

Retiring from page 1A

Sleeves rolled up

Aside from achievements, Deadman leaves the chiseled image of a city administrator, the kind who sits across the desk of office with sleeves rolled up, a couple of pens in his shirt pocket and a hearty laugh at his disposal.

"He came to the city as a public safety officer and, in some ways, he's run the city manager's office with a similar attention to detail and the personal skills of a patrolman on the beat."

"He's fair, prepared and competent," said assistant city manager Robert Schultz, who's worked with Deadman for eight years.

"That's it. He's doing his job," Schultz said. "That sets the stage of how things are run."

"He's very willing to talk to someone who has a question," added Carol Murphy, an executive secretary in the city manager's office. "He's very good at public relations. I've never seen him angry."

Early crisis

Such an even-handed approach has also helped Deadman weather a few crises along the way.

The first one came in 1973, right after then-city manager John Dinan recommended Deadman to replace him. At the time, Deadman still had aspirations of becoming a police chief at a larger department, following the career path of his father, who was a Detroit police officer, and his grandfather, a sheriff in Otago County.

After accepting the job, one of the first orders of business was to pave Drake Road. Angry homeowners then sued the city over the assessment. The city won the case.

"Nevertheless, I was very apprehensive because I didn't expect to be sued immediately upon practically walking in the door," he said.

Deadman went to the city council and told them they'd be better off hiring someone else. After interviewing some candidates, the council asked Deadman to remain on the job.

He hasn't looked back since. In the last 20 years, Farmington has modernized while maintaining its community charm. With such growth, though, the price of pain has been kept to a minimum.

Succeeded

Deadman has also succeeded where other city managers have



DEADMAN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Last few days: Robert Deadman, his sleeves rolled up and the pens in his pocket, ponders his last few days as Farmington's city manager.

been consumed in the tit-for-tat of city politics.

For that, Deadman credits those he's worked with on the council. The respect has been mutual.

"Bob has been real successful in giving sound advice. He's respected for that," said Mayor William Hartsock. "With city councils and city managers, there tends to be a lot of ego involved. There hasn't been that problem in our city. Bob has kept the main interest of the city at heart."

Added Farmington Hills City Manager William Costick: "Bob has the degree of honesty that's necessary. He's forthright with everyone. To last in a position such as city manager for 20 years, you have to be honest and forthright with people."

With that in mind, Deadman's been involved in organizations outside of the community such as the Michigan Municipal Management Authority, which provides pooling for insurance for 170 governments, and the Resource Recycling Authority of Southeastern

Oakland County. There's also a plethora of community groups in which he's been active.

"When I became involved in an organization outside of the community, it hasn't been for personal growth," Deadman said. "If I'm going to give my time, I ask how does it benefit the community?"

Sometimes the job has meant 12 to 13 hour days, coming in at 8 a.m. and working through a council session lasting until 9 or 10 p.m.

In the morning, Deadman usually stops by Dimitri's for coffee and a light breakfast and during lunch he tours downtown to inspect an ongoing project.

On Jan. 4, 20 years of hectic pace comes to a halt.

"I'll probably go out to check the sewer project on my lunch hour," he said about his last day on the job.

There's a little hint of sentimentality in Deadman's voice about his last day. He and his wife, Virginia, plan to travel the United States, and Deadman will fish for bass on Lake Columbia near his Irish Hills vacation home.

He also plans to volunteer for the American Red Cross. He's already taking classes to become involved in the organization's disaster response team.

Otherwise, Jan. 4 will be business as usual as public safety director Frank Lauffhoff takes the helm the next day.

Lauffhoff, like Deadman 20 years ago, has a background in law enforcement.

"I think Frank is a very ethical individual," Deadman said of his successor. "He will do well. He has the people skills."

Which is what they said about a former public safety officer turning city manager 20 years ago.

A reception will take place for Robert Deadman from 7-8 p.m. Monday, Jan. 4, in the Farmington City Council Chamber. The reception is open to the public.



Maria Parker



John McDonald

Candidates from page 1A

"Obviously, you have to have a lot of money. Mailings cost a lot of money."

During the primary, McDonald spent \$29,780, and Parker spent more than twice that, logging \$60,805.

McDonald, 62, a former county commissioner and a longtime local attorney, and Parker, 37, also a local attorney and a magistrate in the 47th District Court, finished first and second, respectively, in the primary. Five other candidates were also-rans.

"It's the chance of a lifetime," Parker said. "You have to believe in yourself if you ask others to believe in you."

McDonald said he paid his political consultant, Farmington Hills councilman Terry Sever, \$8,000. Parker said that Alan Feuer, her Southfield political consultant, cost \$30,000.

According to McDonald, Feuer originally made contact with McDonald, through Michael Shipice, a former Farmington school board trustee, but McDonald said that he wasn't willing to pay the "\$30,000-\$40,000" that Feuer charged.

McDonald said that he preferred to hire a local person.

Both candidates had several fund-raisers. In the period following the primary, Parker received strong support from Southfield,

Birmingham, and West Bloomfield residents and/or professionals, including Judge Hilda Gagg of Pontiac who contributed \$100. Farmington Hills supporters included school activist Betty Nicolay, attorney Michael W. Colton, Bruce Gorash, Stephen M. Feldman, Debra Beth Paves, Michael H. Fabian, Janice Scharg, Richard Siriani, David Gumenick, Marcia Fagan and Jitendra Mandal.

McDonald, in comparison, received strong support from the Farmington/Farmington Hills community, in donations which ranged from as little as \$10 to \$200.

His supporters included Farmington Hills Mayor Jon Grant, Congressman-elect Joseph Knolnberg, Councilman Aldo Vagnozzi, former Farmington Mayor Ralph Yoder, State Rep. Jan Dolan, Commissioner Don L. Wolf, veterinarian John Richardson, 47th District Court Judge Fred Harris, Judge Michael Hand, Richard H. Headlee, the Botsford Inn's John Anhalt, developer Melvin Keftan, Hills councilwoman Nancy Bates, Hills councilman Terry Sever, city attorney John Donohue, Hills councilman Larry Lichtman, Barry Brickner, Michael J. Hand, John Dunleavy, Gerald Surwicz, John F. Nichols, and others.

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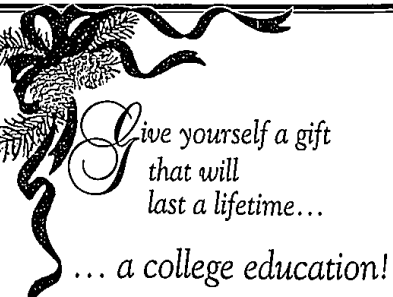
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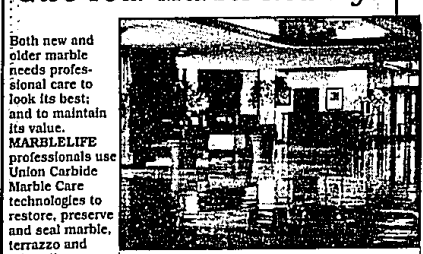
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