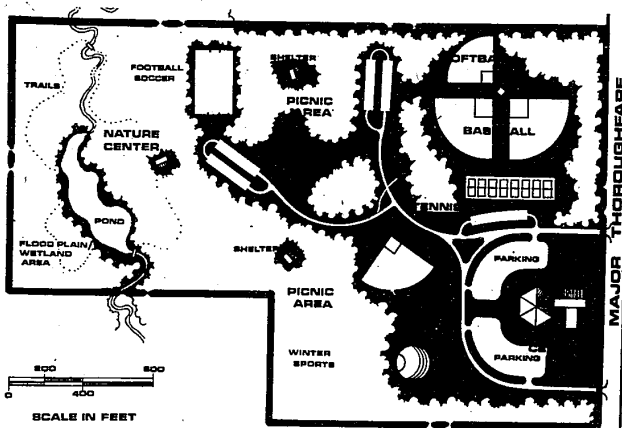


Monday's Commentary



A grand plan, a major parks and recreation area, seems to have been forgotten with the passing years. But the valuable land in Farmington Hills is quickly being developed and soon there may be little room for a fully developed park.

Election fever brings questions into focus

Finally, the political season in Farmington Hills has arrived.

City council hopefuls, both new and old, will be plunking down their petitions at Floyd Cairn's counter, declaring themselves as targets for public scrutiny.

Imagine, we'll have a dozen or so candidates to make a political-watcher's mouth water.

Local political questions are even more fun to ponder than those on a national level. Let's face it, everybody knows that Jimmy Carter is holed up at Camp David composing a speech to announce he won't run for another four-year term.

But local political guessing games offer questions which are even harder to answer.

Will Joanne Smith, target of an aborted recall movement, toss her hat in the ring? Will her chief political enemy Joan Dudley put her name on the line or opt for wielding power behind the scenes?

Will Jaycee power be enough for Terry Sever to become the youngest council person to serve? Will it be George or Barb Majors who will seek a city council chair?

Who is Jack Burwell, anyway? And is it true that Willoughby Wink will run as a write-in candidate?

As long-time Councilman Keith Deacon might say, "this is a real political type situation."

Those of you who opt for Monday night television miss a lot by not attending, at least semi-regularly, the meetings up at the corner of Orchard Lake and Eleven Mile.

Actually, it's all a little more serious than I'm portraying it here. But nobody ever said you can't have a little fun when dealing with serious matters which affect your community.

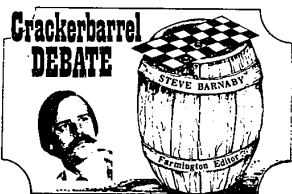
The important thing for voters to remember as this election nears is that there are issues involved. Local politics have a tendency to become victim to personality battles. Issues, most of the time, get lost in the shuffle of who dislikes who.

One issue which residents should focus on during this election is whatever happened to the master parks and recreation plan so proudly touted a few years back?

It was a grand plan, costing \$10,000 to formulate, as a matter of fact. But political priorities do change as time passes and the parks plan has gone out of public focus.

That's unfortunate. For the more cynical, it's unfortunate because it would be a waste of \$10,000 to make a study not to implement it.

For optimists, the shame lies in the fact that



Farmington Hills is in danger of being developed without the benefit of a properly developed recreation plan.

The real problem in a community like Farmington Hills is that residents tend to take all those empty fields for granted. Too few realize that vacant land is owned by someone who will eventually want to develop it to make some bucks on their investment.

If something isn't done by the city government very shortly, all those vacant fields will turn into subdivisions or commercial developments.

Farmington Hills will be without a major parks service. It will be a community which will have left its residents without benefit of a very valuable service.

Council hopefuls should be quizzed by residents on how they stand on this forgotten issue.

Those in power who hold to the playground mentality will point to the utilization of the school playgrounds by the Parks and Recreation Division.

But that's not enough. Others will point to the city's acquisition of the San Marino golf course and say that is enough. But it isn't.

What is needed is a major land purchase, 80 to 100 acres, where a recreation facility for all in the community can be developed.

It has to be more than a few baseball diamonds. It needs to be a facility which reflects the many personalities and interests of the Farmington Hills residents.

So, remember when campaign time comes, ask the candidates about recreation facilities in this community. Sure beats whispering about why Joan and Joanne don't like each other.

