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Twenty-Five Cents

She springs to clean up action crew

Shirley Richardson is back at the helm of Keep Michigan Beautiful, after a six months' absence and her schedule looks like she's making up for lost time.

In addition to helping KMB kick off its spring clean-up campaign, Mrs. Richardson is intent on keeping up with her family and improving her tennis game.

Her resignation as director of KMB last July came as a surprise to family and co-workers. She wanted more time to see her son off to summer school and oversee the rest of her brood in their Farmington home.

"My family was very surprised when I resigned," she said. "They knew how much it had meant to me. They were delighted when I decided to go back."

The organization was continuing its search for a new director in January, when Mrs. Richardson decided to return to the post.

Her long association with the group and its members drew her back into it. "I missed it. I missed the people," she said.

Even after she resigned, she helped the group with its annual October meeting. She felt a sense of obligation toward the members.

"I didn't want to let KMB down in any way. So I helped them on a volunteer basis," she said.

Now that she's returned to her old post, she's busy at planning the group's spring clean-up month, which will end May 20, Community Pride Day of Michigan Week.

In addition, she's planning a swing through the northern part of the state for the group's attendance at the annual Upper Peninsula Awards luncheon.

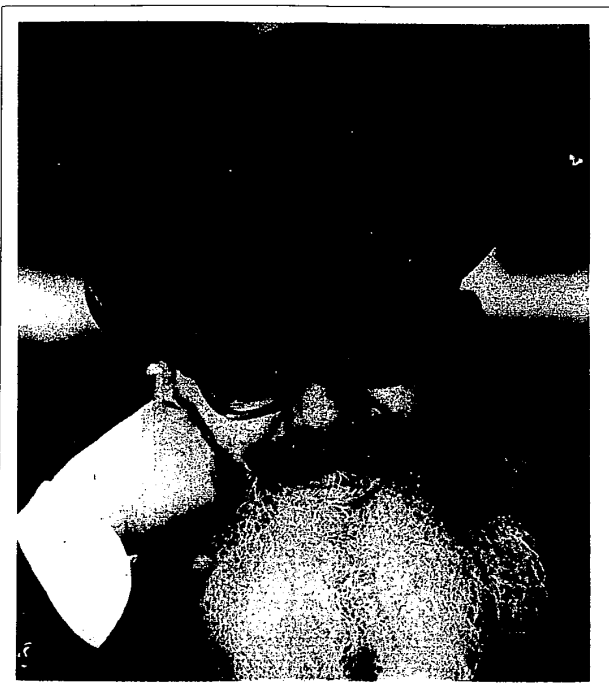
She also intends to work on mailing out the group's annual awards applications.

Her dedication to the group makes way in front of her commitment to her family. She takes part in her children's activities and interests as well as helping her husband, John Richardson, former mayor of Farmington.

With two children in the Farmington area soccer league and an older daughter active on her high school track team, Mrs. Richardson, 40, views her busy schedule as a normal pace.

"I've always been involved with the activities my children are involved in," she said.

Besides making time for her tennis game, she indulges in another hobby, wallpaper hanging, having recently decorated part of her husband's office.



As "Holocaust" ended, Passover began. The two events are tied together more closely than might be expected. (Staff photo by Gary Friedman)

Youths net rewards

Jeweler recovers gems

Gary Pierone, 11 and Terry Petty, 7, look like a lot of other boys their age wearing denim jackets, blue jeans and shy smiles.

But to Al DuQuet, of DuQuet Jewelers, Farmington, the two are extra special.

The fourth and first grade students at Flanders Elementary School were enjoying the sunshine late last month when they found several pieces of jewelry behind the Old Winery building on Grand River. One was a ring that carried a DuQuet price tag. The cache was identified as part of the goods stolen from the store during an early morning burglary last Dec. 6.

Police say the smash-and-grab operation netted \$21,500 worth of merchandise.

Police chased four suspects across Grand River and behind the winery before apprehended them there. About \$20,000 was recovered the following day, but the snow cover hampered further efforts.

POLICE SAY the merchandise the boys found is worth \$1,565, and add all the stolen merchandise has been recovered.

Four men were charged with breaking and entering in the December robbery.

The jeweler had given up hope of recovering the rest of the stolen merchandise until the boys' find.

"Then the police called for a description of the jewelry. The inventory numbers were still on the rings," he said.

DuQuet called the latest recovery a "lifeline" and wanted to express his gratitude to the boys. The 27-year-old jeweler decided to give each boy a \$100 U.S. savings bond.

"WHEN I WAS little, I was given a savings bond and it got me started saving," he explained.

Both Terry and Gary seemed to get the idea last Wednesday, when DuQuet expressed his gratitude to them. "I'm going to put it away," said Terry, examining the certificate. Gary agreed with his plan.

The two surprised police, classmates, their families and themselves with their discovery.

"My friends say I was pretty lucky," said Gary.

DuQuet must feel lucky, too. "I don't know how the boys found them," he said. "I had given up hope."

DuQuet was also robbed in the spring of 1976, when thieves made off with \$200,000 worth of jewelry.

'Fitness Ageless' seminar is May 4

Dr. Joseph Arends will be the keynote speaker when Schoolcraft College holds its sixth annual "Fitness Is Ageless" seminar Thursday, May 4.

The seminar is for persons concerned with life-long fitness. It will help fitness instructors, students, senior adults and individuals who head community, "Y", nursing home and programs which provide activity for older and retired adults.

The seminar is jointly sponsored by community services and the department of physical education. Schoolcraft College is located at 18500 Haggerty, Livonia.

Dr. Arends, a Troy cardiologist and marathon runner, will challenge the conferees with the topic "Heart Attack and Stroke are Preventable." Utilizing a background in aerospace medicine and aerobic research, he works throughout Michigan to encourage life-long cardiovascular fitness and good nutrition. Dr. Arends will speak at 10:30 a.m. Registration for the seminar begins at 8 a.m.

