



# Farlington Observer

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Twenty-five cents

## TIFA leads to city-school tiff

By Tom Beer  
staff writer

Farlington Hills City Manager William Costick last Tuesday tried to sell a share-the-wealth plan to the Farmington Board of Education.

The board, however, wasn't buying. Farmington Hills officials would like to use the Tax Increment Finance Authority (TIFA) act, a 1980 state law, to set up a special taxing authority to pro-

vide funds — both school and city money — for road repairs and drains in a "growth corridor" along 12 Mile Road. School officials oppose the plan. Not only will they be losing future tax dollars, but they'll have little or no say about it. Normally, school districts receive the majority of tax revenue in a municipality.

TIFA, also known as Public Act No. 450, would allow the city to tap anticipated future tax revenues in the design-

ated area, a narrow, 3/4-mile-long swath of land bounded by Haggerty Road and Kendallwood on the west and east, and by 12 Mile and I-696 on the north and south.

If TIFA goes into effect, the city will capture most, if not all, of the future tax revenue in the specified area.

Signs of development in that area are evident these days, especially in the space between 12 Mile and I-696, where an office park called the Arbore-

turn is under construction.

The city wants to aid this development "with something other than general tax dollars," Costick told the board at its regular meeting Tuesday at Longacre Elementary School.

Costick pointed out that the growth corridor soon would become a bottleneck if 12 Mile Road, presently a congested two lanes, was not widened to accommodate the increased traffic.

"These are the city's problems, not

the school board's problems," Costick told the board. "But if we as a city and a school district want this development, somehow we have to have the resources to make these improvements."

"We're feeling the urge and the nudge from many developers — either you do something or we're getting out," Costick added.

THE TIFA PLAN found little support with school board members.

One of the most outspoken against it was Treasurer Richard Wallace, who said that the act was supposed to help areas with "a need for neighborhood revitalization" and a declining tax base.

Those factors, he told Costick, certainly are not present in northwest Farmington Hills.

Trustee Janice Rolnick spoke of

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## Cable accord is set

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

After more than a year, tenants in the three Bezons-owned apartment complexes in the Farmington area will join other apartment dwellers in turning on to MetroVision's cable-TV service.

Work crews are wiring the Bezons-owned complexes of Mulwood and Fairmont Park in Farmington Hills and Kensington Manor in Farmington, said Harold Stobinsky, vice president in management at Bezons.

MetroVision and Bezons officials a couple of months ago signed a three-year contract allowing the cable firm to wire the apartments and provide cable service, said Tom Bjorklund, MetroVision vice president.

"We're certainly happy to finally reach agreement (with Bezons). As soon as service is available, we will contact the residents," he said, expecting a good portion of the apartments to be wired by the end of December.

The agreement with Bezons began almost two years after MetroVision began wiring single-family homes in neighborhoods throughout the tri-city franchise area, which includes Novi, Farmington and Farmington Hills.

The reason for the delay, according to Stobinsky, was because Bezons officials had been researching the possibilities of installing a private cable system.

But Stobinsky said the private systems, such as SMATV (Satellite Master Antenna Television) are still in their infancy.

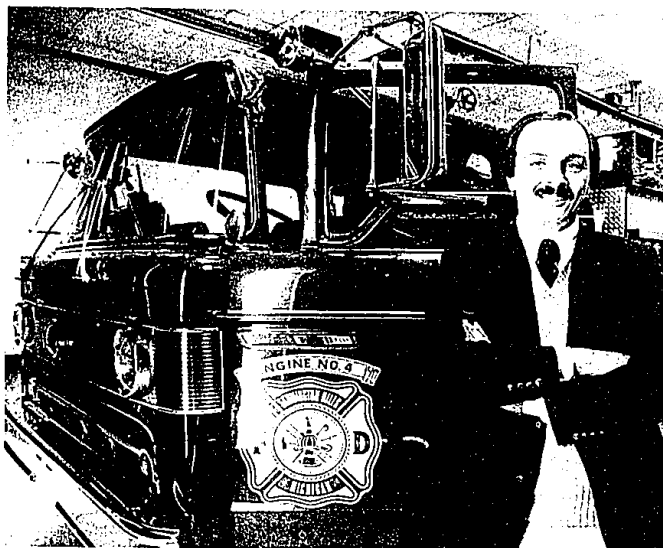
"THEY DID not appear to be right," Stobinsky said, about installing a private system.

MetroVision and apartment complex owners are required to reach an agreement allowing cable installation. For the most part, a contract is a wiring agreement that allows the cable firm an easement to put the cable lines on private property.

A contract can include provisions for apartment owners to charge MetroVision an access fee — a charge above the cost of installing cable in their units. The access fee is determined by the complex owners.

MetroVision, in turn, has the option of passing that fee on to the subscribers.

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Working his way up through the ranks, Richard Marinucci, a teacher turned firefighter, comfortably settles into his new post as Farmington Hills fire chief.

RANDY BORST/staff photographer

## Chief climbs to the top rung

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Life has changed from the days when as a junior high school teacher Richard Marinucci looked forward to summer, Christmas and Easter vacations.

As a math teacher in the South Lyon school district, becoming a firefighter, much less a fire chief, was the furthest thing from Marinucci's mind.

But in 1977 a friend changed his mind.

"A good friend was a firefighter. He said why don't you put in an application," said Marinucci, 31, recalling one of the last summers he would have as a vacation from teaching.

"I thought, heck, I can always quit if I don't like it."

That never happened. Instead, Marinucci said goodbye to his 3 1/2-year teaching career — at least for awhile.

