

Bingo: a game of luck

By Joanne Mallazewski
staff writer

Helen Tataraka's place at one of the long tables, row upon row of them, at the Farmington Hills American Legion post was as uncluttered as the other Bingo players' tables were strewn with memorabilia, trinkets, stuffed animals and family photos — all for good luck.

But the Oak Park resident prefers to do without the good-luck charms. "It's really a frustrating game because there is no skill involved," Tataraka said. "It's all luck."

Puffing furiously on a cigarette as her eyes fluttered back and forth over the 30 Bingo cards in front of her, Tataraka admitted she's "more of a loser than a winner."

"That, of course, doesn't stop her heart from fluttering as she's waiting to place her final marker on the \$300 special Bingo card."

"Happiness is calling Bingo," she said.

The Tuesday and Friday Bingo nights at the American Legion hall are sponsored by the Detroit League of the National Asthma Center. Bingo players pay \$1 for five cards and \$1 for admission, said Oak Park resident Flo Rose, who runs the Bingo games.

Since most players buy about 20-30 cards in an evening, "thousands of dollars" have been sent to the asthma center, Rose said.

WHILE MOST Bingo players spend about \$30 a week on the game, most also claim they win all the time.

When Rita Lacoff, for example, lived

in Cleveland and played Bingo six nights a week, she was able to "make a living out of Bingo."

"I was able to buy all my clothes and I traveled," she said.

Although she uses a strategy which she preferred to keep a secret, Lacoff said "it really ends up to luck. But this way I have good chances."

On the other side of the room, Edee Moss and her daughter, Anita Weiss, both of Southfield, are less concerned with winning. Stopping for dinner before the Bingo game on Tuesday, the two are more concerned with making the evening a night out for mother and daughter.

But sitting in front of Wells Bingo cards are photos of her children and husband, as well as a stuffed Garfield and two small rocks, all given to her by her young sons for good luck at the Bingo tables.

"They aren't so much for luck but just to have my kids in front of me," Weiss said.

Her mother, who claims "I'm not superstitious at all," nonetheless has two dollar bills poking out of her container of markers. The dollar bills, Moss said, were given to her by a man who said the serial numbers would be lucky.

And now and then Anita Lindor of Bloomfield Hills will put a lucky trinket on her card as she's waiting to hear the last number she needs to shout out "Bingo."

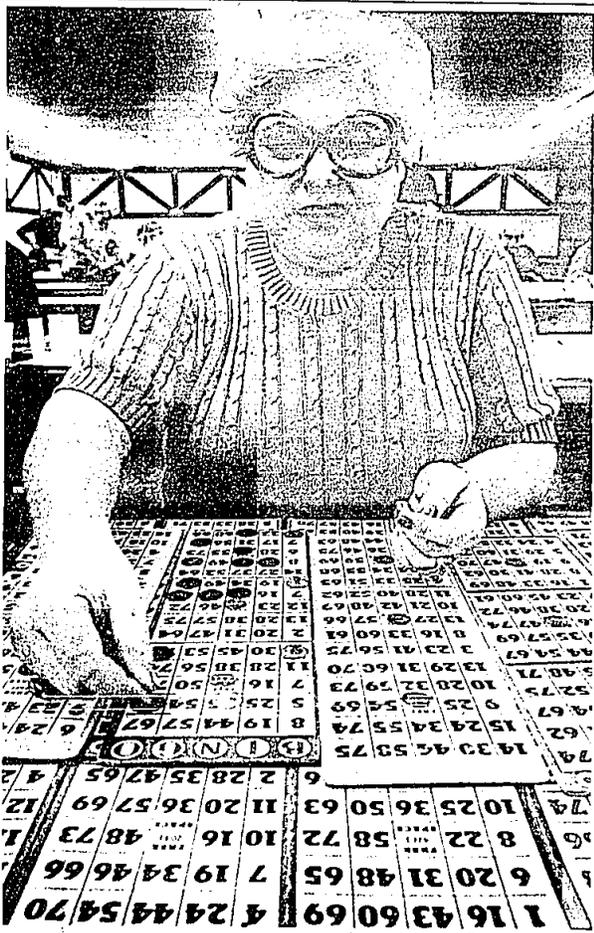
"If I need an L-25, I put it on there," Lindor said. "Trust me it doesn't always work. But I've won enough to keep coming back. I just like the numbers. It's just fun."

"It's really a frustrating game because there is no skill involved. It's all luck."

—Helen Tataraka



L. Anderson looks over her Bingo cards before the start of each game.



Helen Tataraka believes Bingo is all luck. But her heart still flutters when she is waiting for her winning number to be called.

staff photos by RANDY BORGST



When a player shouts "Bingo," floor man Ray Hicks calls out the numbers to be sure its a legitimate win.

memory lane

Memories, memories... have we got the memories. And we'd like to share them with you. Using local newspaper files, we're dishing up generous slices of life in the Farmington community from 40, 30, 20 and 10 years ago.

