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2 Mayors Look Over The Past Year

Yoder Reviews Progress

By RALPH YODER
Mayor,
City of Farmington

The year 1973 has been a year in which the community has begun to slow down its rate of growth. What will probably be the last subdivision in the City of Farmington began construction in the fall of 1973 with the platting of Chatham Hills No. 3.

Although there was a slowdown within the community in construction, there are some major projects nearing

completion, such as the indoor tennis facility on Farmington Rd. and the Versailles condominiums on Shilawasee.

The community's past growth patterns have reflected a rather stable tax base. For the second year in a row, the city was able to maintain its 9.25 mills rate, one of the lowest in Oakland County.

Public improvements include the paving of Drake Rd. from Grand River to Freedom.

A local street repair program is experimenting with the capping of some old asphalt and concrete roads which have adequate drainage, and the resurfacing of a portion of the city-owned parking lot in the downtown area.

The Drake Rd. park has been completed and will be opened for public use in the spring.

The new improvements include outdoor tennis courts, a paved parking lot, and a picnic area including children's



RALPH YODER
play equipment, tables and outdoor cookers.

Construction was begun on the Hawthorne St. paving by installing a relief drain. This

Continued on Page 3A

McConnell Looks Back

By ROBERT MCCONNELL
Mayor, City
of Farmington Hills

The year 1973 will be remembered as the year in which Farmington Township and the Villages of Quakertown and Wood Creek Farms took a giant step of progress in creating a single unit of government — the City of Farmington Hills.

Early in the year the charter commission completed its work on the city charter and the voters endorsed the work

of the charter commission by approving the charter on May 8.

The highlight of the year was the inauguration ceremonies July 2, 1973, presided over by Phil Power, a descendant of the first settler and founder of the Farmington community in 1824.

With the formation of the new city government a complete reorganization was accomplished at city hall and in October, the council hired the first city manager, George Majors, to carry out

the council's programs and objectives.

During the year several other projects of more practical meaning to our citizens were accomplished. First, the HUD flood insurance program was approved by the federal government, qualifying residents for low cost flood insurance throughout the area.

The "Kenwood Lake" flooding problem of 18 months standing was temporarily resolved, and the danger to children and prop-



ROBERT MCCONNELL

erty removed. A similar problem in the northeast section of the city involving Coventry Lake was also alleviated.

Continued on Page 3A

Arsonist Is Sought

Clarenceville School Hit By Fire

By MAURIE WALKER

A fire, which destroyed Clarenceville Junior High School's library causing an estimated \$100,000 damage, was started by a student of the school, Livonia police believe.

Det. Sgt. Shirley Garrison said police are tracing several suspects, one of whom he feels certain started the fire last Saturday night. The school is on Middle Belt north of Seven Mile.

Entry to the school was gained by breaking out a window on the north side of the building, Garrison said.

This brought the vandal into the faculty room where a pop machine was broken open and the change stolen, the detective said.

"A butter knife was used to pry the molding off the faculty room door. The glass was removed and the vandal entered the hall. Several rooms were ransacked prior to the fire being set," Garrison said.

The sergeant said the vandal broke the library door window to gain entry to that room.

"Once inside, a fire was started in the center of the room. A drawer in the library counter had been pried open."

Police believe the main

purpose of the vandal was to set fire rather than to steal.

The library was gutted. Heat and smoke damaged other rooms close to the library.

The school had been broken into a week before the fire. Police believe the vandal was trying to see what

damage he could do and if entry were possible.

Garrison said one of the school's teachers told police he had heard several students discussing the alarm system a week ago.

"They appeared interested in how well the school was

covered with alarms," the sergeant said.

The school has received several federal grants for improving the library.

A conference room in the process of being equipped and decorated also suffered heavy smoke and heat damage. The room is right next to the library.

Robert Nedder, head custodian for the school, said every book and piece of reading material is lost.

"I don't understand what makes a person do a thing like this. We had a beautiful, well equipped library here. It's going to be difficult to replace some of the lost items."

Sidewalk Law Is Reviewed

Developers would like to see a change in the Farmington Hills sidewalk ordinance which makes side walks along major streets a responsibility of new subdivision builders.

The developers were challenged by the old Farmington Township Board on why they had failed to install sidewalks required by the ordinance in new developments.

At a recent meeting with City Manager George Majors, six major subdividers in

the Farmington area said "relatively little thought was given to some very important detail factors when the sidewalk provisions were proposed."

