

# Community center in spotlight

Farmington Community Center's financial problems — and possible solutions — will be discussed by the Farmington and Farmington Hills city councils at 7 p.m. Wednesday.

The joint meeting — scheduled to discuss proposed joint budgets for agencies, such as the 47th District Court, that are financed by both cities — will be in the Farmington Hills council chambers, 31555 11 Mile.

Nancy Finley, board president, will present the center's financial status. The 8,400-square-foot facility is at 24705 Farmington, between 10 and 11 Mile.

The city councils are involved because the 19-year-old community center could — according to the fa-

city's deed — revert to the Farmington Community Library, which is financed by both cities.

The center is about \$18,000 in debt. With a \$300,000 budget, two-thirds of the revenue comes from corporate and individual contributions and fees charged for classes and activities. Rentals are expected to bring in \$42,000, said Jonathan Grant, a center director and financial development committee member. Grant also is president of the library's board of trustees.

**THE NON-PROFIT** community center does not receive money from Farmington, Farmington Hills or the state.

Because revenues often lag behind bills coming in, the community center draws money against a banking line of credit. When revenue comes in, the draw is repaid. But in the last couple of years, the center has fallen into a pattern of drawing against the credit before it can be repaid, Grant said.

Center officials maintain that much of the financial problem is due to decreasing contributions. In 1985, the center received about \$65,800 and \$80,000 in 1986. Though \$87,000 is budgeted for contributions this year, officials doubt that will be seen.

But center officials have set a \$35,000 goal for the annual corpo-

rate fund-raiser, which will begin April 28. The center also has a fund-raiser for individuals wanting to contribute to the facility.

The center also has a special fund — called the Angell Foundation — that has more than \$100,000, which the center's board of directors restricted for capital improvements.

**OFFICIALS** in Farmington Hills, which finances the greatest portion of the library's annual budget, admit that taking over the community center would be a financial burden.

"We would look to work out the problems and aid the community center, but it would be a real burden for us to take it on as a financial commitment," Farmington Hills City Manager William Costello said. "It would be hard with our charter limit (maximum 10 mills)."

Both Grant and Finley have said that the center's board of directors do not want to give up the facility.

Speaking at the library board president, Grant said he and his library colleagues don't want to take over the center, particularly in light of a planned expansion of the Hills branch on 12 Mile.

## Checks thought destroyed resurface, charges result

Two Detroit-area men face felony charges in connection with the cashing of \$50,000 in glued-together American Express Travelers Cheques that were supposed to be destroyed 12 years ago by a Farmington Hills bank.

On Aug. 5, 1975, American Express sent 10,000 checks in \$20 and \$50 amounts to the National Bank of Detroit, 26029 Middlebelt. About a month later, American Express changed their accounting procedures and advised the bank to destroy the shipment, said John Anthony, FBI special agent.

When the checks resurfaced about mid-1986, American Express alerted the FBI.

Investigators believe a part-time employee of the bank took home four shoeboxes of the checks, which had been torn in half. He stored them in his closet. There they stayed for 11 years. "We have no idea why he took them," Anthony said.

It's not a federal crime to have torn travelers checks in your possession, he added.

IN JANUARY 1986, investigators believe, the man's son found the stashed checks. He and friends glued them back together with Elmer's

Glue. They cashed 1,000 of them, "in some instances, signing their own names," Anthony said.

"I've seen some of the checks," Anthony added. "They did a pretty good job. Unless you held them up to the light, you couldn't tell they were glued."

Appearing April 15 before U.S. Magistrate Paul Konives in Detroit, James Hawks, 52, of Wixom and Mark Flack, 31, of Belleville were charged with interstate transporta-

tion of stolen property. No pleas were entered. Konives set bond at \$20,000 for Flack and \$15,000 for Hawks.

Conviction could bring a penalty of up to five years in prison and a \$5,000 fine for each time checks were cashed, Anthony said.

"Investigation is continuing in an attempt to identify others who are part of the conspiracy," he said. "There are other individuals we're looking at."

## CEMS chief is named

Paul Phelps, Oakland County Emergency Medical Service and Emergency Management division manager for six years, was named president of Community Emergency Medical Service Inc.

The announcement came from Gerson Cooper, Ziegler Health Care Corp. president and chief executive officer.

Novi-based CEMS, which provides all levels of ambulance service as well as non-emergency transport to many Oakland and western Wayne communities, is a division of Farm-

ington Hills-based Ziegler.

Phelps' new responsibilities include further development of strategic planning to enhance and improve corporate operations.

The Lake Orion resident is president of the Michigan Association of Emergency Medical Services Systems and past president of the Michigan Emergency Medical Service Coalition. He is active in promoting and improving emergency medical services across the state of Michigan.

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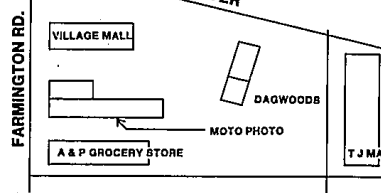
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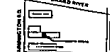
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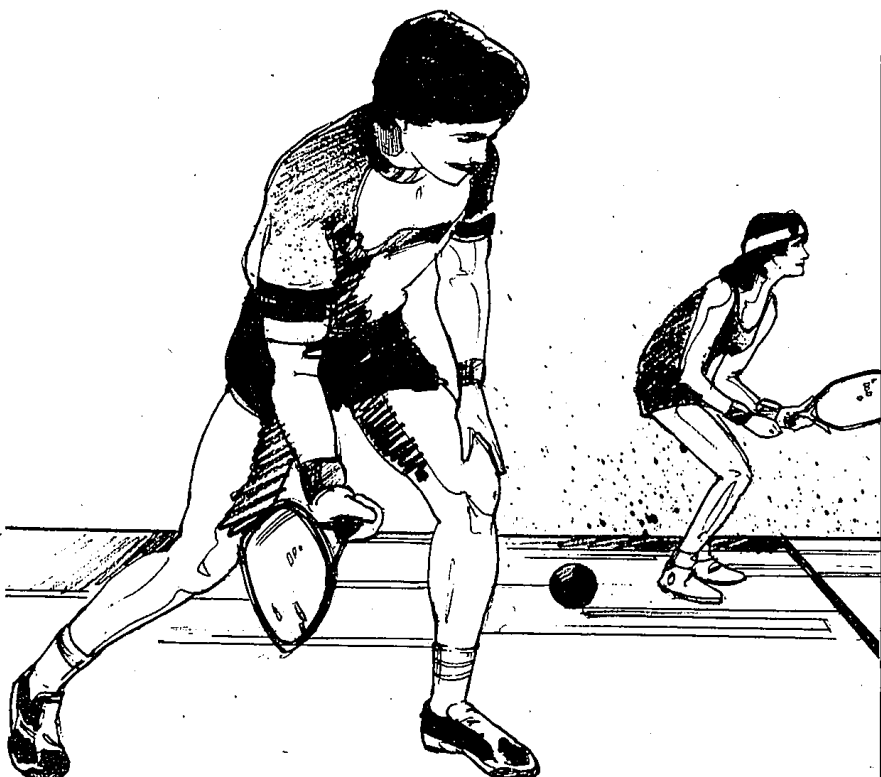
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