Exemptions tax cities

By LYNN ORR

What do cemeteries, hospitals, city parks, schools, solar energy devices, churches, colleges, and the YMCA have in common?

They share tax exempt status, which can be a red flag to economists, a thorn among prickles to tax assessors, and a constitutional right to exemption defenders.

However property tax exemptions are viewed, they're seldom understood by the general public and open to interpretation by the courts as well.

"Exemptions are eroding the tax rolls," says Farmington Hills Assessor Robert Roemer. He tabulates about seven per cent of the city's 21,400 acres as tax-exempt.

Tax-exempt property pushes the 10 per cent mark in the City of Farmington, according to Assessor John Sailer. The vast majority of that property has been exempted from the tax rolls for some time, however, unlike the Hills which has seen a growth in non-taxpaying facilities.

As legislators continue to add such novelties as solar, wind, and energy saving devices to the tax-exempt list, the burden of city service and school financing shifts more heavily to the local tax-paying corner.

MEANWHILE, city officials, and particularly assessors, explore proposed, but normally untrod, avenues to create some leeway in the tax-exempt laws.

For example, under the law, church property on which a house of worship, parsonage and/or school is located is exempt from property tax payments. The law specifies a single parsonage, yet Hills tax exempt property lists include as many as three parsonages on different pieces of property for one church—Nardin Park Methodist.

Roemer is waiting for a court interpretation of the law as challenged by Oak Park.

"Oak Park took the letter of the law and took all of the parsonages but one off the list," Roemer exclaims. "I'm waiting to see how the app. als go."

Another dispute involving religious tax exemptions involved the Sisters of Mercy property at Eleven Mile and Middlebelt a few years ago.

Renting out the conference center

for business purposes was construed as a conflict with the tax-exempt status by some officials.

"It still qualifies, though," Roemer explains. "It hits most of the qualifications for non-profit educational status."

Under the law, those qualifications are real estate or personal property as owned and occupied by non-profit theaters, libraries, benevolent, charitable, educational or scientific institutions. Memorial homes of World War veterans incorporated under the laws are tax-exempt as well.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars home on Orchard Lake Road in Farmington Hills and the American Legion Hall in Farmington qualify under those terms. Real estate not to exceed 400 acres "owned by a boy or girl scout or camp fire girls organization, 4-H clubs or foundations, or by young men's Christian associations" is tax-exempt as well. Hospitals are included in the group.

In light of spiraling taxes and the rebellion of voters in rejecting millage hikes, city officials scraping for extra funds to pay the bills are taking a look at voluntary service fees for tax-exempt facilities.

"Certain specific interests in the legislature have received some unique exemptions," Sailer says. "A lot of people have complained that churches aren't paying their fair share. In some places they've gone to a service fee to help cover the cost of fire and police."

Some communities have tried the service fee approach on a voluntary basis, which Roemer opposes. "They should make it a law and do it or not," he says. "I sometimes think they should cancel the whole exemption list and start over."

AS THE largest piece of tax-exempt property in Farmington Hills, the Orchard Ridge campus of Oakland Community College accounts for 152.18 acres of the nearly 400 acres on the tax-exempt rolls. Sisters of Mercy property of 127 acres at Eleven Mile and Middlebelt accounts for another large package.

Farmington Public Schools tax-exempt property amounts to about 400 acres, including about 130 acres of

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Hills council agenda set

The Farmington Hills City Council will meet in its chambers in the city administration building, 31555 Eleven Mile at 7:30 p.m., April 24.

The following unfinished business will be considered:

- Extension of senior adult transportation service contract with Northwestern Transportation Inc.

- Consideration of agreement with the City of Farmington to furnish a single courthouse facility for the 47th District Court.

The following amended ordinances will be considered:

- A request to rezone property located on the north side of Nine Mile west of Orchard Lake Road from high density multiple to low density multiple proposed by the Farmington Hills Planning Commission.

- A request to rezone property located on Howard between Halstead and Haggerty from single family to light industrial proposed by Albert Siefman.

The following general provisions will be reviewed:

- Site plan review standards, off-street parking requirements and layout as well as parking lot striping will be considered.

New business will be considered:

- Consideration of the city attorney's opinion in reference to the charter amendment for senior citizen housing being placed on the ballot under the jurisdiction of the city clerk.

- Final plat approval for Irv Wil-

cove Estates planned unit development for 109 lots.

- Final preliminary approval for Bride Hills Estates' 60 acres.

- Consideration of transferring the liquor license of the Starboard Tack, 29200 Orchard Lake Road, to Eastman Inc.

- Consideration of the establishment of a special assessment district for road improvement on Hemlock between Middlebelt and lot 118 of supervisors Middlebelt-Ten Mile plot 2.

- Consideration of establishing a special assessment district for sanitary sewer on Sun Spout.

- Setting the date for a necessity hearing for dist control special assessment district.

- Consideration of restricting parking on Albion.

- Consideration of requesting waiver of the advertising requirement on the purchase of second hand motorcycles amounting to more than \$5,000.

- Consideration of a resolution to encourage the modification of the state school aid formula in reference to the financing of local school districts.

- Consideration of the extension of employment of Rolan Pfandner.

- Consideration of resolution waiving interest charges for advanced payments of newly enacted special assessment districts.



Al DuQuet gladly hands over \$100 savings bonds to Terry Petty (left) and Gary Peiron for returning jewelry stolen from his Farmington store last December. (Staff photo by Harry Maute)

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Visiting nurses are shedding their old image as underpaid patient sitters and setting out to new frontiers in medicine. For a closer look at a nurse's day, turn to page 3A.