

Fire chief thrives on sense of humor

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thing. He knew what he was doing."

Marinucci can't say fire service was ever in his life's plans. Originally, he was a math teacher in South Lyon. He liked it, although he would have preferred to teach high school rather than junior high. But he has fond memories. He switched careers because he found something he enjoyed more than teaching.

"I don't really plan the future. I work on personal enrichment. I let the chips fall where they may. I don't project five-year goals or things like that. I try to be content with what I have," he said.

Content seems to be an understatement. He's not eager to let anyone know, but if he won the Michigan Lotto, he'd probably continue working as fire chief — free of charge. But that's a secret.

Not that working in a fire department is without its ups and downs. The hours are irregular. His membership in local, state and international fire chief associations prompts travel and a lot of work.

As an administrator, he misses the action that makes anyone who is a firefighter become a firefighter. But then Farmington Hills doesn't have many fires, so he isn't missing too much actual firefighting.

AS CHIEF of a combination full- and part-time department in a high-growth suburb, Marinucci is occasionally in the spotlight, interviewed before television cameras. And he's stopping into the writing world. He's written chapters for a textbook designed for firefighters and he has published several articles in professional journals.

The associations he belongs to help him in his job when there are few others with whom he can discuss problems, concerns or his perspective. Next year, there's a good chance he'll become president of the Southeast Michigan Fire Chiefs Association. He also develops educational programs for the International Fire Chiefs Association.

But everything takes time. "It's very hard for my family, maybe more so than for me," said Marinucci, who with his wife, Tina, has two daughters and a son.

"I often have to schedule around the kids' activities. It's difficult because I'm the only one who can see the whole picture — my personal and professional life. Between the two, it takes up much of my spare time."

Like a majority of working couples, Marinucci and his wife share household duties and responsibilities for the kids. "It's a lot different than 20-30 years ago when the woman stayed home and cared for the kids and the man worked. We have shared responsibilities. That's good. It's important to be involved in the home front."

LIFE AND work is busy, but Marinucci has no complaints. He takes his work and his responsibilities as they come. And he looks for the enjoyment. "If I'm not going to enjoy it, I won't do it."

As fire chief, Marinucci wants his employees to like their jobs. "I want them to get up in the morning and say, 'Hurray, I get to go to work.' I want them to enjoy the Mondays as well as the Fridays."

But there are down times. There's the stress and the pressure and, of course, the trauma of witnessing what most people never in a lifetime may see. A majority of



THOMAS ARNETT/staff photographer

Fire chief Rich Marinucci, beside a pumper at fire headquarters on Drake, north of 12 Mile.

the department's calls are medical runs and accidents.

"You never get accustomed to the traumatic. It's easier to accept with natural deaths. But when it's unexpected, that's when it gets to you. There are times when they (firefighters) come back that it bothers me to hear about it. You find yourself saying, 'Why this

person, why this time?'"

"Then a good thing will happen, like saving a life. That will turn the state, and it all starts over again."

The humor and laughter he's so well known for also come in handy on the job. "It's a method of coping with the trauma people encounter everyday."



THOMAS ARNETT/staff photographer

Workers with the Michael Morton Construction Co., Brighton, set up the three-sided laminated wood amphitheatre behind the Farmington Community Center. The top will be angled for

acoustics. Two rooms will be added at the back of the facility for storage and as dressing rooms.

Amphitheatre nearly done, quality programs pledged

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The new amphitheatre, rebuilt on the foundation of the former outdoor stage behind the center, is expected to be completed within the next two weeks.

The three-sided amphitheatre is of laminated wood and has an angled roof for acoustics. Two rooms have been added to the back of the amphitheatre as dressing rooms and storage, said center spokesman Rob Strick.

"The foliage and density of the area created a problem. But great care was taken not to interrupt the natural setting," Strick said, adding that only two trees had to be removed.

FINANCING FOR the project comes from the center's capital fund, built up by Farmington Hills city councilman Ben Marks, a center director, who earlier this year launched a campaign to raise at least \$200,000 from area businesses and developers. Center officials did not release the total cost of the amphitheatre project, primarily financed with a donation from the Beznor-Bertak Co., Farmington Hills.

The project also includes improving the stairs down the hill to the amphitheatre. The stairs will be lighted and there's a possibility the hill where patrons sit will be relettered for easier seating, Strick said.

When the Farmington Hills City Council approved the center's request to build an amphitheatre in a residen-

tial zone, they added a few conditions, and requested further review in September 1989.

