

# Farmington Observer & Eccentric

Volume 86 Number 68

Thursday, June 12, 1975

Farmington, Michigan

94 Pages

Fifteen Cents

## Shpiece wins school post

Michael Shpiece became the newest member of the Farmington Board of Education Monday night, defeating the incumbent Ann Rodewig by 187 votes.

Less than two per cent of the district's eligible voters supported Shpiece, in one of the district's smallest elections. Of 1,940 ballots, 362 were cast for Shpiece.

Mrs. Rodewig received 385 votes. Howard Schwartz received 348. Mrs. Hill had 188 votes. Margaret Wright 127 and George Bowman 78.

Michael Flanagan, the district's schools officer, wasn't surprised the turnout was lower than the April 29 millage election. He hadn't expected the number to be so low.

Nearly five per cent of the district's voters cast ballots, compared to 38 per cent in the millage election.

The difference prompted one election watcher to remark that it was odd that people would turn out to vote on the spending, but not on the spender.

A PRE-LAW student in Monteth College at Wayne State, Shpiece said he doesn't plan to study professional education.

"As a board member, I can bring citizens into involvement with the board and with the schools," he said. He hopes to carry out this plan by "going out and talking to people—depending on how responsive other board members are."

Shpiece thanked Al Frank, Aldo Vagnozzi, Steve Guerrier and the Farmington Education Association for their help and support during his campaign.

Shpiece will attend his first board of education meeting as a member in July.

AT 18, SHPIECE was hailed as perhaps the youngest person ever elected to a board of education in Michigan. He is the youngest to hold the position in Farmington.

By winning, he also became a family "first."

"He's broken a family tradition—we're not used to winning elections," his mother said.

Mrs. Shpiece described her late husband as a pioneer Democrat in a Republican-dominated area.

They were firm believers in the doctrine that "if you set an example and love your kids, you have to trust them to find their own way."

Shpiece, his younger sister Kathy and still younger brother Bill were described as "products of healthy neglect."

"They used me as a sounding board. They've been on their own since they were quite young," she said.

She taught her children, she said, that a democracy can only work when the decent citizens are actively involved. "No one has a right to a free ride in a democracy."

Mrs. Shpiece did not help her son with his campaign, which began during his education from Wayne State University.

It was Shpiece's campaign manager, Vito Perrino, who first actively began the campaign. Perrino is a pre-law student at Wayne.

He, along with several others, organized a task force to research voting records and send flyers to those who had voted in the last election.

SHPIECE'S VOLUNTEER staff grew to about 75, most of whom were young voters.

Campaign strategy emphasized personal contact, which meant a lot of door-to-door walking for Shpiece and his advocates. Working at a mild but constant pace since the end of March, he said the campaign picked up until he was spending seven or eight hours daily on it.

On election day, Shpiece and his crew obtained lists of the district's registered 18- to 20-year-olds and called them to remind them to vote.

It was an immense task, calling the 1,100 young voters, and Shpiece said he was working on it until 7:30 p.m. that evening.



MICHAEL SHPIECE

## Police hold 14-year-old in girl's death

There is "very incriminating evidence" against a 14-year-old Farmington Hills youth accused of stabbing a neighbor, 10-year-old Joan Wagner, Oakland County Prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson says.

The girl's body was found in a plastic garbage bag Monday night about 11 p.m. in bushes in the rear of a house near her home. The Wagner family lives at 2216 Malden, south of Nine Mile and west of Inquirer Rd.

The youth being held in Children's Village, a children's detention home, lived in the same Forest Brook subdivision as the Wagners.

Police and neighbors searched for the girl Monday night after she missed a baseball practice. Joan was to meet her coach at the corner of Malden and Brandon but did not appear.



JOAN WAGNER

THE YOUTH was picked up about 8 a.m. Tuesday. Patterson said police found pillowcases, towels and sheet material in a hamper in the basement of the youth's home. A knife was found in a tip kitchen drawer.

