

'74 a year of promises

By ROBERT KIPPER

OAKLAND COUNTY—At the county level, 1974 was a year of more talk than action.

Like any election year, county politicians did a good deal more promising and planning for the future than delivering in the present.

The big county story of the year—the movement to streamline county government under an elected county executive—had less impact on 1974,

'All I'm guilty of is trying to fight crime in Oakland County—Sheriff Johannes Spreen

when it was simply approved, than it may have during the next several years, when the reorganization plan is

implemented and tested for promised benefits.

The Oakland County Road Commission released a highly critical report of its operations. Although many changes have already been implemented at least on paper, the bulk of the promised improvements are still awaited.

Even the county's two biggest newspapers, the sheriff and the prosecuting attorney, got more attention last year for what they said—and some of the fights they failed to win—than what they did.

In total, recalling 1974 was less interesting than anticipating 1975.

LOOKING BACK, most county officials

interpretive report

had reservations about what was accomplished. As he said in his department, they were outweighed by setbacks, he said.

Prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson noted that several low-key programs were introduced in his office this year and several pet projects continued. However, he looked ahead with more expectation and said of 1974 only that it was "a satisfying" year.

ELECTION YEARS bring out partisanship at any level of government, and 1974 was no exception at Oakland County. What made the past year even more quarrelsome was that politicians got involved not only in the regular county commission races but in the dining about whether or not to convert county operations to a county executive system.

Essentially, the elected county executive concept was a Democratic crusade, with county Republicans either unenthusiastic for this particular brand of reorganization or openly in



Sheriff Spreen's (right), strained relationship with county Republicans was made worse when he replaced Undersheriff Leo Hazen with friend and former Detroit police commissioner John Nichols (left)

Students win welding prize

BIRMINGHAM—Two Seaholm High School students have received a \$25 sixth-place award in the James F. Lincoln Arc Welding Foundation contest for arc welded projects.

YMCA to offer sex education

The Birmingham YMCA will offer a sex education course for boys and girls ages 12 to 14. The course is an awareness program with open discussions and question and answer sessions. Classes will begin Monday, Jan. 6.

For more information call 644-9036.

Tom Howitt and Bill Olsen were honored for their straddle crane for a handyman homeowner in the national high school competition. Instructor for the youths at Seaholm is V. J. Figs.

This year's contest was the 23rd consecutive school shop awards program sponsored by the James F. Lincoln Arc Welding Foundation on a national basis.

The program objectives are to increase student interest in arc welding and to encourage the development of their communicative skills.

Written reports also were required in some categories of the contest.

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