

Clock winding down on eventful year

Continued from Page 1

The case was controversial because of the legislated, mandatory 20-year jail term Oakland County Circuit Judge Hilda Gage was required to impose. "I don't feel the sentence I'm imposing is a fair one," she said. "Then I can do it. I'm duty-bound to follow that law."

● JUNE
Farmington Hills and Farmington police officials got tough — again — on the sale of liquor to minors, using police cadets to do a major liquor sweep throughout the communities in an effort to curb teenage drinking in the community. Nearly one third of the licensed businesses were ticketed in the June sweep. The police action followed two major crackdowns conducted in 1986.

Ticketed storeowners were outraged at the sweeps, calling the police use of cadets unfair and entrapping.

Convicted killer John Merlo was sentenced to life in prison — for a second time — for the 1987 fatal shooting of his 18-year-old wife in a Farmington Township beauty salon. The sentencing followed a three-week retrial, in which Merlo pleaded for a lesser conviction, allowing him a chance at parole.

● JULY
As in the past 22 years, July marked the annual Farmington Founders Festival. The theme of the 22nd annual celebration was "Sociocultural," tying in with Michigan's 150th anniversary.

The summer heat brought truth to the rumor that Farmington Hills would not be home to Little Caesars pizza company headquarters. Farmington Hills officials were disappointed when pizza company owner Michael Ilitch confirmed rumors that plans for the headquarters on 39

acres at 12 Mile and Drake were being dropped in favor of renovating Detroit's historic Fox Theatre.

Farmington city manager Robert Deadman celebrated his 30th year with the city's administration. Plans were made amid resident protest to allow Farmington resident Walter Sundquist to level a house for additional parking downtown near the Heene-Sundquist Funeral Home.

● AUGUST
In an annual tradition, Helen Dilzhay, Farmington school board vice president, took the gavel from outgoing president Helen Prutow.

The month brought promise of a celebration as Farmington and Farmington Hills police, officials and residents made their plans for Pope John Paul II's planned September visit.

The anticipation took a back seat to shock, devastation and grief when Northwest Flight 255 crashed near Middlebelt and I-96 while taking off from Detroit Metropolitan Airport, killing all aboard. The Sunday evening crash brought the shock closer to home when it was revealed that one Farmington Hills resident and the relatives of another Farmington Hills family were aboard the doomed flight.

Veteran Farmington Hills city councilman Donn Wolf announced he would not seek re-election to a third four-year term. Wolf announced at a city council meeting that he would support candidate Jean Fox in what turned out to be her successful election bid.

After months of debate throughout 1987 over the home child day care issue, the Farmington Hills City Council gave two-year extensions to two Farmington Hills women operating the larger group day care homes for a maximum 12 children. The two baby-sitting services do not comply

with a city day care ordinance, which allows state-licensed family day care homes for a maximum six children in residential areas.

City council elections already were on the minds of many as 10 candidates in Farmington Hills and three in Farmington filed nominating petitions for the Nov. 3 general election. Four seats were open in Farmington Hills and three in Farmington. In less than a week, however, one of the Farmington Hills candidates withdrew his candidacy.

● SEPTEMBER
To the disappointment of many community activists, Russ Tuttle resigned from his eight-year post as community relations director for Botsford General Hospital. But the former Farmington-Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce president made a final debut as chairman of the chamber's annual Citizen of the Year banquet in October.

August began months of waiting, hoping and recovery for Richard Headlee, former 1982 gubernatorial candidate, who received a new heart in October.

The president of the Farmington Hills-based Alexander Hanover Insurance Co. of America is still in Utah where he underwent surgery at the Latter-Day Saint Hospital in Salt Lake City. The Farmington Hills resident has since faced a number of setbacks including gall bladder surgery.

The Farmington Hills City Council beefed-up an ordinance making the sale of narcotic paraphernalia a criminal offense.

Eleven Farmington area residents banded together and formed a new cultural committee to educate and foster cultural understanding. The committee replaced a former group that was considered to have too many governmental representatives.

A school finance plan was unveiled in the state Legislature that would cost Farmington Public Schools \$1.3 million. The plan would force the 41 wealthiest out-of-formula districts to pay the employer's share of Social Security payments for all teachers. The plan is one of about 10 proposed for revamping the financial side of public education.

Gov. James Blanchard gave many growing communities a rude awakening by vetoing supplemental payments that communities, such as Farmington Hills, were eligible for because of increased populations since the 1980 head count. The issue, as far as the communities are concerned, remains unresolved.

● OCTOBER
Farmington Public Schools announced that enrollment is on the increase. Enrollment increased by 77 students over the previous year, placing the total student enrollment at 10,777.

As images of October 1929 came to mind, local stock market players and analysts braced themselves as Wall Street took a nose dive. While some called it a crash that prompted concern over the nation's economy, others called it a merely a correction.

Farmington city councilwoman Shirley Richardson is named Citizen of the Year at the silver anniversary celebration of the Farmington-Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce.

Farmington Hills Fire Department officials defend their use of live burns for training in the wake of the deaths of three firefighters near Millford during a training burn.



Farmington Hills firefighters Wally Kurzeja, Keith Lamper and Ron Battani visit with Michael and Carol Brazen and their newborn son, Christopher Michael, at Botsford General Hospital last March. The firefighters helped deliver the baby at the Brazen's home one early morning in March. "If it wasn't for them, this guy wouldn't be alive," Michael said.

