

# Estate to join historic district

By Joanne Mallezewski  
staff writer

The 62-year-old Spicer estate house will become a bona fide historic facility and a visitors center for the Farmington Hills Heritage Park. Restoration and renovation of the house is planned over three years for an estimated \$377,400. Other improvements, to be determined by the council, also will most likely have to be done for another estimated \$162,000.

Putting the house in the city's historic district ensures that it will remain protected.

"The city council is the final authority of what happens even to plans and final modifications on the house," said Paul Blizman, chairman of the Farmington Hills Historic District Commission, in addressing the city council March 14.

The commission is concerned with maintaining the historical integrity of the house's exterior. Improvements can be made to the interior without violating the house's protective status, Blizman said.

Including the removal of asbestos from the walls and pipes in the basement, the first year of the program will include improvements to the house's exterior to stabilize the historic structure. The stucco, shutters, gutters, woodwork and the roof will be fixed. Electrical and mechanical improvements also will be made.

THE SECOND year, which will begin improvements to transform the house to a visitors center, will include interior improvements in the house's south wing. The bedrooms



RANDY BOST/Staff photographer

The vestibule is only one of the areas in the Eleanor Spicer estate house that has asbestos in the plaster walls. Renovation plans call for removing the asbestos.

and bathrooms will be converted to an office and large open area for an interpretive center. Work will continue on the exterior.

The third and most expensive year of the program will include the remainder of the house. For example, the library will be converted to a conference room, the living and dining rooms to reception areas, and the kitchen and pantry areas to public restrooms.

To ensure that the historic significance of the house, designed by Michigan architect Marcus Burrows, is maintained, any existing chandeliers or tile work will be used in restoration. For example, a built-in wooden refrigerator is expected to be saved and used, said special services director Dan Patter.

Old photographs of the house taken when Eleanor Spicer lived there will be used to help ensure that the historic significance is maintained, Potter added.

# 46th judges won't hear case against detective

By Alice Collins  
staff writer

The judges of the 46th District Court in Southfield have disqualified themselves from hearing cases involving Franklin police Detective Sgt. Ben David, who in his job as a police officer regularly testifies in that court.

David, a West Bloomfield resident, is charged with 17 counts ranging from neglect of duty to obstruction of justice. Originally some of the cases were assigned to the 46th and some to the 47th District Court in Farmington.

Because the 46th judges don't want to hear the cases, all have now been assigned to the Farmington court by the state court administrator.

In the disqualification order Judge Stephen Cooper noted that David "is a police detective who regularly testifies in the court."

In addition, "it has been disclosed that an employee of the 46th District Court may be called as a witness. This would require the judges . . . to

rule on the truthfulness of one of their own employees."

AT A PRE-EXAM conference Friday afternoon between defense attorney Jerome Sabbota and assistant prosecutor James Halushka, May 8 was scheduled for preliminary hearing on the felony and high misdemeanor charges against David. The hearing will be in 47th District Court. Some of the cases have been assigned to Judge Margaret Schaeffer, others to Judge Michael Hand.

"I thought this would happen," said Sabbota, referring to the disqualification order. "I've represented a number of police officers charged with crimes and the judges usually disqualify themselves when they are familiar with the officer, to avoid any appearance of impropriety."

David is free under personal bonds totaling \$27,000, pending the outcome of the cases. Not guilty pleas were entered for him during arraignments March 9 in the two courts.

Warrants against David, an eight-year veteran with the Franklin department, were issued March 8 following an investigation by the Oakland County prosecutor's office. Among the charges are licket fling, destruction of public records and the unlawful use of the Law Enforcement Information Network.

LEIN is the state police computer network that connects with a national computer system and gives access to criminal histories and general information such as driver's licenses, traffic violation points and vehicle ownerships. (See related story.)

DAVID IS ACCUSED of accepting payments ranging from \$10 to \$50 from a private detective to use the LEIN for unauthorized purposes and turn over the information to the private investigator.

Charges involving improper use of the LEIN computer originated in Farmington Hills because Franklin police use the computer at the Farmington Hills Police Department. Charges originating in Franklin are normally processed in the Southfield court.

## police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police incidents, fire calls and court cases reported during the past week:

### ● MOTORIST DIES

A 48-year-old Farmington Hills man died from injuries in a two-car collision last week at Inkster and 10 Mile, on the Southfield/Farmington Hills border.

Michael McClusky died at 12:15 a.m. March 18 in Bolsoford General Hospital, Farmington Hills, said Gary Conant, Southfield public information officer.

McClusky had been hospitalized in serious condition since the March 8 collision.

McClusky's car was northbound on Inkster at 6:20 a.m. when it collided at the intersection with a car driven by a 28-year-old Farmington Hills woman. Although the woman wasn't hurt, her two passengers, a 39-year-old man and a 34-year-old woman, both from Farmington Hills, sought their own medical treatment, Conant said.

No tickets were issued in the incident.

### ● ARMED ROBBERY

A man armed with a shotgun took \$390 from a downtown Farmington

store last week.

According to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report:

As a clerk at Hit or Miss, 33033 Grand River, rang up merchandise from a man pretending to be a shopper, he brandished a sawed-off shotgun. She was ordered to lie on the floor while the robber took cash from the register and left.

### ● TICKETS ISSUED

A 19-year-old Farmington Hills man and a 20-year-old Farmington man were ticketed for prowling at Hillside Condos at 1:30 a.m. March 17, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

Two Farmington Hills teenagers were charged with trespassing on school property when their car became stuck in mud on the playground at Kenbrook Elementary, 32130 Bonnett Hill, at 9:10 p.m. March 17. A 17-year-old was ticketed. An Oakland County Probate Court Juvenile Division petition will be filed against a 16-year-old, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

### ● LARCENY BY TRICK

Deon's Restaurant, 38170 Grand River, was tricked out of \$50 by a woman who paid for soup with a \$50

bill, then asked for several different combinations of change March 14, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

### ● CAR RECOVERED

A 1988 Ford Escort reported stolen from Detroit was recovered in the parking lot at Shilawasee School, 30415 Shilawasee, March 17 according to a Farmington Hills police report.

### ● THEFTS REPORTED

Tools valued at \$1,022 were reported stolen from a truck parked at Kirts Surplus, 22906 Mooney, March 5.

A 1985 Buick valued at \$6,000 was reported stolen from Timberidge Apartments March 14-15.

A 1987 Chevrolet pickup valued at \$14,000 was reported stolen from along Tulane March 14-15.

A telephone and two saws valued at \$400 were reported stolen from a construction trailer at River Pine Condos March 16-17.

### ● DAMAGE REPORTED

Damage was estimated at \$100 when a display case was cracked at North Farmington High School, 28900 13 Mile, March 18.

# Students receive scholarships

Two Farmington-area students won \$750 scholarships after competing in the Eastern Michigan University's History Day on March 7.

Twelve students received awards for their efforts. Andy Dudley of North Farmington High School won a scholarship for

his fourth place finish in the 12th grade American history competition, and Mark Sprader of Harrison High School won for his second place finish in the 12th grade world history competition.

Harrison student Adam Weiner

received a book for his third place finish in the 11th grade American history contest.

Nearly 300 students representing 22 southeastern Michigan high schools met at the Ypsilanti university to compete.

# CATCH 22

Joseph Heller

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