

Outgoing Mayor Williams assesses year

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

In leaving his post as mayor of Farmington Hills, Charles Williams urged council to work as a team in 1985.

"There was a certain amount of council divisiveness and failure to work as a group," Williams said Thursday during his remarks on his year as mayor. "I contributed to that a little bit."

Williams told council it must tackle the city's major problems and "not get hung up on problems that aren't so major."

In 1985, council will be faced with the challenge of solving the city's problems, Williams said.

FUNDING THE city's capital improvements program will be "paramount," particularly a proposed new police building, the Caddell Drain project and road improvements on 12 Mile.

Failures faced by the city in 1984, according to Williams, included the defeat of a request for an additional 1.5 mills for capital improvements as well as a management and data processing audit that was "worthless."

"It didn't provide us with the insight we'd hoped," he said, about the audit.

Another failure, Williams said, was losing "a major court case regarding sex bias."

But not all was dark and gloomy for the city in 1984, especially economically:

- 521 building permits were issued for single-family houses, compared to 312 in 1983.

- The value of new construction, based on the total number of building permits issued in 1984 topped \$90 million, compared to \$60 million in 1983. As a result, the city's tax roll was in-

creased by approximately 3.5 percent.

- The city's Economic Development Corp. received more than \$9 million worth of new applications for tax-exempt bonds.

OTHER TYPES of progress were also made in 1984, including the paving of two miles of gravel roads. Although the total is not as high as in 1983, the new paving helped boost the city's total number of gravel roads paved since 1981 to 29 miles.

Success also came in the form of preserving the city's status quo in some areas. "We have preserved the neigh-

borhoods abutting Northwestern Highway (from commercial intrusion)," Williams said.

In addition, after several discussions council agreed to maintain current building height limitations, he added.

One of the big pluses of the year, Williams said, was the adoption of a six-year capital improvements program.

"I think a little later I'll say I wish it would have been a little more successful," Williams said, referring to the defeat of a proposal for additional millage to help pay for programs.

Other successes included approving the schematic design for a new police

building, rezoning Middlebelt elementary school for commercial use, and deciding "not to get into the public housing business" — an attempt by Roger Peck to get the city's help in housing for senior citizens.

And "we did keep taxes low here in Farmington Hills by levying an 8 mill tax," Williams said.

On a sadder note, 1984 was the year of goodbyes for some of the city's "key people." — Lawrence Savage, city manager; John Nichols, police chief; Floyd Cairns, city clerk; Robert Romer, city assessor; and Lawrence Karon, fire chief.

Dog owner claims self-defense

By Rich Swanson
staff writer

The owner of a prize-winning English sheepdog testified in 46th District Court Friday that she saw the 100-pound animal attack her 87-year-old mother, but denied that the dog was responsible for her mother's death.

King Boots is a \$5,000 show dog that authorities say attacked and killed Gertrude Monroe in her daughter's Birmingham home on Dec. 19. The city of Birmingham is attempting to get a district court order to have the dog destroyed. Kathryn Schwab and her husband, Charles, are fighting the city's attempt, claiming Monroe died by natural causes.

In the hearing before District Judge Edward Sosnick, Kathryn Schwab testified that her mother — who medical authorities reported died from head and neck injuries as a result of the dog's attack — suffered a stroke and fell. She said the elderly woman hit her

head on the wall before crashing down on the dog, which was sound asleep in the den of the home.

She said the dog then retaliated by grabbing her mother by the hair on the back of the head with clenched jaws in an attempt to get free.

"I WAS WATCHING my mother very closely that day — she was confused," a sobbing Schwab said under cross examination by Birmingham City Attorney Jon Kingsepp. "Suddenly, she fell and hit the wall and went crashing down on Boots. There was a scramble. Boots was trying to get out from under her in a big flurry."

Birmingham police officers David Schultz and Lt. Jack Wilkoff testified that Schwab told them soon after the incident that she was in another part of the house when it occurred and rushed to the scene after hearing the commotion.

But Schwab said the report was wrong. She said she was in the den with

her mother all along, leaving only momentarily to walk into the kitchen. As she approached the kitchen, which adjoins the den, she heard her mother shuffling in the den, and turned around to watch what she was doing, only to witness the entire incident.

Schwab said everything happened "in an instant." She grabbed the dog on the top of his head, pulled him away and pushed him into the back yard.

She then returned to the den, grabbed her mother under the arms and dragged her into the middle of the den and slumped into a chair, where she composed herself before calling police. When police arrived, they found the victim lying on her back, with a pool of blood around her head.