28 special students recognized

Twenty-eight persons from New Horizons of Oakland County received certificates of completion of mandatory special education at a June ceremony at the Hawthorne Learning Center in Pontiac.

A Torch Drive agency, New Horizons offers vocational training for mentally and physically impaired persons in

Oakland County. Headquartered at 117 Turk St., the organization has a branch at 24126 Research Drive in Farmington Hills.

The ceremony was sponsored by the Hawthorne Vocational Training Center, which provides mandatory special education classes for Oakland County residents in conjunction with New

Horizons. The program honored New Horizons trainees who have reached age 25.

Farmington branch trainees included Larry Cook of Birmingham, David Bradford and Howard Threet of South Lyon, James Mulroy and Patrick Blackmore of Southfield and Debbie Raspberry of Farmington.



"Around the edge"

by Jackie Klein

Probation: A second chance

A hefty slash of nearly \$100,000 from Southfield probation department's 1979-80 budget eliminates three top staff positions, including the one held by director Dale Chrysler.

When the federal grant for the department elapsed, city officials argued that an expanded probation bureau was a luxury Southfield could no longer afford. The judges agreed that probation is the only area of the court flexible enough to cut.

A staff of four will remain in the 9-year-old probation department which also has a long list of active volunteers. But Chrysler and his assistant, John Larsen, would be hard to replace even if the city got a windfall for the operation.

Chrysler ran a tight ship and was truly dedicated to the concept that rehabilitation is a humane alternative to a jail sentence. Meeting terms of probation is no cream puff task, he believes, and he was tough but fair and humane.

Larsen's style was somewhat different. A former priest, he came off as a gentle, idealistic champion of those who erred and fell from grace. But he could be firm if he thought it was best for the probationer.

YOU WIN a few and you lose a few in the probation department. Offenders referred by the court pay \$10 a month for a second chance. Probation officers take a chance that they'll get at the root of the problem and help probationers make it in society.

It doesn't always work. Chrysler never kept statistics on how many clients succeeded and how many failed. He said it was impossible to follow through and his former probationers may get in trouble in another community. He couldn't reduce human beings to cold numbers on a chart.

The people who work in the probation department really have heart. I remember one probation officer who was as proud as a mother when her client made it. Anne, the young offender, was arrested for possession of narcotic paraphernalia. It was her first offense.

The girl was placed on probation, assigned to an alcohol and drug abuse center for drug information classes, group and individual therapy and to a one-to-one volunteer counselor.

Anne now lives at home, has a steady job and attends college. She has no criminal record because she successfully met terms of probation. That was the condition for clearing the slate and giving the young woman a second chance without a stigma.

THE PROBATIONER officer's spirits dampened when she learned about another case that could be a loser. Juanita, 19, was arrested for shoplifting. She was assigned to six months probation and a three-day work week detail at the Southfield library. Juanita was unmarried and lived with her mother. She was to be dismissed from probation June 20 with no record.

Shirlee's sallies

by Shirlee Iden



It's more than fireworks

With the fireworks now silent, the hot dogs eaten and the last of the picnic ants brushed away, what's to be said about another July 4th?

Like most, I'd tend to forget it until holiday plans come close again next year. Indeed, memories dim of what Independence Day really means.

Coming back to work on the 5th, I was jolted into remembering.

A letter from Congressman Bill Brodhead reminded me that, like most Americans, I take so many basic freedoms for granted.

His letter is part of a continuing story, the plight of Soviet Jews who ask little but to be reunited with their families, but who are at the mercy of the Soviet government.

Brodhead wrote this time about the Maryasin family of Riga, Latvia. They have sought permission to join their married daughter and her family in Israel for several years.

Included in Brodhead's message were letters from the daughter, Mrs. Rita Yovash in Israel and the father, Alexander Maryasin in Riga. The English in Maryasin's letter is rough, but the message is clear.

"Really, who is able to explain the feelings (of) a father when his child is being expelled from an educational establishment, deprived of education and work, only for the desire to join her sister, and at the same time refused the visa to go where (she) wishes?"

"Who can explain the feelings of the man who was a successful worker, (who) today is deprived of work and put in conditions of a social leper, because he gave to his daughter (according to the law) permission to leave the country?"

