

Farmington Observer

Volume 92 Number 68

Monday, June 8, 1981

Farmington, Michigan

36 Pages

Twenty-five cents

Tax opponents rally support to sway votes

By Steve Barnaby
editor

State legislators opposed to last week's passage of a bill paving the way for a 1 percent income tax increase for suburbanites working in Detroit are banding together in attempts to persuade Detroit voters to reject a June 23 ballot question.

State Rep. Sandy Brotherton, R-Farmington, although opposed to the income tax plan, is unsure of his support for the group.

"I'm part of the group, I guess, but right now it's a little too radical for me," said Brotherton, whose district represents Farmington, Farmington Hills and parts of Southfield.

The group's intent, he says, is to urge suburbanites to influence Detroit co-workers to vote against the plan. It also hopes to raise advertising funds to be used in Detroit newspapers.

"We also will emphasize the five-mill property tax increase which not too many people know about right now," said Brotherton.

The millage increase is designed to pay off bonding issues so state revenue sharing funds can be used by the Detroit for other purposes, Brotherton said.

Although favoring the group's intent, Brotherton questions some of the tactics he's heard discussed as possibilities for swaying the vote.

"Some of the ads people are talking about are rather flamboyant. They would talk down (Detroit mayor) Coleman Young. That's a little stupid," says Brotherton.

Such tactics, he believes, would cast the opposition in the role of being racists and against Detroit.

"At least for me that isn't true. I don't think people are against Detroit. They are just disgusted with the way some things are done," he said.

If the income tax plan is approved by Detroit voters, residents will pay 3 percent and non-residents will pay 1.5 percent.

One of the suburban legislators spearheading the anti-tax drive is State Rep. Doug Cruce, R-Troy, who is serving his first term in Lansing.

"He represents a swing district in Troy and Macomb County. He has to come down hard to convince voters he's against this thing," Brotherton said.

Another leader, State Rep. Jack Kirksey, R-Livonia, "is vehemently opposed to the whole thing," Brotherton said.

But not all suburban legislators share the same sympathies. At least one who will reject membership in Cruce's group is State Rep. Joseph Forbes, D-Oak Park.

The House majority leader, he aided in squeezing the proposal through the house in a close 56-50 vote.

Forbes fears if Detroit defaults, it will ultimately cost all state taxpayers more, said his administrative assistant Win Rowe.

"REPRESENTATIVE FORBES is aware people are complaining about property taxes. He has taken this stand with considerable reluctance," said Rowe.

"But prudence dictated something had to be done."

Meanwhile, on the Senate side, State Sen. Doug Ross, D-Southfield stuck to his guns all week and consistently opposed the tax initiatives despite intense lobbying efforts by supporters of the tax program.

The Senate passed the measure Friday after hours of debate. One senator stormed out of the chambers threatening never to return.

The final break came when Lt. Gov. James Brickley cast a tie-breaking vote.

Earlier in the week Ross defended his stand.

"It seems clear to me that the last thing my constituents want is an increase in taxes," said Ross.

"I do think we all have a critical stake in Detroit. But I think we'll just have to look at our existing funds to bail out the city," he said.



Soccer and sun

The combination of warm weather and bright sunshine are perfect for a little soccer practice in Farmington City Park. Debbie Hunt (left)

gives her son Brian a few pointers while Joe Gallagher watches over the fun.

RANDY BORST/staff photographer

From Frisbees to showmobiles

Festival revamps summer offerings

By Mary Rodrigue
staff writer

A parade, pageantry, fireworks and a week of revelry is in the making for the 17th annual Farmington Founders Festival July 21-26.

The festival committee chaired by Betty Huff is working with a clean slate for the first time in four years, having wiped out a \$5,000 deficit from the last two festivals. Festival '80 grossed \$16,665.

Seventeen contestants are vying for the title of Miss Farmington in the annual pageant, the traditional festival kickoff scheduled July 22 at Vladimir's, 28125 Grand River.

A talent contest, ethnic food booths, a Frisbee tournament and three showmobiles are expanded offerings this year.

One of the oldtime favorites, Sunday in the Park, an afternoon of games,

picnics and entertainment at Farmington City Park, is being scrapped due to reconstruction of the Shiawassee bridge. Roads leading to the park have been barricaded for the project.

Showmobiles will be stationed at Chatham Center, Farmington Plaza and the downtown center for three days of entertainment.

The committee hopes to attract baton twirlers, gymnasts, singers, dancers, mimes, magicians, ventriloquists and others to the first annual talent contest, which will be held in one of the showmobiles.

July 25-26 at Oakland Community College, Orchard Ridge campus.

The American Cancer Society and Coppertone are co-sponsoring a Frisbee tournament, one of four regional competitions slated for Michigan this summer. Winners will compete in the national tournament.

Contributions for the fireworks dis-

play have been made by Metro Bank and the Alexander Hamilton Life Insurance Company. Any person wishing to sell raffle tickets to support the fireworks should call Oscar Rhoton at 855-9700.

First prize is a trip for two to the Bahamas, second prize is a trip to Mackinac Island and third prize a hot air balloon ride. There are 25 additional prizes.

