

# Farmington Enterprise & Observer

YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

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today's  
hot line

what's inside

## Educational Mileage

The state Legislature is busy seeking a solution to the financial crisis. But Farmington School District is getting a lot of mileage out of its funds as seen by its special education program and learning resource program.

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## National Project

Oak Hill Nursing Home in Farmington is conducting a special pilot program—the only one of its kind at this time in the nation. Liz Wissman found out what it was and now wants to tell you.

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## 27 Days Left

The Nov. 4 consolidation election is only 27 days away. To help you cast an informed vote, stories inside today's Enterprise & Observer include: a report on the single-city hearing held for Wood Creek Farms residents; notice of a meeting to be attended by charter commission candidates; a viewpoint telling why some of the fears raised by consolidation foes are false; and the views of two candidates—one who is unsure about consolidation and another who says budgets, not consolidation, hike taxes.

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## Now She Owns It

The wife of a Farmington minister has attended Detroit Town Hall lectures for years. Now she's owner of the series. Read of Louise Mercer's ideas about speakers and listeners in Margaret Miller's Woman on the Go.

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## Smogging The Issue

Murky smog kept a U.S. official from keynoting a Clean Air conference for women last weekend. But the ladies learned a lot about air pollution anyway.

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## Plays Coming

The Everyman Players, a nationally-known acting company, is coming to Farmington Saturday. For information about the local performance of this group and the cast of the upcoming Farmington Players production, see the Amusements Pages.

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## The Observer Newspapers, Inc.

Salutes The Six Outstanding Carriers Of The Year!

see page 7C for details

# Villagers Weighing One-City Arguments

By EMORY DANIELS

Villagers from Wood Creek Farms were told last week that a "yes" vote Nov. 4 was the only logical alternative available to insure the village remaining as it is.

A crowd of about 50 residents gathered in the Sarah Fisher Home Thursday night to hear pros and cons, ask questions, and debate and discuss the merits of consolidation.

COUNCILMAN William Ortmann spoke against consolidation. Village President William Brown urged a "yes" vote Nov. 4. Also speaking in favor of a Nov. 4 affirmative vote was David Goldman, village attorney and Wood Creek Farms' candidate for the charter commission.

Brown said he studied the issue as a member of the Joint Study Committee and felt that because consolidation seemed to be the best alternative for Wood Creek Farms villagers should vote "yes". An affirmative vote, Brown said, would be just the first step to elect a commission to draft and submit a charter.

"The Farmington area and Wood Creek Farms is changing rapidly," said Brown, "Wood Creek just put in a new sub-

division and is faced with problems of increased traffic. We are no longer a rural area. "We are in the hub of the enlarging metropolitan area and as it changes we are faced with a challenge to have a government responsive to these changes. Rural problems could be handled by a village government but we need a charter which will form a government responsive to problems arising during this period."

BROWN TOLD villagers he has been assured by Farmington Township officials that if consolidation falls Nov. 4, petitions will be filed immediately to incorporate the township. Such incorporation could or could not include Wood Creek Farms, Brown added.

"I like the status quo," explained Brown, "but, by default, the village would not exist if the township incorporates without us. We would become a fifth class city if the township becomes a city and leaves Wood Creek out."

"Wood Creek Farms will change its governmental form in some fashion in the near future with or without consolidation," Brown said. The alternative to voting "yes" Nov. 4, Brown contin-

ued, would be to go it alone as a fifth class city. Brown said the village had studied this possibility and was told by consultants it was not feasible because the financial burden would be greater with services being marginal and substandard.

"The only other alternative would be to join someone else," Brown said. He said consolidation gives the area the opportunity to study the recommendation of MSU. "And consolidation gives Wood Creek the only opportunity to be represented on a charter commission."

Brown explained that if consolidation fails and the township incorporates with Wood Creek, the village would not have the veto power it does under the consolidation proceedings.

ORTMAN BEGAN his presentation by casting an aspersions on the Boundary Act which, he pointed out, was less than a year old. "Less than one per cent of the population of the Farmington Area went out and got signatures and said we should become a big city," said Ortmann referring to Citizens For A

Better Farmington which petitioned for the election. "Well, I'm against big cities and don't think bigness means greatness."

Ortmann said originally MU and WSU were asked to conduct the study but refused. Then the "Ag School"—referring to MSU—was solicited and agreed to conduct the study, said Ortmann. Ortmann then questioned the qualifications of the MSU Institute for Community Development.

Ortmann said MSU's only argument was the need for services. "If you build a big city, someone must pay for it. I came here because it's a small village. I don't want any factories or high-rise apartments near door."

"I don't want to spend my tax dollar to support someone on 8 1/2 to 10 Mile Rd, but want my tax dollar to stay in the community where I live," Ortmann continued.

"Wood Creek Farms is a square-mile area and is not just an area designated by a subdivision name," Ortmann said. He added that Wood Creek became a village to obtain stronger control over its zoning and that reason still holds true today.

"People with a median income of \$10,000 don't have the same problems we do and we don't have their problems," Ortmann said.

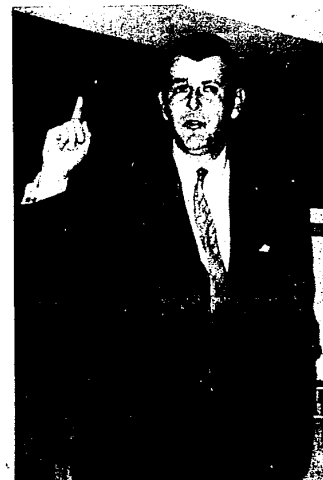
BROWN REBUTED that the cost of services is independent of the type of government. "A city can have high taxes or low taxes and there are examples of both in Michigan. It will depend upon the type of charter that is drawn up."

