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How family struggled through unemployment

By Diane Gale
staff writer

A domino effect beginning with a lay-off notice led to financial strain, emotional trauma and the collapse of an easy lifestyle for a Farmington family — a story typical of what many families have experienced during the recession.

The sole income earner, husband and father of two grade-school boys, who netted between \$30,000 and \$35,000 a year as a skilled tradesman at General Motors Corp., was laid off for a year-and-a-half.

He was devastated when he found himself standing in long lines for his unemployment check, food packages and free cheese.

The unemployment checks, which lasted until he was called back to work last April, were \$750 a month. His wife, who will be referred to as Joan, agreed to share his experience, but asked to be kept anonymous to save their children from peer harassment.

"We didn't choose unemployment it was inflicted on us," she said. "To be ashamed or embarrassed by it isn't being fair to yourself, because you

'To be ashamed or embarrassed by it isn't being fair to yourself, because you have to throw away your false pride, and at the same time keep your dignity, respect, determination and what sanity there is.'

—Unemployed worker's wife

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respect, determination and what sanity there is."

The family faced foreclosure notices on their home, utility shut-off warnings, repossession of one of their cars and the possibility of bankruptcy.

THEY FOUND a mortgage company to pay for their house, because the landlord demanded the balance of what was due. At this time the interest rates were 18 percent.

"The first impulse is to panic and the fear which goes along with it only adds to the problems," Joan said.

"It's not that I'm not grateful or thankful he was called back to work,

but I don't think I'll ever live depending on next week's check again," Joan said. "I don't know how, but I'm going to try not to."

When their car was repossessed, Joan said it was the first materialistic loss the family faced, but it was only the beginning of many things they learned to live without. The everyday necessities that most people take for granted became quite evident.

"Children don't stop growing and it gets to the point where you can't let the

Please turn to Page 9

Headlee stands at ease as he watches Lansing

By Diane Gale
staff writer

Richard Headlee has stepped back into the political spotlight, but he's chosen a different stage than his November 1982 gubernatorial campaign.

The defeated Republican contender looked more like the victor as he sat relaxed in his Alexander Hamilton Life Insurance Company office where he works as president and talked about his position as a board of director on the Voter's Choice Committee.

The group is sponsoring a petition that promotes voter approval for new taxes, tax increases or tax shifts, and is in direct retaliation to Gov. James Blanchard's 38 percent income tax increase approved by legislators last month.

"Maybe I will have more effect by speaking out and articulating issues, rather than getting involved in easily distorted emotional issues with slick politicians like Blanchard," Headlee said when he was asked if he would run for governor again.

Sitting with his feet perched on a coffee table Headlee stressed that the petition is an effective way voters can



Richard Headlee

use the United State Constitution to control government.

The Farmington Hills resident spearheaded the most recent successful Michigan constitutional amendment drive in 1978.

THE HEADLEE amendment limited

the growth of the state budget by fixing the ratio between the budget for fiscal year 1978-79 and the total personal income in Michigan for the calendar year 1977.

It also provides for a reduction of property tax millage rates when community state equalized valuations exceed the increase in the consumer price index for the previous year.

In addition, the ratio between state and local spending cannot fall below 41 percent of state spending going to local governments.

"This (Voter's Choice '84) amendment will require that citizens ratify an increase that will shift money from their pockets to the government," Headlee said.

He is confident the committee will garner enough signatures to place the issue on the November 1984 ballot, and that it will be approved by the voters.

Even though Headlee is in the front lines in the war against Blanchard's income tax increase, he is against recall petitions to remove the governor from office.

"Recall to me means that someone is immoral and dishonest, and I don't think anyone, yet, has demonstrated he's been involved in actions such as that," he said.

"He merely has done what most liberal Democrats have done in the past and that's increase taxes, spend money and blame it on somebody else (previous Republican administrations)," Headlee said. "The best way to control this is not to make (L.I. Gov.) Martha Griffin governor."

With a wide grin, Farmington Hill's favorite son said he is pleased with the outcome of the gubernatorial election, because he "came dangerously close to winning," and with hindsight he wouldn't change any of his campaign methods.

HE NOTED that he "far outdistanced any midwest Republican" running in the election.

"It was only really hurt in Detroit, and that's primarily because of a piper influence of the mayor, who continues to spend money that's not in the best interest of the people," Headlee said.

owns on that block, after officials found, through tests, that sewage was leaking.

"He's pumped it out," Krinn said, referring to Staley, whose commercial parking lot sits directly behind the house at 20763 Hugo.

