

Farmington Observer

Volume 91 Number 28

Monday, January 21, 1980

Farmington, Michigan

48 Pages

Twenty-five cents

© 1980 Seaboard Communication Corporation. All Rights Reserved



Mayor Soronen calls for unity as council launches new year

By MARY GNIEWEK

She calls herself a walking commission-person, an apt title for the newly elected mayor of Farmington Hills.

As she begins the third of a four-year term on the city council, Jody Soronen is a member of five government committees and regularly attends the meetings of a sixth group.

Her colleagues elected her mayor Jan. 7.

"It's much more interesting than housework," she jokes. Neighborhood, then city, then regional government gradually caught, then consumed, her interest.

"I started out in my subdivision (Wood Brook) as secretary of the homeowners' council," she said.

"Then I was president for a couple of years. I met more people, joined the beautification committee, then decided to run for office."

Even with Farmington Hills' city manager-city council form of govern-

ment, Mrs. Soronen's job as mayor is more than ceremonial. She chairs the Monday night council meetings, represents the city at official functions, and can propose names to the council, which elects residents to various committees.

"I think we're going to do just fine together," she says of the city council, which sports three new faces this year.

"They all seem to be very sincere about doing a good job," she says, dismissing the frenzy which surrounded the November 1979 election. That frenzy centered on the senior citizen housing controversy.

"We want to make every effort to work as a whole group. We may have different opinions about how to approach problems, but we're all up there with the best interests of the city at heart," she says. "Emotionalism is not the way to run the city."

Mrs. Soronen hopes the day-to-day business, like road pavings and sewer constructions, will consume the first

couple of months of the new year. She wants the new council members to be broken in gradually.

"We don't need issues right now," she says, lifting both arms in a mock dramatic style.

But the old issues remain.

"Hopefully this year we'll get senior housing. We are of one mind to accomplish some kind of senior housing. The biggest problem is cost.

"If we build our own, can we get the cost low enough so rents won't be prohibitive? If we come up with a good plan, I think the community will support it. And we won't know until we've tried," she says.

An Industrial Research Office (IRO) zone is another council concern. The council turned down a proposed ordinance Monday which would have allowed businesses in the zone to be built to 60 feet. The council plans to reintroduce the ordinance with a 50-foot limit.

"I DON'T KNOW that 60 feet would

give us the best competitive edge (in luring new businesses)," Mrs. Soronen said.

"We're surrounded with cities with higher height limitations. They've always had them."

She has asked council members to list their priorities for 1980.

"We seem to spend our meeting time just going through the business that has to be attended to. At the end of the month, we'll sort through the areas of interest. It's worth considering."

Mrs. Soronen recently gave up her seats on the Farmington Area Advisory Council and Farmington Youth Assistance.

But she is still a delegate for the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), the Council on Regional Development (CORD), the Regional Clearinghouse Review Committee, the Michigan Beautification Committee, and the Farmington Hills Beautification Committee.



On work in city government: "It's much more interesting than housework."

Age enhances activist role for volunteer

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

She may have voted for Democrat Woodrow Wilson in 1914 but Mrs. Helen Cope has managed to maintain her status as a stalwart Republican ever since.

Now, at 80, the Farmington Hills resident is volunteering to help the Republicans settle into Detroit. Her offer didn't surprise Oakland county Republican regulars.

In recent years, Mrs. Cope campaigned for former U. S. Sen. Robert Griffin and worked in his Washington D.C. office for several months during the Conference on Aging.

She distributes her remaining time to her post as legislative chairwoman for the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), the Presbyterian church, the American Association of University Women, the Farmington Area Commission on Aging and a smattering of local politics.

Through it all she remains a Republican instead of a senior citizen with a hobby.

"I'm not a senior citizen," she insists from her book and correspondence cluttered living room.

"YOU'VE GOT TO keep interested and alive or you'll grow old," she says.

Her only concession to her age is to admit that she'll probably do clerical work for the convention because she can't move as fast as she once did.

When she called the Civic Host Committee in Detroit earlier this month to volunteer, she says she was welcomed into the fold.

"They knew me because I worked for Sen. Griffin. They knew I was a good

worker. They know I'm dependable," she says.

Her optimism about the Detroit area and her dedication to her party prompted her to take the plunge.

"I'm very, very Republican," she says, slowly, as she leans forward in her chair and emphasizes the "very very."

She adds that she's not a blind follower in the party. If presidential hopeful Ronald Reagan lost his bid for the nomination it would "suit me perfectly," she admits.

AS FOR BARRY Goldwater's unsuccessful try for the White House, Mrs. Cope says, "it would have been a disaster," if he had won.

