

Farmington Observer

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Elderly tenants sought to occupy new housing

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Eligible senior citizens this week will be selecting their new home in Drake Apartments, the HUD-funded Detroit Baptist Manor project, opening in mid-to-late July.

"Thanks to mild weather, the \$3.5 million low-income housing facility on the northeast corner of Drake and Freedom roads, has been completed 4-to-5 months ahead of the originally anticipated October finishing date, said Robert McQuaid, executive director of Detroit Baptist Manor. Residents should be in their new homes by August.

Baptist Manor is a large senior citi-

zen housing facility on 13 Mile near Orchard Lake Road.

Even though McQuaid began receiving housing applications from potential renters as soon as word was out that a new facility was under construction, Baptist Manor officials were required to first contact the approximately 400 people on a Farmington Hills senior citizen housing list.

"We had an understanding with the city that 50 percent of the rent-up would be Farmington or Farmington Hills persons," McQuaid said, referring to Department of Housing and Urban Development guidelines for funding.

BUT THAT list, McQuaid said, is old so officials contacted another 500 po-

tenial renters who applied for housing since the Drake Apartments project was started.

"We have been making an effort to make minority people aware of the opportunity," McQuaid said, indicating that Baptist Manor officials have been notifying minority agencies and churches, as well as advertising in the Michigan Chronicle and Detroit metro newspapers.

According to HUD guidelines, renters must be 62 years of age or older although exceptions to the age rule may extend to handicapped persons, McQuaid said. Other restrictions include a maximum income of \$19,700 for a couple and \$17,250 for single persons.

"We are not allowed to rent to people unless they are in a lower income," McQuaid said.

All units will be rented at individually-set rates based on residents' incomes. Rent will include utility costs.

The two-story, wood-framed building with veneer face brick are on five acres and the u-shaped portion of the building facing Drake road ties into five connecting corridors of apartments.

The new facility also will contain a community room featuring a small kitchen which will be unavailable for daily meals, as well as card rooms, a library, laundry rooms and lounges.

ALTHOUGH HUD, which signed a 40-year mortgage for Drake Apartments, will monitor the housing facility, Baptist Manor will manage the complex, perhaps with a couple in residence managing the office and maintenance services, McQuaid said.

While residents are selecting their units this week, plans are in the works for another senior citizen housing facility on six acres just south and adjacent to Drake Apartments. The acreage, donated to Farmington Hills by Ron Hanaway, will be optioned to Baptist Manor officials, said City Clerk Floyd Cairns. The price of the land will be whatever is allowed by HUD, Cairns said. McQuaid confirmed the proposal, adding officials applied for HUD funding last week.

But, he said, "all I have is the preliminary sketch proposal so if there are any dollar figures (on the proposed housing project) at this point, I don't have them."

The proposed housing facility, is expected to offer 93 apartments, 69 one-bedroom units, 25 efficiencies and one two-bedroom unit.

Parents wage war on alcohol

By Steve Barnaby
editor

Luring teens and pre-teens away from the peer pressures leading to alcohol and drug abuse is the goal of a group of Farmington School District parents.

Calling itself Farmington Families in Action, the group is attempting to reach every parent in the Farmington School District by its October meeting when a town meeting will be at Harrison High School where a panel will speak on parent/child relationships.

"Our goal is to obtain an atmosphere where drugs and alcohol are no longer the norm. Right now the one who doesn't do it is the deviate," said the group's vice president Martha Ehlers.

The organization's concept is an offshoot of a group founded in Naples, Fla., whose members sought to show their children that alternatives to marijuana use existed.

Since that time, several organizations have cropped up in Michigan, including ones in Birmingham, Grosse Pointe, Troy, and Rochester.

Unlike other groups which attempt mainly to cope with teens who already are addicted to drugs or who are alcoholics, Families in Action's goal is to avoid the problem initially through parent education and developing a close relationship between parent and child, said Ehlers.

Alcohol, she said, is the biggest prob-

lem. "We would like to have better cooperation from the Farmington Hills police force, and maybe have them better control the area," Wanda said. "We want to make people more aware, so they'll report things they see in their community."

