

# the Farmington enterprise & observer

YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

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## Next Edition On Thursday

Because of the holidays, Observer Newspapers will not publish the weekend edition for Dec. 30.

For another week, your home town paper will be published on Thursday (Jan. 4), instead of the customary Wednesday.

The offices and plant at 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, will be closed Monday (Jan. 1) for the New Year holiday, as well as on Saturday (Dec. 30).

News and retail advertising deadlines will be pushed back one day, to Tuesday. Late classified ads will be accepted until 11:30 Wednesday morning.

## County Review

County officials review the past year in a summary of politics at Oakland County. What did it look like from the official point of view? Page 4A

## Phone Calls

Four free telephone calls go during the holiday season from Observerland homes to military men overseas. To find out about the calls and the called, see today's Women's Section. Page 1C

## Retiree

After 18 years, the retiring office manager of the Northwest YWCA in Redford Township is going to continue to be a part of activities there. You'll find her story in our Women's Section. Page 2C

# Is The Future Being Buried?

"Politically it's one of the most unpopular subjects."

—DPW Head David Jones

By DAN Mc COSH

Citizen Scrooge is visited by the ghosts of garbage past in a mini-drama presented recently by the Farmington League of Women Voters.

"Nobody is interested much in landfills," said Olga Weir, director of the play. Faced with generating a little interest in her report to the league on the disappearing landfills in the area, she resorted to dramatics.

But for most residents, the garbage can lid clattering on their 3.8 pounds of trash a person each day is the end of it.

THE MAN most concerned with what happens after the lid clangs shut is David Jones, head of the City of Farmington DPW. Without being a "doomsday" forecaster, he points to problems lurking in the near future concerning solid waste disposal that Farmington will have to solve.

●The distance to a working landfill keeps increasing.

●Zoning against landfill operations is increasing in outlying areas.

●Local governments have been unwilling to cooperate on regional solutions to landfill problems.

JONES, FORMERLY with the Livonia DPW before coming to Farmington, has witnessed the growth of the trash problem in suburbia.

When it was a predominantly rural area, "farm" solutions held sway: paper and other burnables were incinerated in a back yard burner, edibles were fed to the pigs, and what little remained

found its way to the town dump in the back of a farmer's pickup.

Door-to-door pickup and a health department, ban on feeding garbage to pigs, followed by bans on outside burning, put the whole burden on local garbage collection, and indirectly on landfills.

The national average is four pounds a day, per person thrown away, which makes Farmington residents slightly more frugal than average at 3.8 pounds per person per day.

"There's a lot of cardboard and paper, and a lot of grass. Grass is a real problem with the big lawns out here."

Grass, according to Jones, is typical of the innocuous products of daily life that seem to incubate and turn into monsters emerging from the lines of garbage trucks at the dump.

It doesn't burn well, and if it does go into incinerators, it emits clouds of smoke. Paper is another "monster" because although it burns well, it doesn't reduce much in volume.

●The ash is nearly as bulky as the paper itself.

CURRENT SOLUTION to these sorts of problems is to bury them.

A modern landfill operation must be operated under state regulations enforced by the county health department.

This means scraping back a bit of earth, dumping the waste, and covering it up with six inches of dirt. At most

operations, giant "compactors," with studded iron wheels, roll over the stuff and squash it down before bulldozers cover it.

The point to all this is to eliminate the old "sins" of

landfills — deep layers of decomposing garbage, uncovered refuse and burning.

The major advantage, particularly to the landfill owner, is the land can be used for construction in a couple of years.

OWNING A landfill these days is something like owning a gold mine.

Holloway Construction Co., which owns and operates the landfill in Salem Township at Six Mile and Napier Rd., charges 70 cents a cubic yard just to receive refuse from surrounding communities, including the City of Farmington and many contractors in the Farmington Township.

Since the city alone generates 2,000 yards (\$1,400 worth) a month, and even Detroit is trucking its refuse to the site, business is obviously booming.

McCreedy Trucking Co., which picks up the refuse in the city, in turn charges about \$1 per cubic yard for picking up and delivering to the landfill.

THE LANDFILL cost has jumped from 10 cents a yard to 70 cents in about five years, Jones said.

The state restrictions on landfills put many independent operations out of business; restrictive zoning and permits plus the escalating demand also pushed the cost up, he said.

The Salem Township site is now expected to last only another two years — instead of the originally projected seven.



GARBAGE — George Richter, Ron Hubert, and Jerry Linhart add a little more to the disappearing landfills. (Evert photo)

At that time, another nearby site must be found, or one even further out. South Lyon is popular among the landfill crowd these days, Jones said.

This is the crux of the problem for the future — landfills disappearing or requiring exorbitant long hauls from even from suburbs that once were "far out" themselves.

"Politically it's one of the most unpopular subjects," Jones said. "Cities won't get together with other cities, even though there is federal money available for regional solutions."

THERE ARE currently seven federal pilot programs aimed at developing ways to conserve landfills. While organic gardeners favor composting, and ecologists call for recycling, neither seems practical in the near future, according to Jones.

