

today's hot line

LIVONIA—Flash floods Tuesday threatened the evacuation of 204 patients from the five-floor St. Mary Hospital. Rising waters threatened to flood out transformers in the hospital basement which are the central source of electrical supply for the institution. City employees and volunteers made makeshift dikes of bedclothing and linen and averted disaster.

LIVONIA—With one seat on the new two-bench District Court available, three lawyers already have filed for the Aug. 6 primary—in which two will be nominated for the November election runoff. Others are expected to run before the Tuesday deadline. Those announced are Steve Polgar, city attorney; James E. Mies, a former Charter Commission member; and Lonnie H. Brashear, a member of the Board of Education. The act abolishes the Municipal Court but retains Judge James McCann.

REDFORD—Twelve of 32 township families driven from their homes by flood waters this week had to be evacuated by boat. American Red Cross Emergency relief was provided for those in need. Basement flooding was reported by 114 homeowners. The swamped homes and one Five Mile Rd. office building shipped nearly three feet of water.

REDFORD—Democrats James Young and Gordon Boski have deferred to fellow Democrat James Young for primary candidacy for a single, probable seat. Having circulated each other's petitions among the same signers, they could not legally appear on the ballot opposing each other. If legislation creates other constable openings, they will be eligible to run.

PLYMOUTH—Plymouth Rock will be unveiled at City Hall and a stronger link forged with Plymouth, England, as high-light of July Fourth parade.

PLYMOUTH—A state labor mediator has been assigned to wage negotiations between the Plymouth Board of Education and teachers association.

PLYMOUTH—A new rain gauge recorded 3.92 inches of rain in eight hours to make last Tuesday's downpour worst in 25 years.

What's Inside

The damage caused by last week's flood is extensively covered in two pages of pictures and a story from the suburban point of view. Pages 4A, 6B.

High school students from Redford and Livonia undertook the bold job of tutoring and making friends with the kids at an inner city school. What everyone learned and what they did are told in story and pictures by Dennis Pajot on Page 1B.

Artist-reporter Glenna Merillat added her talents to Fred DeLano's probing accounts of the Dr. Clark manslaughter trial in Ingham County. Stories and pictures on Page 8B.

Suburbia may be greatly affected by a bill that Gov. Romney has signed into law—the Boundary Commission. Analysis on Page 9C.

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OCEAN BOUND?

If your vacations have gone nautical, you don't need that trailer anymore. It's probably not too seaworthy. Why not offer it for sale to a family headed for the woods? For only \$4,44 you can run an Observer Twin-Action Want Ad in two editions.



Jury's Verdict: Clark Guilty

MASON—A jury of six men and six women found Dr. Ronald E. Clark guilty of manslaughter in the death of a patient to whom he had administered sodium pentothal in his Farmington office. The verdict was returned at 3 p.m. Friday in the ancient county court house here.

Circuit Judge William J. Beer immediately cancelled the \$15,000 bond on which Dr. Clark has been free since last Christmas and remanded him to the Ingham County Jail for sentencing July 18.

As the jury returned 22 and a half hours after it was given

the case, six armed deputy sheriffs were stationed in the court room. Judge Beer earlier had warned the courtroom against any demonstrations whatever the verdict.

Clark and his attorney said they were uncertain at this point whether they would file an appeal within the 20-day limit. The Farmington Township physician went on trial June 17, accused of causing the death last Nov. 3 in his clinic at 30735 Grand River Ave. of Dr. Sharon E. (Grace) Neil, of Livonia.

Dr. Clark maintained a medical practice in Redford before

moving to the Farmington area 10 years ago, and in the mid-'40s was Redford health officer and director of civil defense.

"The case was handed to the jurors at 4:30 p.m. Thursday by Circuit Judge William John Beer whose final words regarding their assignment were, 'I envy you not.' They were sent home in early evening after failing to return a quick verdict and resumed their review of testimony at 1 p.m. Friday.

In his final summation, defense Attorney Philip Rowston advanced two theories of Mrs. Neil's death in answer to the

prosecution's claim that she died because of Dr. Clark's "absolute gross negligence."

"We think there is a possibility Mrs. Neil could have pretended to be asleep and then, after Dr. Clark left the treatment room, somehow added more sodium pentothal herself to the solution which had been administered," declared the attorney.

He also suggested that Mrs. Neil, who had received many previous sodium pentothal injections from Dr. Clark, may have developed an unpredictable allergy for the drug and that "such a condition could cause

death."

Judge Beer, during his 30-minute charge to the jurors, told them in regard to these two theories:

"If you believe either circumstance occurred, it is your duty to return a verdict of not guilty."

THE JUDGE also emphasized to the jury that Dr. Clark's failure to take the witness stand and testify in his own behalf at any time during the trial was his own privilege and raises no presumption either way.