Medical examiners have not yet reported but police indicated the Wagner girl died of one wound in the chest. Ronald Holko, Farmington Hills director of public safety, said the girl appeared not to have been sexually assaulted.

Patterson said his office will ask juvenile court for permission to try the youth on a first degree murder charge. He cannot be tried as an adult. Conviction would mean the youth could be held until age 18.

Mrs. Edith Cloutier, Joan's fourth grade teacher at Grace Elementary School, said the girl was a "real sweet pleasant little girl—a pleasure to have in class."

Joan was always willing to help out and "liked school an awful lot."

Grace Principal Nicholas Abid said an older sister called him looking for Joan. The family had a birthday planned for a younger brother and couldn't find her. Abid called police.

Neighbors of the Wagner family said the whole neighborhood is upset.

Mrs. M. L. LaPlam, whose daughter Karen, 9, was a playmate of Joan Wagner, said the whole incident was frightening to mothers in the neighborhood.

Her daughter had been playing at

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There were no trumpet fanfares or crowds waiting to acclaim Michael Shpiece as winner of the school board election in the Farmington School District's administrative offices Monday night.

As a matter of fact, 8 p.m. found business manager William Prisk the only occupant of the lobby. He was whistling to pass the time until he saw one of the candidates' campaign managers walk briskly to the door.

It was the night of the election, and one seat was being sought by six candidates, including incumbent Ann Rodewig.

Voting was expected to be light, somewhere around 10 per cent, as is traditional in school board elections without millage issues.

As election returns arrived, it was evident someone had overestimated. It took 362 votes, or less than two per cent of the district's eligible electorate, to boost 18-year-old Shpiece into office.

It was Vito Perrino, Shpiece's campaign manager, who was the first of the candidates or their representatives to arrive.

HE WHISKED open the double glass doors and was shushed by Prisk before he even uttered a word.

"Shhh," Prisk said, with a finger to his lips. "Don't wake anyone."

For an instant, Perrino hesitated, then grinned as he recognized the sarcasm in Prisk's words.

The school board lobby was nearly empty, with only a few election workers mopping the phones, waiting for precinct results.

Candidate Howard Schwartz arrived with his wife, Pat. He was nervous and spoke quickly, joking with his wife and a friend before turning back to the election returns tele-board.

Absentee ballots ran in favor of Mrs. Rodewig, who received nine of the 21 votes. The next precinct to report was Schwartz's "home precinct," Eagle Elementary. He was running

well ahead of the other candidates, with 117 votes.

"Well if I didn't get votes from my home precinct, I wouldn't get them anywhere," Schwartz said, smiling.

Shpiece trailed him in that precinct, with 57 votes, but won a strong majority in precinct four, his "home" precinct. With 144 votes, he was ahead of Mrs. Rodewig, who had a relatively weak second place with 87 votes.

Candidate Jacqueline Hill arrived to view the election results, but didn't stay long.

MANY OF THE people watching the precinct tallies were amazed at the "soft voice" with which the district mandated their elected school officials.

"I hate to see anybody win or lose on such a small turnout," Mrs. Schwartz said.

"It's funny how everybody turns out to vote on the money, but nobody turns out to vote for the spender," said another bystander.

Shpiece's highest margin was in precinct two, Duncklet Junior High School. It was the home precinct of four of the other five candidates.

Nevertheless, he received 221 votes to Mrs. Hill's 152. She was the strongest of that precinct's contenders.

Perrino was surprised. "We didn't expect to do that good in that district," he said.

Precinct one, Farmington Junior High School, reported last and showed Mrs. Rodewig in the lead with 187 votes to Shpiece's 73.

Candidate George Bowman arrived with Mrs. Bowman shortly after all the unofficial precinct tallies were reported.

A total of 1,940 votes were cast, which is approximately five per cent of the registered voters.

