

# Pay hike

## County board OK's \$1,600 raise

By PAT MURPHY  
Staff Writer

Oakland County commissioners played Santa Clause last week. They gave pay hikes to about 1,600 county employees including themselves.

Most county workers received increases amounting to about 3 percent of their annual salary. But by a 16-to-11 vote, commissioners boosted their own salaries by 7.82 percent over two years. Salaries for commissioners will increase from \$20,964 annually to \$22,565, an increase of \$1,601.

"I think the raise is definitely justified," said commissioner Larry Crane, R-Waterford and board chairman. "We didn't get a raise last year" and it's a matter of parity.

Commissioner Lawrence R. Pernick, D-Southfield, also voted for the pay hike. "Given the decisions we have to make," he said, "I don't think we were out of line by treating ourselves like we treated other county employees."

Pernick was referring to the 4.5 percent that most Oakland employees, except commissioners, received in 1992. That included

elected officials such as the county executive, sheriff and prosecutor who generally get pay hikes when other, usually unionized, employees get theirs.

State law precludes county commissioners voting themselves a pay raise during the current term of office. Commissioners said that law puts them in a position of having to grant themselves significant pay hikes in order to make up for the off years when they could not vote themselves a salary.

Not everyone accepts that philosophy, however.

Commissioner Donald E. Bishop, R-Rochester, for example, said the pay hike was unwarranted given the state of the economy. "We shouldn't be increasing our wages when so many people are afraid of losing their jobs. It doesn't bode well for our public image."

Commissioner John G. Pappageorge, R-Troy, said he voted against the pay hike because the county faces tough economic times ahead. "Salaries account for two-thirds of the county bud-

et. The county will have to curtail raises sometime, and they might as well set an example."

Others voting against the pay hike are Dennis M. Aaron, D-Oak Park; James D. Ferrera, D-Pontiac; Ruth A. Johnson, R-Holly; Thomas A. Law, R-West Bloomfield; Nancy McConnell, R-Bloomfield Hills; Ruei E. McPherson, D-Hazel Park; Lillian Jaffe Oaks, D-Southfield; Larry Obrecht, R-Lake Orion, and Rudy Serra, D-Ferndale.

Voting for the pay hike beside Crane and Pernick were G. William Caddell, R-Walled Lake; Marilyn E. Gouling, R-Bloomfield Hills; Donna R. Huntton, R-Clarkston; Donald W. Jensen, R-Birmingham; John P. McCulloch, R-Royal Oak; Frank H. Millard, R-Sylvan Lake; David L. Moffitt, R-Farmington Hills; John E. Olsen, R-Huntington Woods; Charles E. Palmer, R-Clemons; Hubert Price Jr., D-Pontiac; Kay Schmidt, R-Novi; Richard G. Skorrirt, R-Milford, and Donn L. Wolf, R-Farmington Hills.

Commissioner Teresa Krause, D-Troy, was absent and did not vote.

## Recycle used trees at a county park

Don't put your Christmas tree curbside after the holidays, recycle it at the Oakland County Parks.

Yule trees will be accepted Jan. 2-3 and Jan. 9-10 at nine Oakland County Parks. Drop-off hours are 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

New this year, roping and wreaths will be accepted. All metal materials must be removed. Plastic used to transport trees must also be removed at recycling sites. No commercial trees will be accepted. Recycling sites include Red

Oaks Golf Course in Madison Heights; Addison Oaks near Oxford; Glen Oaks Golf Course in Farmington Hills; Groveland Oaks near Holly; Independence Oaks near Orion Township; Springfield Oaks Activities Center in Davisburg; Waterford Oaks in Waterford; and White Lake Oaks Golf Course near Pontiac.

No park entry fee will be charged to drop-off Christmas trees. "People are aware of the dra-

matic impact recycling has and are acting responsibly as stewards of their planet," Dan Stencil, chief of park operations, said.

For their efforts, recyclers will earn a coupon for free vehicle entry to the April 24 Earth Fair at the Independence Oaks Nature Center. There, they can obtain a free pine seedling, compliments of the Hoop Club of Detroit. The club is a lumber, industry organization.

For more details and exact park locations, call 858-0906.

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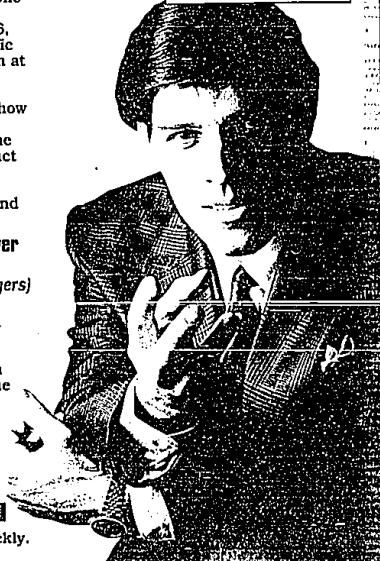
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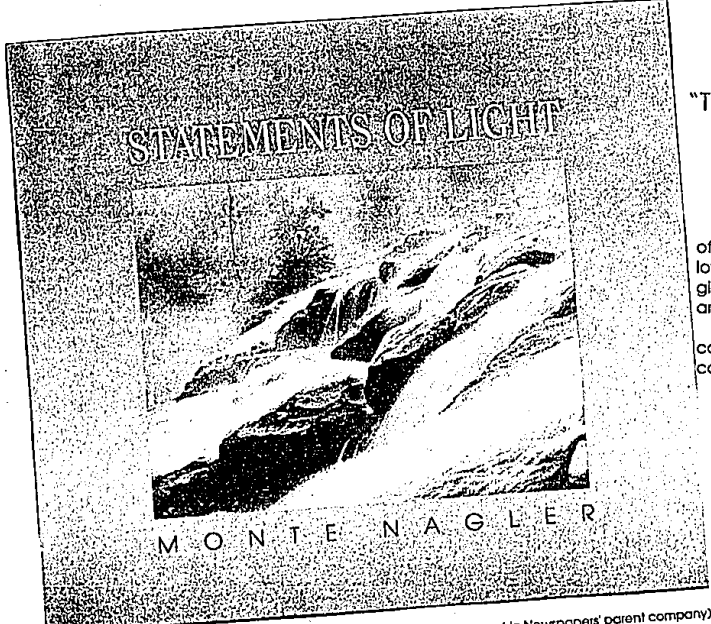
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