

Regional Roundup

COURT FIGHT ENDS

Bloomfield Township officials has abandoned efforts to place the 48th District Court under county control.

Last fall, the three controlling units of the court—Bloomfield and West Bloomfield townships and the City of Birmingham—passed resolutions urging the state legislature to make the 48th District Court a division of the 32nd District Court.

But two weeks ago, Birmingham rescinded its support of the resolution and Bloomfield Township took similar action Monday.

LOW-INCOME HOUSING DEBATED

Farmington Hills has joined its neighboring city, Southfield, in the debate over low-income rental housing as the city council this week approved submission of a grant which calls for the construction of low-income housing by 1980.

Teenage alcoholism, accidents prompt look at drinking age

State House of Representatives' action to raise the state's drinking age to 19 is being considered by the civil rights committee headed by Rep. Perry Bullard (D-Ann Arbor).

Although action isn't expected until fall, suburban lawmakers have already begun to line up in support of raising the age by one year.

Supporters of the higher drinking age have cited problems of teenage alcoholism, disorderliness in the schools and an increasing rate in drinking-related auto accidents in the 18-20 age group.

The drinking age was lowered from 21 to 18 when the 1972 Age of Majority Act went into effect. Under current proposals, only the drinking age would be raised. The Michigan Senate has voted to raise it to 19, although a handful of lawmakers favor going back to 21.

REP. JAMES DEFEBAUGH (R-Birmingham) said he would support the increased drinking age solely on the basis of the "school problem." He said they must do something to get a

hold out of the high schools.

"It's too easy for underage students to get alcohol from seniors who can legally get it. It's not that hard for them to pick up a little extra for their friends."

He added, "I don't absolve the schools from maintaining discipline and order. But I know school officials don't like being baby sitters. I think the schools are doing their share."

REP. W.V. BROTHERTON (R-Farmington) said 19 would be a logical place to limit drinking. "There's a clear break between them 19-year-olds and their high school friends. Most of them have already graduated and are away from the school. And if they do hang around with high school friends, at least when they drink they are away from school."

He said the biggest problem was disruption in the schools due to the availability of alcohol.

REP. JOHN BENNETT (D-Renton) favored raising the age and Rep. Ruth McNamee (R-Birmingham) said she would support the legis-

lation only "to get alcohol away from the high schools."

"Raising the age won't do away with the problem," she said. "It won't be easy if we've cured the problem."

"My only view is a matter of age, nor is it consistent with age," she added.

REP. ROBERT L. LIVONIA said: "The general public sees it as the only solution to the school problem and the driving problem. We have not been able to come up with another solution."

"Whenever I'm talking to school groups," he said, "I always ask: 'Can you suggest another idea? I think people would be willing to listen to alternative plans. But they haven't come up with anything either."

DEMOCRATIC FLOOR LEADER Jack F. Pugh (D-Oak Park) stood up for the state's 18-and-older law.

"I think the kids are getting a bad rap," he said. "I know by now this is kind of a cliché, but if they can go fight a war, why do we restrain them in other ways?"

"I think we should have a little confidence in the kids."

No break in veterans' benefits this summer

The Veterans Administration has announced that a procedure which would have caused a break between summer and fall checks for veterans attending school under the GI Bill has been changed.

Frank Käppelen, director of the Detroit regional VA office, said that students who continue their education in

the fall with less than a month's break in classes will be paid on schedule. The student must be continuously enrolled or be pre-registered early enough to allow for processing the necessary paperwork.

There is no change, however, in the legal requirement that allowances be paid at the end of the month, rather

than at the beginning. Kilcullen said that law will result in a 60-day break between the "pre-payment" check which comes May 1 and the "post-payment" check which will come July 1, he said.

Students who are not eligible for continuous payment because there is more than a one-month break between terms have the option of receiving

either an advance payment or regular end-of-month payment.

New procedures, he said, permit advance payment for the first partial or full month, plus the following following month. The student makes a written request 30 days prior to registration and the school agrees to process the advance payments.

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