

# Part III

## Farmington events reviewed

The following is a third of a series reviewing the events of 1976 in Farmington and Farmington Hills.

**July**  
•A shift of alliance was indicated when the Farmington Hills City Council opened nominations for mayor and mayor pro-tem. Councilmember Joan Dudley nominated Keith Deacon for the mayoral position. In turn, Deacon was the swing vote when he cast his support for Ms. Dudley. Traditional rivals, the two councilmembers found themselves furthering each other's political careers.

•Eight Mile paving between Orchard Lake and Farmington roads came one step closer as Oakland County officials informed Farmington Hills it would pay approximately \$62,000 and the City of Farmington would pay \$13,000 of the estimated \$12 million project. Livonia, Oakland and Wayne Counties and the federal government were slated to pay the remaining costs.

•Girard Miller was appointed as the new finance director for Farmington Hills. The 25-year-old money man came from New Jersey to fill the administrative post.

•In another controversial vote, Trustee Anne Struble was elected president of the Farmington School Board in a split vote which pitted her against Trustee Mervyn Ross. Trustees William Gravis and Gary Lichtman supported Ross.

•It was learned that Farmington Hills Police Chief Ronald Holko was part owner in a private security agency which led to speculation that he might be leaving the city's department. He denied he was contemplating such a move.

•In keeping with the bicentennial mood, a freedom of speech rift broke out on the campus of Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge campus, Farmington Hills, when publishers of the Sun Newspaper claimed suppression of their paper on campus.

•A Farmington School District driver

er education teacher claimed conditions on the courses were bad because of faulty automobiles.

•The Farmington Founders' Festival was launched celebrating both the Farmington area's birthday and the nation's bicentennial. Thousands of people from the metropolitan area showed up to celebrate in the carnival atmosphere.

•A blue ribbon task force was formed to study declining enrollments in the school district. The task force was assigned to study the feasibility of closing schools, changing boundaries, utilizing surplus space and changing programs and organization within the district.

•A study of parks was launched in Farmington Hills. Bills and Childs Associates was hired to make the study.

### AUGUST

•The dispute between Oakland Community College and Sun Newspaper officials was settled after college officials allowed resumption of the paper's distribution on the Orchard Ridge campus.

•Holly Ann Schmidt was named as Miss Farmington 1976 during the Farmington Founders' Festival. Her sponsor was Farmington Towne Center.

•Marvin Esch and Donald Riegler carried Farmington and Farmington Hills in the August primary. Farmington Hills City Councilmember Robert McConnell won the Republican primary nod for the Oakland County Commission seat in the 25th district.

•Farmington City Council debated the merits of putting a question on the November ballot asking residents how they felt about recreation vehicles in their community.

•Television muckraker Lou Gordon came to town for the second year in a row to testify before the Public Service Commission on the merits and demerits of a rate increase by Michigan Bell.

•The Oakland Training Institute (OTI) moved into the Farmington Junior High School building which had been closed earlier in the year. The facility would serve Clarenceville, Farmington, Birmingham, South Lyon, Walled Lake and Huron Valley school districts.

•Farmington Hills announced it would be paying back \$1 million in rebates to property owners presently holding title to land which was taxed for water and sewer bonds between 1963-67.

•Resident fix-up programs were announced by both Farmington and Farmington Hills to be financed through a community development grant from the federal government.

### SEPTEMBER

•Another controversy broke out at the Oakland Community College Orchard Ridge campus when naturalists objected to plans to construct an activity center. Area naturalists feared the construction of the center would destroy the campus' natural area.

•Clarenceville teachers and the administration reached a tentative agreement on a contract. The two-year contract included an average of a six per cent salary increase in the new fiscal year, with a salary reopener clause the following year.

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