



Traffic on Northwestern Highway in Farmington Hills was hampered by this fallen tree, which blocked the two northbound lanes, about a half mile north of Middlebelt, during Thursday's windstorm. Cars had to use the shoulder of the road to get around the tree.

RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Trees worst hit by high winds

Continued from Page 1

Outages totaled 25,000-30,000 Detroit Edison customers in Oakland County, Joy said.

Farmington Hills fire personnel helped treat an elderly man who had been blown over while walking on the sidewalk in the Kendallwood Shopping Center. They also helped a Scott Drive resident get back into her house after she walked out and the door blew shut, leaving a small child inside unattended.

Shortly after the high winds began about 1:15 p.m., traffic on Northwestern Highway was hampered by a fallen tree, which blocked the two northbound lanes about a half-mile north of Middlebelt.

A tree also fell across Halsted, north of 12 Mile, and another across the driveway of the Samaritan Counseling Center on Farmington Road, north of 11 Mile.

IN FARMINGTON, the city reported some downed electrical wires and at least one large tree that fell in a Pickett Street resident's back yard.

Jan Dahlhofer just moved to a

'Motorists didn't wait for help. They got right on the phone. The cellular telephones really helped. We get as many calls for service from our customers as we do now from law enforcement.'

— John Joy

road commission spokesman

house on Pickett one month ago, and got a taste of what a Michigan winter could be like when a tree was toppled in her back yard. The tree caused little damage to the house but took down power, telephone and cable television lines.

At the Farmington Crossroads Shopping Center at Nine Mile and Farmington Road, merchants had either partial or no power throughout much of the business day. Some posted closed signs and locked the doors. Others, like Fantastic Sam's, clipped hair by natural light.

Throughout Oakland County, at least 19 traffic signals were out by

late Thursday afternoon. Three signals were in Farmington Hills, all along 14 Mile — at Haggerty, Halsted and Middlebelt.

A major power line fell across 14 Mile, near Middlebelt, forcing the Farmington Hills Fire Department to shut the thoroughfare for an hour until Detroit Edison made repairs.

"The one (traffic signal) at Middlebelt was on a generator. But nobody could really tell. We had one of our (county) orange trucks in the intersection," Joy said. One traffic signal went out at the

Farmington Road and Colfax intersection in Farmington, Joy added.

While DPW crews and trucks were out in Farmington Hills keeping the roads clear of debris and branches, the fire department answered 14 calls of downed wires, including at Independence Green Apartments, which is at Halsted and Grand River, and along Orchard Lake Road, at 13 Mile and at Oakland Drive, the entrance to Oakland Community College-Orchard Ridge Campus.

IN FARMINGTON HILLS, the private Hillel Day School and three public schools, Power Middle School, Gill Elementary and Fairview Early Childhood Center, were all closed for the day due to power outages, said Pam O'Malley, Farmington schools' school/community relations director.

Though there were no storm-related traffic accidents, Farmington Hills police also were busy, logging 50 alarms, which were mostly false due to the high winds.

Staff writers Bob Sklar and Casey Hans and staff photographer Randy Borst contributed to this report.

Neighborhood nights planned by Hills council

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Neighborhoods will regularly have a chance to tell their history, show their best and air their concerns to Farmington Hills officials beginning in February.

"We're doing this to publicize some of the features some of the history and the roots the neighborhoods go back to. We basically have a commuter community. Many people don't realize we have a rich background," said councilman Aldo Vagnozzi, who suggested the program last year.

Beginning Monday, Feb. 26, one neighborhood will be invited to a special 6:30 p.m. meeting before the regular city council meeting every other month.

The new neighborhood recognition program will debut with Meadowbrook Farms and Woods, north of Eight Mile, east of I-275. Olde Town, in southeast Farmington Hills, will follow in March.

"I think it's a great idea. Giving associations the opportunity to respond to the city council is very good," said Jack Rajkovich, former chairman of the Council of Homeowners Associations of Farmington Hills.

"A lot of associations are in the dark about city government. On the

other hand, I think city government is sometimes unaware of what happens in their own city with the neighborhoods," Rajkovich said.

NEIGHBORHOOD OFFICERS are expected to follow a format in their presentations to city officials. Presentations will begin with a five-minute discussion on the subdivision's history and work of its homeowners association.

Officers will be asked to spend another 5-10 minutes on the subdivision association's activities and current events. That will be followed by a presentation on the subdivision's major concerns for their neighborhood or the city.

Vagnozzi said the idea of starting such a program came to him while walking through neighborhoods on his first city council campaign in 1987.

"The neighborhoods in Farmington Hills have distinctive features. You wouldn't know many of the neighborhoods were even there unless you were walking," he said.

One neighborhood, for example, has a game preserve. Others have ponds, lakes and lots of history. Many neighborhoods have one street, which with a little studying, will reveal that it's named after the builder or the builder's hometown, Vagnozzi said.

Hills man awaits drug charges

Continued from Page 1

ON TUESDAY, a federal drug enforcement task force arrested Wakefield at Detroit Metropolitan Airport. Wakefield had a half ounce of suspected heroin and \$125,000 in cash in his possession, Montl said.

Armed with a tip from an informant and a search warrant signed by District Judge Fred Harris of Farmington, Farmington Hills police raided Wakefield's home, near Orchard Lake Road and 10 Mile, on Dec. 22.

