

# Farmington Observer

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## Be assertive, advocate urges consumers

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Wearing a peach-colored knit hat tipped to expose her ears to the Michigan winter, Phyllis Eliasberg is a Californian trying to grow accustomed to cold.

But she is accustomed to lending an ear to consumer woes.

It's a vocation which has taken her from directing attorney for the Neighborhood legal services in Los Angeles to acting as an attorney with the Federal Trade Commission's regional office in Los Angeles to her role as a television consumer counselor for WXYZ-TV in Southfield.

She deals with consumers caught in the corporate crunch or trapped by their desire to beat the system by getting something for nothing.

But the Farmington Hills resident admits that her position is an outgrowth of the general realization that

what's good for the automotive industry isn't always good for the rest of the country.

"In fact, it can kill us," she said. Such court action as the law suit against Ford Motor Co. for the fiery crash of a Pinto in Winamac, Ind., which resulted in the death of two teenage girls, shows a concern with corporate power over the nation's lives and safety, according to Ms. Eliasberg.

ALTHOUGH she sees the consumers' move toward speaking up for their rights as an important experience she insists she isn't against all corporations.

"The United States is the greatest nation. We really are committed to the idea of individual liberty and we really care about these rights."

"The corporate entity is important. It offers almost full employment. With the offer of such employment

the corporations make it possible for almost everyone to live with a degree of comfort, she said. The low levels of poverty experienced in other nations is avoided in this country with a little help from corporations.

But corporations are also in the position to allow persons to suffer through winters without heat or electricity. For Ms. Eliasberg, it's not a question of laying the blame on the utility company alone.

"I think the utilities are trying everything they can. They're caught between a rock and a hard place."

The utilities are faced with the rising cost of their energy supply and the consumers' decreasing ability to pay increased fees, she said.

"I'M NOT in sympathy with the utility companies. They have an unregulated source which can charge what they like. No one is regulating the oil com-

panies.

"It's a complex problem," she said. The utilities could tax the average wage earner to compensate for losses incurred from those who don't have as much money or there can be a move made to control energy sources.

"But the answer is not letting people freeze to death," she added.

The consumer movement is an outcropping of assertiveness training. Buyers aren't afraid to return to a store and ask for an item which works or their money returned.

Learning to use assertiveness is a theme which runs through Ms. Eliasberg's career.

She was a bright 13-year-old in a Brooklyn High School when her math teacher told her she ought to be in college. The teacher arranged for the test and the admissions procedure and she became a 13½-year-old college freshman.

Her mother urged her to do something besides marry and the choice was posed between law and medicine.

"I couldn't stand the sight of blood," is the way Ms. Eliasberg explains her preference for law.

BUT AT 18½ she met a "handsome man with a cream and orange Oldsmobile." They married. Her mother asked, "Couldn't you find another way to rebel?"

With one-half year of law school left unfinished, she went to England when Ken Eliasberg was stationed there as an officer in the air force. Her mother urged her to stay and finish school. Instead, a year after she arrived in England, her first son, James, now-19, was born.

While her husband pursued a mas-



PHYLLIS ELIASBERG: "We really are committed to the idea of individual liberty and we really care about these rights."

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### Saving lives

The lines of communication are open as paramedic Lynn Navarro (above, left) transmits Jerome Krauss's heartbeat to Dr. Ronald Lagerveld (right) in the emergency room of Botsford Hospital in Farmington Hills. (Staff photos by Randy Borst)



## Emergency system is brought to patient

By MARY GNIEWEK

A 15-year-old high school girl in Redford received a measles inoculation, walked out of the school office and fainted in a hallway Thursday afternoon.

She was feverish and a rash quickly spread over her body. School officials immediately called for emergency medical service.

Minutes later, Dr. Ronald Lagerveld, director of emergency services at Botsford General Hospital, was instructing paramedics at the scene to administer drugs to the young patient who had just suffered a violent allergic reaction.

"Twenty minutes later, Lagerveld greeted the teen, who was already positively responding to treatment,

as paramedics wheeled her on a stretcher through the emergency room doors at Botsford.

The girl was the 87th patient to be treated with the aid of Botsford's new hospital control communications consoles installed three weeks ago.

Two machines, constantly monitored by one of Botsford's five full-time emergency staff doctors, provide an often lifesaving link with a trained paramedic at the scene of an emergency.

"Fifty percent of all deaths occur one hour after the onset of symptoms," Lagerveld said.

"This system brings the emergency room to the patient during those critical minutes after a heart attack or trauma such as an auto accident."

THE SOPHISTICATED machinery, which costs \$5,000 apiece, sit side by side in the emergency room office. The machines have television screens allowing doctors to monitor a heart patient's electrocardiogram, even though the patient may be miles away from the hospital.

Another part of the machine makes a printout of the patient's heartbeat. The system allows communication between doctor and paramedic through a telephone hook-up while the machine records the conversation on tape.

At least half the emergency calls are for heart attack victims or people complaining of chest pains. One of the reasons the machinery is highly valued is that approximately two-thirds of all unexpected deaths due to heart attacks occur before a patient reaches the hospital, according to Lagerveld.

In a heart attack situation, the paramedic attaches electrodes to the patient and contacts one of four radio towers in Oakland County. The system is connected to William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak by phone.