"We're going to be working in the black for the first time since 1977," Mrs. Huff said. "We're very proud of that."

"We can still use more arts and crafts booths, more antiques and collectibles," she added.

"And we definitely need people to provide extra help on parade day."

The committee is looking for persons

with convertibles or sunroofs who could volunteer to drive dignitaries along the parade route.

Parade applications are in the mail to persons and groups who have been in parades in previous years. New groups are also welcome to participate.

FESTIVAL '81 will also have a ping-pong tournament, baseball, tennis and a marathon. The annual or roast will be moved from its original spot in the downtown center to the Masonic Temple.

The Jaycees luncheon will be open for expanded hours this year to coincide with the hours of the festival.

To volunteer service to the festival committee or register for special programs, call 476-2819.

Driver is sought in fatal hit/run

Farmington Hills police are looking for the driver of a car that fatally injured an 83-year-old nursing home patient on Wednesday night as he walked across Eight Mile west of Orchard Lake Road.

Laszlo Rotter, 83, a resident patient at the Farmington Nursing Home, 30405 Folsom, died of internal injuries following the 11 p.m. accident.

Nursing home officials alerted police just before the accident that Mr. Rotter was missing. He left the nursing home at 8:30 p.m. to take a walk.

Police said the driver of the car, an aqua Chevrolet Nova which was traveling westbound on Eight Mile, may be

unaware that he hit Rotter, a short, slightly built man.

A witness said the car wasn't speeding and that Mr. Rotter appeared to walk directly into its path. The car was driven by a white man, the witness said.

A spokesman for the nursing home said that residents are free to go outside.

"It's normal procedure. Nobody is a prisoner here," he said.

Anyone with information on the accident should call the Farmington Hills police department at 474-6181 anytime.

Cop focuses his scope on crime

By Jackie Klein
staff writer

Southfield Police Sgt. Melvin Paunovich is on both sides of the law.

A graduate chemist and head of the city's crime lab, the 34-year-old sergeant wears one hat as a qualified expert witness testifying in court trials.

Wearing another hat and a traditional three-piece suit, Paunovich defends clients in divorce, personal injury, insurance and building contract cases. He maintains law offices in Southfield and Howell.

"In his 'leisure time' the busy chemist-lawyer twice ran for a seat on the Farmington Hills City Council but was unsuccessful.

Paunovich earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry and a juris doctorate. He attended Wayne State University, University of Detroit and FBI School. He also has taken a number of drug and fingerprint analysis courses to round out his education.

Paunovich has headed the police crime lab for 12 years. He works from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. and then dishes to one of his two law offices. But the dual careers don't conflict, he said.

PAUNOVICH HAS seen many changes as the crowded police station at the Southfield Civic Center moved

into the new, spacious public safety building.

"We used to call the old crime lab the 'broom closet' because it was so small," he said.

"Every once in a while, we step into the closet in the new lab just to see how it feels. But in any event, you got a lot of experience and training in this job."

"When I testify in court, attorneys ask me what background I've had. And I say 'Where do you want me to start? I've analyzed hundreds of fingerprints and controlled substances in 12 years.'"

Paunovich and police specialist Duane Szumlinski — a graduate chemist who's been with the lab 11 years — are the only two officers in the department qualified as expert witnesses. But, they point out, their testimony is based on evidence tagged in little plastic bags after careful screening.

Preliminary drug screening includes chemical, microscopic and crystal tests. Suspected controlled substances are compared with known drugs. Among the most common are Valium, Librium, marijuana and cocaine. The lab sells for about \$2,200 an ounce. Paunovich said.

ANALYZING fingerprints isn't as easy as it sounds, Paunovich said. He's had five years of training in what's called "latent fingerprint examination."



MINDY SAUNDERS/staff photographer

Sgt. Melvin Paunovich prepares a chemical sample for study in the new Southfield crime lab.

"We analyze fingerprints in major crimes, compare them with suspect's and classify them for patterns. Prints are photographed before lifting. We try to see the print under oblique lighting without processing. But it doesn't always work."

Prints are processed with powders, sprays or chemicals depending on the surface. It's important for the crime scene to be secured so evidence isn't destroyed.

Paunovich and Szumlinski also collect physical evidence such as hair and carpet fibres, clothing and blood. They're brought to the lab to be analyzed, separated, compared and marked as evidence.

"In one incident of rape, the victim covered her head with a pillow and never saw her assailant. The scene was processed and we got samples of carpet, hair, blood and semen."

"A suspect was picked up hitchhiking, and through analysis and comparison, he was convicted."

"All evidence from police road specialists filters to the lab. Burglary suspects have been convicted on the basis of broken glass samples in a microscopic search."

Another function of lab officers is to process and develop photographs of crime scenes in a darkroom bigger than a broom closet.

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BEHIND THE SCENES

If you have a job to do... the only thing you can't do it by knowing the whole thing is a secret.

When Eugene Smith needed to know the secret, he placed an ad in the "Observer" and "The Observer" was the only magazine that could help him. The Observer is the only magazine that can help you to buy or sell anything. The Observer is the only magazine that can help you to buy or sell anything.