

Councilman says Hills can regulate day care

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Budget ax to fall on day-care licensing

Continued from Page 1

Farmington Hills councilman Ben Marks said he believes the city can better monitor day-care facilities — including private homes — than the state can.

"I think the city should have the responsibility. I think we can do it a whole lot better than the state," Marks said.

In the wake of the cuts in the state Department of Social Services, which includes layoffs of employees in the licensing and regulation of day care, some Farmington Hills officials are wondering how day-care facilities in the city will be affected.

"I'm concerned because there has to be some inspection of the facilities," Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi said. "They did this too quickly. There's so many ramifications if they drop the licensing."

"Both parents work to make ends meet, and they depend on well-licensed day-care facilities. The state eliminations will create a problem," Vagnozzi said. "They (state officials) seem hellbent on ending these kinds of things without looking at the consequences. This is parallel to the

avoid losing some \$20 million in federal money.

"But child-care providers remain concerned, and legislators like state Rep. Jan Dolan, R-Farmington Hills, say they have received calls from both providers and parents.

"I think all of us who provide day care are gravely concerned," said Jean Vickers, program director at the Sarah Fisher Center in Farmington Hills, where the Seton Child Care program has been in place for some 50 years. "We're allowing our most vulnerable kids — our infants, toddlers and preschoolers — to be in an at-risk situation."

"It opens the door for any individual to hang out a shingle," adds Geri

Angel, district manager for Children's World Learning Centers. In addition, state regulators often provide helpful information to center operators. "They're our first source," she said. "We'll call upon them for their expertise."

PROVIDERS ARE also concerned the uncertainty due to the lack of licensing and regulation will cause insurance rates to skyrocket.

Day-care centers are busy sending letters to parents advising them programs will remain status quo with the same high standards, and encouraging parents to get involved with the situation. "If you live in a state where a dual income is necessary and child care is a necessary outcome, then you would have to be-

lieve that Gov. Engler has committed the most heinous of crimes — the crime of deserting our children," said Chailin and partner Vicki Palmer in their letter to parents.

John Truscott, press secretary to Gov. Engler, said the governor has made proposals to maintain many state jobs — including those in the child-care licensing area — since taking office last month, but that "the (state) House (of Representatives) has not been willing to compromise."

Michigan has more than 13,000 day-care facilities with an estimated 224,000 youngsters.

The DSS' Miller said he found it ironic that he got few complaints about cutting Aid to Families with

Dependent Children grants by \$80 — from \$488 to \$405 for a family of three in Wayne County, for example — but many about the day-care licensing cuts.

"We have rubbed a middle-class nerve here and it is very interesting as to who speaks out in our society," he said.

Dolan said she is concerned about the licensing situation, but believes parents should expect more from their facility than the minimum standards granted by a license. "I don't want to lull the parents into a false sense of security because a center is licensed," she added.

The *Observer & Eccentric* news staff and The *Associated Press* contributed to this report.

After the Farmington Hills City Council adopted such restrictions in 1987, Marks waged a successful battle against Democratic state Sen. Jack Faxon of Farmington Hills who wanted to liberalize day care by prohibiting communities from restricting the service to certain areas.

Marks said he is disappointed with the DSS cuts. But he believes the city should take charge of day care, including inspections. "We can respond to complaints better. We'll have to rely on people in the community to let us know where the (unregistered) homes are," he said.

Marks said he plans, at some point, to recommend to the city council that the city take over licensing and monitoring of day care, though he recognizes the city staff now lacks the manpower to do the job. He said the city's ordinance probably would have to be changed.

Vagnozzi said that's what may happen as "a last resort and if we can do it legally. The state is getting out of certain activities. The problem is being dumped in our laps. But money (state shared revenues) are being taken away. It's another burden without funds."

THE STATE licenses both large

day-care facilities and private homes whose owners take care of children. Under a city ordinance adopted in 1987, day-care facilities are registered with the city. The ordinance, which reflects state laws and regulations, only allows the city

to have fire inspections at day-care facilities. Determining whether certain operators are suitable for day care, however, is not within the city's authority, zoning supervisor Lee Blizman said.

The city ordinance allows both

family and group home child day care in residential areas, with certain restrictions. Family homes allow a maximum of six children and group homes a maximum of 12. The ordinance restricts group homes to major and secondary roads.

