

# Old, new house values maintain pace

The value of existing housing is keeping pace with the rising costs of new housing, according to the Western Wayne Oakland County Board of Realtors (WWOCBR).

Examining national figures on building costs and median prices, the Board found the median selling price of new houses rose from \$35,900 in 1974 to \$52,900 last year or 75 percent.

At the same time, the median price of existing housing went from \$32,000 to \$55,700, or an increase of 74 percent. In the North Central region of the nation, which includes Michigan, the climb in median existing housing prices was slightly lower at 72.5 percent.

Median selling prices in this region traditionally are below national figures. The 1974 median price of \$27,700 was 13.4 percent lower and nearly the same ratio was continued in 1979 with the \$47,800 median price 14.2 percent below the national figure.

While such statistics show the wisdom of home investment as a hedge against inflation, they also show a strong rise in housing costs that is expected to continue," said John J. Halser, WWOCBR president.

"These figures show that costs of home construction — for land, materials, labor and financing — have risen by an annual average of 14 percent since 1974.

"Where it cost only \$19 per square foot for a new home in 1974, it now costs \$32.40. The \$32,000 price in 1974 could provide a home of 1,684 square feet, about the average size. Now it would only offer about 988 square feet,

which would severely cramp most households."

Halser pointed out that part of the rise in new housing costs has resulted from increasing the amenities which are included. In 1979, for example, nearly two out of three houses were equipped with central air conditioning; about the same ratio had fireplaces; about 80 percent had two or more bathrooms and 65 percent had dishwashers built in.

Other indications of building trends showed that of new houses in 1979, 57 percent were one-story; 67 percent had at least two-car garages; 64 percent had three bedrooms; and, of the 87 percent equipped with central warm air heating systems, 29 percent had heat pumps.

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## BEAR bites the dust

After taking more than 10,000 calls over two years from motorists traveling Michigan's I-96 Freeway, the BEAR system has died.

BEAR (Broad Emergency Assistance Radio) has run out of operating funds, which amount to about \$120,000 a year, according to Michigan State Police.

The system began in October 1978 as a national pilot project to determine the feasibility of using the popular citizen band radio as a means of assisting motorists with emergencies on a freeway.

It was a cooperative effort involving the Michigan State Police, the Michigan Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Communications Commission.

DURING THE TWO years of BEAR operation, more than 10,000 CB calls were received from motorists traveling I-96 anywhere on the 140-mile stretch between Detroit and Grand Rapids.

About 50 percent of all calls involved "aid to motorists," which covered car problems. Fifteen to 20 percent of calls involved the reporting of accidents; 10 percent involved reporting traffic violations.

Other calls involved abandoned vehicles, fires, medical emergencies and highway hazards.

State Transportation Director John P. Woodford said the 10 CB relay towers stationed intermittently between Detroit and Grand Rapids will remain in place.

Signs along I-96 which advise motorists to "CALL CB-9" for motorist emergency aid will be covered, rather than removed.

Col. Gerald L. Hough, State Police director, said "I hope that additional funding can be found that will enable us to reinstate the program at some future date."

## EMU child care center has afternoon openings

Eastern Michigan University's Child Care Center now offers an afterschool and evening child care program from 3:45-10:15 p.m. Mondays-Fridays.

The program, designed to meet parental class, study and work scheduling needs, is available for children between the ages of 2 and 12, whose parents are EMU students, faculty or staff members.

The Child Care Center, on the ground floor of Snow Health Center, contains four well-equipped rooms for the children, a Parents' Room, and the Child Care Center office. Also, there is a large outdoor play area adjacent to the Child Care Center entrance.

The staff is headed by three early education professionals. They include:

Tobi Bartlett, coordinator; and Debora Romeo and Bertha Thomas, assistant coordinators. The remainder of the Child Care Center staff is comprised of graduate students, student teachers and student volunteers.

The cost of child care service is \$1.25 an hour for the first child in a family. Reduced rates are offered for additional children in the same family. Normally, child care is paid by the month, in advance, but other payment schedules can be arranged. There is a \$3 registration fee per family each semester.

For further information, contact Tobi Bartlett or Bertha Thomas at the Child Care Center, at 487-1126.

### Solar financing facts offered

A free directory describes programs that offer financial incentives to buyers of solar and other renewable energy systems. Single copies of Sun Dollars may be obtained by writing to the Michigan Department of Commerce and Energy Administration, PO Box 30228, Lansing 48909. It is also available by calling: 1-800-292-4704.



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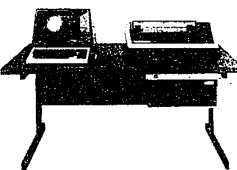
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