On the whole, she's a moderate in the party who looks toward former CIA Director George Bush of Texas, U.S. Sen. Howard Baker of Tennessee or U.S. Sen. Robert S. Doyle of Kansas to the party into a nomination in July.

Although she will probably work for her party's choice, she doesn't always support their candidate.

In 1914, before the nation allowed women to vote in all states, they were permitted to vote in Illinois. Mrs. Cope took advantage of the state law to cast her ballot for Wilson.

"So you see, I'm not unreasonable in the decision." More recently, she's kept in contact with U.S. Sen. William Brodhead's office.

"They probably think I'm a Democrat," she laughs.

But she learned long ago that in politics, the person with the position is the

(Continued on page 2A)



Watch out Ichabod Crane

The Headless Horseman may have frightened Ichabod, but Farmington area residents had their own frightful equestrian recently. Upon closer in-

vestigation, we found the rider to be Lissa Bankowski, 16, of Farmington. She wears the mask to keep warm. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

Councilman appointed chief of GOP county campaigning

Farmington Hills Councilman Donn Wolf will serve as the 1980 campaign chairman for the Oakland County Republican Party.

The announcement was made by Oakland GOP Chairman Joe Knollenberg.

Assisting Wolf will be Barbara Dupont, also of Farmington Hills. The position is designed to help strengthen Republican campaigns at all levels across the county, according to Knollenberg.

The major areas directed by Wolf will be candidate training, literature drops, advertising coordinating campaign activities and a newspaper tabloid.

He will appoint directors for each project.

Wolf is a political consultant and teacher. He serves as a political advisor to business, professional and civic organizations.

In conjunction with F. Clifton White,

he co-authored "Action Politics," a campaign training manual and seminar for political candidates.

"In the last two years in Southeastern Michigan alone, more than 600 people have participated in Wolf's seminars. Not all of them have run for office but most of them are involved in political campaigns in some capacity," says Knollenberg.

Last November Wolf was elected to a four year term on the Hills council. He also was elected at mayor pro-tem earlier this month.

Papers tell story of past

Robert Cook has a file of names of more than 13,000 people who lived in Farmington before 1900.

Cook, 72, accumulated the data by way of an investigation of his family's history. That investigation has stretched over 40 years.

Starting with the modest task of researching his family background, Cook began to collect information about persons who lived in the town between the time of its founding, in 1824, and 1900.

The project led to the forming of a file system to catalog the births, deaths, weddings and graduations of Farmington's early families.

He's been helped in his record keeping by the Farmington Historical Society's collection of Farmington Enterprise and Observer newspaper issues which cover most of the 20th century.

Cook has easy access to the collection. He volunteered to take care of the newspapers until the society could find a suitable display area for them.

"It takes up quite a bit of room," he says. "And I haven't read every word of every issue. But I have skimmed through them for the information I want."

"I keep them because I would hate to see them destroyed."

HIS ORIGINAL project of researching his family's history has revealed distant relatives with interesting predilections.

Cook's maternal grandmother was a member of the Thayer family. While looking into that family's New York relatives, Cook discovered that the old genealogical cliché of having a few horse thieves in every family was true.

"They were distant cousins," he adds.

His grandfather came to Farmington shortly before 1872 and promptly married a second cousin, Florence Lapin. The family lived on the outskirts of the village near present day Nine Mile and Gill.

As a youth, Cook's father, Fred, worked as a printer's apprentice and was on duty when the first edition of the Farmington Enterprise rolled off the press in November 1888.

"My father glommed on to the first (Continued on page 2A)



Helen Cope practices her typing to get in shape as a volunteer for the Republican Party as it readies to hold its national convention in Detroit. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

Energy saving tips available at library

Your 1980 resolution to save energy could be the most important of the year.

To aid you in keeping this resolution the Farmington Community Library has some helpful publications.

Two free pamphlets published by the U.S. Department of Energy offer practical energy saving tips to consumers. "Tips for Energy Savers" offers suggestions on insulation, heating and

cooling energy savers, major appliance energy savers and more.

"How to Save Gasoline and Money" gives tips which could reduce your gasoline consumption by 40 to 60 gallons per vehicle.

These two publications are available free as supplies last at the library.

The libraries are at 23500 Liberty, Farmington and 32737 Twelve Mile, Farmington Hills.

inside

Ala Mode
Agendas
Community Calendar
Inside Angles
Monday's Commentary
Sports
Suburban Life

3B
3A
7B
5A
6B
Section D
Section B

JAYCEE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

It's Jaycee Week, the time when young men around the community get out the message about their accomplishments through the year. To see what's going on during this week, turn to Page 1B.