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Farmington FOCUS

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In urging the city council to place Heritage Park's estate house, the former Spicer family farmhouse, in Farmington Hills' historic district last week, Paul Blizman keyed on the park's name.

"I would suggest," said the historic district commission chairman, "that Heritage Park not be just a mere name but a reflection of the city's commitment to conservation and protection of a significant historic property."

TRYING out the hot seat. At the stroke of 7:30 p.m. Monday, March 14, Terry Sever gavelled to order the Farmington Hills City Council meeting.

It was the first such call to order by the mayor pro tempore, who was filling in for Mayor Jody Soronen. Sever is in line for the mayorship in 1989.

PLOT costs up. Farmington City Council raised lot costs for the city-owned Oakwood Cemetery on Grand River March 7.

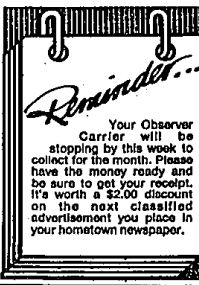
Lots for residents will now cost \$300, up from \$170; non-residents will be charged \$450. Fees for opening and closing graves will nearly double, according to a city report.

ON board. Farmington Hills City Council named Julian Hovanecian to a three-year term on the historical commission last week.

FOOTNOTES: One year ago this week — Regulations allowing in-home child day care in Farmington Hills are now on the books.

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Beef-up urged for housing rehab

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

George Roberts is still holding out hope. "All I have ever asked for is a 50-50 split," said the veteran member of the Farmington Hills Housing Rehabilitation Loan Board.

Roberts has long been an advocate of splitting Community Development Block Grant money evenly between capital improvements and the popular housing rehabilitation program for low- and moderate-income families in Farmington Hills.

If the Farmington Hills City Council follows administrators' recommended distribution of anticipated 1988-89 Community Development Block Grant money, Roberts can continue hoping.

But he'll be on hand at a public hearing tonight to discuss uses of the annual allocation of money from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. The scheduled hearing will be in council chambers, 31555 11 Mile.

"This program (housing rehabilitation) was meant to serve low-income people and people with older housing stock. And all housing stock in

'This program (housing rehabilitation) was meant to serve low-income people and people with older housing stock. And all housing stock in Farmington Hills is getting older is it not?'

— George Roberts

Farmington Hills is getting older is it not?" Roberts asked.

THE CITY is expected to receive \$297,000 in block grant money. That's about 5 percent less than last year.

In addition to the annual allocation, city officials are adding another \$36,000 expected in repayment of low-interest loans offered through the

housing program. That brings the total available for block grant program administration, housing rehabilitation and capital improvements in the city's low- and moderate-income areas to \$333,000.

The proposed distribution of the money has been changed since the public hearing was announced in February. Since that time, the amount devoted to administration has been increased from \$39,000 to \$42,000.

"We got into the budget and found that salaries, fringes and the audit alone exceeded \$39,000. We looked at minor additional expenses — legal notices, supplies," said Richard Lampi, community development manager. "We felt more comfortable increasing it. It's to cover bare minimum expenses."

OF THE remaining \$291,000, housing rehabilitation will receive \$191,000 and capital improvements, \$100,000.

But not only does Roberts think the split between the two should be equal, he disagrees with city officials' adding loan repayments to the housing program's total allocation for the

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George Roberts
rehab board member

Schools are cautious about new tax plan

By Casey Hans
staff writer

Local school and business officials are voicing cautious optimism about a tax reform proposal passed by the state Senate last week.

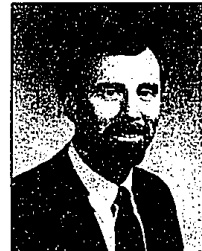
The package, a modified version of a proposal by Sen. Jack Faxon, D-Farmington Hills, was approved by the state Senate 26-8 with bipartisan support.

It would cut property taxes, up the state sales tax to 6 percent to cover the difference, and earmark 12 percent of the state budget for education. The measure has now moved to the state House for consideration.

The proposal has been nicknamed the "50/50 Plan" because the money lost from reduced property taxes is made up in increased sales tax.