"The general consensus here at this meeting is that a cooperative effort between the builder - developers and the City of Farmington Hills begin to set aside the unreasonable requirements previously established."

"In lieu of a costly lawsuit for both parties, we should attempt to find a proper solu-

tion for the public's best interests for the future and to establish future guidelines.

At issue is a requirement that new subdivisions have sidewalks installed along major streets.

It was discovered the ordinance had been largely ignored for several years, and the old Township Board contacted offending developers to ask them to comply.

The new city administration offered to meet with the developers.

City Manager George Majors, Jim Macksey, Mel Rosenhaus, William Bowman, Marvin Rollins, Harry Lieberman and Max Sheldon discussed problems with the old ordinance.

The developers saw problems including: • Maintenance would be difficult, since the sidewalks would not be in front of an individual's house, and the responsibility for snow removal is not clear.

• Construction problems exist, such as difficult topography, drain crossings and

retaining walls, which would make construction in some areas difficult.

• Unimproved roads mean the sidewalks would have to be replaced if the road were paved in the future.

A mile test sidewalk, suggested in a report from the old township sidewalk committee, may be the outcome of the session.

The builders indicated they would cooperate with the city in the construction of the test strip.



DETECTIVE SGT. Shirley Garrison of the Livonia police is examining the door to the Clarenceville Junior High School library. Vandals broke the door glass to gain entry to the library which was completely destroyed by fire. (Observer photo)

Gotcha Coming ...And Going

A new style radar which detects the speed of an oncoming vehicle will be in operation in the City of Farmington next summer.

The new unit is called a "MR-7 solid state moving radar unit" and is capable of being used either by the side of the road or in a moving squad car.

The state of Michigan told

the Farmington police they can get it for their wholesale, and the cost will be approximately \$1,500.

"It pays for itself," Capt. Dan Byrnes told the city council after it approved the purchase.

"Yeah, I think my wife paid for the last one," quipped councilman William Hartsock.

One Edition For Holidays

Your home town paper is being published only once a week during the holidays.

It will be delivered Thursdays following the Christmas and New Year's observances.

Next week, our office at 38251 Schoolcraft, Livonia,

will be closed on Tuesday, Jan. 1. News deadline for Jan. 3 edition is at mid-day Monday, and classified ads will be taken until 11 a.m. Wednesday.

Our regular twice-a-week publication schedule will resume Jan. 9.



Fancy Farmers Linda and Bob Kiser show off the colorful dance fashions.



"SWING YOUR partners," say the Fancy Farmers at a recent outing.

what's inside

1973's top stories	Page 3A
Pet control suggestions	Page 8B
Tape firm hits it big	Page 5C
Classified Ads	Sec. D
Community Calendar	5A
Cooking	3B
Deaths	8A
Editorial	4A
Home and Garden	7A
Leisure	5-7B
McCosh's Column	3A
Observing Life	1-4B
Readers' Forum	4A
Religion	7A
Ski Hill	2C
Sports	1-3C
Woman on go	2B

Fancy Farmers Are Swinging Out

The Fancy Farmers of Farmington will be dancing into the new year with a get dancers moving and having a good time.

The dance, which begins at 8 p.m., is aimed at introducing the Western American dance to anyone in the Farmington area who might be interested.

The Fancy Farmers is a community-sponsored, non-profit square dance group.

Caller is Bruce Light, a young man with the ability to get dancers moving and having a good time.

The group is in its fourth season of intermediate level square dancing.

It grew out of a Farmington adult education class.

They range from young adults to veteran grand parents.

which the Farmers are involved include visits to Oak Hill Nursing Home, a visit to

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the Baptist Manor, and a demonstration for the early Americana exhibit for the

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Junior League Benefit at the Kern Block in October.

The Farmers are identified when traveling by wearing red bandana print skirts and shirts. Square dancing is always colorful with swirling full skirts over bouffant petticoats. Western cut fancy shirts set the men apart.

President of the group is Mrs. Vincent Ciandolo, of Dumas Ct. Mrs. Robert Kaiser of Farmington Rd. is another contact for further information.

Late Deposit Set For Taxes

Tax bills due before Jan. 1, can be placed in a depository in the lobby of the Farmington City Hall over the

New Year's holiday, according to City Treasurer Winona Woods.

Bills received in the depository will be postmarked Dec. 31.

Residents of Farmington Hills may pay their taxes during regular business hours at the city treasurer's office Dec. 31.