

Murphy makes new Children's Village bid

By Kathy Parrish
staff writer

For years, Oakland County's Board of Commissioners and the Probate Court have worked together to help troubled kids who live in Children's Village.

Some of that cooperation was set back last week when a board committee in anger recommended the county executive take over running the facility.

"I'm extremely distraught that the committee didn't choose to listen to our side of the issue," said Probate Court Judge Eugene Moore, who believes there was a "conscious effort to push through the resolution without the judges' giving our side."

"Children's Village is a bipartisan effort on the part of the county to help

youth. I don't perceive it as a political issue."

MEETING WEDNESDAY In Children's Village, the Health and Human Resources Committee agreed to recommend reopening of the facility's B Building. The unit was closed in August 1983 when Children's Village numbers dropped off.

Commissioners in November 1983 voted against reopening the unit when need arose. Michigan Department of Social Services this month cited the facility for overcrowding.

After approving the expansion, the commissioners were handed a letter from County Executive Daniel Murphy asking to take over Children's Village.

Adding to the surprise was a resolution designed to transfer operation and control of Children's Village and Camp

Oakland from the Probate Court to the County Executive's Department of Institutional and Human Services.

IN DECEMBER 1983, Murphy asked the board of commissioners to give him control of Children's Village, which takes in Probate Court wards. The commissioners refused the request by a vote of 16 to 7.

Murphy took the issue to court, but Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Hilda Gage ruled against him. In her December 1984 ruling, the judge said legal authority to supervise, direct and control Camp Oakland and Children's Village remains with the probate judges.

But Gage also stated she does not recognize "any inherent power in the Probate Court to operate and control child care facilities."

"The board of commissioners has the power to transfer the control and administration of child care facilities from the court to the county," she said.

WHILE IT WAS no surprise that Murphy intended to ask the commissioners to give him jurisdiction over Children's Village, the timing of his request was.

Not on the Health and Human Resources agenda for discussion, the resolution was a secret to all but a couple of commissioners.

Introducing the resolution, committee chairwoman Nancy McConnell, R-Bloomfield Hills, said the issue was being brought up because the probate judges Jan. 28 appealed Gage's decision.

"We're looking at two to three more years before this is resolved," ex-

plained McConnell, who said she was told the appeal was filed on behalf of the commissioners but without their consent.

"I don't think we should have people twisting in the wind that long."

DESPITE PLEAS from Democratic Commissioners Betty Fortino of Pontiac and Ruel McPherson of Hazel Park to wait a week on the decision, Republican committee members pushed the resolution through.

"A week's postponement in the scheme of things isn't very long," said Fortino — "just as a matter of courtesy and not having a knee-jerk reaction to a rumor we heard."

Opposed to the resolution were Fortino and McPherson. Its backers were Republicans McConnell, Susan Kuhn of Clawson, John McDonald of Farming-

ton, Marilyn Goeling of Bloomfield Hills, David Moffitt of Bloomfield Township and Dorothy Webb of Farmington.

Probate Judge Moore, whose father, Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Arthur Moore, helped start Children's Village, said the rumors were unfounded. The probate judges appealed on their own behalf, contending that Gage's recommendation to the commission wasn't proper.

"We're not appealing whether her ruling was right or wrong. We're just saying that issue wasn't before her," said Moore.

The county executive Jan. 7 also appealed Gage's ruling. His appeal objects to her decision saying that the law which allows counties to set up executive-style government also authorizes him to run the facility.

Townships buck mobile home rules

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Township officials would like to tax mobile homes more heavily and resent what they see as state interference in their mobile home regulations.

"The state Mobile Home Commission has overstepped their bounds," Gene Thornton, legislative director for the Michigan Townships Association, told a state Senate committee last week.

The theme of state intrusion into local affairs was sounded continually when the Senate Local Government Committee, chaired by Harmon Crosby, R-Decatur, held a public hearing at MTA's annual convention in Dear-

born. Thornton supported a House bill to limit the authority of the Mobile Home Commission (MHC) to mobile home parks, not to every mobile home in the state. But the MTA official said the state agency is telling townships it wants to review all local ordinances governing mobile homes.

TOM BROWN, former state representative from Westland, agreed with the MTA's view.

"It was the intent of the Legislature that mobile home parks were to come under the Mobile Home Commission. The law was never intended to cover all mobile homes, no matter where located," said Brown, who was supervisor of Nankin Township before he be-

came the city of Westland and who handles occasional lobbying for MTA.

Sen. Patrick McCollough, D-Dearborn, whose district includes Garden City, agreed with Brown. "I was chairman of the local municipalities and elections committee in 1975-76," McCollough said, "and that was my recollection."