Local city and township administrators have been most impressed by in-

cineration (where burnables are consumed before the remainder goes to the landfill) or "compaction" (several methods of squeezing the refuse into a smaller space).

A pilot project in Milwaukee puts solid waste under hydraulic pressure until a ton is squashed into a cubic yard.

The "cubes" are laid in a landfill, with none of the sanitary or compaction problems associated with conventional methods.

Modern incinerators are virtually pollution free, but need several cities cooperating to keep them going on an economical schedule, Jones said.

If a steady supply of trash is fed into some modern incinerators on a 24-hour-a-day basis, it would even be possible to generate electricity with the heat, he said.

BUT NOBODY wants an incinerator or a dump site."

"The counties or some regional authority need some power. Cities don't like to look at the long-range—they tend to see it as a day-to-day problem."

As for recycling, Jones says he has noticed a drop in volume since "Earth Alive" in Farmington started a volunteer glass recycling and paper collection.

Paper in particular should be valuable enough to collect separately, he feels.

But we are not looking for miracles — either a compactor or incinerator will probably be the answer.

THE SAME landfill problems facing the City of Farmington face the township, although with its bigger population and more future growth, the township has bigger problems.

Currently seven independent contractors do most of the weekly pickups in

Continued on 3A

# How Civic Leaders Saw 1972 Incorporation Coming Nearer

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Enterprise and Observer invited some civic leaders to reflect on the past and make some predictions for the future over the holidays. Floyd Cairns, Farmington Township clerk, and Robert Deadman, city manager, look at the past year in government.

By FLOYD CAIRNS

Many years of court cases came to a close on incorporation, and the prospect of an election in the spring for a new city (City of Farmington Hills) combining Farmington Township, Quakertown and Wood Creek Farms.

The State Legislature set May 16, 1972 for a new presidential primary election for the state, and it became possible to put the question of incorporation on that ballot.

THE RESULTS of this election were certainly inspiring, because it was the first time in history that Farmington Township, Wood Creek Farms and Quakertown had voted to become a city.

In the same election nine charter commissioners were elected. The commission set out to write a charter which will govern the new City of Farmington Hills, if approved by the voters at an election now set for May 8, 1973.

In the past year the township has paved or repaved the

roads in Holly Hills Subdivision, a part of Grand River Crest, Kendallwood 1 Subdivision and Glenbrook Subdivision.

Sewers have been built in Westhill Woods Subdivision, Westgate Franklin Village Subdivision and a part of Oakland Hills Orchards Subdivision, plus some extension lines.

Water was provided for Springbrook Subdivision.

The northwest pressure district, which will provide water for the northwest portion of the township from Drake Rd. to Haggerty Rd. and from Eight Mile to 14 Mile, had been started and the first segment will be up for bids Jan. 22, 1973.

Hopefully, with the bids coming in within reason the complete project will be well underway in 1973.

The 10 Mile Rouge Arm study was made in 1972 and the township and Quakertown have come to an agreement on the route of this arm which has been under discussion for many years.



FLOYD CAIRNS

With this accomplished, the township board has authorized the county to proceed with engineering and contractual agreements to pursue the construction of this arm.

Although a federal grant has been applied for, it is questionable that it will be forthcoming.

1972 WAS the presidential election year and turned out voters en masse.

Although the Township bought fifteen additional voting machines, there were long lines at the voting booths as happened in all other communities in the country.

The general election brought about one change on the administrative board of the township, and although the tenure of this term in office has only started there have been many changes, and a renewed spirit of the board with an aim toward a more progressive and efficient government.

# More Growth Shown In City

By ROBERT DEADMAN  
City Manager

During 1973, new construction will add approximately 100 new residences of various types to the city. The residential units include cluster housing, single family residences, and condominiums. A new 10-court indoor tennis facility, costing approximately \$1 million, should be completed next year on Farmington Rd. The new tennis facility is said to be one of the finest in the Midwest.

The Farmington Medical Complex at Shawwassee and Orchard Lake Rd. will open in the spring of 1973. This complex completes the medical offices development which began to the south of the new building during the 1960s.

THERE ARE several public improvement programs scheduled for construction during 1973. Drake Rd. will be paved south of Grand River for approximately a half mile.

This paving will improve the present dirt road conditions and allow for proper drainage in the area.

Grand River will be improved by the State Highway Dept. This improvement will include the resurfacing of Grand River within the city and the replacement of deteriorated curbs.



ROBERT DEADMAN

surface parking lot for over 60 cars.

The city administration will continue to work towards involving the private sector in constructing an indoor ice facility in the Farmington area.

THE YOUTH Basketball League sponsored by the Public Safety Dept. will continue to grow. It is projected that in the 1973 program, over 140 boys who are in the fifth and sixth grade levels will be involved.

The city's senior citizens' program should continue to expand, including more field trips to interesting places for the senior citizen groups.

The planning commission is working diligently on a review of the city's master plan, the purpose of which is to project future land uses within the city that coincide with this community's general aesthetics and welfare.

The planning commission should complete its review of the city master land use plan early in 1973.

Continued on Page 3A

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