

World of law a family affair

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woman attorney vying for the seat. When she won the 1974 election, Schaeffer had two resignation letters to write, one to the Farmington Hills City Council and another to the state Workman's Compensation Appeal Board. She had been the first woman to be appointed to the compensation appeal board in 1973.

THAT WAS the same year Schaeffer was elected to the newly created Farmington Hills City Council. Her council election seemed only fitting after serving on the Farmington Township Board of Trustees from 1968.

"I've always been interested in public affairs" — an interest she has carried with her whether working for the community or for people in the court system.

Over the years, she has seen people, armed with their difficulties and problems, come and go. But she doesn't tire of her work or the system she strives to uphold.

"If everyone decides for themselves whether they are right or wrong, we would have chaos. Doing exactly what we please — that's what we give up," Schaeffer said. Although some of the civil cases

people bring into court may seem silly, Schaeffer said she is content in knowing that "the important thing is that you are resolving disputes between people. Otherwise, they will use their fists. And people will accept a judgment."

SCHAEFFER is a soft-spoken and gentle woman. When necessary, though, she won't hesitate to get tough with some defendants, such as the young man with a drug problem.

The judicial system, Schaeffer said, is there to help, not necessarily punish, those with particular problems and needs.

Unfortunately, once people have moved through the system, it's difficult to keep pace with them — their progress in particular. "We certainly hope for a better follow up. But you have no way of knowing how they're doing. With 1,700 people on probation, it's difficult."

Yet Schaeffer moves ahead. As a judge in a high volume court, decisions must be made quickly, accurately and as insightfully as possible.

No easy task. But Schaeffer realized long ago — with a few tips from others in her position — how to handle the rigors of a professional life without detracting from her personal and community life.

She immediately recognized that

being a judge was both a job and a lifestyle. She drew a line between work and home. "It was advised to do that. I try not to agonize. I try to make a decision, not to hold on to it. That's especially true with a high volume court. You have to make a decision."

BUT THERE is frustration. In those moments, she goes home to her garden and pulls weeds. Cooking and traveling are other activities sure to take her mind off the work.

"It's a more lonely job (than being an attorney). As a trial judge, you have to make the decisions yourself."

Becoming a judge after almost 30 years in private legal practice, Schaeffer said she, at first, felt "a sense of separation. There's a lot of camaraderie between attorneys. Then suddenly when becoming a judge you don't feel as free."

Becoming a judge or an attorney wasn't something Schaeffer spent her youth dreaming about. When she entered the University of Michigan in the early 1940s, she was uncertain what she wanted to do.

But Schaeffer knew the choice was hers. And for that freedom, she credits her late father, a long-time Detroit attorney, who raised Schaeffer and two sisters after her mother's death.

"He was always encouraging us to do what we wanted. Whether we were sons or daughters, it wouldn't have made a difference to him."

HIER FATHER'S encouraging words paid off. Schaeffer's sister, Cornellia Kennedy, is a U.S. district judge. Her sister Christine Gram is director of Oakland Community College-Auburn Hills.

For someone who was unsure about what she wanted to do, Schaeffer said she found law school interesting and enjoyable. Despite expected difficulties of being a woman in law school in the 1940s, Schaeffer had few problems.

"I just wouldn't tell guys I dated that I was in law school. Their response (when they found out) was 'what do you want to do that for?'"

One of her first jobs was as a clerk in the U.S. Court of Appeals in Cincinnati as well as a clerk in the California Supreme Court. Later, Schaeffer practiced law with her father and sister as well as with another Detroit firm.

Despite tenacity in maintaining her career over 40 years, Schaeffer said her greatest support and joy has always been her family.

"Life would be very empty without my family. They come first. After all, the reason we do all this is so we have a family and a home," she said.

Hills robbery suspect a prison escapee

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BASED ON information in an FBI affidavit, U.S. District Court Judge Paul Korman of Detroit signed a warrant for Litchfield's arrest Aug. 29 in connection with the Farmington Hills robbery.

"We're conducting a fugitive investigation right now to try to locate him," Hullinger said.

Investigators believe the man who robbed the Michigan National Bank branch in Farmington Hills of \$73,176 Aug. 13 is the same man who robbed banks in a similar manner in Atlanta, Ga., Feb. 11 and Ormond Beach, Fla., May 2.

On Aug. 15, investigators showed four pictures of bank robbers in progress to the employees inside the Michigan National Bank branch at the time of the Farmington Hills robbery. The FBI supplied the pictures, taken by bank cameras.

The Farmington Hills bank employees picked out the picture of the man who robbed the bank in Ormond Beach. And they said it was positively a picture of the same man who robbed their bank," Hullinger said.

Fingerprints matching Litchfield's were found in the Ormond Beach bank. Employees at the Ormond Beach bank identified Litchfield as their assailant from a mug shot taken at the time of his arrest in March 1985. A federal warrant was issued charging Litchfield in that stipup.

"Employees at the Atlanta bank identified the bank surveillance photograph taken in Ormond Beach as being identical to the individual who robbed them. But we need more specific evidence to seek a warrant — fingerprint evidence or having the bank employees identify what we would consider to be a known photograph, like the mug shot," Hullinger said.

IN EACH of the three robberies, the gunman drove up and left in a taxicab, was neatly dressed, asked to speak to the person in charge by name, carried an airlines pilot map case and either showed or implied

possession of a gun and a bomb. In two of the cases, including Farmington Hills, the man posed an IRS agent. His overall take was "well over \$100,000," Hullinger said.

It's not clear why the gunman chose banks in different states. "We're trying to develop ties," Hullinger said. "There could be various reasons."

"Maybe he was just traveling the country looking for likely targets. Or

maybe he was en route to somewhere else. Or maybe he was in each area visiting friends. We just don't know. Who knows the reason, or even if there is one. We're looking for that key."

Litchfield is known to have traveled extensively throughout the United States. "So where he shows up doesn't surprise us," Hullinger said.

Investigators aren't even certain

if Litchfield has left Michigan.

"We can't be sure," Hullinger said. "We don't know what brought him here."

Litchfield's wife, Donna, 35, also is a federal fugitive. Released on bond, she failed to appear at a court hearing on a bank fraud charge in Miami earlier this year.

"She may be traveling with her husband. We believe she is, but we're not positive," Hullinger said.

October: Industrial Month

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— a major concern of many residents throughout the area.

AS AN additional help, Baker will act as liaison between the manufacturing companies and the cities it an issue arises from an interview that needs immediate attention.

The survey does not touch area re-

tallies, who are "generally a pretty stable part of the community" and already have an effective communication flow among themselves and with local governments, Sorenson said.

Adding retailers would bring a total of 2,300 businesses into the project — a nearly impossible interviewing task, organizers said.

Balasia said the survey will show

needs of the entire community. "It shows the interests of all businesses," he said. "They (manufacturers) have similar concerns to the balance of the community."

The survey is designed to bring out both negative and positive aspects of a community, so the results can be used to help strengthen the area, Balasia said.

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