

# Farmington Hills honors veteran firefighter

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Today, as a 21-year veteran employee of a parts manufacturer, the Redford-based Stahl Co., Reboj handles the General Motor and Ford Motor accounts as production controller. His supervisor allows him the needed flexibility for emergency fire runs.

He was drawn into firefighting work by a friend's father, and has been hooked ever since.

Working 55-60 hours each week, Reboj still makes time for his volunteer firefighting. He currently is district chief for Fire Station Three near Grand River and Middlebelt, and at age 39 is senior firefighter for the department, which works with a \$1.2 million budget.

REBOJ ESTIMATES the city would spend more than four times that amount, if it used a fully paid staff.

District chiefs at each of the four

stations watch the number of fire and medical runs closely. Reboj doesn't like to see a station handle more than 70 each month.

"If they take too many runs, it'll burn a guy out," he said. "And if we don't have any, it works the same way."

To keep the call ratio even and because of the city's growth, capital improvements plans in the department call for a possible fifth fire station, he said.

Department morale is "the best it's ever been," under the direction of current Fire Chief Richard Maronucci, Reboj said. He credits the improvement to the appointment/promotion of an internal chief — the first in the city's history.

NOT ONLY has morale improved, but the incidents of fire have decreased over the years because of local community education and increased fire inspection programs. "We used to have a major

house fire once a month," Reboj said.

Education programs have changed that. The department also has a service where smoke alarms are provided and installed at no charge to area residents on request.

The district fire chief spends a good deal of time "listening to people" at the scene of medical emergencies — the majority of calls to which the department responds. He lives in the central part of his sta-

tion's coverage area, and his crew receives 65-70 percent of all calls throughout the city, according to Reboj. Last year, his station responded to 899 incidents.

"I call it my therapy — it's really just a hobby for me," Reboj said of his volunteer experiences. "You've got to make it fun."

It's more than fun for some volunteers. As part-time workers, they earn \$6,000 per year on the average, which Reboj considers "pretty good for a second job."

# Detroit Baptist Manor plans more senior housing

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bed project costs were too high and space planning did not meet with state-planning policies for the aged home facilities, according to MDPH information.

"WE DESIGNED the building to meet nursing care specifications so if in the future we wanted to convert it into a nursing home, we could. But the department of health frowned on that. Our area is over-bedded in nursing homes, according to them," McQuaid said.

The original plan had 60 beds and a therapy room and several lounges, which have since been converted into residential rooms. Some areas were eliminated to reduce the size of the project and reduce the gross square feet per bed.

The facility would offer private and semiprivate rooms, three meals per day, housekeeping, assistance with dressing and bathing and a full range of activities.

The second project — approximately 48 units in quadruplexes — is targeted for a five-acre parcel at the northeast corner of Drake and Freedom roads,

adjacent to an existing Baptist Manor 102-unit apartment building, McQuaid said.

Farmington Hills City Council last week introduced an ordinance authorizing the sale of the property to Baptist Manor, which has an option on the property. The Farmington Hills city charter requires adoption of an ordinance when selling property.

THE CITY is selling the property to Baptist Manor at \$25,000 an acre for a total of \$131,000. Baptist Manor is expected to make a \$1,000 down payment, and pay the balance in two payments in the next two years, City Manager William Costick said.

Although Baptist Manor officials are still working on plans for the quadri-

plexes, the idea is to provide housing for senior citizens — age 62 and older — in mid-income range. The units will not be subsidized, McQuaid said.

The units would be about 1,000 square feet in size and each building would contain four units, with single car garages, McQuaid said.

"We are working on a plan to form a co-op. Persons would purchase a unit of stock in the co-op equal to the cost of the unit," McQuaid said. A monthly maintenance fee would be charged so residents will have "maintenance free living," he added.

Under the co-op concept, residents would receive a financial return when they are ready to sell the unit. The value of the units would "be at market level. I guess it (cooperative) is an un-

usual animal," McQuaid said.

"THERE IS a demand for housing, for senior citizens who do not qualify for subsidized housing yet are not so affluent they can pay the price anywhere," McQuaid said.

Before planning for a co-op gets far along, Baptist Manor officials plan to conduct a market test to make sure the concept can be successful in this area, McQuaid said.

Baptist Manor facilities were first built at the 13 Mile location in 1972. The facilities offer independent living for area senior citizens. Some of the housing is federally subsidized.

The existing 13 Mile facility has seven duplexes and seven quadruplexes. This facility plus the one at Drake and Freedom house 550 residents, McQuaid said.

"The waiting lists are very long," he added.

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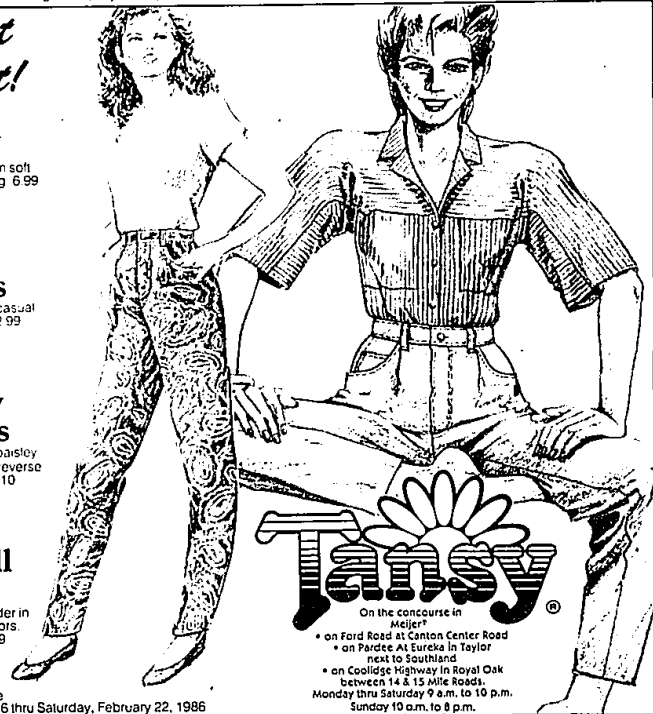
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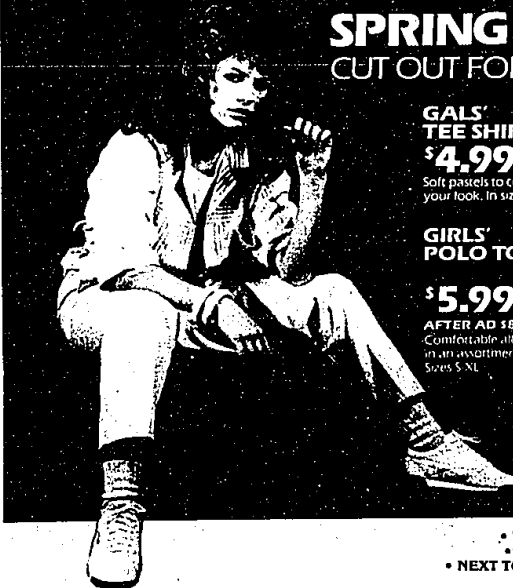
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