"I wasn't totally happy with teaching. Not that I didn't enjoy teaching. I still do," he said. Teaching eighth and ninth graders, though, involved more discipline than teaching.

Unlike his teaching career, Marinucci "enjoyed all the aspects of firefighting," the camaraderie, excitement and self-satisfaction.

"It's the one job where you don't have to grow up," Marinucci said.

"ALL FIREFIGHTERS — it sounds ghoulish — like to fight fires," Marinucci said. "There is a certain feeling you get by helping people and having them appreciate it."

The "certain camaraderie," a "brotherhood" between firefighters also ranks high for drawing Marinucci into the job and for keeping him at it.

Despite Marinucci's appointment as the new fire chief of Farmington Hills a couple of weeks ago, those feelings about and expectations of his job have not changed.

Although required to respond only to the big alarms, the former department lieutenant prefers to continue responding to the majority of fire calls along with the other firefighters.

"I have to. That's my therapy," Marinucci said. "I like to respond. It keeps me in touch (with the firefighters)."

While still hanging on to the things he has loved most about being a firefighter, Marinucci's job as chief, replacing former chief Lawrence Karoo, has provided him a new list of responsibilities.

His job includes planning the department's future, managing department programs, recruiting, preparing an annual budget and "keeping everyone

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## Schools act to cut asbestos danger

By Tom Beer  
staff writer

Farmington school officials have gone asbestos hunting, and they say they're satisfied with the kill.

Asbestos, the fibrous insulating material which has been linked to various lung diseases and cancer, is present in at least 18 of 28 Farmington School District buildings, school officials have said.

Beginning about five years ago, school officials took steps to cut the peril of asbestos by finding and "encapsulating" it where it was used around boilers and pipes in many buildings constructed before 1965.

What officials described as a "three-level" search for asbestos also revealed its presence in the library at Woodcreek Elementary School, and in an office and audio-visual storage area at Forest Elementary, according to Jack Lawing, the district's director of

administrative services.

"We've been receiving a deluge of mail (about the asbestos hazard)," said Lawing, who played a key role in identifying and dealing with the substance. "There's been an awful lot of newspaper coverage about asbestos and its harmful effects."

"It (asbestos) is every place else, too, but they seem to emphasize the fact that it's in the schools more than any place else."

The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) "also emphasizes it and has put in some strict penalties," Lawing added.

The EPA, in fact, issued an "asbestos school rule" in 1982, requiring school districts to inspect elementary and secondary buildings for asbestos materials by June of 1983.

AT A RECENT school board meeting, Lawing described the search for asbestos and the method of defusing its dangers.

*"In the future . . . we may find that some of these other products are just as bad for us."*

— Jack Lawing  
Farmington schools

"Everybody is becoming sensitive to the issue," he said. "Rather than wait for someone to call for an investigation, I thought I'd update our board on what has been done."

Lawing said that the investigation was on three levels. First, he said, building principals and custodians conducted an "informal" search. Then an architect and the supervisory staff continued the hunt.

Finally, a private firm, Thurst Thermal Systems, "looked for and sampled

suspected friable (capable of becoming airborne) asbestos," said Lawing, who explained that friable asbestos can easily become airborne by chipping, flaking, peeling or crumbling.

"We've been through this three times, so we're confident we've got it all," Lawing said.

But very little of the found asbestos has been removed, Lawing said.

"That would be impossible and cost prohibitive . . . because of all the regulations required to do it," he added.

"You just can't go in and take it out because you'll make a bigger hazard."

Instead, officials decided to encapsulate or confine the asbestos. Lawing said. A soaking solution was sprayed on the asbestos, he explained. After saturation, the substance solidifies.

"It's kind of like a glue which impregnates the product (asbestos)," Lawing said. "Then they put a covering over that. When they're finished, it looks like the thing looked in the first place."

AFTER THE encapsulation had been completed, Lawing said, another company came in to test the air in the area. "We had a company check on the company that did our repair for us," he said.

Following EPA regulations, the district must post notices to school employees and notify parent-teacher organizations.

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## oral quarrel

### Should feds work on Christmas Eve?

Federal employees should report to work and keep the government running on Christmas Eve, so ordered the Ronald Reagan administration this week.

Christmas Eve falls on a Monday this year, and presidents have given federal workers the day off when this has happened in the past. News commentators have said that the president's break with tradition may be an attempt to improve the government's Dec. 7. To see how your neighbors feel about this issue, please look to Monday's Farmington Observer.

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**Gifts Galore**  
SPECIAL SECTION  
IN TODAY'S ISSUE

## Arrest made in traffic death

A 40-year-old Farmington Hills man is free on \$1,000 personal bond following his arraignment last week on a charge of negligent homicide in connection with a head-on car accident Nov. 9 in which Mercy High School student Elizabeth Scharret was killed.

Gary R. Hicks, 23155 Colgate, stood mute at his arraignment Nov. 26 before 47th District Judge Michael Hand. A plea of not guilty was entered for Hicks. A preliminary examination has not yet been scheduled. Negligent homicide carries a penalty of a maximum of two years in prison upon conviction.

Scharret, 17, of Birmingham died of

multiple injuries at Botsford General Hospital on Nov. 10.

According to Lt. Ernest Miller of the Farmington Hills Police Department, Scharret was killed when a car crossed the center line on Middlebelt, near Hemlock, and struck her car head on. Scharret was traveling north along Middlebelt. The accident occurred at about 7:30 p.m. Nov. 9, Miller said.

A third car, traveling behind Scharret's car at the time of the accident, struck the rear of the victim's car, Miller said.

Scharret was a senior at Mercy High School.