"Who can explain the feelings of a family who is everyday, twice a day, seeking in the postbox the so long-expected postcard from the OYER to come (with news about) the visa, and can't find it for several years, and more."

BRODHEAD and other public officials have championed the rights of persons like the Maryasins who seek their basic human rights as guaranteed under the Helsinki Agreements.

Ah, but there's the rub. The Helsinki Agreements, signed by the Soviets and our own government sev-

On June 6, she was again picked up for shoplifting. She wanted to buy her boyfriend a graduation present but she had no money. The tragedy is she was on her way to making it.

There are classic shoplifters who say they'd rather do time than go through Southfield's 46th District Court Probation Department, Chrysler maintained. And there are those who claim probation, "criminal justice's non-system," is a soft cushion for law-breakers.

Chrysler was somewhere in between. He tried to be neutral and objective. He wasn't critical of those who pool-pool the "non-system" and grumbled it's too easy on offenders.

"WE LIVE in a democracy," Chrysler said, and laws can always be passed to lengthen prison terms. Jails have often failed miserably as temporary deterrents to crime. Prisons are expensive schools for criminals.

"On the other hand, probation isn't a soft touch with benevolent counselors who take you to find a job, get medical attention or treat your psyche so you can get your head back together again."

The Southfield probation department, Chrysler said, doesn't do things for people. Probation workers examine the influences which bring offenders in conflict with the law and try to establish behavior patterns to keep them from repeating the crime. Probationers are responsible for their own actions.

Larsen used to call offenders younger than 24 late developing juveniles searching for identity without responsibility. Rehabilitation involves motivation, he maintained.

Another probation department function is presentence reports which turn faceless offenders into individuals for judges to rule upon.

"WE NEED to know more about why young offenders fail," Chrysler said. "It's important to catch the reasons before sentencing to a better job of correction."

Chrysler claimed the probation department lacked manpower to do more investigation. The department has even less manpower now with the substantial budget cut-back.

In recent years, Chrysler said, more felons have been on probation or parole than are in jail. Experiments indicate freedom is an incentive. But correction is invisible unless it involves a sensational case or is the brunt of severe criticism?

"You forget all about technical measurements and statistics when you've helped someone turn his life around," Chrysler said. But that's not the side society sees. Society demands accountability."

It's too soon to determine the impact of the economy measure which knocked Chrysler and Larsen off the city payroll. But it would be a shame if even one young offender was deprived of a second chance.

eral years ago, simply are not the Declaration of Independence.

On the part of the Soviets, they have been observed, as the saying goes, more in the breach than otherwise. Families continue to be torn apart and kept apart, often for no discernible reason.

Take the father, separated from daughter and grandchild he has never seen. He is dying of cancer, alone and helpless. It seems impossible to find a rational reason to keep a sick person from his child and a grandchild. What threat does Isaac Zlotover hold for the Soviets?

Igor Gudzy spent the months of his wife's pregnancy thousands of miles from her side. The Soviets said he might have military secrets and yet his military service was spent playing soccer.

The list is endless — young couples separated for years from one another at the puzzling whim of the Russians.

Just a year ago, two of the most well known dissidents in the USSR, Anatoly Scharansky and Alexander Ginzburg were found guilty in a Moscow trial and sentenced to years in notorious Soviet prisons.

The rage of much of the world has failed to free Scharansky even today.

EVEN when U.S. Sen. Donald Riegle said: "Today's trials in the Soviet Union show a blind bureaucratic savagery that makes a mockery of a detente that would be both dependable and decent," the plight of the two men was not alleviated.

Riegle said then: "I cannot imagine a SALT treaty I could support with a nation that terrorizes its own people."

Although the Soviet Union seems very far away, basic human rights have become the challenge of every American. The lessons of the past-half century of human history mandate this. And President Jimmy Carter rallied us all to this cause early in his administration.

More than 200 years have passed since Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence. No one ever claimed it was perfect, and certainly, it has been challenged and even bent out of shape at times in our history.

But think about it, and you have to concur, the July 4th observance is about a lot more than fireworks and picnics.

Alexander Maryasin would understand that.

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Editor

23362 Farmington Rd.

Farmington, MI 48024

(313) 477-5450

John Reddy, General Mgr.

Thomas A. Riordan, Executive Editor

George J. Hagan, Advertising Director, Fred J. Wright, Circulation Director