They seized 1 ounce of pure heroin, a half ounce of cut heroin and a

quarter pound of marijuana. The heroin had a street value of more than \$80,000. The marijuana had a street value of about \$250, Montl said.

Police also seized \$20,000 worth of jewelry they hope to keep under a state law that lets them keep property they believe had been bought with drug transaction proceeds. Seized property is converted to cash for use in drug enforcement and drug education.

Shortly after the Dec. 22 raid, Wakefield was released pending further investigation.

Homeowners pick officers

News briefs from the Farmington and Farmington Hills city halls will appear regularly in this column.

● FARMINGTON HILLS

● Officers elected — The Council of Homeowners Associations of Farmington Hills has elected 1990 officers.

The new officers are: Marty Krohner, president; first vice president, Gail Haynes; second vice president, Steven Reifman; secretary, Jim Atkinson; treasurer, Jim Vandenberg; trustee, Jack Rajkovich, former president.

● Rezoning OK'd — In 7-0 votes, the council enacted two rezoning requests Jan. 22.

One acre on the west side of Halsted, south of 13 Mile, from SP-1, special purpose district, to RP-1, planned residential district. The change is requested by the planning commission because the SP-1 district no longer allows day care centers.

CITY HALL news beat

ters, one of which, Children's World of Michigan, is now on the acreage. The residential district allows day care use. The change brings the zoning into conformance with the actual land use.

● Nine acres on the southwest corner of 13 Mile and Halsted roads, from RC-2, multiple family residential, to RCE, elderly housing. The change brings the zoning into conformance with the city's master plan for future land use.

● Assessment rolls OK'd — In 7-0 votes Jan. 22, the council approved two assessment rolls.

The mayor said, for example, the 1991 city sanitary sewer improvements for Rollicrest, north of 12

Mile. Participants have up to 15 years to pay off the average \$6,069 assessment.

● For sanitary sewer improvements for Nine Mile, west of Whitlinton to Averhill. Participants have up to 15 years to pay off the average \$7,940 assessment.

● Bid awarded — A bid of \$108,530 was awarded to the Whitlinton-based S.B.G. Construction Inc. for the Rollicrest and Nine Mile/Whitlinton sanitary sewer improvements.

● Date set — A public hearing is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 21, to consider Orchard Lake Road improvements from I-696 to 10 Mile.

● Bid awarded — A bid of \$87,600 was awarded to the Whitlinton-based Ultimate Construction Inc. for the renovation and addition to the white house on Hull Street, adjacent to the city hall complex at 11 Mile and Orchard Lake roads, for use as special services department offices.

New Hills panel under fire

Continued from Page 1

re-elected him, instead of Fox, as 1990 mayor.

FOX, WHOSE mayoral role traditionally would allow her to make board and commission appointments, considered the study group unnecessary and refused, as mayor, to appoint the committee.

Other council members, all of whom supported Sever in a 5-2 vote, were unmoved by Fox's and Vagnozzi's comments and approved the study committee.

They also appointed Sever and councilmen Lawrence Lichtman and Jonathan Grant as members. Sever's committee will study city issues that he believes could potentially compete for tax dollars. The agenda includes a new library, more parks and recreation land, a community activities center, renewal of the 65-mill parks and recreation tax and the Year 2000 report recommendations.

"The basic thrust and purpose is to marry some of these ideas. We have 4-5 interest groups working independently. We are going to find a common ground," Sever said. "We will not make decisions."

THE MAJOR projects could cost the city about \$30 million. The price tag is enough to warrant the committee, Sever added.

But his arguments didn't hold much weight with Fox and Vagnozzi.



Terry Sever
councilman

Aldo Vagnozzi
councilman

Fox said individual council members are free to study whatever they want. But she believes a three-member committee should not do the council's work.

"If they wish to do that as individuals, they have my blessings," Fox said. "The council shouldn't be fractured into individual parts."

The mayor said, for example, she would expect the Year 2000 steering committee to prepare recommendations for 1990 and present them to the council for consideration. "Everyone has had input into this (Year 2000) except your governing body," Fox added.

Fox and Vagnozzi argued that not only is the committee inappropriate but the topics to be studied are too major a concern to be discussed in private breakfast and luncheon meetings by three council members and city manager William Costick. They also said that some items, such as the library, were outside the city council's jurisdiction.

"As a group, we haven't made

much progress as a council in pulling these things together," Lichtman argued, disagreeing with Fox and Vagnozzi.

"It would just be unwieldy to act on (study) them (issues) as a seven-member council."

VAGNOZZI CRITICIZED having only three members on the committee. That's one less than the quorum required for a public meeting.

"The privacy was meant for convenience, not to hide anything from the public," Sever said. "We are, in fact, going to get public input by bringing in board and commission members and homeowner groups."

Councilwoman Nancy Bates agreed with limiting the committee to three members. "It makes sense to me. Four of us can't go. It would be a quorum."

When other council members threw their support behind Sever, Vagnozzi made last-ditch efforts to change some of Sever's plans. He was unsuccessful, however, in demanding that Fox make committee appointments.

He also was unsuccessful in having Fox make an ex-officio committee member, allowing the committee meetings to be public. That suggestion didn't prompt any discussion among council members.

"My popularity is at an all-time low. I started (as mayor) Jan. 1 and it's only Jan. 22," Fox said, frowning and feeling hurt while laying her head on the council table.

We will be

CLOSED

Tuesday, January 30

for our annual inventory

OPEN

Wednesday, January 31

during regular hours

Jacobson's