Continued on page 11)

Memorial Day gala set for Farmington

The 12th Tactical Fighter Wing from Michigan Air National Guard at Selfridge Air Base will fly over Farmington and Farmington Hills to herald the Memorial Day Parade. The event is staged every year for the area by the American Legion Post 546 and the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2208.

The parade will be led by the North Farmington High School Band playing "Stars and Stripes Forever," when it begins at 10 a.m. May 31 from Plaza Shopping Center for its way up Grand River.

In keeping with the military service tradition, a tradition of the parade sponsors, this year the parade will honor the U.S. Navy.

Rear Adm. Lee E. Landes SC USN will be the guest of honor at the pre-parade banquet in the American Legion Hall, and will be the reviewing officer as well as the guest speaker in the morning address to be given at the monument in downtown Farmington.

Farmington Mayor John Richardson, Farmington Hills Mayor Pro-Tem Keith Deaton, Michigan State Supreme Court Justice G. Mennen Williams, U.S. Rep. William Brodhead and state Rep. Sandy Herdman, will be among the dignitaries at the ceremony.

Other dignitaries on hand will be Judge Michael Hand and Judge Margaret Schaefer, Oakland County Sheriff Johnathan Spreen, Oakland County Commissioners, and local school board members.

AWARDS WILL be given for the outstanding marching units, best float, and best mounted group.

Bi-centennial parade chairman Walter L. Christensen believes the parade will be one of the largest the area has ever seen in its size, as well as the numbers of people who will view it. Estimated number of viewers is from 75,000-100,000.

Christensen's committee is made up of Gus Hansen, Chuck Currier, Ben Kohls, Gladys Tolbert and Bill Tolbert. Don Eby is liaison man for the area's Boy Scout units.

Kokko is chairman of the pre-parade banquet which is set for 6:30 p.m. May 30, held annually to honor visiting dignitaries from the service. The master of ceremonies for the affair is Dave Williams, from WDEK radio, and Judge Hand will be the guest speaker.

Diagnos will be presented then to both the active and reserve "Man of the Year."

Persons wishing to attend the banquet may contact Kokko for reservations at 674-8880.

Christensen has been assistant parade marshal for the past eight years. He has resided in Farmington, with his wife Loraine, for the past 25 years, and has been a member of the local American Legion Post for 18 years.

He has coached the American Legion baseball team for 14 seasons and has been a coach for Farmington Little League Football Rockets and Our Lady of Sorrows CYO teams.

Murder suspect faces circuit court trial

Philip Lee Harrington, 24, charged with second degree murder in the death of Peter Rogers, waived his right to a pre-trial exam Tuesday before 17th District Judge Robert Strang.

He was bound over for circuit court trial on \$100,000 bond but no date has been set.

Harrington, of 11119 Robinson, Farmington, allegedly shot Rogers the day after Christmas in the Double-O-Bar, 23044 Grand River, Redford Township. Rogers did not die until April 13.

The police report states that a bar maid, Mrs. Ella Oatwell, refused to serve Harrington because he appeared to be drunk.

After being refused a drink, police said Harrington asked McKinley Ruten if he would drive him to a residence in Detroit.

Ruten refused, but Rogers walked up to Harrington and offered to drive him to the Detroit address.

"At this point the defendant pulled a .765 French automatic out and shot Rogers in the stomach with one shot," said Redford Det. Dale Johnson. "Rogers fell to the floor and the defendant ran out the back door."

Witnesses in the bar said moments after the first shot, Harrington appeared at the doorway of the rear exit and fired "four or five more shots."

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DON'T FORGET

So sure to care the receipt you carrier will give you when he calls this week. It's worth the face value towards the next classified ad that you place.

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