

Community center has new director

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What Pfaff really likes about her work is the "interconnectedness of things." Today in the delivery of human services, for example, there's

a lot of specialization "so a lot falls through the cracks." Pfaff intends for the community center to provide those things — activities, programs, even a meeting place — that residents can't find elsewhere.

"The community center sits in an ideal place for needs that aren't met at work or home," she said.

The center's business and professional organization for single people

is a good example. Singles can meet and become acquainted without the dating and social pressure of the bar scene or other single organizations that are purely social, she said.

In every discussion of her plans, Pfaff mentions the center's staff. She is a true believer in team management and the need to involve employees in the center's operations from step one.

"I encourage the staff to get out with the community and with community groups. I think it is essential for us to keep a pulse on the community. I believe in team management. The whole staff will be in what decisions are made. I know that can sound Pollyanna-like, but I believe in it."

ONCE PFAFF is nestled in her job, she plans to put the center in the

forefront of the Farmington community. She's realistic and recognizes the task that is ahead of her.

Unlike Birmingham's Community House, which is downtown, the Farmington Community Center is not necessarily in a focal spot in the community. However, also unlike Birmingham, the Farmington area is spread out.

"People have to know about the center. It's removed from downtown so we have to make ourselves even more paramount in people's minds," Pfaff said. "We're going to put a big emphasis on reacquainting people with the center. We need to posture to bring the center back in the forefront of people's thinking."

Pfaff is coming prepared to her new job with ideas to do just that. The history of the center, particularly the facility — the former Good-

nough house — is integral. Maintaining the positive aspects of the past while bringing in the contemporary is the starting point for the new director.

"The setting can offer us good visibility as a sign of history and community," said Pfaff, the mother of three grown sons.

In addition to continuing cultural programming, Pfaff wants to beef up the center's reputation as a meeting place, especially for the business community. "It could serve as a site for seminars — remove the employees from the chrome and glass."

Pfaff intends to encourage the community to use the center as a means "to make life more civilized. Classes, activities and programming will continue. We will be coming to the community to see how we can be of service. We hope they can make use of the facility."

Traffic troubles plague city

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"OUR COMMITTEE did a lot of investigative work and research. We're very concerned with the safety aspect. We want to keep traffic on the main streets (Grand River and Farmington Road) and in a more controllable environment."

The majority of residents are concerned with safety, a possible devaluation of residential properties and the "overall nuisance" factor of the traffic volume and speed, and the city's "inability to enforce current speed limits," Chiara said.

Lanhoff agrees there is a problem. "I think a lot of the things they mention have merit," he said. "There have been a lot of questions raised by their recommendations."

In a 1985 study, the most recent available, 35,000 cars and trucks

were counted traveling through the Grand River/Farmington Road intersection daily.

A 1987 study showed 9,077 cars and trucks traveled along Shilawsee Road near downtown during one 24-hour period, according to figures from the city.

RIDING IN a Farmington patrol car on a recent Monday morning, Farmington public safety officer Dan Potter called traffic in Farmington a "day-long rush hour."

"Just in the past few years, traffic has really increased," he said.

Speed was also a factor.

Speeds in the 25 mph zone along Grand River were averaging instead from the low to mid 30s. Potter ticked one man who was clocked at 48 mph heading through the Grand River/Farmington Road intersection shortly before 9 a.m.

Officers monitor Farmington's main roads, including Grand River, Farmington and Shilawsee, and others when they are not busy with other calls in the city, Potter said.

"Everybody's got their favorite spots to sit," he said.

These spots can range anywhere within the city limits along these main thoroughfares.

OFFICERS TREAT the 25 mph along Shilawsee differently from the same speed limit on Grand River, he said. Speeding is more carefully monitored on Shilawsee, which is residential.

"I'm sure it (traffic volume and speed) is not an isolated problem," Potter said.

Hills vote results to be studied

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With vote tallies in hand, Haron, a Southfield attorney, isn't about to wait until the next election to make a change. The voter participation committee has already met once to plot a course for change and has scheduled a second meeting for 7:30 p.m. Dec. 16 in the Farmington Hills City Hall, 31555 11 Mile.

Ideally, Haron would like to increase voter turnout at least 5-10 percent. About 14 percent of the city's 43,000 registered voters cast ballots in the recent city council election. "When we looked at the state area, we're average," Haron said.

"IF WE get 20-25 percent (for local elections), we'd be among the leaders in the state," Haron added. Haron and his committee began their first meeting and their task at square one. With the help of two high school interns, Stacey Moss and Carol May, the committee will

be reviewing and analyzing the city council election returns in depth.

"The students will do the analysis," Haron said. Factors that will be analyzed in the city's 27 precincts include age of voters, average cost of housing, income and number of school-age children.

The committee also will determine how the city's decision not to send absentee voter ballots to every elderly resident affected voter turnout in that age group, Haron said.

With an analysis, committee members hope they'll have some clues to help them find ways to prompt voter participation and interest in elections and the political process.

"We'll go back 100 years if we have to," Haron said, referring to traditional American customs on election day, such as search lights at city hall.

Committee members are planning to conduct a survey to find out exactly why some Farmington

Hills voters don't vote and why some do, Haron said. Schools, political parties and civic organizations also will be contacted for their ideas and help in encouraging election interest.

BUT THERE was one factor that the seven-member committee agreed was lacking: "The precincts are not well identified," Haron said. That, plus more detailed maps showing where precincts are, will change at the next election.

Committee members also believe that different precincts for school and city elections are confusing to voters. If a change in that procedure can be made, the committee will give it a try.

In addition to candidates' use of political signs, Haron believes general signs advertising an upcoming election are necessary.

Committee members include Al Diebel, Lawrence Irey, Brenda Kandi, Al Zolton, Robert Jones, Patricia McDonough and Haron.

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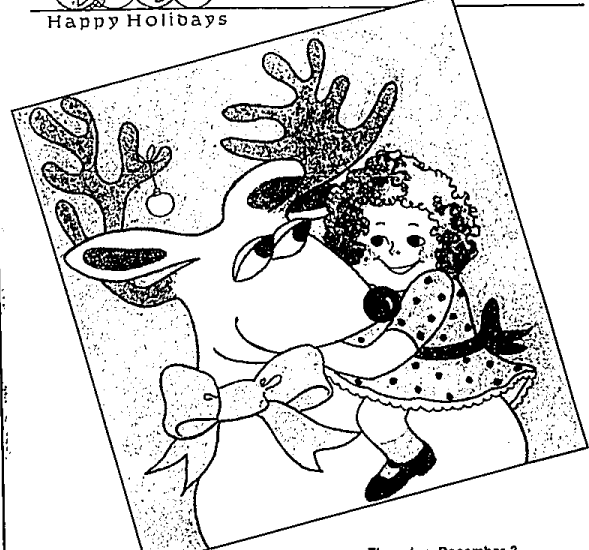
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