

How senior citizens find life in housing unit

By MARY GNIEWEK

Thursday morning a handful of oldsters gathered in the lobby of Westland's Greenwood Villa, an 11-story high-rise they call home.

Dressed in springy clothing despite chilly temperatures, they waited for a SEMTA bus to transport them to an Easter party at a nearby center.

In the management office a few feet away, it was business as usual for Judy Tosolan and her crew — reordering supplies and calling a repairman to fix one tenant's dishwasher.

Greenwood Villa is a 12-building complex of primarily senior citizen and some low income family housing. Built by multi-rise corporation of Southfield, it was financed with HUD funds allocated to the city of Westland from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA).

It's the type of project Farmington Hills has in mind, but on a larger scale. Greenwood Villa has 298 units, the hills proposal calls for a six to eight story mid-rise with 150 to 200 units.

Farmington Hills City Council applied to MSHDA last month and is waiting to hear if it will be chosen to receive HUD money for the intended project.

Like Westland, it has contracted the same builder, Multi-Rise, and the same management firm, the Fourmidable Group, to oversee the project.

"I WAS impressed with management," said Hills City Councilwoman Jan Dolan, who attended a recent open house at the Westland center. "Anyone can build a building, but management is the key."

Mrs. Tosolan shares the credit with others.

"We placed our first occupants in February of last year. It's been relatively quiet," she said. "There have been no security problems, no break-ins. The Westland Police Department does a beautiful job patrolling the area."

Greenwood Villa revolves around the high-rise building with 210 one- and two-bedroom apartments. Thirty-two garden section apartments stand behind the main building. Around the perimeter of the site, bordering a heavily wooded area of William Holiday Park, are 56 townhouses, which are a mix of senior citizen and low income family units.

Eight units are for low income family housing — the quota established by HUD. The rest of the complex, which has a five-year waiting list, is occupied by senior citizens. There's also a gov-

ernment regulated 10 percent minority mix.

"You can't give preference to local residents or discriminate against race, because the program is federally regulated," Mrs. Tosolan explained. "But if a city has a waiting list, it can give those people top priority."

Westland has a waiting list of more than 4,000 names.

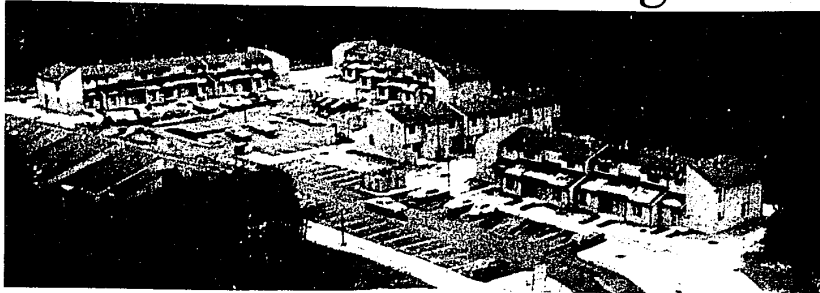
RENT IS PAID on a sliding scale — 25 percent of the tenant's monthly income. Rent varies from \$40 to \$400 a month. Security deposit is based on rent.

One tenant who wasn't attending Thursday's Easter bash was Mrs. Gizella Nemeth, who lives in the high-rise.

"I've been here one year and I love it," she said. "I'm in seventh heaven."

Mrs. Nemeth lives in a typical one-bedroom apartment. The kitchen has built-in appliances. Like all the units, the apartment came with drapes and

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These townhouses, photographed from the roof of the high-rise at Greenwood Villa, are a mixture of senior citizen and low-income family housing units. The complex borders Holiday Park, off Cowan street behind Westland Shopping Center. (Staff photos by Harry Mauthe)



Mrs. Tosolan, manager of Greenwood Villa, talks to tenant Gizella Nemeth in her apartment.



Tenants Ying Shu-Wen and Ying Chen Poa take advantage of the tenants self constructed library. The complex also has game and meeting rooms and a chapel.