"You are forbidden to consider why he did not testify," admonished the jurist.

Rowston told the jury: "Dr. Clark was not intending to put her into a deep coma or prepare her for surgery. Sodium pentothal was being administered only to cause her to relax and converse easily.

"The only possible answer to Mrs. Neil's death which appears reasonable to us may be that she added additional pentothal herself, or developed a sudden allergy."

It had been emphasized that Mrs. Neil, as a patient of Dr. Clark for many years and his part-time volunteer office assistant, was familiar with the injection procedure.

ASSISTANT PROSECUTOR Bruce Leitman's rebuttal to the self-destruction theory was the resort:

"There is the realm of reason can an unconscious woman get up and put more sodium pentothal in her own solution?"

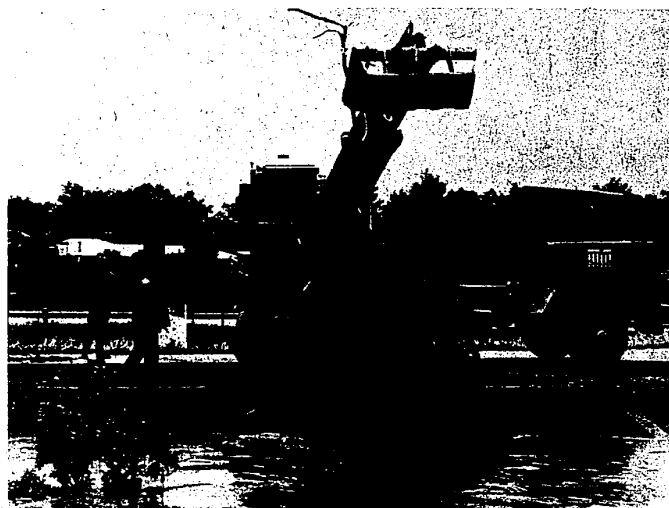
It is the prosecution's claim that the dosage given Mrs. Neil between 6 and 6:30 p.m. Nov. 3 was at least one gram in quantity and that this not only rendered her totally unconscious but resulted in fatal pentothal poisoning.

Referring to the fact that Dr. Clark allegedly had listed the cause of Mrs. Neil's death as being "coronary thrombosis," Assistant Prosecutor John Bain declared in his final argument: "If Dr. Clark didn't know he'd done something wrong, why did he give a phony cause of death? I think Dr. Clark acted with complete disregard for this patient's life. Had he exercised any care at all, Grace Neil would have been alive today."

JUDGE BEER instructed the jury that to find Dr. Clark guilty, it must be satisfied that the prosecution proved through its witnesses that the physician did perform the sodium pentothal injection; that the quantity was excessive; that it did cause death; and that, as a physician, he neglected the legal duty he owed his patient.

"If the prosecution failed to prove any one of those factors, your verdict must be not guilty," stated the judge.

He also declared that the prosecution did not have to prove that Dr. Clark "intended to kill, or had any malice toward Grace Neil." Neither of those factors, nor premeditation, is an element in the charge of manslaughter, he said.



THE CULPRIT — Oakland County crews remove a complete tree from the Rouge River culvert at Freedom Rd. in Farmington Wednesday. City officials credit the tree with causing flooding along the river, in the Twin Valley Subdivision and at the Valley View apartments. (See additional flood pictures on page 4A.)

Five Inches Of Rain Create Flood Conditions

By SUE SHAUGHNESSY

Rain—topping any previous records in the Farmington area—caused more than a few problems for county, city and township officials along with private citizens this week.

The Michigan State Highway Department reported that its rain gauge at the corner of 12 Mile and Northwestern in Southfield measured 5.03 inches of the wet stuff between noon Tuesday and 8 a.m. Wednesday.

Average median rainfall for the month of June in the area is 3.3 inches.

Scores of basements were flooded and roads closed off as the downpour continued throughout Tuesday afternoon and evening.

HARDEST hit in the city were the Alta Loma and Bel Aire Subdivisions, while Kendallwood took the dubious prize in the township.

One township family, the John Fennell's, were forced to leave their home when two feet of water filled the entire house on Nine Mile and Ruth.

The combination flood-plain-parking lot under the Valley View apartments filled with water in a half hour's time when a tree blocked a culvert of the Rouge River under Freedom Rd.

This blockage forced the closing of the I-96 expressway from 10 p.m. Tuesday till early Wednesday morning. Farmington High School also flooded and the police had the school's electricity turned off as a safety precaution.

Township police moved equipment into Botsford Hospital to prevent a flooding at that facility.

Hardest hit roads in the township were: 14 Mile and Halstead; Truck Road, south of I-96; Nine Mile and Ingham and Gill Rd. south of Nine Mile.

The water ran from door to door in some sections of Alta Loma and from curb to curb in Bel Aire in the city.

