

Construction courts tennis buffs

By SUZIE MARKS

Long lines of tennis buffs waiting to swing their rackets are familiar sights around Southfield this summer. The courts at both public high schools and local tennis clubs are booked virtually every hour with anxious players begging to get into a game.

Many frustrated players, tired of lingering in back of the fence instead of next to the net, have thrown in their rackets and built their own courts. In the privacy of their own backyards, tennis balls can be hit around without the hassles of waiting to play.

"There's a big demand in the last seven or eight years for home tennis courts," said Ted Rauch, owner of a Farmingtonpaving company. Constructing home tennis courts is a major part of his business.

"There aren't enough adequate courts where the average person can play. The public courts are too crowded," he added.

FOR \$13,000 a homeowner can bring the tennis club to his own home. The entire construction takes about five to six weeks, Rauch said.

"The best time to install them is

between May 1 and the end of October," he added.

The average age of the home tennis court is between 35 and 50, Rauch reported. Most of his customers do not have swimming pools depicting the at-home country club.

"Pools are not necessarily going along with the tennis courts because they (pools) require a lot of maintenance," Rauch said. "Once tennis courts are constructed, there is little maintenance for them."

Tennis courts must meet regulation size of 60-by-120 feet and have a 10-foot high fence constructed on each side of the court. Most courts are made from asphalt. However, colored acrylic such as red or green tops have become popular.

Most courts that Rauch Brothers build do not have lights. High costs and municipal regulations are the reasons.

"We only have a few requests for lights. There are restrictions against them in some cities or the neighbors complain," he added. "It costs about \$8,000 to \$10,000 for lights."

SOUTHFIELD has very few restrictions regarding construction of home

tennis courts. The Department of Safety Engineers is concerned with the water drainage on the court's land, but that's about the extent of it, department director Earl Owens, said.

"We're only concerned about the drainage, because any flat work does not require a permit in this city," he added.

Owens requested that potential tennis court owners contact the Department of Public Works to have a

coordinator check the site so proper drainage is assured.

As far as assessments go, if the assessing department finds out about the court, it is assessed for 25 percent of the construction cost, said Ed Davis of the commercial and industrial assessing department.

"People are supposed to get a building permit and then we follow up on the permits," Davis said. "But then again, not everyone gets one."

Festival agenda is corrected

Farmington area residents planning on attending the Farmington Founders Festival should take note of several calendar changes for events this weekend.

Due to a lack of material, the Farmington City Police Auction, scheduled for 1-3 p.m. Friday on the downtown stage, has been cancelled.

A performance by the Clarenceville Players will replace the auction. Per-

formance times of the players is scheduled for noon to 3 p.m. Friday, Saturday and Sunday, which is a change from the official calendar.

Also performing on the downtown stage will be dance groups from two local studios. The Shirley Busher Dance Studio group will perform from 4-5 p.m. Thursday and Friday. Cheryl's School of Dance group will perform from 5-6 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Thursday, July 27, 1978

(F12B)

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