"She was lying on the old slate floor," Schwab said. "I dragged her onto the rug in the family room. I'm sure I hurt her because I was dragging her, but I was frantic. . . maybe it was my fault. I should have just left her there."

Schwab admitted that King Boots has had at least two altercations with people in the past.

LAST AUGUST, the dog bit the family maid causing an injury that required stitches to close the wound. She said the maid tripped while carrying a load of towels from the den. She fell back on King Boots, who snapped back, causing a wound to the back of the head.

As in the case of her mother, Schwab grabbed the dog and escorted him outside.

She also said that several years ago, her daughter-in-law, Sharon Schwab, suffered a puncture wound inflicted by the dog while traveling in a mobile home on the way to a dog show. The wound was treated by a physician at a food oasis where the Schwabs stopped.

Schwab was the first Birmingham police officer who responded to Schwab's call after the attack.



King Boots has been held in Birmingham's dog pound since the night of the incident. Animal control officer Linda Chase feeds the prize-winning sheepdog special food brought in by its owner.

Ice storm leaves its mark on Farmington

Continued from Page 3

coating of ice, making life difficult for Powers and his partner Gary Smith.

"You can slip on those poles," said Powers, who had special metal climbing aids strapped to his shins. "Even now the worst sides of those things are pretty slick."

NO BREAKDOWN was available on power failures in individual communities, according to Edison, but some sections of northern Farmington Hills still were without power last Thursday.

One casualty of the ice storm and resulting power failure was Thursday and Friday classes at Warner Middle School on 14 Mile Road between Northwestern Highway and Middlebelt. Some 500 Warner students had their holiday break extended when classes were canceled at the powerless school.

"It (Warner) is the only (school) building that Edison hasn't been able to restore the power to," said Lynn Nutter, assistant superintendent for the Farmington Public Schools.

"We were quite fortunate, quite frankly, Warner's the only school without power, and we're dealing with it on a daily basis. The rest of the schools are operating."

On New Year's Day, 11 Farmington school buildings, including the central

office and the bus garage, were without power, Nutter said.

Farmington Hills firefighters were kept busy during and after the storm. From 12:55 a.m. New Year's Day to 4:30 p.m. last Wednesday, the department received 47 calls, including 34 involving downed or arcing power lines.

"Holidays are generally on the slow side," said Fire Chief Richard Marinucci, but the storm "kept everyone busy."

He added, "We had no major fires or car accidents. We were very busy mainly with service calls."

Finding a downed or arcing wire, firefighters would "try to keep people out of the area and advise residents that wires are down," Marinucci said.

FAMILIES, WHO were without heat, flocked to area motels, which quickly filled.

"We've had an increase in business,"

said Bill Delac, regional director of operations for Red Roof Inns, which has a hotel in Farmington Hills. "It's up about 10 percent over the last two nights."

My Troy, Madison, Warren, Roseville properties also have shown increases because of the weather."

Christopher Nowka, shift supervisor at the Holiday Inn on Grand River, also reported a surge in business because of the storm.

"We booked the hotel," he said. "We had people lined up on New Year's Day

from 2:30 in the afternoon until, well, I left at 5:30 and they were still lined up from the front desk out the door."

Many people were disappointed to find no room at the inn.

"There's nothing we can do about it," Nowka said. "It's on a first-come, first-served basis. Whoever has the reservation gets the room. We do our best to help them find hotels that do have rooms."

Items which could aid the storm-ravaged — portable generators, kerosene heaters and fuel for them, oil heaters, extension cords, flashlights and batter-

ies — were in short supply, merchants reported.

"Some of these generators I've had around for a long time," said Gary Sauer, a clerk at Jean's Hardware on 12 Mile Road in Farmington Hills. "I usually carry a couple. They're all gone now."

Heaters and kerosene have been "going like crazy," according to Sauer, as were "most of our bigger size batteries."

The Edison spokesperson said service to most areas was to have been restored by last Saturday.

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A study whose results were reported in the New England Journal of Medicine indicates that funeral directors have been very helpful in dealing with families suffering the grievous loss of a child due to disease. Most of the families expressed very positive feelings toward the funeral director for the services rendered during their bereavement. The authors conclude that the funeral directors' experience with grief reactions make them skilled in offering help to grieving families.

This role as counselor/comforter may be more important than ever before. The increasing isolation of people in our society and the fractionalization of the family often make the needs of the bereaved very acute. The modern funeral director is aware of and sensitive to these needs. Often, because of his experience with grief, the funeral director can make an invaluable contribution to meeting these needs.

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