"There's a lot to think about in it," said Farmington school trustee Helen Prutow, who sits on the Oakland Intermediate School District board. "It's an interesting package. I'm not ready to endorse it, though."

LEGISLATORS HAVE spent the past year debating school finance and property tax reforms, and Farmington deputy superintendent Michael Flanagan believes they have reached a reasonable measure, presuming little is changed.



Michael Flanagan
He's pleased, but . . .

"I'm very pleased with it," he said, "but that's conditional in that it stays in its final form."

Flanagan is concerned the portion of money earmarked for education in the Senate bill will be left out in the final version.

"I always get worried everyone gets on the bandwagon, and in its final form they take out a key provision like that," he said.

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Voters to decide reform proposal

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Some liked it. Some voted to put it on the ballot so voters would have a chance to choose. Some think it's doomed.

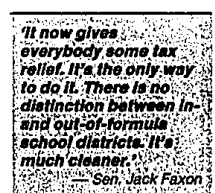
The Michigan Senate last week voted 26-8 to put a school tax reform proposal on the ballot. It would cut school operating property taxes, raise the sales tax and assign a bigger piece of the state budget to schools.

"It was my resolution, modified," said Sen. Jack Faxon, D-Farmington Hills, who said he spent much of the five-hour debate tending off Republican amendments to give business more tax relief.

"It now gives everybody some tax relief. It's the only way to do it. There is no distinction between in- and out-of-formula school districts. It's much cleaner."

IN LEGAL language, it's known as Senate Joint Resolution K. The 26 votes it received were one more than the two-thirds necessary to put it on the ballot.

Supporting it besides Faxon were



Doug Cruce, R-Troy; Richard Fessler, R-Commerce; Robert Geake, R-Northville; and George Z. Hart, D-Dearborn.

Opposed was Rudy Nichols, R-Waterford, original author of SJR K. Nichols had his name taken off as sponsor.

William Faust, D-Westland, had an excused absence.

NICHOLS DOUBTS voters will like the much-amended version of SJR K. Key ingredients:

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Teacher leader to yield reins, focus on teaching

By Casey Hans
staff writer

For 10 years, his day has been split between adult grievances in the morning and kindergarten games in the afternoon.

This year, Tom Chrzanowski will make students his full-time priority, as he leaves his position as president of the Farmington Education Association in June. He plans to return to full-time teaching this fall and leave collective bargaining to his successor.

"I'm not leaving because I'm

people

tired of it, or unhappy with it," he said. "I just did it and hope I did a good job."

After a decade of labor peace with Farmington Public Schools and many night union meetings, Chrzanowski said he will also devote more time to his family and their home in the lakes area of

West Bloomfield Township. He will also be free to spend time at his video business, of which he is co-owner.

"The plan is to go in and be a full-time teacher and spend a little more time with my wife and family. Being with them and sharing time with them is important," he said.

THE CHRZANOWSKI family is particularly special because the couple had tried for many years to

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Sketch of rape suspect sparks barrage of tips

By Jeff Counts
staff writer

The Oakland County Sheriff's Department has received more than 50 tips after releasing a sketch of a suspect sought in the March 5 rape and armed robbery of an Independence Township woman, according to Lt. John Taylor.

The sketch Friday was circulated to the media and police agencies, said Taylor, who added that the sketch may look as though the suspect has sideburns, but he doesn't.

Taylor says there are similarities between the case and a series of nine sexual assaults in Birmingham, Bloomfield Township, West Bloomfield and Farmington Hills.

"It very well could be the same person. We haven't ruled out that it's

not our suspect. But we're not saying it is either," said Farmington Hills Police Chief William Dwyer.

"The tips are coming from all over, and not from any concentrated area," Lt. Taylor said.

Tips are being disseminated to the appropriate local police department for follow-up.

THE SUSPECT in the Independence Township case is a white man, about 28-35 years old, with a medium build and receding hairline. Taylor said the man combs his brown hair back.

He said the man may live in Sterling Heights or Warren and may try to pawn jewelry taken during the robbery. Authorities have a photo of

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A police artist's sketch of the suspect in the sexual rapes.