Brown said a vital point to the success of consolidation will be the role played by the Wood Creek Farms Civic Association. "If we are the community and people we think we are," Brown said, "we can be an influential force for the 36-square mile community."

Ortmann replied he was "utterly stumped" when Brown said there would not be an increase in taxes.



PRO — Wood Creek Farms Village President William Brown tells villagers why they should vote "yes" Nov. 4 to elect a charter commission to study the questions of consolidation. (Evert photo)



CON — Wood Creek Farms Village Councilman William Ortmann tells villagers they should vote "no" on Nov. 4. (Evert photo)



SEEKING ANSWERS — Residents of Wood Creek Farms listen to the pros and cons of consolidation held at the Sarah Fisher Home last week for village residents. (Evert photo)

## John Early Captured After Jackson Escape

AFTER TWO months of freedom, John T. Early has been recaptured and is on his way back to Jackson State Prison to finish serving his 3-10 year term for shooting his former wife.

Early, 29, formerly of Farmington Township, was arrested Sunday night by Waterford Township police near the intersection of M-59 and Crescent Lake Rd.

The high-speed, five-mile chase started at the home of Mrs. Shirley Eaton, Early's former wife. While pursuing Early, police tried to shoot a tire of Early's car but the bullet ricocheted into the township fire station garage, knocking out a light.

Three Waterford police cars surrounded

Early's car at the intersection where the police station and township hall are also located. Early was captured and found to be unarmed.

Mrs. Eaton called police when she spotted Early driving back and forth in front of her home. Early was sentenced in November 1968 after shooting his former wife as she left work in Farmington Township in August 1967.

Also arrested was Geneva L. Liebling who owned the car Early was driving and was a passenger at the time of arrest. She was arrested for aiding and abetting a fugitive, according to Waterford Township police.

Early escaped by walking away from a work gang at the Treasury Building in Lansing.

## See 12 Per Cent Hike

## Water Costs Will Rise

Farmington City councilmen were told Monday night that residents can expect an increase of \$7-58 per home for the next year's cost of water.

City Manager John Olson reported on Detroit's plans to increase sewage disposal rates charged its suburban users. The Detroit Water Board has recommended that sewage disposal rates be hiked 32.5 cents per 1,000 cubic feet of water, effective Jan. 1.

Since the City of Farmington's water and sewage disposal rates are combined, Detroit's contemplated hike for sewage disposal would result in an increase in city residents' water bills.

The expected increase by the City of Farmington would be three cents per 1,000 cubic

feet of water. This represents a 12 per cent increase, or an annual added expense of \$7-58 based on the amount of water used by the average resident.

The Detroit Water Board requested the hike to help finance \$159 million worth of system improvements within the next 18 months. The increase would apply equally to Detroit and 54 suburban communities.

interceptors for central and northern Oakland County.

The contract between the City of Farmington and the DMWS provides for rate increases to finance the program, said Hamus. Although the increase is twice the present rate charged to Detroit and suburban users, Hamus claims, "Our sewage rate is one of the lowest in the country."

The Farmington City Council decided against taking action on increasing local water rates until the recommended increase is approved by Detroit Common Council.

IN OTHER action, the council adopted a resolution urging the state Legislature to correct inequities received by senior

citizens, disabled veterans and widows of veterans regarding property tax exemptions.

Cited as inequitable, because of inflation, was an act adopted in 1966 which granted a \$2,500 property tax base exemption to those senior citizens, disabled veterans and widows of veterans whose residential homes were valued at \$10,000 or less.

The resolution adopted by the council urged the legislation be amended to increase the \$2,500 exemption and raise the \$10,000 limit to the same degree. Inflation has raised the state equalization factor.

Olson said the SEV has increased by 30 per cent since 1966, and more than half of the city residents who had exemptions in 1966 no longer qualify.

## Single City Means

## Fire Protection

(On Nov. 4, Farmington area residents will be asked to choose whether a nine-man charter commission shall write a charter to combine the four governmental units into a single, new city. A reason why a charter commission should be given the chance to explore the benefits of consolidation is given below in the fourth in a series of articles on what a single city means.)

A single city could result in better fire protection for each of the present four governed areas.

The Himmelsbach fire last spring showed that the city needed help to contain the blaze. With its equipment and manpower, the city was not able to extinguish the fire alone.

The township has a volunteer, country-style fire service. A volunteer force is cheaper and can be effective if properly equipped. Township officials recognize the need for an additional fire station but are waiting for the money to accumulate in the capital improvement fund to pay for the needed station. A township cannot issue general obligation bonds as a city can, and it must expand its facilities on a "pay as you go" system.

The lack of bonding authority means facilities are constructed not when they are needed, but when the money is available from local sources. The single city would have bonding authority to borrow funds to build fire stations wherever they are needed in the 36-square mile area.

Fire is an especially dangerous hazard, destroying not only buildings and personal property but killing human life. When life is involved, the least fire protection that should be provided is the best.

A single fire department means less duplication of clerical-administrative services and more professionalization in specialized areas of fire-fighting. Result: better fire protection, lower insurance rates, and better protection for YOUR family. That's what consolidation means.

—Enterprise & Observer