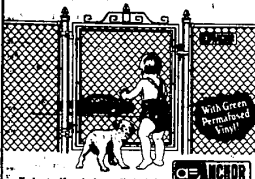


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Area cities are sued for tax bill fee

Residents of Southfield and other metropolitan area communities have filed a lawsuit claiming collection fees added to tax bills are unconstitutional.

The class-action lawsuit, filed this week in Oakland County Circuit Court, asks the court to declare collection fees unconstitutional and prohibit collection of the fees. The suit also seeks refunds for property owners who have been required to pay fees.

The suit attacks the legality of a one per cent collection fee added to tax bills in Southfield and other communities, even if bills are paid on time.

Named as defendants in the action, filed by city residents Lawrence and Vivian Schechter and property owners in other communities, are the municipalities of Southfield, Livonia, Plymouth, St. Clair Shores, Detroit, Westland, Taylor, Grosse Ile Township, Sterling Heights, Riverview and Avon Township.

Treasurers in Southfield and other cities are accused in the lawsuit of "double-dipping" into taxpayers' pockets by assessing the one per cent fees.

The tax law, according to Southfield City Clerk Patrick Flannery, provides

that cities may levy fees by resolution of local legislative bodies.

SOUTHFIELD CITY Council, Flannery said, passed such a measure in 1967 when Hugh Dohany, now Oakland County treasurer, was treasurer for City of Southfield.

"The collection fee is levied for county and school tax payments to reimburse the city for administrative expenses," Flannery said. "The city pays for the cost of printing tax bills and for seizures of property in cases of uncollected taxes. Southfield also stands all expenses for procedures of tax sales."

The lawsuit, however, claims the collection fee is an arbitrary tax, not provided for by the state constitution or other laws. S. Lawrence Stein, attorney for the complainants, said the fee was used many years ago to pay treasurers who collected taxes by "chasing people down."

The suit contends with modern tax systems including payments by mail, escrow or personal delivery, there is no need for collection fees.

The case has been assigned to Oakland Circuit Court Judge Alice Gilbert. No hearing date has been set.

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Grads named by colleges

Cynthia Rae Amelon of Southfield is graduating with a bachelor's degree from Michigan Technological University. The Southfield High School graduate is the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Maynard Amelon, 2280 Lake Ravines. She plans to go on for a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine at Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine in Missouri.

Robert Mark Brodsky, son of Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Brodsky, has been named as a graduate with a degree of Doctor of Podiatric Medicine from California College of Podiatric Medicine in San Francisco. The graduate of

Southfield-Lathrup plans to join the residency program at Brent Hospital in Detroit.

Three other Southfield residents were named as graduates from the Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine in Cleveland. Each will receive the degree of Doctor of Podiatric Medicine.

The new doctors are: Neil Hertzberg, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Hertzberg, 2800 Wayland Dr.; James R.F. Cornfield, son of Mr. and Mrs. Melville R. Goldberg, 2931 Mari-moor; and Gary R. Bauer, son of Mr. and Mrs. W.F. Bauer, 20179 Beech-haven.

College names area grads

Three Southfield residents April 30 received degrees from Mercy College of Detroit.

Catherine Ann Cykowski, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David Cykowski, earned a magna cum laude BA in English, speech and drama. She was on the dean's list for outstanding scholarship for four years and received a scholarship award from Detroit Women's Writers Conference during her senior year.

Miss Cykowski is a member of Southfield Repertory Theatre and

plans to continue her career in theater.

Elena E. Maccaroni, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Maccaroni, received magna cum laude a BS in home economics. She has been on the dean's list for two years and earned an academic scholarship in her senior year.

Elaine Louise Michalik, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thaddeus M. Michalik, received cum laude a BS in nursing. She was given a Mercy College academic scholarship for three years.

Sacrament to bless ill

At 11 a.m. Saturday, May 21 at St. Ives Church in Southfield, the Reverend Louis Grandpre will celebrate a mass for all faiths. "The Sacrament of the Sick."

The young and elderly, the terminally ill, handicapped, emotionally ill,

alcoholics or anyone who is sick and would like to experience the "blessing of the sick" is welcome, along with their families. Refreshments will follow mass.

The church is located at 29350 Lah-ser, north of Twelve Mile

Flowers have a day

Broccoli and begonias will share equal space when the 11th Annual Flower Day is held at Detroit's Eastern Market, 2834 Russell, north of the Fisher Freeway and west of Gratiot, on Sunday.

Flower Day Hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and admission is free.

The increased emphasis on home vegetable gardens will be reflected in the displays at the annual event. More than 100 vendors will offer both the usual and unusual in food plants as well as traditional and unique flowers.

Master Gardeners who have completed comprehensive training through the Wayne County Cooperative Extension Service of MSU will be on hand throughout the market to offer advice on vegetable and flower growing and answer questions from home gardeners.

Annual Flower Day is a joint effort of the City of Detroit Bureau of Markets, the Wayne County Cooperative Extension Service and the Metropolitan Detroit Flower Growers Association.

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