

# Mishaps Cost Plenty In Farmington Township

FARMINGTON Township accidents occurring in Farmington Township in 1969 accounted for a calculated cost of more than \$2.5 million.

The \$2.5 million loss from auto mishaps is based on authoritative estimates supplied by the National Safety Council.

The Farmington Enterprise & Observer has learned that last year's township-wide crash experience resulted in nine persons killed, 882 injured and 652 property damage accidents.

FARMINGTON TOWNSHIP had a total of 1,191 recorded accidents about 11 more than in 1968 when a reported 1,000 accidents for eight fatalities and 774 injuries.

Of the township's 1969 accidents, 350 involved one or more personal injuries.

Fourteen of 24 pedestrian victims, including the only pedestrian fatality, were struck crossing roadways between intersections.

These statistics, and more, were gathered from Kenneth A. LaBenne, traffic data center director of the Oakland

County Traffic Improvement Association (TIA).

All police agencies throughout the county feed traffic statistics into the TIA which LaBenne programs into his computers to analyze conditions leading to accidents.

ACCORDING TO the computer's outputs, the most frequent contributing circumstances to accidents in Farmington Township were obscured vision and skidding.

Failure to yield the right-of-way and following too closely were, the driver violations most frequently cited.

Drinking was involved in 16.6% of all accidents, nearly identical to the previous year's 16.7%.

More than one out of every four crashes occurred on the interstate highway system which accounts for less than 11 miles of the Farmington Township public roads.

The county, as a whole, experienced only one out of every seven of its accidents on its freeway system.

THE COMPUTERIZED statistics pointed up the over-

involvement of young drivers in 1969 crashes.

More than 52% of all drivers involved in the Farmington Township accidents were 24 years of age or younger.

Some 70% of drivers involved in the township crashes were males, approximately the same percentage experienced throughout Oakland County.

An analysis of the township's accidents shows a substantial majority of the mishaps occurred on dry pavement, in daylight hours, and on a level, straight road.

Of the 3,030 accidents, only 946 occurred on wet, snowy or icy pavement, 1,033 happened at night, only 125 when the car involved was travelling uphill and only 10 downhill, and only 108 on a curve.

DATA From the Traffic Data Center, established in 1968 as a national demonstration model, is being used for enforcement planning, special studies of accident causation, and traffic engineering by the Farmington Township officials, as well as other local and county authorities with crash prevention responsibilities.

"The dollar savings to Oakland County communities is substantial," says LaBenne, "since this information can be produced in seconds for any special study. Previously, hundreds of manhours of hand-dialing were required by local police departments."

Reports originate from Oakland County's 41 police departments and are supplied to TIA through the Michigan State Police.

The accident reports, once compiled and encoded by the TIA Traffic Data Center, are computer processed by the Oakland County Data Processing Center.

## Are Taxes Uniformly Applied?

FARMINGTON Having failed to convince the Farmington Township Tax Review Board of inequity in assessments, Vincent J. Menier is considering an appeal to the State Tax Commission.

Menier, of 26458 Westmeath, feels the local tax review board behaved in an unprofessional manner and made no attempt to prove why his tax should be increased by almost 18%.

HE MADE AN appointment with the tax review board after receiving notice the assessed value of his property was being raised from \$18,400 to \$21,700.

Menier did his homework by surveying property in the Kimberley subdivision, which is located north of 11 Mile between Orchard Lake and Middle Belt.

He located 11 homes identical in size to his and found the new evaluations ranged from a low of \$17,500 to a high of \$23,300.

"The evaluation of mine was \$21,700, the second highest of the group," said Menier, adding he found two four-bedroom homes with the same lot size as his assessed at \$17,500 and \$18,900.

MENIER SAID he felt one of the tax review board members, attorney Edwin Oglesby, would disqualify himself hearing the appeal.

Menier said he is having a legal dispute with another man who is represented by Oglesby and "there have been some real heated words exchanged between Mr. Oglesby and myself. I certainly would disqualify him as a man that can impartially render an opinion."

Menier continues: "They made me present my case first and in a very unprofessional manner told me that the evidence that I developed was not acceptable, did I have any bearing on any tax evaluation, and also told me that I didn't go into the homes to look at the inside."

Menier quickly adds that the township assessor admitted he didn't enter Menier's home either before raising the assessment.

MENIER CLAIMS the chairman of the review board disqualifies his petition without asking the other two members for their opinion.

"My objection and exception to their decision was the very unprofessional manner in which they handled the evidence that I presented to them."

"The street I live on has an elementary school; there is an enormous amount of traffic up and down the street; there is a Detroit Edison easement across my property with heavy electric lines; there is a creek running through my back yard which is constantly flooding."

"The home that I purchased was originally a three-bedroom home. The previous owner partitioned the basement into a four-bedroom project and made a four-bedroom home in a very shabby and simple manner."

"Are we completely frustrated in our attempts to get equity?" Menier concludes. "This is something that I just cannot understand."

## Sets Party

The Nights of Fun Club, a group for singles 21-35, will have spring flings on May 1 and May 8 at the Executive Inn on Van Dyke just north of 12 Mile. The "Steel and Velvet" group, recently returned from performing in Las Vegas, will be featured.



"STEEE. RIKE," calls out Red Jones as he relates one of his colorful anecdotes from 30 years of American League umpiring. He will recreate the humor and excitement of many of his experiences in baseball when he appears as guest speaker for the Michigan Week luncheon May 20 sponsored by the Redford Township Chamber of Commerce. (Observer photo by Gerald Gozda)

## McDonald Quizzes Young Adult Group

WASHINGTON Congressman Jack McDonald (R-Farmington) will include the 19-21 age group in his soon to be released district questionnaire.

McDonald said he will mail more than 100,000 questionnaires to his home district. It is the first time the age group has been included in the census since his election in 1966.

"This generation of young adults has rejected the traditional goldfish swallowing and telephone booth stuffing and

substituted involvement in the vital issues facing our nation. I want to hear what they have to say," McDonald said.

The questions which they will be asked have a wide range of topics, including Vietnamization of the war, an all-volunteer army; busing of schoolchildren; the ABM; and inflation.

Another question asks the group to establish priorities on the subjects of crime control; defense spending; education; pollution control; space; and urban problems.

## Health Careers 'In' Say SR Counselors

REDFORD Health careers are "in" and teaching is "out." This is the word which the Pierce Junior High School counseling department is spreading to students selecting courses for high school.

"The U.S. Department of Labor tells us that by 1980 there will be an overabundance of teachers. Another report indicates that there are presently 250,000 unfilled professional and technical medical positions."

Mrs. Marion B. Lucky, Pierce counselor, said, "We have begun to push medical careers among our students who like math and science."

A group of 37 Pierce students, accompanied by Mrs. Lucky, attended the recent health careers forum at the Rackham Building. Held in conjunction with the science

fair, it was sponsored by local medical and health organizations. Displays about various health career opportunities, as well as science fair winning exhibits, were on display.

"DOCTORS AND nurses are not the only ones in the health field, but students this age sometimes need to have this pointed out to them," Mrs. Lucky said. "This forum gave them an opportunity to learn about pharmacy, laboratory and x-ray technology, dental hygiene, physical therapy, and other opportunities requiring various amounts of training."

"We want to help our students prepare for the future," Mrs. Lucky said, "and if the future is going to be in health fields, we want them to be there, too."



ROADSIDE JUNK -- Candy Rabe was glad she wore sturdy shoes on the spring cleanup sweep of Lola Valley Park by RU High School students from James Murdock's American Government classes. She and others found broken glass and discarded cans along the roadside, the riverbank and some play areas. (Observer photo)



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