

Woman wins battle to keep cat in apartment

By Diane Gale
staff writer

Mo Stocker was punitively content with Judge Margaret Schaeffer's ruling last week in a court case that pivoted around whether she could live in the Midwood Apartment complex.

Mo, a four-year-old cat, has lived in the apartment with Fran Stocker most of her life. All was well, until about two months ago when Stocker was served

an eviction notice. Her lease contract states that she and all other tenants may not have pets in their apartments.

Stocker didn't want to move, and she didn't want to be without Mo. She decided to fight the eviction notice and took the case to court. The decision delighted and even surprised Stocker. She won the fight — at least for now.

"I ruled that the landlord waive the provision about pets, because they have

allowed others to have pets," Schaeffer said. "And, they're not evicting others."

"If one person isn't restricted for breaking the rules, it's not fair to penalize someone else," said Schaeffer in explaining her decision.

However, the issue about keeping Mo and other pets in the apartment complex isn't going to rest at this point.

"The instructed Bostak (the company that owns the complex) to evict the

other woman who has a cat," said James Clarkson, the attorney representing Bostak. He didn't divulge the other pet owner's name.

Clarkson also said he plans to file a motion for a rehearing.

IF CLARKSON presents additional law to support his case, Schaeffer said, she would consider granting a rehearing.

"You can imagine the contradiction,

if you're going to allow tenants to have cats," Clarkson said. "It's impossible to admit animals in a multi-unit dwelling when it's against the rules."

Stocker, who has vowed to move before giving up her feline friend, has lived in the complex for five years.

Mo is let out of the apartment about one hour a day, and on some occasions doesn't go out at all. Stocker, 33, said

she doesn't understand why that would be a bother to anyone else.

She argues that the complex owners allow geese, ducks and muskrats to frequent the grounds, which is encircled with trees. "The issue was perhaps unique, but the trial was conducted professionally with attorneys who represented their clients very well," Schaeffer said. "Both attorneys had cases to support their issues."

Hills candidates get in final swipes before election

Continued from Page 1

Both Wolf and Levine said they would not automatically raise taxes to help pay for the property. But if raising taxes is the best alternative, then voters should decide, they said.

HUGHES also expressed optimism over the city getting the state grant. But he admitted uncertainty as to how the property would be financed, particularly that share of the property not paid for by grant money. He suggested

seeking other recreation grants also available.

Sever questioned if Farmington Hills met priority requirements for the state grant. Burwell suggested "spinning

off" a portion of the property to developers.

The city's six-year capital improvement plan also came under the spotlight. One of the projects listed in the

plan is improving drainage to stop flooding.

Both Hughes and Dudley said priorities must be set before the city decides how to finance specific projects.

"We did not properly prioritize it (the plan)," Hughes admitted. "That program requires a great deal of study."

DUDLEY said the council showed a "lack of leadership" in the plan. She

added that it is "time to bite the bullet," in putting in and paying for improvements throughout the city. She said the voters should decide whether to go ahead if the city proposed a "luxury" project, but she didn't define what a "luxury" project was.

Burwell, claiming the council has already set its improvement priorities, said projects did not have to be completed within six years.

Police search for missing woman

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"She may have met with foul play, maybe she was kidnapped for ransom — but there's nothing to lead us to be-

lieve that — and maybe she just left," Tullock said.

Gurwin said he has obtained three restraining orders against his client's

husband, Donald, during the past year and a half. Most recently, Donald was forbidden by court order to enter her room pending the divorce.

Donald DeArment, a partner in several area businesses, Tullock said, couldn't be reached for comment.

Carol DeArment had a business selling dietary aids and was studying to become a court reporter.

THE INVESTIGATION is proceeding, Tullock said, but he conceded that "leads get cold . . . and the possibility of foul play becomes greater as time goes on."

The DeArments' children reportedly are being cared for by their father. DeArment's friends hope that she'll turn up, but they aren't optimistic.

DeArment is described by police as white, 5-foot-5, 120 pounds, with blue eyes and brown collar-length hair with frosted tips.

Anyone with information on her whereabouts is asked to contact Sgt. Ed Hollinger at the Troy Police Department, 524-3458.

2 killed in accident

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POLICE WOULD NOT speculate as to why Burwell was driving the wrong way on the expressway.

The accident was reported to the state police Northville post at 7:36 a.m. The expressway was closed from Telegraph Road to Middlebelt until about 9:50 a.m.

Westbound expressway traffic was rerouted west on 12 Mile, north on Orchard Lake Road and back onto westbound I-96.

"We had to shut it (I-96) down for rescue purposes," said State Police Sgt. Leo Morris, "and the traffic was beginning to back up."

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