Richard Headlee had a change of heart.



Richard Headlee had a change of heart.

● NOVEMBER
Election returns are in. In the Farmington Hills corner, the surprise was the defeat of veteran councilwoman Joan Dudley. Victors were incumbents Joe Alkateeb and Terry Sever and council newcomers Jean Fox and Aldo Vagozzi.

In the uncontested Farmington City Council race, the victories of incumbents Richard Tupper, Ralph Yoder and William Hartsock was no surprise.

Farmington Public Schools voters will be asked Feb. 9, 1988, to renew 5.75 operating mills plus to waive the effect of the Headlee Tax Limitation Amendment on the renewal. An approval in February would allow the value of the 5.75 mills to be retained without the tax limitation impact of the Headlee Amendment.

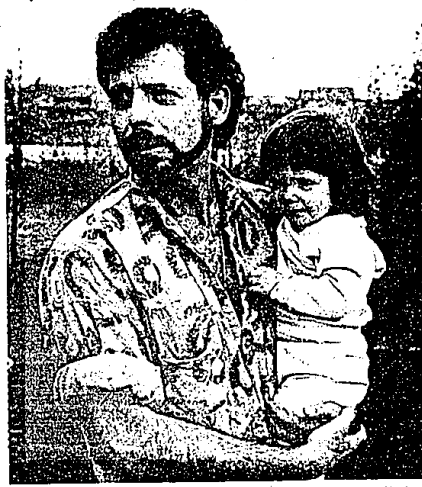
Surprise wasn't the theme of the night as the Farmington Hills City Council and Farmington City Councils elected its leaders. Councilwoman Jody Soronen was elected Farm-

ington Hills mayor and Terry Sever mayor pro tem. In Farmington, Richard Tupper was elected mayor and Arnold Campbell mayor pro tem.

Farmington Hills resident, Clifford Culham Jr., petitions the Oakland County Circuit Court to be removed from his life-sustaining ventilator. A victim of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, Culham, 57, got his wish and was disconnected from his life-sustaining equipment Dec. 18.

● DECEMBER
A man who raped and robbed two women in a house in northwest Farmington Hills Thanksgiving night may be responsible for at least six other rapes or attempted rapes in West Bloomfield, Bloomfield Township and Birmingham since April. No one has been arrested.

Members of Farmington's Downtown Development Authority continue reviewing options to alleviate downtown traffic congestion.



Farmington Hills resident Victor Capaldi and his daughter, Brittany, stand on the deck of their Farmington Ridge house which overlooks woods where he spotted what he thought was a panther last April. "It was pretty incredible," he said. The animal was reportedly three feet long and weighed about 50 pounds.

Center's story: struggle

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

1987 brought a series of ups and downs to the Farmington Community Center.

Financial woes for the 20-year-old community center grabbed the spotlight in the spring when then-president Nancy Finley made the center's deficit public before a joint meeting of the Farmington and Farmington Hills city councils.

Finley promised council members that everything that could be done would be done to save the historic center on Farmington Road, between 10 and 11 Mile. She also made it clear center officials were not looking to either city for financial help.

If the center ever goes under financially, it would revert to the Farmington Community Library, financed by the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills. That's a possibility that officials in the cities and community center made clear they are determined to avoid.

As center officials plotted their course for financial recovery and a brighter future, veteran executive director Betty Paine announced her retirement, effective June 1.

That's when Lawrence Freedman, former Farmington Public Schools assistant superintendent, stepped in as interim director until a new full-time director could be found for the center.

● THOUGH FREEDMAN made it clear his stay would be temporary, he stepped in and immediately began planning for the future. Under his leadership, a study planned by Finley and other board members,



The Farmington Community Center — a year of change.

was started. The still incomplete study is being conducted by Plante & Moran CPA's of Southfield.

The \$18,000 study is expected to provide a guideline for programming, community services, financing, staffing, administrative organization and use of the 8,400-square-foot building.

While kicking-off the study, Freedman and board members got the ball rolling on other things. Freedman plotted a new course for making the community center a cultural center. Some cultural programming was added. For example, a successful series of outdoor concerts, one of which featured jazz musician Marcus Belgrave, drew overwhelming crowds in the fall.

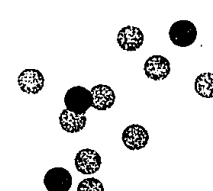
"We are not eliminating anything,

We are going to expand our cultural offerings to the community," Freedman said in July.

Freedman also made efforts to beef up the center's public relations and to improve staffing. He hired two new staff members during his short tenure, a public relations representative and another custodian.

By December 1, Dorothy Pfaff, a Bloomfield Township resident, left her position as volunteer services director at the Birmingham Community House to take the reins as the new executive director.

She has big hopes and plans for the center. "The community center is entering new horizons," she said. "The population is growing and the community center will attempt to meet the changing needs of the Farmington area."



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We welcome another new opportunity to thank you for our most important asset... your warm, enduring friendship.

Be assured that our high standards for quality, integrity, and personal service will continue to be upheld.

May your 1988 be blessed with joy, health, happiness and contentment for you and those you love.

Jacobson's

CLOSED TOMORROW. OPEN SATURDAY UNTIL 6 P.M.