CITY MANAGER John Dinan told The Enterprise & Observer that the main flooding problem could be traced to the level of the Rouge River.

"The water level was so high that the sewers couldn't empty out into the stream," he said.

In Alta Loma the problem was complicated by the passage of water across Gill Rd. from the Woodcroft Subdivision and from Grand River.

Dinan said that the city engineers are currently studying the possible diversion of waters from the area away from the subdivision.

He added that a formal report would be made to the city council Monday night on the flood conditions. The council session begins at 8 p.m. in the city hall.

In Bel Aire the problem was complicated by the flow of water south from the northern sections of the township.

"The system just isn't equipped to handle that much water," Dinan said.

Road Group Turns Down Millage Idea

The Farmington Township Road Association is withholding support from the proposed Oakland County one-mill tax increase because it fails to provide help for local residential streets.

The proposal, offered by the Oakland County Road Commission will be on the ballot in the Aug. 6 primary.

The Farmington road group took its position after hearing County Road Commission chairman, Frazer Staman, say at its meeting Tuesday night that the money raised from the tax would be used only for the primary road system.

Primary roads in Farmington include Middle Belt, Orchard Lake, Farmington, 16 and 13 Mile Rds. Local roads which become impassable during bad weather and whose subdivision roads which are breaking up are not included in areas scheduled to benefit from the proposed tax increase.

A RESOLUTION adopted by the road association states that support of its group be withheld from the millage issue until such time and as a substantial amount of the revenue from the tax increase is pledged to repair the local road system.

Staman told The Enterprise & Observer that the commission is aware of the problem on local roads.

He said, "They are a mess, but the \$5.5 million the tax would raise wouldn't even be a down payment on fixing local roads. It can only be done by special assessment on the residents."

DURING discussion on the tax issue, road association members made the following points:

1. The Oakland County Board of Supervisors should have allocated some of the \$2 million in new funds it received this year for repair of local roads.

2. The commission has failed in the past to honor association requests to send a speaker, but sent one to plug support for the tax increase.

3. The proposed expenditure of the tax increase ignores the need to repair and reconstruct several local roads serving schools, roads not unsafe for children and school buses.

4. The county proposal fails to provide any relief for local roads which have been ignored for years and which continue to deteriorate.

Away From Books '136 Years':

Adult Grads Treasure Diplomas

By ELIZABETH WISSMAN

Five adults who have been out of school a total of 136 years were among the graduates at Farmington High School this year.

Probably none of the 385 young people who recently received their diplomas from FHS were filled with as much sense of achievement as these five adults.

Mrs. Alberta Benton, of Purdue, Farmington, left school 34 years ago. Mrs. Helen Parinello, of Glen Ard, Farmington, hadn't been in school for 28 years. Mrs. Helen Sulewski, of Beverly Hills, left school 31 years ago. An executive in industry, who prefers not to be identified, interrupted his education 43 years ago. Mrs. Betty Lehman, of Fendt St., Farmington, couldn't be reached for comment.

THE FIVE PICKED UP their edu-

cations under the auspices of the adult education department, headed by Dr. Jack Cleveland, of the Farmington School District.

Under the adult education program, every allowance is made for experience gained in adult life. All applicants take the Iowa Test of Educational Development which grades on varied skills and life experiences. Seventeen class credits are needed to graduate and good achievement on specifics on the test grants credit hours.

MRS. BENTON, a unit collection manager at Creditor's Service, Inc., had much work experience. For 16 years she was credit manager for Montgomery Ward and has been a store manager for Spiegel's, Inc.

A grandmother-four times over, Mrs. Benton says her family claimed, "Mother will never make the grade."

She comments, "There was so much about which I just had surface information. It was difficult to dig into things like government and history, but today I feel I will certainly become a more intelligent viewer of such things as the political conventions because I went back to school."

Mrs. Benton was an A and B adult ed student and notes about homework, "You simply divorce yourself from all home and social activities and get down and do it."

ALSO a grandmother, Mrs. Parinello laughs when she notes that "I certainly taught my senior Farmington High School son a lesson."

Now that she has her study habits back, this grandmother is thinking about attending college. Her grades were all A's and one B, accomplished by getting up at 5:20 every morning and doing all her cooking and house-

work before the family got up.

MRS. SULEWSKI and Mrs. Parinello became fast friends after meeting in adult ed classes and were a source of encouragement to each other when the going got tough.

Mrs. Sulewski's children cover a wide range of schools. A son is in college, another son a senior in high school, a third in elementary school, a daughter married and another daughter is a teacher at North Farmington High. The mother of the family says the children all egged her on to get her diploma.

As with the other lady graduates, Mrs. Sulewski says housework was just ignored during the big push to graduate.

"Things that weren't too noticeable, just didn't get done till this spring," says this persevering person.