

# Center's contributions 'flattening out'

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

The Farmington Community Center is "cash poor."

That's how the center's treasurer, Richard Wells, describes the center's monetary problems. In a nutshell, expenses are going up, revenues are going down and that trend is getting stronger, he said.

Contributions — representing 25 percent of the center's total gross

revenues — are "flattening out" even though the number of donations has increased. The new tax law more than likely will further decrease contributions in the coming year, Wells said.

Revenue from class and activity fees — representing 30 to 35 percent of total gross revenues — are decreasing in relation to the center's expenses. About 4,000 people a year participate in classes at the center.

More than 85 percent are Farmington-area residents.

Operating income has decreased while the center's expenses are continually increasing. Because revenues 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 the center is having difficulty paying off the draw before it must again borrow on its credit, Wells said.

"We're about \$19,000 in the red," he said.

THOUGH THE center is "cash poor," it is "not without cash," thanks to a \$165,000 trust fund (from the Angel Foundation). Smaller funds, also provided through the foundation, have been tapped to meet operating expenses.

The center's operating income has continued to decrease since 1984 when the center had a total \$275,404.

In 1985, the total dropped to \$269,104 and again in 1986 to \$264,334.

At the same time, income was decreasing, however, expenses were going up. In 1984, expenses totaled \$268,043. By 1985, \$274,521 in expenses outstripped total income. The same held true for 1986 when expenses totaled \$283,579.

Yet center officials maintain that, despite increasing expenses, costs have been held artificially low in attempts to avoid adding necessary

staff. To adequately run the center, according to Finley's presentation, an estimated 80 to 100 percent increase in staff hours is required. Salaries (for four full-time and eight part-time employees) are about \$106,000 of the \$300,000 budget, according to board member Jonathan Grant.

Rentals — which center officials will consider increasing — have grown and are expected to bring in \$42,000 this year, Grant said.

## Public's support sought by board

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"Before you come to the governments for money — which is against the premise on which the community center was founded — I feel you have not plumbed the depth of the community to get the help you need," she said.

DUDLEY TOOK issue with what she believed to be the center's tendency to ask for monetary contributions rather than in-kind services to reduce some of the center's expenses.

"I'm questioning whether the push has been too much toward contributions, which is a kind of impersonal thing, rather than a push on man-hours," Dudley continued.

She referred to expenses for printing and facility repairs as examples of services that could be donated from residents rather than cash contributions.

"We have tried on a number of occasions to get that kind of support. It's been very difficult," Finley said. Repairing the building is not only expensive but it's difficult to find contractors willing to do the job, she added.

Farmington City Councilman Richard Tupper echoed Dudley. "It looks to me like... you are looking for input and perhaps financial support from the cities..."

Again, Finley set the record straight. "Right now, we are strictly looking for support. We really want to do it on our own. Our reason for coming tonight was not to ask for financial support."

OTHER CENTER board members reminded the council that the financial state of the community center should be their concern. Should the center financially fail, it would first revert to the Farmington Community Library, financed by both Farmington and Farmington Hills.

If the library's board of directors does not want the center — for a library, museum or cultural center, according to the center's deed — then the facility reverts to Farmington Township, now Farmington Hills.

"The reason for the cities' cooperation with the community center is that eventually this baby could be yours," said John Donohue, center board member.

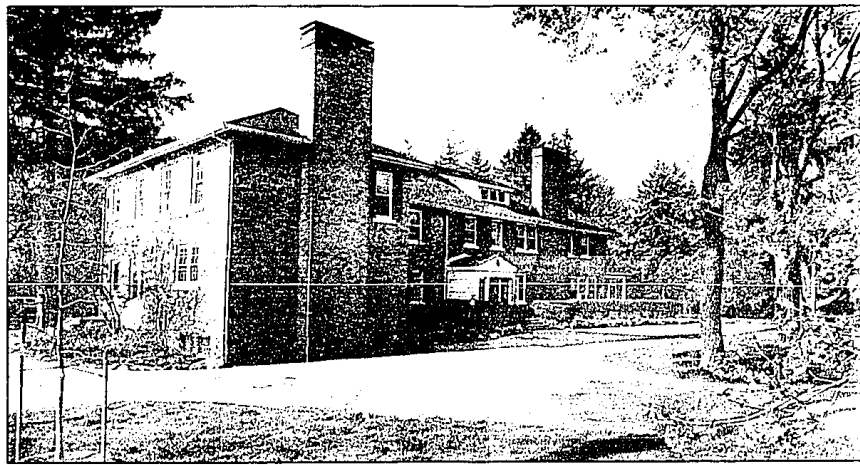
Hills Councilwoman Jan Dolan, a center board member, agreed. "It's to our best interest not to have Farmington Hills end up with it."

Under the city's 10-mile charter limit, the center would be a financial burden, she added.

Yet Dudley announced she was hard-pressed to understand why the council's blessings were necessary for formation of a task force in light of Finley's contention that the cities were not being asked for money.

"If no government funds are being spent on this, why do we have to authorize the mayors to sit on this (task force)?" Dudley asked. "I'm questioning the formality for this."

Hills Mayor Ben Marks provided looking for support. We really want to do it on our own. Our reason for coming tonight was not to ask for financial support."



RANDY BORSI/staff photographer

Farmington Community Center is in a 91-year-old historic house in a picturesque Farmington Hills setting on Farmington Road, near 10 Mile.

## 'Discover what's new,' mayor stresses

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FINLEY ALSO is concerned about possible future competition with neighboring Heritage Park. She asked Farmington Hills officials to allow a center representative to be privy to all meetings and discussions on the park's development and activities planning.