Weapons buff 'not just a collector,' police chief says

Continued from Page 1

was executed Monday, was dated Jan. 8.

Lang, whom Posner said is a goldsmith and jeweler, remains in the Oakland County Jail. He did not post the \$1 million bond set by Harris.

"It's expected in this climate (of the Persian Gulf crisis)," Posner said of the high bond. "There's a lot of over-reaction and paranoia. They (police) know as well as you and I that he is not a terrorist. He is a gun buff."

JORGENSEN and Dwyer both said they do not believe Lang is involved with terrorism or selling the weapons for terrorism. "We are looking at some additional state charges," Dwyer said.

Dwyer and Jorgensen said they also said that not all the weapons are illegal, though they believe some of

them will be found to be reported as stolen. Two firearms, a long gun and a pistol, have already been determined to have been reported stolen, Jorgensen said.

"No one's allowed under the law to collect stolen guns," Jorgensen said.

Posner, however, maintains that Lang has papers on each weapon that was in his possession and that none of the items confiscated were stolen. Posner said Lang buys his weapons from flea markets and gun shows.

The so-called rocket launchers and other devices can be bought from army surplus stores, which is where Lang reportedly bought the items. Lang also bought weapons from police officers, Posner said.

"They're (police) treating him like Quasimodo. He

probably goes to sleep at night dreaming of being Hambo," Posner said.

But Dwyer sees him a bit differently. "He said he was a collector. Based on our seizure of these items, a number of the items were illegally obtained and are illegal. He's not just a collector."

The items, including a rocket launcher authorities believed was loaded, were found in a closet in the basement of the Lang house. Lang apparently lived in the basement.

Authorities had the reportedly loaded rocket launcher taken to the Selfridge Air National Guard base in Mount Clemens. But Posner said the rocket launcher was not loaded. "It's a dud that fits into the launcher. The rocket is a dummy," he said.

They will be found to be reported as stolen. Two firearms, a long gun and a pistol, have already been determined to have been reported stolen, Jorgensen said.

"No one's allowed under the law to collect stolen guns," Jorgensen said.

Posner, however, maintains that Lang has papers on each weapon that was in his possession and that none of the items confiscated were stolen. Posner said Lang buys his weapons from flea markets and gun shows.

The so-called rocket launchers and other devices can be bought from army surplus stores, which is where Lang reportedly bought the items. Lang also bought weapons from police officers, Posner said.

"They're (police) treating him like Quasimodo. He

'The girls' return to rescue local doughnut franchise

Continued from Page 1

The secret of success in a small business like a doughnut shop? Hard work, long hours and pampered customers, say Grenon and Ulrych.

"Take good care of your customers," said Grenon, who learned busi-

ness by managing a Corvette car shop. "Acknowledge them right away . . . and give them a good product."

"Especially in the beginning, it takes a lot of hours and a lot of hard work," she added. "But eventually,

there's a payback."

Added Ulrych, "You just have to like people." Her son Mike is a Marine serving in the Persian Gulf and her daughter Teresa is on duty in the doughnut shop.

A STEADY customer, sipping cof-

fee at the counter, said he was glad the girls were back.

"Betty is probably one of the operators I respect most in this chain," said the man who wouldn't give his name. "It's a tough business, but she's a sharp lady."

Grenon and Ulrych own the franchise (some of the new franchises go for \$300,000), although Massachusetts-based Dunkin' Donuts Inc. owns the building.


Neither partner has much formal business schooling. The company

supplied six weeks of intensive training on how to operate the shop.

A drawing for prizes (Red Wings tickets, radios, etc.) will be held over the next few weeks.

"One more thing," said Ulrych. "We're hiring."

We Salute the Cable News Network



"CNN used to be known as the little network that could. It's not a little network anymore."

Tom Brokaw
NBC News

"I'm following the action on CNN."

Dick Cheney
Defense Secretary

"Without a doubt, Wednesday night (Jan. 16th) will mark the moment CNN came of age."

Robert Goldberg
Wall Street Journal

**For bringing us live breaking coverage of our
courageous men and women defending world peace...
For keeping us informed**

MetroVision Cable TV
Livonia **422-3200**
Farmington, Farmington Hills,
& Novi **553-7300**
Redford **538-1313**

Omnicom Cablevision
Serving: Canton, Northville
and Plymouth
459-7300

**Continental
Cablevision**
Serving: Dearborn Hgts.
and Westland
277-8750