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Twenty-Five Cents

Cities' fire services labeled inadequate

This is the first in a series on a study made by the Public Administration Service consulting firm on firefighting units in southeast Oakland County. Thursday's story will deal with some alternatives suggested by the study.

By STEVE BARNABY
Farmington editor

Farmington and Farmington Hills residents are being protected by fire departments which are less than adequate in meeting the needs of full fire fighting services, according to a study made by the Public Administration Service of Chicago.

The research and consulting firm released the results of a study made recently in relationship to the feasibility of an area-wide fire service.

Those communities being considered in the study are Farmington, Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield

and Commerce townships, Walled Lake, Wixom and Novi.

Areas of deficiency labeled by the study are number of firefighters responding to alarms, poor response time, poor location of fire stations making for long distance traveling in emergencies, inadequate training, lack of fire prevention training for residents, communications taken up by police needs and inadequate emergency medical services.

FARMINGTON HILLS took hard knocks in the study, with poor response time zeroed in on as the weak link in that city's fire fighting system.

"Based on the average time per mile as shown in the 1976 incident reports, it would take over 15 minutes for the nearest station to reach some of the more distant locations in the response area," said the study results.

'Experience throughout the country will bear out the fact that a well-organized volunteer fire department with a modern communications system can provide fast response to fires and also prevent them from developing into larger fires.'

"A response time as great as this doesn't provide an adequate level of protection."

For fires involving buildings, the time-distance relationship averaged 3 1/2 minutes for each mile travelled. The consultants determined this slow response time was due to delay on the part of dispatchers to relay the information to the proper stations, slow response by volunteers or slow speed by the trucks.

The Hills has four fire stations which the consultants labeled anywhere from good to poor. Station One, at Research Drive south of Ten Mile was rated good; Station Two, Middlebelt and Utley, also met the firms approval; Station Three, Grand River and Middlebelt was rated fair; and Station Four, Twelve Mile, between Farmington Road and Drake, was rated poor.

The Hills fire fighting system is

composed of 80 volunteers and are divided into the four stations which operate on a near autonomous basis, according to the study.

"This system creates some confusion, but these problems are being resolved through closer coordination of the total operations," according to the consultants who give credit to full-time Fire Chief John Van De Voort.

WHILE THE HILLS rated well with how buildings were separated making the probability of fires spreading less likely, the City of Farmington was rated less highly.

"Buildings are mainly of ordinary construction and many lack the necessary features needed to prevent fires from spreading to other structures," according to the study, referring to the central business district at Grand River and Farmington Road.

The smaller shopping centers at the east and west sides of town also were labeled as potential fire hazards because of adjoining structures. Residential areas in the city also took criticism.

"Spacing in the older sections of the city can result in fires spreading from one dwelling house to another."

But the report did note that under normal conditions, the fires could be contained to one building.

City of Farmington firefighters rated from "fairly good" to "excellent" in fire fighting equipment, which is located at the sole station at city hall.

The city is fire protected by a public safety officer (PSO) system, with the 23 personnel doing duty as both police and firefighters.

While response time was rated as

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Carter's plan garners osteopath's approval

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Osteopaths are willing to take a look at President Jimmy Carter's proposal to place a ceiling on hospital costs but maintain that they are hurt by medicare swindles, rising malpractice insurance rates and the single business tax.

That's the assessment of Daher Rahi, president of the Michigan Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons. He was elected recently to head the Farmington based organization.

"We commend the president on looking at the problem of high hospital costs," Rahi said. "Something has to be done but that doesn't mean that what he is saying is what will be done in hospitals."

Rising hospital costs are part of a picture of increased expenses for the institutions and osteopaths, according to Rahi. If Carter can present enough data to back up his program to reduce costs, the osteopaths would work with him.

They have to contend with other rising costs, as well. Medical malpractice insurance has skyrocketed along with the number of patients who sue their doctors.

"When it comes to the patient in the field, a doctor is a doctor. They don't perceive osteopaths and doctors as two different types."



