

Mark Sitts Has Directed Fun For Kids for 17 Years

By LIZ WISSMAN

One person looking at the annexation question in Farmington with more than personal interest is Mark H. Sitts of 2490 Floral.

For 17 years, since 1953, Sitts has been president of the Farmington Area Recreation Commission.

He has tendered his resignation.

In his formal resignation statement, here's what he said:

"I have had this job since 1953. I will be 70 years of age on Dec. 11. A younger, dedicated president could relate more easily and more readily to the problems of the eight-to-15-year youths of today.

"Seventeen years as a president of this commission or any other organization is too long. I do not feel very youthful today."

IN THE 17 YEARS Sitts has been FARC president, he has seen the organization grow from service to 300 children to service to more than 1,500 children.

For 12 of the years Sitts has headed the FARC he has dealt with Curtis Hall as township supervisor. Sitts' contacts with Hall came about when he went to Hall for the township's check toward FARC expenses. The city pays 25 per cent of FARC expenses, the township 75 per cent.

"I anticipate some problems with this consolidation mess," says Sitts. "Some councilmen want to stay small and you know they say if you feed a puppy whiskey he'll stay small, but it's not true."

"Expenses for the square mile are going to increase. If you get more people to help pay these expenses it'll help. If annexation passes, the city will have to go 50-50 on FARC costs. I don't think Teepees (Earl Teepees, supervisor-elect) knows what he's got mixed up with."

"I went to Curtis Hall every June and he gave me a check. I'd have to show it to John Dinan (city manager) before he'd give me a check. The city doesn't trust the township."

"BUT," muses the FARC

president, "If the consolidation election had been effective, the FARC would have gone out of business."

"I wish they had gone for one big city. When we here in FARC Park voted to be annexed to the city, my fire insurance dropped from 70 cents a hundred dollars to 40 cents in one day."

"I paid out more for trash removal when we were in the township than I pay in city taxes."

IN HIS RESIGNATION statement, Sitts also pondered another thought:

"Because we work with the eight to 15 year group of children it might be possible to accomplish more that would be of benefit to these children in later years than we have done so far."

"I have reference to propaganda about such things as good habits, healthy bodies, avoidance of smoking and other bad habits. Most of our programs have concentrated on arts, crafts, games and exercise."

"The introduction of more meaningful ideas requires very skillful handling and it might be best not to attempt it. This idea has been proposed for food for thought."

DISCUSSING this subject, Sitts says:

"We (the FARC) do nothing about this. Maybe it's not feasible but certainly these children are exposed to all kinds of things outside our sphere of influence."

"They seem to be tractable. Maybe FARC people could sell them on good habits without their being aware of it."

"When the FARC has these children all so much of an age we might have an excellent opportunity to get their thinking along the right lines."

"It's something like sex education, however. It's a fine thing but it depends on who does it and how it's done. You've got to start out with something a child thoroughly understands and then build on it."

SEVENTEEN YEARS may seem a long time to serve in any job, but with Mark Sitts' ability for establishing tenure it isn't so very long.

He retired from the telephone company in 1955 after 43 years on the job with the company. He had been a staff supervisor and expert in transmission, radio and carrier circuitry.

Sitts has used this expertise for electricity in his own home by building a stereo that pipes all over the house.

He has used his ability for tinkering, as he calls it, in many ways. He built his home's family room and carport, cases for his wife's collection of antique glass, converted his garage to a utility room and built many tables, desks and bookcases.

NOW THAT HE IS RETIRING from the FARC, Sitts thinks he may get around to some housekeeping.

His wife is ill and he keeps up the home and calls himself "a low average typehousekeeper."

To the casual observer everything in the Sitts home is in its place and if something hasn't got a place, trust Sitts to build one for it.



HANDY MAN—Now that he is retiring as president of the Farmington Area Recreation Commission after 17 years, Mark H. Sitts will have time to build more gadgets such as this rubbish crusher which he designed and built. (Evert photo)



HOW TO GET HELP was high on the list of priorities when Farmington Township mothers Mrs. Betty Holbert and Mrs. Barbara Hoskins got together with

Mrs. Penny Nelson, now community aid worker for the Office of Economic Opportunity and Mrs. Billie Bates new OEO supervisor. (Evert photo)

OEO Needs Volunteer Drivers in Farmington

Volunteer drivers to aid needy families in the Farmington area are being sought by the Oakland County Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO).

Mrs. Ruth O'Gawa, volunteer coordinator, said the OEO needs many drivers.

The drivers transport residents in need of attention from the Farmington branch office, Wheeler and Grand River, to a number of medical and legal aid service areas such as Providence and Beaumont Hospitals and children's dental and medical clinics.

THE VOLUNTEER Transportation Corps for the Farmington Area, Mrs. O'Gawa recalls, began about three years ago when the OEO first set up quarters here.

She said, "Drivers spend either a morning or an afternoon never a whole day-for as often as they can make it during the week."

THE "CORPS" consists of 12-15 drivers at present although Mrs. O'Gawa estimates another 40-50 people are needed.

"If we don't get some help," she said, "we might have to close the Transportation Corps permanently."

OEO representatives at the Novi office told the Farmington Enterprise & Observer that "Farmington has the largest concentrated low poverty area in western Oakland County."

"It's so vital to realize," she said, "that poverty exists right here, not only in downtown Detroit. People here are living in horrible, pathetic shacks some without enough food and clothing."

The most common census among OEO workers is that "nobody in Farmington or Farmington Township knows this poor area exists."

According to his mother, a Scout uniform is often the best piece of clothing an inner city boy has - if he has a Scout uniform, that is.

Anyone wishing to donate a uniform to this good cause, may call Steve at 476-3388. You, too, can do a good deed.

phie calls. He appealed to the Farmington Enterprise & Observer when he ran out of people to contact.

A Scout for 2½ years and the son of Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Dielenheim, Steve isn't very articulate when you ask him why he's doing this. He just thinks it needs doing.

to date, Steve has collected 15 suits but needs many more. He collected the 15 by placing notes in the Sorrows parish bulletin and making countless

Mrs. Jerome T. Ahlbrand of Farmington was named project chairman of the Detroit Committee for Seven Eastern Women's Colleges at the group's annual meeting.

She will direct projects to raise funds for scholarships. The 1970 Cabaret Concert Benefit earned \$4,500 which has already been awarded to scholarship recipients in Michigan.

Chairman Is Named

the farmington enterprise & observer

ENORY DANIELS, Editor

Editorial Office
3382 Farmington Road
Farmington, Mich.
Phone 474-6225

Home Delivery Service

Nearest per copy, 15¢
Monthly
Yearly
Phone 474-8737

Published every Wednesday and Weekend

Published by Observer Newspapers, Inc., 271 South Main Street, Farmington, Michigan, 48170. Owner: Stanley Philip H. Power, Publisher. Entered as Second Class Matter at the U.S. Post Office, Farmington, Michigan.

Address all mail subscription orders to: Observer Newspapers, Inc., Box 200, Farmington, Michigan, 48170.

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