The center might be financially better off capturing the unique and historical nature of the historic facility and renting it for community, city and private functions, Finley said.

With both councils' blessings, a task force also will be formed of

center representatives and others chosen by the mayors of both cities. The task force will develop ways to ensure the center's financial security.

Finley and other center board members told the councils they would like the task force to draw on city officials' expertise and knowl-

edge in helping to save the center.

For example, Marks suggested contacting the Southeastern Michigan Builders Association for help in repairing the historic facility — at a discount or no cost.

"I certainly think they would be amenable to a call from you," Marks said.

## short takes

If you recently opened a shop, captured an award, earned a promotion or are planning a new venture or project — and there's a Farmington-area business angle — we'd like to hear from you so we can share your news item with other Farmington Observer readers. Send items to: Short takes, Farmington Observer, 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

### ON THE MOVE

Alamo Learning Systems, a national training and development firm, has moved into expanded offices at 37000 Grand River, at Halsted, in the Metrobank Building, Farmington Hills.

The new office is regional headquarters for Alamo serving the midwest, central and southeast United States as well as Canada. The 4,343-square-foot facility includes two meeting rooms, where public sessions of Alamo training programs will take place on a regular basis.

Farmington Hills resident Harry Lebovitz is Alamo senior vice president. He directs the regional office.

Alamo was named one of Inc. Magazine's 500 fastest growing companies three years in a row. It offers training programs and consulting services focusing on managing innovation and change in a rapid-paced business environment.

The telephone number is 471-6777.

### EXTENDED HOURS

Saks Farmers Market has expanded hours.

Under new ownership, the market opened March 20 at 31550 Grand River, in Farmington Grand Plaza, Grand River at Mooney, just west of Orchard Lake Road.

New hours are 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

Specialties include fresh meat and fresh produce at discount prices. There also are lunch meat, dairy, frozen food and grocery sections and a service deli counter.

The telephone numbers are 478-4222 and 478-4268.

### NEW ACQUISITION

Farmington Hills-based Medar, Inc., has acquired Automatic Inspection Devices, Inc., a subsidiary of Owens-Illinois, Inc., Toledo. The purchase was through an exchange of stock for 80 percent of the company.

Automatic designs and manufactures a line of low-cost, machine vision systems for the packaging, pharmaceutical, electronics and consumer goods industries.

"This acquisition is particularly significant for Medar in that it gives us entry to entirely new markets and customers such as Upjohn, Champion, Procter & Gamble, AT&T, GTE, DuPont, Allied-Bendix and Amoco," said Charles Drake, president and chairman of the board.

Medar sees machine vision as its major growth market. The company has received orders for 40 non-contact inspection systems, mainly for the automobile industry, since 1985.

Medar designs and manufactures computer-controlled automation equipment, including vision gauging and inspection systems, resistance welding controls, computer communications systems and automation machinery. Medar's customers include major companies in the defense, aerospace, automobile and appliance industries.

### NEW IN TOWN

R. DiCocco of Farmington has opened a catering service that provides cooks, bartenders, waitresses and cleanup for parties.

You can order uniformed workers or ones dressed for the occasion. Order one entree without service, or service and no food or catered food and service.

You can order one entree and one waitress. Or you can order the cook only and have your own food prepared, whole or partially, at your business, clubhouse or home.

Cater graduations, showers, weddings, business meetings or luncheons. The specialty is Italian pasta. High school graduation specials are available, including a free two-hour video.

Avante Party Services is at 31831 Grand River, No. 101, Farmington 48024. The telephone number is 474-1546.

### JOINS FIRM

Jeffrey Shanbom of Farmington Hills has joined the law firm of Leikin and Ingber, P.C., 3000 Town Center, Suite 2390, Southfield 48075. The

telephone number is 353-1070.

Shanbom is a 1979 Farmington Hills Harrison High School graduate, a 1983 Michigan State University graduate and a 1986 Wayne State University graduate.

### ATTENDS FORUM

Kevin Youngs of Farmington Hills attended a leadership conference for Wausau Insurance Cos. at Marriott's Orlando World Center, Orlando, Fla. Youngs is a field sales manager for the firm's Southfield office. Wausau is based in Wausau, Wis.

### EARNs AWARD

George Nauman, a former resident of Farmington Hills and an employee of West Bloomfield-based Viasle Foods, Inc., a subsidiary of Campbell Soup Co., was among the honorees in Campbell's first awards for outstanding citizenship.

Called the Spirit of America Award, the program salutes Campbell Soup employees who have demonstrated exemplary citizenship through longstanding or exceptional contributions that improved their community.

His community activities include the Farmington Lions Club, of which he has been a member for 20 years. He has been president, a club service officer, on the board of directors and chairman of various projects.

He chaired the Lions' Sight Conservation Committee, responsible for investigating referrals for eye care, glasses or related problems involving the handicapped. He has been instrumental in Lions' fund-raising, including White Cane sales, Christmas candy cane sales, pumpkin sales and newspaper drives.

As a member of Orchard United Methodist Church, Nauman was actively involved in the building of the church in Farmington Hills. He has served as board of trustees chairman, Staff Parish Relations Committee member, board member and youth counselor. Each year, he takes time to play Santa at the church's annual Breakfast With Santa.

Nauman has served as a Little League manager. He has been active in the local PTA and has held various offices, including president.

The honor he received brings a pin designed as well as a cash award. A matching cash donation will be made by the corporation in the winner's name to a charitable organization of his choice.

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