DR. DAHER RAHI

"BOTH DOCTORS and osteopaths have been faced with the problem of malpractice suits. But I think we've seen the worst of it," Rahi said.

Osteopaths are faced with the same skyrocketing insurance rates as medical doctors. Once a typical insurance premium cost an osteopath about \$500. Today, the rate has jumped to \$5,700, according to Rahi.

"I sympathize with the public, but doctors are not immune to increasing costs. How do you accommodate the change in rates. We are forced to pay high expenses, so fees must rise. This doesn't mean that doctors are making more money," he said.

Another sore point with the osteopaths is the single business tax. The

Michigan group has passed a resolution condemning the tax as a burden to patients and doctors. It would force doctors to increase their fees and discourage them from seeking practices in less affluent rural areas, according to Rahi.

"The single business tax affects doctors badly," he said. "It takes one per cent to two per cent off the top of the doctors' gross incomes. That's very bad because now it takes a physician up to \$30,000-\$40,000 to set up an office."

"WE CAN'T deduct our own expenses. It's very inequitable. It's a hardship," he added.

Another problem for both doctors and osteopaths is the mishandling of medical and medicare funds by some of their colleagues, according to Rahi.

"We vehemently oppose any individual who abuses these programs. We have threatened them with the severest punishment available to us in order to protect the profession," he said.

One way osteopaths protect the profession is a stringent background check of the doctor before he is granted permission to practice in the state. Records which date back to the doctor's undergraduate days are examined as well as letters of recommendation, according to Rahi.



Diane Akers (right), Shelley Strlewski and Stavroula Peterson prepare for the next issue of Eastword, East Junior High's newspaper. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

At East Junior High Junior press rooms halls

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

When East Junior High students want to learn the truth about the mysterious man French teacher Vicki

Blass meets behind the school, they turn Eastword.

If they prefer considering the heady issues of school millage, pink slipping teachers or the new lunchroom system, they turn Eastword.

Eastword, the junior high's newspaper is the brainchild of Diane Akers and her academically gifted students. Her group of ninth grade PACE students chose the newspaper as their class project. Their first issue hit the hallways April 20.

"Eastword is a school paper. I want the students to concentrate on total school activities. I didn't want it to become something that was for the PACE students alone," Ms. Akers explained.

PACE students are chosen for the program which caters to the academically gifted on the basis of their grades, teacher recommendations and standard test scores. Once in the program, students attend unstructured classes which allow them to follow an extracurricular project.

FROM THE BEGINNING of the project, the young staff took to heart Ms. Akers suggestion that the newspaper appeal to all segments in the school.

"We want to hit all the groups at East. It's hard to reach all the people and get into the paper what each one wants to see. We want a good variety, but it's hard because there are only ninth grade students on the project," said editor-in-chief Shelly Strlewski.

With that goal in mind, staffers rack their brains for story ideas that

will interest each of the three groups in the school. Junior high students lump themselves into an athletically oriented crowd, a group that focuses on grades or those who associate with a fringe group that has little interest in school activities.

In order to reach such a diversified readership, the staff resorts to a tried and true newspaper practice—print a lot of names in the paper.

"We're going to do a story about the cheerleaders for the next issue," said front page editor Paula Ross. "If we get the name of the cheerleaders in the paper, they might buy it and then we'll have sold eight more copies."

ALONG WITH HER co-front page editor Kim Zisholz, Ms. Ross is trying to reach other segments in the school by writing stories examining such issues as millage and teacher layoffs.

"It's something that the kids want to read," explained Ms. Zisholz.

Their page will include an interview with School Superintendent Lewis Schulman in the next edition.

Next to reading about themselves, students like to learn a little more about their teachers. That's the philosophy taken by feature page editors Karen Brochhaus and Gayle Dalawrak. Their last feature page included an interview with French teacher Vicki Blass and a gossip column. That column finally told the truth about the stranger Mrs. Blass was meeting behind the school.

"It was her husband," giggled Ms.