Although he has received about four reports of failed septic tanks in Farmington Hills, Krinn said the Staley septic tank problem is unique because it comes on the heels of Farmington Hills City Council's decision to install sewers along Hugo Street. Most of the septic problems are in the city's southeast section where the oldest neighborhoods are located, he said.

Please turn to Page 9

Please turn to Page 9

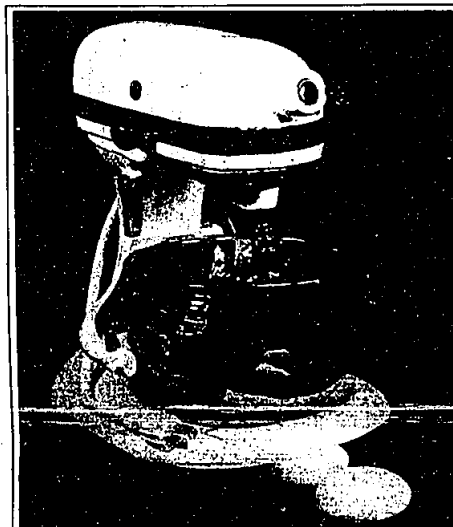
Your soggy lawn could be warning

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Septic tank owners are cautioned to be on the lookout for seepage or clogging as Oakland County Health Department officials continue monitoring a failed septic tank in a Farmington Hills subdivision.

"Spring is the traditional time for septic problems," said Keith Krinn, a health department sanitarian who was called to the Hugo Street neighborhood in early April after a resident complained about seeping raw sewage.

County health officials ordered Dennis Staley, owner of Staley Asphalt Co., 20763 Hugo, to repair the septic tank at one of the several homes he

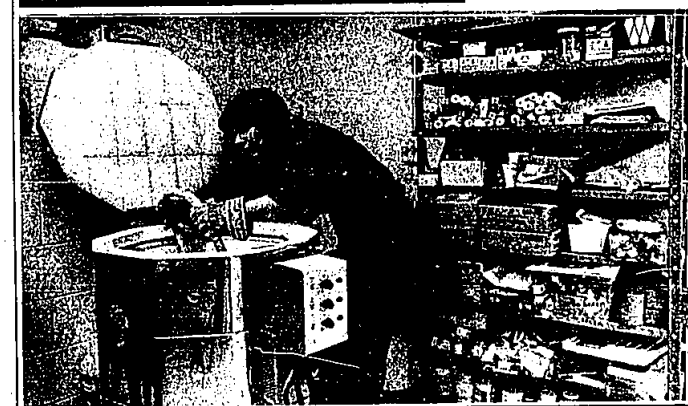


Everyday items used as models for artist

Artist Gail Rosenbloom Kaplan, working in her Farmington Hills home, produces clay pieces such as the "Kitchen Aid" mixer at left. Below, Rosenbloom Kaplan, who holds a fine arts degree and teaching certification from the University of Michigan, checks the electric kiln in her basement workshop.

The artist recently exhibited 28 of her works — some so real-looking that it was hard to distinguish them from the household items they resembled at a private showing in Birmingham.

For a story about the artist and more photos of her art, see the Suburban Life front page.



She will keep watch on cable for community



Getting set for the advent of cable TV in Farmington, Farmington Hills and Novi is Lark Samouelian (seated), who will serve as the executive director of the Southwestern Oakland Cable Consortium. Greeting her is Novi Mayor Pro-Tem Ronald Watson.

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Plymouth Township resident and cable television trouper Lark Samouelian will represent Farmington, Farmington Hills and Novi as executive director of the tri-city Southwestern Oakland Cable Consortium.

"I'm trying to develop a good, solid working relationship with MetroVision," Samouelian said, referring to the cable television firm which has a 15-year franchise with the intergovernmental consortium.

As executive director, Samouelian's responsibilities extend to keeping "an overview" of cable business in the consortium district.

"We (Samouelian and MetroVision officials) will be working together so that cable in our community is creative, effective and comfortable," Samouelian said.

"It is a business. We must never forget that. But my job is to make sure it's a good business."

"We're going to work at keeping local programming consistent and well-rounded," she said.

RIGHT NOW, Samouelian, whose

office is in the Farmington City Hall, said she "is boning up on all the underlying (cable franchise) documents."

Please turn to Page 9

what's inside

Community Calendar . 5,6B
Editorials 8A
Inside Angles 3A
Obituaries 2A
Oral Quarrel 8A
Shopping Cart Section B
Sports Section C
Suburban Life 3,4,5,6B

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