Last month the Farmington Hills police department arrested 25 suspects for breaking and entering cases in the city, according to police Inspector Miri Spencer.

"We are doing everything we can to arrest the people that are responsible," Spencer said. "Each incident has a detective assigned to the case."

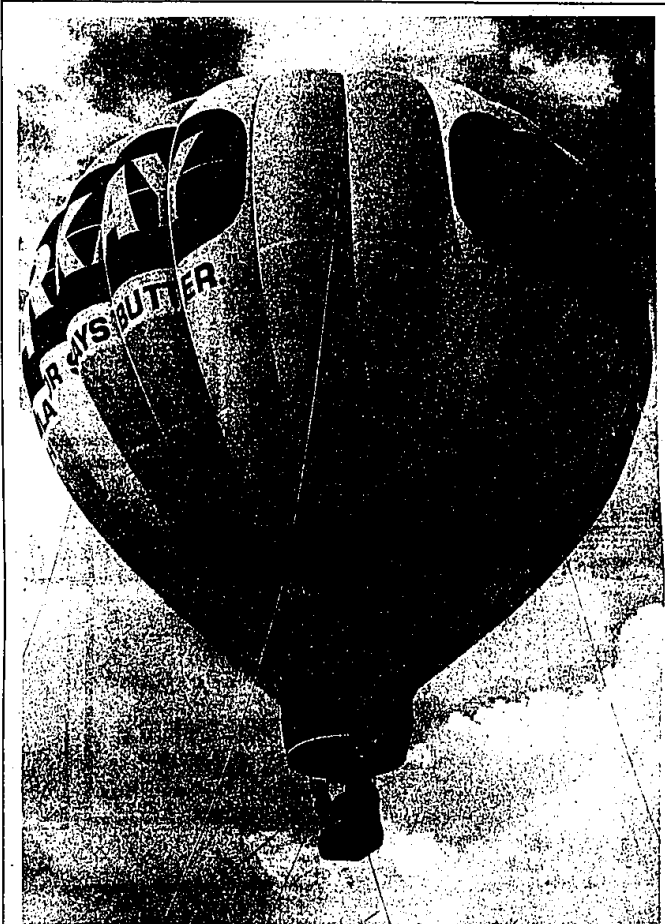
"I don't think it would be very wise to put a sign like that in front of their house," Spencer said. "Because in fact someone may take her for her word, and break in."

THE CURTISES estimate the dollar value in losses from the burglaries amount to approximately \$4,000. In addition to money the stolen goods include tools, jewelry, a stereo, golf clubs, and a 10-speed bicycle.

"The burglars cut through a screen in the window, take what they want, and walk out the front door," Wanda said.

Wanda and William both have day jobs, and the burglaries take place while they're at work.

"Our neighbors watch our house, and they went to the doctor's when it was broken into last," Wanda said. "So it's someone watching our house."



Up, up and away

Ballooning, one of man's most ancient and colorful forms of flight, is becoming more of a familiar sight in the space age. A soon-to-be-scheduled event will celebrate those times of

you're when humans took to the air. Balloons and other flight paraphernalia will be part of the show. To read more about it, turn to Page 2A.

4 burglaries spawn front-yard protest

By Diane Gale
staff writer

"Open House, Burglars Welcome, P.S. Farmington Hills police are asleep."

Wanda and William Curtis made a sign with that statement "out of frustration" after the last of four burglaries on their house and garage in the past two months.

The sign hangs conspicuously from a tree in their front yard at 22025 Springbrook.

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After a patrol officer makes the initial visit to the break-in they decide if prints can be taken, or if the burglars left any other evidence. They also try to determine how they entered.

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Reminder...

Your Observer carrier will be stopping by this week to collect for the month. Please have the money ready and be sure to get your receipt. It's worth a \$1.75 discount on the next classified advertisement you place in your hometown newspaper.

Wanda Curtis stands next to her sign of protest at her home which she constructed after several burglaries. RANDY BORST/staff photographer