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Board candidates face off in debate

By LYNN ORR

Closing schools; alternatives to property tax financing of schools; financial disclosure; and the feasibility of a student school board member were some of the issues tackled by four of the five candidates running for the Farmington School Board in the June 13 election.

About 30 persons were present at the candidates' first public appearance, sponsored by the Farmington Democrats' Club last Thursday. Incumbent Emma Makinen, James Peponis, Richard Wallace and Eugene Lemberg responded to questions posed by the Democratic Club and audience members. Candidate Peter Sanders failed to appear at the meeting.

Although dissimilar in their backgrounds, the candidates generally agreed on most issues discussed at the meeting.

Task Force recommendations, minimal amount of dislocation of students, and possible change in school boundaries are the criteria the candidates would use in closing schools, they agreed.

"I think the board has come up with a fine procedure in the closing of schools," said candidate Peponis, an educator and Southeaster administrator of a 1,200 student school.

THE BURDEN of school financing on local property owners should be decreased, the candidates agreed.

"I don't know that we will ever have total equality in schools. But we have to decrease the dependency on local property tax," said Wallace, president of a brokerage firm, who believes his experience in financing would be his most valuable asset as a school board member.

Lemberg, four-year president of the North Farmington Parent-Teacher Organization, would like to see school financing equally shared by the local community, the state and the federal government, but he also stressed the importance of local control.

Although all the candidates were in favor of student input, they were opposed to the idea of a voting student member of the school board.

"I think we have the means to achieve student input now with the questions and answers part of the agenda," Lemberg said. "And there are other options without board representation."

Asked how they would make budget cuts in light of economic problems, the candidates were in favor of across-the-board cuts rather than eliminating specific programs.

"It's very difficult to cut total programs," explained Mrs. Makinen, seeking her second four-year term. "It takes many years to get a program going, and I would make cuts across the district."

The question, "Do you favor the proposed policies of a code of ethics and financial disclosure?" was asked of all the candidates.

"I do favor the development of a code of ethics so the potential for conflict of interest is clearly understood," Wallace said. "I do not necessarily favor the expansion of those ideas to include financial disclosure, which has no bearing on conflict of interest."

"I agree with Mr. Wallace," Mrs. Makinen responded.

"I'm in favor of a code of ethics, but I also don't think it's necessary for any member of the board of education to relate that information unless there's a conflict of interest involved," Peponis responded.

I agree with the other candidates, the only difference being if a financial disclosure statement were required, I don't know that I would fill it out," Lemberg stated. "I feel it's an infringement on my rights as long as nothing is in conflict."

Leonard Rheame turned on his flasher and siren.

Cain tried to escape by driving north on Southfield, west on Beverly, north on Evergreen and east on Maple to Ring Road, police say.

The chase eventually ended on Huntley, with the Corvette north in the southbound lanes, and then jumping the median back into northbound lanes, police said.

By then several other area departments had joined in the chase, which ended when Cain collided with the Bloomfield Hills car.

Police said Cain then fled on foot with officers in pursuit. Shots were fired and he was arrested near 1111 N. Woodward.

Birmingham police arrested Ed Cain, 37½ Grand River, on North Woodward after he smashed into a Bloomfield Hills public safety officer's car. No injuries were reported.

A Southfield police reported the car, a Chevrolet Corvette, had been stolen from a mobile home park at 3000 Southfield Road at 1:30 a.m.

Beverly Hills public safety officers later saw the car heading north on Southfield near Thirteen Mile. Cain allegedly tried to flee when Officer

Library features book discussion

The Farmington branch library will continue its informal book forum on May 12 at 10 a.m. with a discussion of "The Adjusted American" by Putney Smith.

Coffee and cookies will be served at the library located at 2350 Liberty. On May 16, "Blackberry Winter" by Margaret Mead will be the topic.

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ART AND BEAUTY

Farmington area artists are recognized for their works at an arts commission banquet. Meanwhile, on the other side of town, the search for missing beauty continues. It's that time of year, again that Michigan's beauties try out for the Miss Michigan World contest. To learn more about the persons that make Farmington beautiful, turn to Suburban Life, in Section B.