

1990 was good to Hills

Editor's note: The outgoing mayor of Farmington Hills traditionally prepares an end-of-the-year address on the state of the city. The following address was written by Jean Fox, mayor during 1990.

WHEN WE SURVEY the year just closed, we find that perhaps in spite of ourselves this city has accomplished a great deal.

Now I know there are those up here and out there who think we spend most of our time bickering, and there have been some dandy arguments. But the record tells a different story.

Perhaps the most important thing we have done this year is to begin our educational program on how local government operates. We have since early in the year been broadcasting these city council meetings.

Not only does this provide insights into the political and governmental process, in itself a valuable depiction, but it shows us in action, warts and all... as Samuel Johnson insisted when in the 18th Century Sir Joshua Reynolds asked to paint his picture.

We understand that as a result of our success, Novi and the school board, as well as some members of the planning commission, are considering televising their meetings.

POSSIBLY the second most important thing we've accomplished this year is to settle the longstanding Boys' Republic lawsuit which stemmed from 1989 disagreements.

We are happy to put this behind us, as we have preserved our zoning intact in this lovely residential area of our city, are working on a monitoring system, and have resumed cordial relations with the board and staff of the facility.

In fact, we were even invited to their Christmas Party, and we hope this show, now on the road, stays on track.

Another milestone this year has been the cooperation of handicapped individuals in our community to help enforce the handicapped parking allotted in shopping and office areas.

Citizens like George Roberts and others are making a difference, and we were the recipients of a wonderful editorial on Channel 7 from

Chuck Stokes commending this effort.

A fourth significant accomplishment has been the adoption of controls on toxic and hazardous materials in industrial and ITO zones in the city, and the hiring of an additional fireman to aid enforcement. This concern, unknown ten years ago, is the price of our admittance into the next century, with its evolving environmental concerns.

FIFTH, AND this has been generally misunderstood and unduly criticized by the press, we extended our voting procedures at the time of the general election in November into the high schools, allowing students for the first time since the 1930s a chance to have a mock election and practice the voting procedures they will soon be using.

This city, which has for some time been registering to vote students who become 18 at the high schools, exemplifies yet another concern for creating good citizens for the future.

This year has also seen (as a result of Mayor Terry Severs' efforts in 1989) a great increase in the number and amount of fines levied by the Liquor Control Commission on local holders of Class C licenses, even to the removal of three such licenses, for selling to minors, an action intolerable to this city council.

We are seeking to upgrade the city's qualifications for acquiring a liquor license; they are not a right, but a privilege, and deserve to be allotted to those who can use and enforce them properly.

This entire city council has completed a facilities study of needs and available land throughout the city for the foreseeable future.

Together, with the Year 2000 Plan, we are looking to serve better our senior citizens with an enlarged program at the Mercy Center, teens through cooperation with YMCA, we are inventing ballfields, and what it will cost to buy more land, have received grants of over \$400,000 for Heritage Park, completing an outdoor classroom and expanded walkways, the renovation of the Spicer House is complete, and it is being used for civic meetings and programs.

WE PURCHASED the 44 acres of



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Jean Fox, outgoing mayor

MDOT property with \$810,000 in state grants, and are preparing a campaign for renewal of the city's half mill voted money for parks and recreation programs next year.

In May we also hosted a statewide conference at Botsford Inn showcasing the city's ability to hold historical preservation in the face of rapid growth and development throughout, with over 100 attending from all over Michigan, as well as from two state universities and the Lansing state government.

We've devoted a lot of time to road improvements. First off, we assumed control of Farmington Road from 10 Mile to 14 Mile as a city road, the Oakland County Road Commission relinquishing control to us. We have almost completed the first mile \$5.5 million phase of the 12 Mile boulevard - our Christmas gift to you. Landscaping awaits next spring.

We also this year received a \$3.5 million grant for the second mile. We are now signing contracts for a \$3 million widening Orchard Lake from 10 Mile to Grand River, a complicated arrangement involved the city of Farmington, the road commission and the state of Michigan. We are finalizing a program to get noise barriers along I-596 to protect better Camelot Courts areas near Drake Road.

On another front, we have amended the tree ordinance to make us a more beautiful city, and if you don't believe this makes a difference, just compare the parking lots in the new Target/PM development and the renovated Crowley's Center with similar Target Store developments elsewhere in Michigan which do not have our ordinance provisions' Day and night.