JAN. 20, 1944 — CAFETERIA LUNCHEES available to Farmington High School students cost 17 cents. The War Food Administration ruled that school lunches must consist of one-half pint of whole milk; two ounces of meat for fish, or one egg, or two ounces of cheese; one-half cup of dry peas, beans or soybeans, or four tablespoons of peanut butter; one cup of vegetables or fruits; one or more slices of bread or muffins or other hot bread made with whole grain or enriched flour, two teaspoons of butter or margarine with added Vitamin A.

"THE SUNNY South... has little appeal for Michiganders with the beautiful weather we have been enjoying recently," noted the Around the Block column. "Maybe we'll pay for it within the next few weeks, but it certainly hasn't seemed like January in the least."

"COME ON AMERICA! It's 1944!" screamed the headline over an advertisement for the Farmington State Bank, urging people to buy 4th War Loan securities to "back the attack."

CLASSIFIED AD: WANTED — "Three brood geese, Edward Sielky, 28260 Shinawasse." Another classified: "LOST — One girls' white fur mitten, Phone 984-R, Mrs. W. Robinson, 34700 Fendit Road, Farmington."

SHORT ITEM: "Concealment of black eyes and bruises may be accomplished by use of a paint consisting of two parts bismuth subcarbonate and one part talc, mixed with carmine or calamine to match the skin tint."

JAN. 21, 1953 — TWO OF THE buildings recently condemned as fire and safety hazards by the Farmington City Council were removed last week, according to city manager James Tennant. The removed structures were the "log cabin" building on Orchard Lake Road just north of Grand River, and the "tank" building on Grand River just east of Orchard Lake. The log cabin was moved to another site, while the tank building was torn down. The third building, an old barn located near Grace Street and Grand River, will be razed in the near future, Tennant said.

"JUST IN CASE you happened to miss the other reminders on this page, here it is again. Today, Tuesday, Jan. 21, is election day in Farmington City and Township. So, if you haven't cast your ballot... get out and do it right now. The polls will remain open until 8 p.m. The nomination of candidates to the Michigan House of Representatives is important to you. This is another opportunity, not only to have a voice in governmental affairs, but even more important, to exercise your right as an American."

SHORT ITEM: "The firmest friendships have been formed in mutual adversity, as iron is most strongly united by the fiercest flame." Another short item: "Resolve to be thyself; and know that he who finds himself loses his misery."

ERIC'S MEAT Market on Seven Mile Road west of Middlebelt advertised boneless rump roast for 69 cents a pound and lean short ribs for 23 cents a pound.

JAN. 23, 1964 — MARICE D. FOLTZ of the Oak Park Public Safety Department has been appointed the new director of public safety for the city of Farmington. The 36-year-old Foltz, who will begin the \$7,800-a-year position on Feb. 1, will replace Joseph DeVriendt, who retired after 40 years of service in the police and fire departments.

FARMINGTON WILL BE among 15 communities where new push-button telephones will be offered during 1964, according to the Michigan Bell Telephone Company. Known as Touch Tone, the new system is faster and easier than dialing, a company spokesman said. With Touch Tone, telephone switching equipment responds to musical tones sent over the lines instead of electronic impulses of the dial system.

NEIL WARRNIER scored 24 points and pulled down 16 rebounds to help Farmington High School whip Southfield High, 66-55, in a battle for first place in the basketball standings of the Inter-Lakes League. Dave Schlaack added 17 points for the winners, and Ray Schlaf had 16 for Southfield.

SHORT ITEM: "I'd like to have 1951 wages, 1955 prices, 1928 dividends and 1900 taxes." Another short item: "Today, more young people under 18 years of age become crippled by arthritis than by polio."

JAN. 23, 1974 — THE FARMINGTON area will receive several new bus routes, and several old lines will be expanded under the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority (SEMATA) plan for public transit in the suburbs. Orchard Lake Road will have a bus line extending from Eight Mile Road to Pontiac Trail. Twelve Mile Road will have service from Orchard Lake Road to points east, and the line on Northwestern Highway will run from the Northland Shopping Center to the village of Orchard Lake.

HOWARD MCCracken has retired after 15 years as assistant chief as Farmington Hills Fire Station No. 4, which serves the northwest part of the city. McCracken, who has served at the station since it opened, will remain active as a volunteer fire fighter.

DAVID SIDLOW of Farmington has been appointed assistant cashier of the Bank Properties of the Bank of the Commonwealth. He graduated from the Detroit Institute of Technology.

NORTH FARMINGTON dropped a 63-37 basketball decision to Livonia Franklin. North's Jim Fredericks, who had been averaging 20.9 points a game, didn't play because of an injured knee.

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