The conditions include placing a 10 p.m. curfew on amphitheatre activities, with traffic to be cleared out by 10:30 p.m. Fencing along the property line must be improved.

At a planning commission public hearing in June, residents complained about noise, patrons walking across their lawns and parking problems. After the hearing, one resident told planning commissioners he didn't feel neighbors' concerns were adequately addressed.

THE AMPHITHEATRE design, Pfaff said, includes measures to direct the sound to the seating area, so neighbors aren't bothered. Though amplifiers will be bought for the center, Pfaff assured they will not be the kind capable of use in concerts other than light classical and jazz music.

"We are trying to be as conscientious as possible for our neighbor's sake. We are not increasing the size of the seating area, and we have an agreement with Heritage Park that cars can park in there when our lot is full so there will be no on-street parking."

The center's board of directors also has a community relations committee that's expected to work with neighbors to ensure a good relationship between nearby residential areas and the center, Pfaff said.

"We'd love to have a neighbor interested enough to come and work with us," she added.

Dolan designations ordered

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Ken Murray, who had received support from Farmington-area Democrats.

JOHN DOLAN said he wasn't sure whether he would appeal Mester's ruling. He was represented by yet another Dolan, his son Jack.

"I'm sorry we can't both be pleased with the final result," said Jan Dolan.

She is recognized in the Farmington area by her council position, argued her attorney Timothy Kenny of Farmington Hills. "We're not handicapping a horse race," Kenny said. "The fact is that Jan Dolan . . . is

recognized as a councilperson in the community."

In arguments, Kenny told the court that "a number of complaints were made that they (voters) had voted for the wrong Dolan." He added that Jan Dolan had already received mail addressed to "Mr. Dolan," indicating there was confusion between the two candidates.

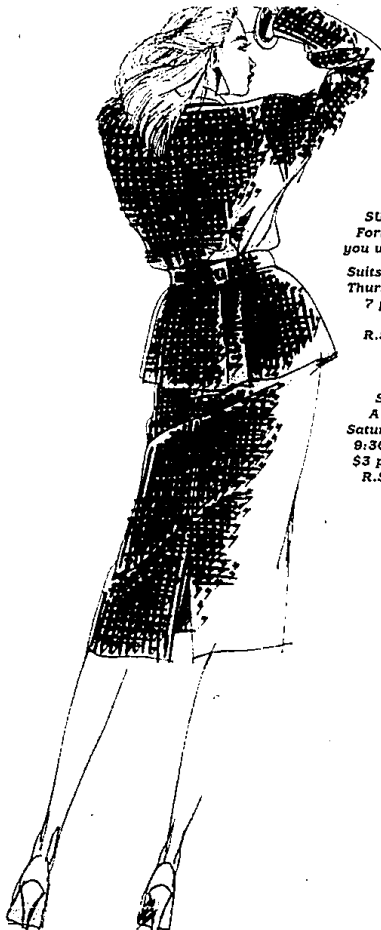
And although only four to six ballots are spoiled in an average election, 38 ballots had to be reissued in the August primary because voters cast ballots for John Dolan instead of Jan Dolan, said Kenny, citing information he received from the Farmington Hills clerk.

JOHN DOLAN had contended that the "councilperson" designation gave his opponent an unfair advantage because it was a political title.

"The 'councilperson' designation carries with it . . . some sort of endorsement, or preference," attorney Dolan added.

A secondary issue was raised about Jan Dolan's legal name, Anna Janette Dolan. She filed for office under Jan C. Dolan, using her abbreviated name — by which she is known in the community — and the letter "C" representing her maiden name. The judge ruled this was within the law.

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Psychologist/author talks at high school

Psychologist Sylvia Rimm will speak to Farmington-area parents, Thursday, Sept. 15 at 7:30 p.m. at North Farmington High School.

Author of the book, "Underachievement Syndrome: Causes and Cures," she will share strategies proven to reduce underachievement in students.

Rimm possesses nationally recognized family and school approaches to working with gifted, creative and underachieving children, and specializes in working with highly able

youngsters who are not performing to their ability in school.

Rimm's visit will serve as a kick-off to a local effort in Farmington schools, where an Achievement Project is being piloted this year to help reduce underachievement in highly able students. The project is being handled through the district's DELTA, or gifted, program.

North Farmington High School is on 13 Mile just east of Farmington Road. The public is invited to attend.



Sylvia Rimm, psychologist

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