

# the Farmington enterprise & observer

YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

Wednesday, January 10, 1973

15¢ a Copy

Volume 84 Number 26 • Four News Sections

## 5 Are Killed In X-Way Crash

A Farmington family of five was killed Tuesday morning in an accident described as "the worst I've ever seen" by a member of the Detroit Traffic Bureau.

Robert Spanski, 23, of 20741 Tuck, Farmington; his wife Diana, 25; their three daughters, Sherry, 6; Terry, 2; and Laura, six months, died in a flaming crash when their car ran into an abutment at Pembroke on the north-bound John Lodge Expressway in Detroit.

An eyewitness reported their small car may have been side-swiped by another vehicle before it hit the overpass and burst into flames, according to a Detroit police spokesman.

Police are still looking for a second car, possibly involved in the accident.

## FIRE

### What Happens When You Call 474-2233

By DAN MCCOSH

Farmington Township has a volunteer fire department. "This is news to some people, a source of pride to others. To some it has become a cause of concern.

How good is the system? How does it work? Does it hurt insurance rates? And most important, what is the future of the department?

THE 80-MAN department works out of four fire stations in the township, about 20 in each station.

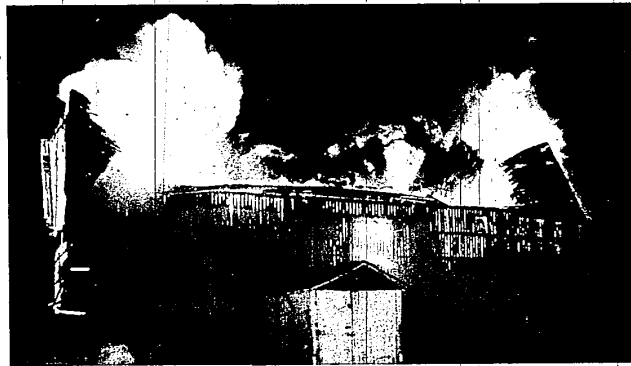
Each station is equipped with a pumper truck and a smaller "brush fire" truck which also doubles as a rescue wagon.

The men experience a lot of fire-fighting experience. Of the 80, 42 have more than five years on the department, according to Paul Button, chief of station four at 34600 12 Mile Rd.

They attend regular training sessions twice a month with the department, and many also have taken a 66-hour course at Michigan State University sponsored by the Fire Training Council.

In addition, some have taken courses in pulmonary cardiac first aid. The department answers about 80 calls a year. About one-third are rescue calls, according to Button.

But when a call comes in, when a grease fire explodes into a blaze in the kitchen, or a



"I suppose you should say something about the type of man - the kind of guy who will fight fires until three, then get up and go to work at six...but I don't know how you would put that."

—Chief Paul Button

motorist is pinned in a wreck, how does the system work?

A CALL CAME into fire house four last Tuesday night. The monitor, a small radio that is the heart of the communication system, beeped a siren - like noise and announced "fire at Danny's Gin Mill ... station three ...". The call was followed by a "backup" call for assistance from station one.

This reported jumped into a car with George Hume, chief

of the "Star Cutter" station one, who was at the north-side station attending a meeting of the chiefs.

Hume flicked a red flasher on the dashboard of his car, and we took off down 12 Mile toward the fire, eight miles away on the far side of the township.

Normally Hume would have been one of the first to "his" station at Grand River and Gill. He lives across the street. Volunteers are required to live close to their stations, and

most drivers live in the immediate vicinity - Button, for instance, actually built the 12 Mile Rd. station next to his house.

Hume's car was equipped with a siren as well as the flasher, and he kept a portable monitor turned on in the back seat. A portable extinguisher, his books and other equipment made this a typical volunteer car.

The siren flicked on at infrequent intervals, when

someone refused to give way to the flashing light.

"It's no different in the big trucks," Hume said, as the second car in as many minutes hogged the road until he could pass.

"A lot of cars don't pull over."

A CAR SWUNG over to the right hand lane on Grand River. When Hume started to go around in the left lane, his light flashing, the car swerved. Continued on Page 3A

## Vocational Training

A study of vocational training in the Farmington Schools had been completed and it shows some progress in the area. What's in store for the future?

Page 4A

## Recreation Program

A winter recreation program for Farmington residents is taking registrations now. To find a way to keep fit this summer, see:

Page 3A

## Friendship And Love

Both are part of an unusual story that came to light when a couple in a Farmington nursing home marked their 50th anniversary last week. Read it in the Women's Section.

Page 1C

Amusements	10, 11B
Classified Want Ads	1-15D
Cooking, by Elf	13B
Deaths and Funerals	15B
Editorial Viewpoints	148
Home and Garden	7, 8B
Observing Sports	2B
Readers' Forum	15B
Sports - Prep and Pro	1-5B
Spotlight on Women	1-5C
Turf Tips, Quips	5B
Woman on the Go	2C

## Court Ruling Considered

# Will School Financing Change?

By STEVE BARNABY

"Up in the air" is the way Kenneth Perrin, Farmington School Board president, describes the district's position in light of the recent Michigan Supreme Court opinion on school financing.

In a 4 to 3 vote, the majority held that Michigan can no longer use a system that provides for unequal spending of public funds for students in different school districts.

"IT IS HARD to tell what approach the court will take in interpreting their own opinion," said Perrin.

Although the court took no action which would affect local school financing during

the present school year, the majority said it would accept a legal challenge in 1973 to a school aid formula adopted by the Legislature for the 1973-74 school year before any local taxes are levied for that year.