WE HAVE a new \$1.1 million fire station at Nine Mile and Drake, dedicated this year by the Council; we have 112 units of low/medium cost senior citizens housing - Freedom Square at Drake and Freedom roads, thanks to aid and superior effort from councilwoman Nancy Bates.

We have signed contracts with the city's four major labor unions, assuring many years of peace and fine workmanship. We have dealt with several problems around the city, as well as approving \$16 million storm water program designed to alleviate flooding in the center of the city.

We've signed a new major multi-year contract for garbage pickup for residents, and in July, 1991, as a result of hours and hours of work this year, the city will be starting its curbside recycling program.

We've done several dozen other things, but time does not permit. All in all, it's not a bad record for this city of almost 75,000 souls to all of whom we wish a most joyous holiday season.

And to those who persist in believing this is just a part-time position. I challenge them to give it a try and do it, sometime.

And to Mayor Pro Tem Aldo Vagnoli, for his never-failing understanding and support, I wish a joyous and peaceful 1991.

Here are a few '91 predictions

SD WHO NEEDS Jean Dixon? Here are my predictions for 1991.

The U.S. Postal Service, reacting to the concerns of some Oakland County residents and following the lead of the secretary of state's car license division, will begin offering vanity ZIP codes.

For a fee of course, residents of Bloomfield Township, Beverly Hills, Garden City or any other place in the metro area can get a Birmingham ZIP code.

Codes of Choice will be the official name of the program. It will slow down mail delivery considerably, but at least no one will be stuck with a ZIP code to be ashamed of.

Cranbrook will finally place its 50-acre nature sanctuary on the open market. It will be bought by the Southland Corp., which will bring in bulldozers and cement trucks and build the world's first megamall to be anchored by a 2-

eleven store.

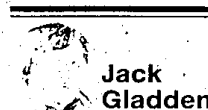
Plymouth Township will buy Mettetal Airport and then, to justify the purchase, will form its own Air Force.

Canton Township Supervisor Tom Vack, who has been trying ever since he took office to create a real downtown in a strip-mall suburb, will finally realize his dream after the township board of trustees gives him the authority to lease downtown Plymouth-Metrolink it to a site in the Ford Road Sheldon area will prove to be a bit of a problem however.

IN FARMINGTON HILLS, officials will decide that the police department's continuing undercover sting operations are getting too expensive and will offer a solution by passing a prohibition ordinance making it illegal to sell alcoholic beverages to unemploy-

Pizza king Tom Monaghan, in one of his boldest moves yet, will solve a number of problems by buying the former St. John's Seminary in Plymouth Township and Duns Scotus in Southfield.

He'll build domed stadiums on both sites and rename his baseball team "Pizza Tom's Traveling Tigers."



Jack Gladden

In Rochester the school board, reviewing its school holiday policy for the 41st time, will decide that the whole holiday concept is detrimental to the learning process and will ban celebrating, teaching or discussing any kind of holiday in any building owned or controlled by the school district.

And nearby Rochester Hills, which successfully banned smoking on the beach at Thelma Spencer Park, will enact an ordinance to make smoking illegal anywhere in the city, joining Quetzon City in the Philippines as the only other municipality in the world to make the use of a legal product illegal. It is unclear whether the Hills will jail smokers, as is the practice in Quetzon City.

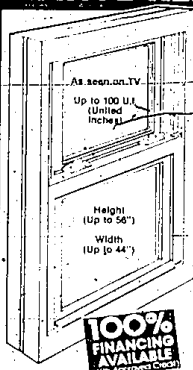
IN TROY the high school theater director will start planning for his December production in January since, under the school district's fine arts guidelines, he is required to announce the name of the proposed play several days in advance of auditions in order to give residents a chance to voice any objections they may have.

By November he will announce that there will be no high school theater production, after objections have been raised against "Romeo and Juliet," "Mary Poppins," "Cinderella," "The Sound of Music," "The Wizard of Oz" and a special one-man show featuring Mr. Rogers.

And on the political scene, Debbie Schluskel, the wunderkind of the Oakland County Republican Party who lost the primary race for state representative by one vote, then got wiped out as a write-in candidate in the general election, will return to the University of Michigan as a guest lecturer in the political science department, where she will teach a course in "Campaign Ethics."

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