

'What To Say?'

Some Situations Startle Crew Checking City Census Totals

By WYLLIE GERDES

What do you say to an almost-naked lady? If you're a college student working for the City of Farmington this summer, you probably say, "Did you mail your census forms?"

Six college students working for the city this summer have been covering the city looking for persons not counted in the 1970 census. City officials challenged the preliminary total of 9,851 recorded by the Census Bureau, about 1,000 less than previous estimates.

Census figures are important to city governments because state and federal aid is often based on population. The city could lose hundreds of thousands of dollars over the next decade if Farmington really has more residents than the 9,851 counted by the Census Bureau.

The difference between city estimates of 11,000 and the census figures means about \$25,000 per year now because the city receives about \$22 per person in aid. More state and federal aid programs during the next 10 years could greatly increase the loss per year.

SO THE SIX went on extra duty to ask city residents if they were counted in the census. For two weeks, they rang doorbells and buzzers in apartment buildings to up the city's official population and save city residents tax dollars.

The six gathered around their lunch pails in the Department of Public Services building on Nine Mile to relate their extraordinary service.

JIM ATKINSON laid claim to encountering the scantily-clad miss in a city apartment complex. A comrade, Ned Toman, said the young lady appeared at the door wearing an unbuttoned blue work shirt. Toman also said Atkinson refused to divulge the name, address or telephone number of the air-cooled lady.

But others in the group also reported services above and beyond the call of duty.

Michael Gale said he encountered a local grandmother who spoke only German. Her granddaughter had to translate for her.

Of course, the group -- the others are Jack Horniman, Mark Lynott and Ed Hoaglund -- said it would have been easier to count the dogs in the city because they came searching for the canvassers.

"I never knew there were so many dogs in this town," Toman commented.

COVERING THE CITY from stem to stern has taken the six since July 17. They've been to every house twice, walking most of the way. Although short of the 1,000 persons, city estimates show missing from the census, they have found more than 300 persons not counted.

They invaded convents, rectories, nursing homes and the thousands of homes in the city, and they found a lot of people who didn't know what they were talking about.

Gale noted that before the Farmington Enterprise and Observer printed the first public announcement of the plan, each house required a spief on the purpose of the visit. After the news traveled around the city, residents knew what to expect, Gale said.

The group was unanimous in deprecating automatic doors in apartment complexes. Atkinson said it was difficult to explain the problem over the intercom favored in apartment buildings. Atkinson and the others agreed that they were often mistaken for salesmen.

"I was going to tell them I was a vacuum cleaner salesman," the red-haired Atkinson joked.

Atkinson thinks the Census Bureau will have to return to personal interviews to get an accurate count in the next census.

Most of the residents missed in the census forgot to return them or were distracted by accidents or illness. A few didn't even receive the form.

RESIDENTS MISSED in the census were scattered over the city, canvassers said. If a person answered that he had not been counted in the census, the canvassers had the person fill out and sign the short census form.

Toman said many of the persons he contacted who were missed are elderly. He said one older man was blind and couldn't see the line on which he had to sign his name.

THE COLLEGE STUDENTS canvassed starting about 4 p.m. on weekdays and on weekends. Overall, they said, public response was favorable. They were asked to show identification cards supplied by the city only a few times.

Would a group of older canvassers had more success? Atkinson, who sports an amber mustache, said he had gotten some stares but that older men probably couldn't have done any better.

"Besides, you couldn't get them to walk that far," he added.

City Manager John Dinan explained that the city's case is based on the number of customers listed by utility companies.

The city manager said Detroit Edison has 3,263 residential customers listed on April 1, 1970, and the number of city water users is 3,225. Based on 3.4 persons per household, the total population of the city should be about 11,000.

CITY OFFICIALS once thought a recently annexed portion in the southern part of the city was responsible for the difference between the Census Bureau estimate and the city figures. The Census Bureau said the area is included in the city total, but Dinan noted a trip to Kentucky may be necessary to check on the map.

If the new territory doesn't account for the difference the city manager said a physical recount of the whole city might be necessary before the end of August.

"We're negotiating with the Census Bureau now to see if we can physically verify the count," Dinan said.



ENDING CAMPAIGN — Mrs. Lenore Romney, U.S. Senate aspirant, wrapped up her primary campaign in the Farmington Area Saturday with visits to the Downtown Farmington Center and the Farmington Plaza. At Frank's Nursery she meets Mrs. Richard Rhodes of Farmington (Evert photo)

TIME PASSES — With time running out on her primary campaign, Mrs. Lenore Romney was in Farmington Saturday to meet voters. Among those she met were (from left) Kristene Kiley and John Bagnasco. (Evert photo)



MEETS HOPEFUL — Gary Linsay, a customer shopping at Federal's in the Downtown Farmington Center, stopped to visit with Mrs. Lenore Romney whose campaign for U.S. Senate drew to a close with a visit Saturday to the Farmington Area. (Evert photo)

Optimistic About Fall Opening For Harrison

With settlement of the plumbers' strike, Harrison High School principal Lewis Schulman expresses renewed optimism the new high school will be ready for occupancy this fall.

Schulman expressed his optimism in a newsletter mailed to members of the Harrison parent and student advisory committees.

Although hopeful of a September opening at Harrison, Schulman reported the tentative student orientation dates of Aug. 24, 25 have been cancelled.

Details about reporting times will follow later this month," he says.

An emergency alternate plan has been prepared in case Harrison cannot open but it is hoped it will not have to be carried out. The alternative calls for Harrison students to attend North Farmington High with half-day sessions for both student bodies.

"Some things are in our favor," comments Schulman. "The east parking lot, which is a very large one, is near completion. The third floor, which can house all of the students at one time, is practically completed."

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