This, said Perrin, would force the Legislature to take some action to satisfy the court's requirements. The opinion said the formula of state aid grants in the 1971-72 school year failed to help poor districts enough, and the state must go farther.

MARNUS VAN Amedye, acting superintendent, says that until action is taken by either the Legislature or court, the district will carry on as usual.

"I can't say how this will

effect us at this time. We have been advised by the state assn. of School Boards to continue operating as we have been because we are still responsible for our own financing."

Perrin said the decision could affect whether the board would request a renewal of the five mills for the next school year.

"The school district will be OK through the present school year," but after summer vacation we will have to ask there is a change in the formula."

WILLIAM PRISK, Farmington School District

business manager, said the opinion would eventually affect such things as teachers per 1,000 students, professional staff and amount of state aid.

At present, Farmington receives \$30 per pupil from the state while local revenue raised per pupil is \$386. Total operating expense per pupil is \$937.

Professional instructional staff per 1,000 students is 46.5 and teachers-per 1,000 is 38.3.

Prisk said the state takes all of these factors into consideration when deciding on the amount of state aid for school districts.

Since the local property tax varies from district to district,

the state has attempted to make up for inequities by providing help for the poor districts.

The majority decision showed wide disparities of spending throughout the state. For instance, Oak Park spends more than \$1,500 per pupil while Ionia spends \$541.

THE COURT suggested the system could be changed by either revising the state's school aid formula to provide for generally equal spending per pupil; revise the local tax structures and change the districts boundaries to make spending equal; or a combination of both.

The opinion refers to "general equality" as opposed

to absolute spending between school districts which wouldn't be required, according to Justice G. Mennen Williams, who wrote the majority opinion.

Although Perrin expressed fear that special programs might have to be dumped, Chief Justice Thomas M. Kavanagh said the court ruling would permit a school district to tax itself and spend extra money per pupil for special programs such as art.

Justice Thomas Brennan, in the dissent, said the majority opinion was meaningless because it didn't affect existing education financing methods and said the present system wasn't a denial of equal protection.

The opinion refers to "general equality" as opposed

## Judge Protests Delayed Budget

Farmington District Judge Michael Hand protested the tardy approval of the \$2.2 million township budget Monday, complaining it failed to "reflect the actual situation" of court expenditures.

The 1972-73 budget, which covers the fiscal year ending April 1, 1973, represents about a seven per cent increase over last year's \$1.9 million total.

THE TOWNSHIP board approved the budget with three months remaining in the fiscal year with the explanation from Treasurer Thomas Nolan that the township had been waiting for employe negotiations to be completed.

Hand, the only non-board member to speak, complained the budget for his department did not reflect a 25 per cent increase in caseloads.

"If the budget is adopted as presented here, the court is over-expended right now," he said.

The judge said additional revenues from the added cases, up from 11,000 last year, would cover the additional expenses, but complained the late adoption of the budget made it difficult for him to plan the operation of his department.



JUDGE MICHAEL HAND

He also made two corrections of charges to his department, which were adopted along with the budget.

The budget projects \$849,000 in local tax revenue, based on 3.2 mills levied. The 1.5 mills for the library are excluded:

State sales tax distribution of \$370,000 is the other major source of revenue.

THE POLICE department, with \$1.06 million, tops the list of expenditures. The fire department is budgeted at \$131,000.

The document lists \$97,000 for roads and streets, \$48,800 for the township board, and \$62,000 in expenditures for District Court.

The building department is budgeted at \$160,500, and "other services," which include rubbish collection, youth guidance and recreation, get \$100,000.



MARTIN KELLY of Boy Scout Troop 110, Farmington, Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church, has received the eagle rank highest in scouting. Martin's community project was working with the Farmington city police in organizing the theft-guard program. He has been a scout for six years.

## Park Senior Housing Site?

First steps to sell a five acre park on Greening, overlooking the Glen Oaks Golf Course, for a proposed senior citizens housing project, were taken by the Farmington Township Board Monday.

The board adopted a resolution moving the park from the jurisdiction of the parks commission to the housing commission in order to get an appraisal of the property.

TRUSTEE Frederick Lichtman said, "Let the record show millage requests for the improvement of this park have been turned down."

A legal opinion indicated the land, which was originally deeded to the city as a park could be sold, and the money used for other park purposes according to trustee Margaret Schaeffer.

Objections to the action came from two members of the audience, who cited the need for the land as a park.

Trustee Earl Opperthaus mentioned "several developers" were being considered for the housing project, and the most likely method of financing would be through the Michigan State Housing Authority (MSHA).

Leo Sklar, representing the Fairwood Corp., a developer interested in building senior citizen housing in Farmington, was in the audience. Sklar previously presented a tentative proposal for a project of 200-250 units under the MSHA "limited dividend" program, which means the developer will also manage the project.

SKLAR has been meeting regularly in secret with the board since he made his proposal public in November.

The park site would be good for the housing project, according to board members, because it is one of the few meetings they the state requirements for being close to shopping, and public transportation.

# The Best Bet!

What's the easiest, quickest way to let the buying public know what you have to sell? A Want Ad! And with an Observer Want Ad you reach a large audience for a very small investment. That's why this kind of advertising is your best bet. And the stakes aren't high either. Place your low-cost, fast acting OBSERVER WANT AD TODAY! 522-0900 is the lucky number to dial.