

# Opinion

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(A)(F)

O&E Monday, February 6, 1984

## New police station? Opinions vary

### oral quarrel

Today's Oral Quarrel asked Farmington Hills residents how they can be sure that the proposed \$2.5 million police station isn't going to cost too much money. Architects have estimated that the building would cost approximately \$78 a square foot to construct. Chief city council opponent to the building's cost is Councilman Joe Alkateeb who says he is unprepared to vote for a building that costs that much.

Following are resident responses to the building and Alkateeb's stand on the issue:

The department needs the facilities.

I don't understand it. I just had a new house built and it cost me \$52 a square foot. And that's for a residential building. Seventy-eight dollars a square foot to me should be low cost for a commercial-style building.

If Mr. Joe Alkateeb would come down here to this police department and work in our department for one day I'm sure he wouldn't care how much it cost. If he had to work under these conditions — people tripping over one another. You can't even breathe if one person smokes.

I have been to the Farmington Hills police stations and they do need a new building.

After the money they just spent on the new park we'd better have a new police station to handle all the added work this new park is going to bring to us.

The mere fact that one individual on the council takes issue with what has become pretty much a national average should be closely examined for motivation.

You have to put your faith in the elected officials. If anyone has ever walked through that police department, which I did a week or so ago, they can definitely see that we need a new building. I think it should be built regardless of the cost.

I think the people have to trust the integrity of the professional architects involved. I believe that \$78 doesn't seem too high. It is \$5 below the national median. I think maybe Joe Alkateeb would like to see the police department pitch tents and work out on the west side of the building.

He should have five competitive bids and not limit the bids to local contractors but out-of-state contractors if necessary.

Farmington Hills doesn't need a new police department. What they need is to lay off half of the 108 office people they have working there now and reduce detective staff by two-thirds and get realistic. If you look at the population of Farmington Hills in relation to any other typical population, we are spending three times as much as the national average.

The school on Middlebelt Road is available at a much lesser cost and they could make that into a great facility. Their thing is an absolute rip off in terms of a new building. They don't have to be in proximity to city hall.

The taxpayers should let the experts like the police chief and the architects decide the plans and the cost. The present plans are \$5 under the national median for police buildings. We have wasted money remodeling the current facility over the last decade.

The current Farmington Hills police station is so small that if we filled it with dogs instead of people we would scream cruelty to animals.

By allowing council members to make intelligent judgments after looking after other communities.

Novi and Southfield have the right idea for building police stations. Build them big and build them now and you won't need them for decades. Are you listening Councilman Alkateeb?

I believe we don't need a new police station. The police station they have now should be cut down in size. In regards to the manpower they have, the inexperienced detectives, we have crime growing at an unbelievable rate.

The only way to be sure is to continue to elect responsible conservative councilmen such as Mr. Alkateeb. And hope they will monitor the costs for us. Some of these other councilmen are letting things get out-of-hand.

I think Farmington taxes are way too high now and I think \$78 a square foot is a ridiculously high price for a building that should be mainly utilitarian.

I think city sewer and water is more important in our area than a new police station.

What difference does it make? The city council is going to spend as much money as it wants to anyway.



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## Almost forgotten: Gar Wood's feat

IT IS oftentimes interesting to note that great deeds of men are placed in the limbo of forgotten things.

Whoever would have thought that the most amazing thing to be done by Gar Wood, the Gray Fox of Algonac, was more than writing speedboat history on the Detroit River and keeping the famed Harmsworth Trophy in the United States? His chief feat was to build motors that carried him to the world record.

Yet when Detroit historians went to work on their eulogy for the Packard plant on East Grand Boulevard recently, Wood's name wasn't even mentioned.

IN TALKING about the Packard plant, the historians told about the days when the prestigious Packard was king of the automobile world.

Not a word was mentioned that in the Packard plant, Gar Wood took four regular Packard Gold Cup motors and rebuilt them to three times their power, making possible the greatest victories in speedboat history.

Under the rules of the Harmsworth Trophy race, competing boats had to be powered with motors built in the country the boats represented. The rule never was questioned.

But the time came when the challenging nation — England — had more powerful motors than America could produce. In 1932, England challenged for the trophy, then held by Gar Wood and the United States. Wood knew he was in a difficult position. There were no motors of sufficient power to defend the trophy.

That was when he performed

what, at that time, was considered a miracle — even by Packard engineers.

WOOD TOOK FOUR Gold Cup motors, better known as the Gold Cup 750s, and rebuilt them until each was able to reach 1,800 hp. Many engineers sort of snickered at Wood's attempt, but the old Gray Fox had an idea it could be done.

When the motors were finished, he placed them in the famed Miss America X and then called in the Packard engineers to explain what he had done.

It was a mild summer evening at his home in Gray Haven. Wood furnished dinner for the engineers and the press. In his anxiety, he got down on his knees in the living room and drew his plans.

One Packard engineer looked at the drawing and said, "Gar, it can't be done. You'll kill yourself."

Wood just smiled and winked at The Stroller, who was the speedboat editor for the morning paper at the time. Wood answered, "You won't have to worry — you won't be in the boat, I will."

ON THE DAY the boat was launched, we were gathered on the spacious lawn of Wood's home. When the order came to lower the boat into the river, the engineers stood stiffly and waited. As the motors roared and the boat skimmed down the river, the Packard engineer fainted. He just couldn't believe what he saw.

This boat eventually set the world record on the St. Clair River in Algonac when it was timed at 123.91 mph. What's more, it retained the Harmsworth Trophy for America.

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**PALINDROMIC ARTHRITIS**

Some of you suffer from an arthritis that comes and goes; at times you may wonder if the problem is in your joints or in your head. Don't worry, it is likely that you are experiencing an arthritis called "palindromic" arthritis.

In this type of arthritis you will have sudden attacks of joint pain and swelling, but just as suddenly as the attack comes, it may end. It is not unusual to have the arthritis for months and then one day arise feeling well — and stay that way for months.

Acute attacks must be treated, but between episodes inflammation is not present and the medications usually used in arthritis are not needed. Furthermore, even if you have palindromic arthritis for years, you need not be concerned that your joints will be destroyed, or that you will become crippled.



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by Charles H. Williams, C.P.A.

**CHOOSING AN ACCOUNTANT**

Who'll prepare your tax return this year? It's time to start choosing a professional, and to undertake the planning that may help you shelter some of your income from taxes.

If your income is fairly straightforward and deductible expenses minimal, you might satisfactorily use a short-form return and do it yourself or with the help of a tax preparer. But with more income, and more deductions, as the return becomes more complicated, you're going to want a tax professional.

Why? Because it's worth the difference to put your tax return in the hands of someone with the knowledge to find every likely loophole, and the experience to know which are acceptable. And as you reach the higher brackets, you'll get the advice you need on sheltering some income from taxes.

Some free help is available from the IRS. Revenue employees will answer your questions (but the tax court has challenged some of their answers) and prepare the simplest returns. There are also independent and chain tax preparers who pop up at tax season. Their workers may not be experienced enough to catch all legal deductions.

A certified public accountant can handle most complex returns and are familiar with shelters and investing. His or her tax know-how can save you more than the fee.

How do you choose a professional? Recommendations from satisfied clients are one way, as are referrals from lawyers. Once a relationship is entered, the client will find his accountant helpful in making financial decisions all year round.

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