THE INSIDE * ANGLE

THE LATEST ADDITION to Farmington's business community can't be accused of self-aggrandizement. Quiet T.J. Maxx is heavy on the cloak and dagger stuff, these days. When asked why the company doesn't give out the address of its corporate headquarters, one employee answered that their suppliers wanted a low profile. "And that's all I can say," (Angles wonders what it feels like to work for a place that's more cautious than the CIA. Trench coats, anyone?) The store opens on April 6 in the old Federal's building.

SPEAKING OF HYPE the makers of Kowalski sausage are about to spring another word on unsuspecting consumers. Try rolling around the word "smacznessen." It's a hybrid of the Kowalski slogan, the Polish word for tasty, and delicatessen. (IA thinks it will hide during that commercial.)

THE GATHERING PLACE is sponsoring a spring fling dinner dance at 7 p.m., April 20 in Mercy Center. Tickets are \$5.50. Seniors are encouraged to bring along their adult sons and daughters. The Farmington Senior Adult Band will provide the music.

REGISTRATION FOR THE SPRING session at Oakland Community College will be conducted on April 30 and May 1, according to an alphabetical schedule. Applications for spring session are still being accepted. Interested individuals should contact the campus they wish to attend for information regarding admission procedures. Persons requiring council assistance can visit the counseling office. For further information about classes at the Orchard Ridge campus in Farmington Hills call 476-9400.

CHINA, CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM will be the topic of discussion at 7 p.m., April 23 in the Royal Oak library, 222 East Eleven Mile. The lecture and slide presentation about the politics and culture of southeast Asia is sponsored by the Detroit Council for World Affairs and Wayne State University's Center for Peace and Conflict Studies. For further information call the Royal Oak library at 577-3453.

UNDERSTANDING DEAFNESS IN older persons and learning how to cope with it will be the theme of a two-day workshop at Madonna College in Livonia on April 19-20. Edward Carney, public information officer of the National Association of the Deaf, Silver Spring, Maryland will conduct the sessions. The workshop will explore an overall orientation to deafness including the definition of terms

associated with deaf and hearing impaired persons. The American Sign Language system will be discussed. The workshop will be conducted from 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. on April 19 and on April 20 in room 106 of the Madonna College Administration building on Schoolcraft and Levan. Advance registration is required. For further information call Sr. Colleen Morris, gerontology department 591-1200, ext. 53.

THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT of Transportation will be taking bids later this month on three major Oakland County highway projects. One of the projects involves watering landscape on 8.2 miles of I-486 from Halsted in Farmington Hills, east to US-24, Telegraph in Southfield. Estimated completion date is September at a cost of approximately \$50,000.

PERSONS WHO WANT TO LEARN cardiopulmonary resuscitation can attend classes at the Gathering Place in Mercy Center. Class will be offered from 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. on April 10. The Michigan HEART Association will present a demonstration and film.

THE FARMINGTON COMMUNITY LIBRARY is switching to its summer hours. Beginning April 10 the library will be open from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. from Monday to Thursday and from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. The library will be closed on April 13.

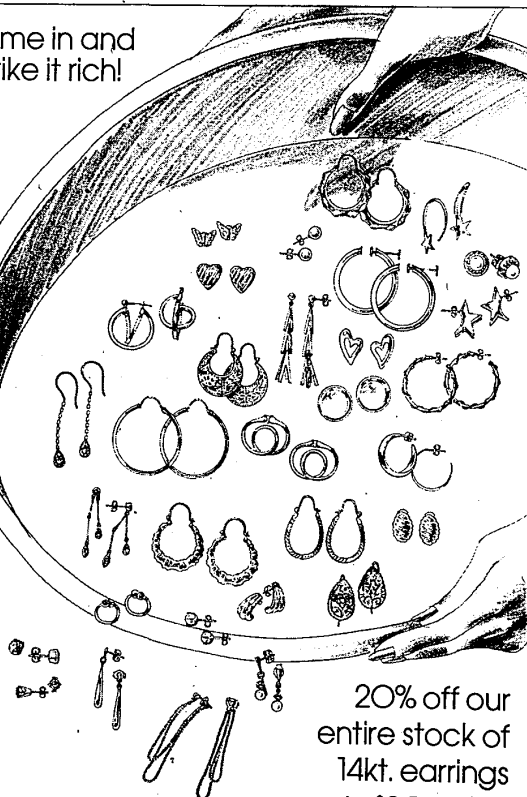
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