

Area musicians stage
an extravaganza, 1B



Wenson
signs, 3D

Employees retire in
record number, 14A

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Twenty-Five Cents

Budget OK'd in a split vote

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

The only complaints voiced this week about Farmington Hills' \$19.5-million operating budget and 1-mill tax increase — devoted entirely to road improvements — came from the city council.

Despite opposition from council-

men Donn Wolf and Terry Sever, council members approved the 1986-87 budget supported by 9.8 mills — a 1-mill increase over the 1985-86 levy.

In adopting the budget in a 5-2 vote Monday, council approved a \$2.9-million capital improvement budget. It includes approximately \$1.2 million in revenue for roads —

dollars that will be garnered from the 1-mill tax increase.

The 1986-87 budget represents a 14.3 percent increase over last year's \$17 million budget. But 2.7 percent of the increase is due to new debt incurred for construction of the new police facility and the Caddell Drain project near 10 Mile and Grand River.

The 9.8 mills (per \$1,000 of assessed valuation) will cost taxpayers — based on a \$90,000 house assessed at \$45,000 — approximately \$441 a year.

"MY POSITION has always been very clear. I will not support a tax increase without vote of the people," Wolf said in a prepared state-

ment to council.

"I see no reason to deny the people the opportunity to give us, or not give us, more money to spend via the ballot box. We are only here to serve with what the people give us. They will tell this council what we can spend — not the council telling them

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2 incumbent trustees pace school voting

By Casey Hans
staff writer

Only 2 percent of the Farmington school district's registered voters came out Monday to re-elect incumbents Janice Rolnick and R. Jack Inch for their third four-year terms on the Farmington school board.

According to the unofficial vote tally, Rolnick was the top vote-getter with 706 votes, followed closely by Inch with 692. Newcomer Paul Blizman brought up the rear of the three-person race with 422 votes.

Rolnick carried three of the four precincts, with Inch winning by a 37-vote margin in district one, which includes his home city of Farmington.

Of the 52,008 residents registered to vote, only 1,036 voted, according to Scott Bacon, administrative assistant for the school district. He said 1,036 voters cast ballots — 77 by absentee.

CALLING IT a "good race," Rolnick attributed her first place win to "what the board has done over the past eight years. It was definitely an approval from parents. It was a vote for education."



Susan Rolnick



R. Jack Inch

Inch said he is happy, but tired. "I'm very pleased," he said, "and thankful for the people who helped me and supported me." The 2 percent turnout did not surprise the incumbent. "It's never what you want. Sometimes, you have the desire to rent a bus, pick people up and take them to the polls."

Inch called the election a "quality program."

"I did what I wanted to do," Blizman said about his loss. "I worked hard on the campaign, and I'm glad I did."

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Develop more parks, Hills survey says

Editor's note: Farmington Hills voters will consider a half-mill increase for parks and recreation capital improvements in a special election Tuesday, June 24. It would be the first dedicated millage in the city's 12-year history. Following is the first of two parts previewing the election. For a related editorial comment, see Page 18A.

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Much-publicized Heritage Park — the former Spicer property — is by no means a new topic in Farmington Hills.

The Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Commission was interested in the 212-acre Spicer property when the land was on the selling

block to cover estate taxes in the mid-to-late 1970s.

"We on the commission had long hungered for land," Commission Chairman Dennis Fitzgerald said. "The original master plan for parks and recreation identified Spicer as something we should have."

Aware of the Spicer family's desire to sell the land, commission members asked the Farmington

Hills City Council to make efforts to purchase the acreage, west of Farmington Road, between 10 and 11 Mile.

Finally, Farmington Hills was awarded a \$12.2-million Michigan Land Trust Fund to help purchase the property. The city put up \$800,000 toward the purchase, which was completed in April 1985.

PLACING A special 0.5-mill re-

quest over five years for parks and recreation development on the Tuesday, June 24, ballot represents the culmination of months of work and decisions on development of the city's parks and recreation facilities, Fitzgerald said.

At the time, city officials agreed to purchase the property, commis-

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'Boom and bust'

Crises help to bring neighbors together



Neighborhoods

Editor's note: This is the third installment in a series examining Farmington Hills' homeowner associations and their impact on the city.

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Nothing brings people together like a crisis.

And the notion holds true for many neighborhood associations.

While the majority of homeowner groups in Farmington Hills are formal organizations with by-laws and officers, many breathe life only when the neighborhood is faced with a threat or problem.

"Neighborhoods are very complicated. It's not like running a business. It's like inflating a balloon.

They have a 'boom and bust' period," said Oakland University Professor Don Warren. "They are very much like political parties, driven by the intensity of the problem."

Section 35 Homeowners Association — one of the city's oldest associations — illustrates the "boom and bust" nature of homeowner groups.

Long before Farmington Hills incorporated, the association formed to operate the section's own water system. Even after Oakland County took over the system, the Section 35 association remained active as long as there were problems to solve, said George Roberts, a Section 36 activist. "We formed as a defense against the (Farmington) township and eventually the city," Roberts said.

LIKE NEWER associations today, the Section 35 organization was heavily involved in zoning issues and even established a committee charged with keeping an eye on what was happening within and around the area, Roberts said.

While Section 35 was in its growth period, the association was incredibly active in dust control, paving and neighborhood beautification. Development of Waldron Park also brought out the troops.

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Homes
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Love
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Sight

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IN EVERY
THURSDAY EDITION



Traffic on Haggerty Road can be a headache at times. Above, a car tries to pull out onto

Haggerty from the Farmington Ridge subdivision, north of 13 Mile.

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