Except for saying they disliked the MHC looking over their shoulders, MTA members cited no specific complaints about the state body's decisions. BROWN SAID mobile homes should be taxed at the high rates of real estate

rather than at lower vehicle rates.

"We've licensed them as if they were vehicles. But they've developed into big houses. No doubt about it, some pretty high rents are being charged. They should be taxed according to use," Brown said.

McCollough agreed: "If it's on wheels, it should be considered mobile. If it's on cement blocks, tied down and hasn't been moved in 10 years, it should be taxed as real property."

Stanley Wasek, a township supervisor from Bay County, said, "It's very unfair that these people (gas owners) pay \$35 a year (\$3 a month per lot for

12 months). Some of these units are worth up to \$20,000." If such units were taxed like houses, Wasek said, they would generate \$480 in annual revenue to local governments.

JOANNE EMMONS, of Big Rapids Township near Ferris State College, said the MHC was failing to regulate setups of two to four mobile homes, as it should, but "looking over our zoning ordinance," which it shouldn't.

She said mobile home parks rent units to college students for the nine-month school year, declare them vacant for three months, and avoid a quarter of the tax.

Travel tips taik at OCC

Robert Payne of Travel Trends Inc. will speak during a session on "How to Travel Tips" presented by Oakland Community College's Highland Lakes Campus, 7350 Cooley Lake Road, Union Lake.

Admission is \$2.50 for the program at 7:30 p.m. in the Student Center Arena. Participants will be able to attend "How To" sessions on how to save money, select a travel wardrobe, handle medical emergencies and travel safely.

GOP to hear Rep.

U.S. Rep. Guy Vander Jagt will be guest speaker at the Oakland County Lincoln Republican Club's 26th Anniversary Banquet.

Oakland County Prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson will be master of ceremonies for the event at 8 p.m. Friday in Petruszello's Banquet Hall, 6950 Rochester, Troy.

Considered a possible 1986 GOP gubernatorial candidate, Vander Jagt represents Michigan's 9th Congressional District and is chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee. NRCC is the campaign arm of the GOP House Caucus. He is also a member of the House Ways and Means Committee, serving on the Select Revenue Measures and Trade subcommittees.

Tickets for the prime rib dinner with dancing are \$22 for advance purchase and \$27 at the door. They can be purchased through the Oakland County Republican Headquarters at 338-1133.



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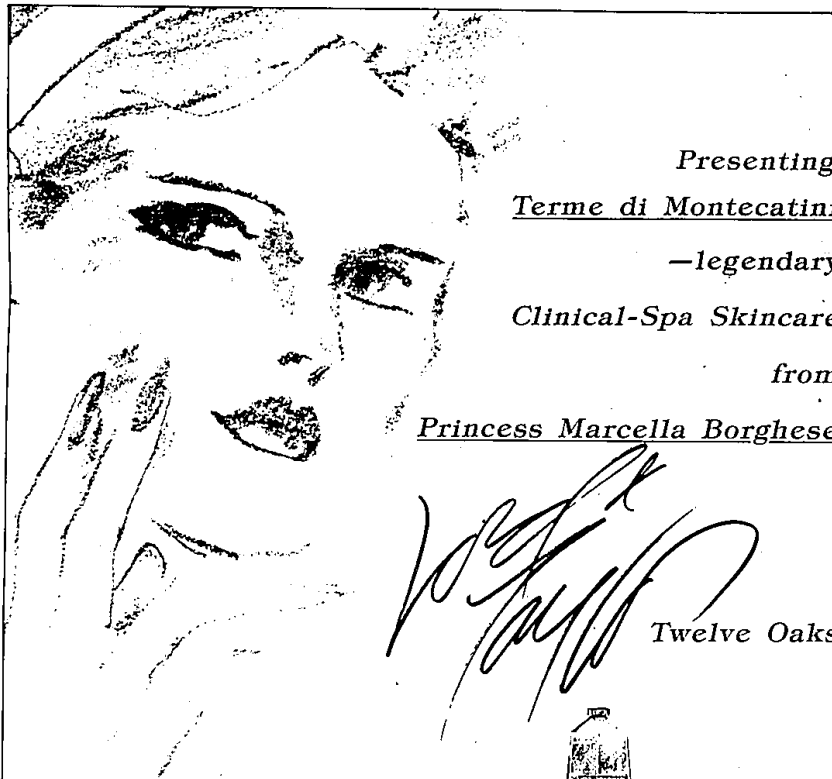
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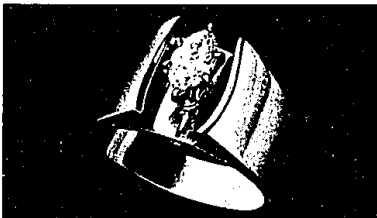
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