Mrs. Rodewig received 385 votes, followed by Howard Schwartz with 348, Mrs. Hill with 188 and Mrs. Margaret Wright with 127. George Bowman received 78 votes.

## Adopts \$5.3 million budget

# Hills rejects FAAC request

By WYLIE GERDES

FARMINGTON HILLS—The city council rejected a plea from the Farmington Area Advisory Council (FAAC) for more money in adopting a \$5.3 million budget.

The budget, increased more than \$1.3 million because of accounting changes, was adopted by a 6-0 vote. Mayor Frederick Lichtman was absent.

Betty Arnold of the FAAC asked councilmen for \$4,000 more than the \$14,000 included in the budget. Last year's FAAC allocation was \$12,000.

If the money is not acquired, Mrs. Arnold said, it "will have a drastic effect on what we are able to do." The FAAC operates a telephone counseling service, a referral service and, until recently, a free medical clinic.

Mrs. Arnold made the only comments on the budget. Councilmen said the FAAC should seek private sources for the money if it can.

The FAAC has only a skeleton paid staff, just large enough to coordinate volunteers. If the \$4,000 is not found, one of the two professional counselors would have to go, Mrs. Arnold said.

The clients FAAC would be able to handle would be cut in half.

At present, there is "no other source for that \$4,000," she added.

MRS. ARNOLD said the FAAC has checked into federal and state grants and found none. It receives donations from the community but it is "unrealistic to count on more than \$5,000 or \$6,000," she said.

Councilman Earl Opperthausser, chairing the meeting in the absence of Lichtman, said the council has "no intent to impair" FAAC's operation. However, the council felt the FAAC hasn't checked closely enough for private funds. The less-than-requested budget is a "way of encouraging them to do so."

"Perhaps the advisory council might obtain support from these it serves," Opperthausser said.

Mrs. Arnold commented FAAC has asked for donations from these it consults several times. However, donations are "not something we can depend on."

Councilors don't ask for donations from clients referred by police departments, Mrs. Arnold added.

The lack of money, she said, has caused a turnover in staff.

"It's created a consistent problem of job insecurity."

Councilman Mrs. Joan Dudley said the fund raising should be a function of the FAAC board rather than the staff.

The council isn't asking the staff to "go out and collect \$500 here or \$100 there," Mrs. Dudley said.

"IF THE community is indeed enthusiastic... these 21 people can perhaps get the \$4,000."

The council was faced with cutting \$500,000 in budget requests to retain the six mill tax levy. It wasn't a lack of confidence in the FAAC program, she said.

"I personally have been pleased with what's been going on."

Another councilman suggested the FAAC try to raise the money. If it can't, it should approach the council again. Councilman Robert McConnell said.

### inside

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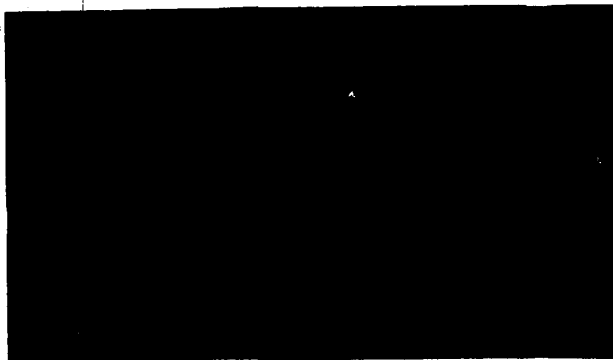
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## Summer in the Park

Betty O'Connor, also soloist with the Kandallars, has coordinated the group's "Summer in the Park" performance which leads off the Sunday series on June 22. The 25 women, who sing three-part harmony with a repertoire consisting of hymns, contemporary show tunes

and old favorites, share the bill with the Levans, a dance group from St. Constantine & St. Helen Greek Orthodox Church. The complete line-up for the series is on 1-C. (Staff photo by Gary Friedman)