Beaumont is a switch station, so paramedics talk to a Beaumont tele-

phone dispatcher before an ambulance company licensed with a hospital for the area is contacted.

Botsford is affiliated with Amcare Inc., which runs two fully equipped \$40,000 ambulances.

PHYSICIANS WHO monitor the system have advanced cardiac support certificates from the American Heart Association. Likewise, paramedics are specially trained for the service.

They administer drugs after providing the emergency room physician with the patient's symptoms and as complete a medical history as possible.

The mother of the girl who suffered the allergic reaction was able to relay that her daughter had no allergies that she knew of.

"Usually it's a combination of doctor and nurse who answer a call," said Mrs. Dorine Kramp, Botsford emergency room head nurse.

"The doctor takes charge while the nurse records the information in a log book."

The log confirms that a majority of calls have been for heart patients. The patients aren't necessarily transferred to the hospital which takes the call. They can be transferred to a hospital of their choice, except in a life-death situation when they're always transferred to the nearest hospital.

"We keep track of the patient even if they're sent elsewhere," Mrs. Kramp said.

"The system's exciting, just like television."

The hospital used the Hear System for emergencies before it switched to the control console.

"That system was just voice communications on a very cluttered channel, there was no DEK on it, either," Lagerveld said.

"This new system was devised because of the high incidence of death on emergency calls. Most major cities have this system now."

"It's really a valuable service. It does save lives."

## Battle over controversial freeway rages on

The Northwestern Coalition's battle against the controversial M-275 freeway project through western Oakland County and the Northwestern Highway extension isn't over yet.

Rather, Coalition Chairman George Snyder says the Michigan Transportation Commission's 4-2 decision late last year to build the freeway has "spurred on" citizen action.

The Coalition renewed its battle against M-275 and Northwestern with letters to Gov. William Milliken and the federal Department of Transportation.

In the letters sent Jan. 7, the Coalition said Milliken failed to press the transportation commission for a decision on M-275 which would have supported both state and federal policies on preserving the environment and curtailing urban sprawl.

The Coalition claims the transportation commission was unable to conduct an objective environmental impact statement on M-275 because many of its members have publicly supported the freeway.

"CLEARLY CITIZEN sentiment was more critical of the freeway than ever before when the commission held its September hearing in Oakland County," Snyder said.

"We feel that the failure of the majority of the commission to heed that sentiment has strengthened the opposition movement," he added.

"We have found support among citizens and leaders in the older suburbs like Royal Oak who realize the threat the freeway would be to them. We have even found support in unexpected places," he said.

The statewide Coalition on Redlining, the American Lung Association, a group representing 800 homeowners on Lower Straits Lake and the Holly Village Council have joined the 6,000-member Coalition in its battle against the freeway.

The Coalition represents Citizens Council for Land Use Research and Education (CLURE), Concerned Citizens for West Bloomfield, Concerned Citizens of Franklin, Council of Homeowners of Farmington Hills, Detroit Audubon Society, East Michigan Environ-

mental Action Council, Franklin Fairways Association, Nash Acres Property Owners Association, Orchard Vale Property Owners Association, Frank Knolls Improvement Association, Rouge Basin Coalition and the West Bloomfield-Farmington Area League of Women Voters.

Other groups working in conjunction with the Coalition are Citizens in Opposition to M-275, Sierra Club, Lower Straits Lake Protection Association and the West Oakland League of Women Voters.

"If the commission had been provided with objective information by the department, they might have made a different decision on M-275," said Janet Lynn, the head of CLURE.

"I HOPE THAT people won't be making plans now — developing land, building and buying homes, relocating businesses — as though the M-275 freeway is unquestionably going to be built," added Verona Morse of the Rouge Basin Coalition.

"The federal government's policy on environment, energy use and urban

sprawl, and the December decision by Transportation Secretary Neil Goldschmidt to refuse funding for a stretch of I-675 outside Dayton all indicate that the Michigan Transportation Commission's decision may be the only favorable one forthcoming of those needed to fund M-275," Morse said.

The Coalition said it will continue its seven-year opposition to the possible extension of Northwestern Highway from Orchard Lake Road through West Bloomfield to a terminus at M-275 in Commerce Township.

But Snyder cautioned Milliken in his letter that "its fate lies essentially in your hands rather than ours."

Shella Outley, a member of Concerned Citizens for West Bloomfield, addressed what she believes are the environmental problems of extending the highway.

"With the development which has taken place in West Bloomfield since we circulated those petitions (and sent the governor 4,000 names Concerned Northwestern in 1974), I think it is going to be even easier now for people to see how destructive to the social life

and landscape of West Bloomfield this road would be," Outley said.

"FOR ALL the money it would cost, it wouldn't do a thing to address our real needs, which are upgrading, some widening and much paving," she added.

Snyder said the Coalition has pressed for a new method of applying available state funds to upgrading local roads as a substitute to freeway building.

"The sad thing about the M-275 decision is that it literally guarantees that nothing will be done about the local roads," Snyder continued.

In a Jan. 2 letter to the federal department of transportation office in Lansing, the Coalition asked the division administrator to monitor the environmental impact statement process on the M-275 project.

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### ON STAGE

Pat Bordman continues her series on community theater in today's Suburban Life section. She keeps track of on-stage and off-stage goings on in the Farmington Players' production of "Angel Street."