

**ARTIST**  
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"There, they didn't encourage it," he said of drawing. It wasn't until later in his life that a U.S. teacher discovered his talent and invited him to use oil paints to express himself.

While starting life in the U.S., Hadjimarkos gave one of his paintings to a doctor friend who hung it in his office. Soon, Hadjimarkos' oil paintings gained popularity, enough for him to host exhibitions in the area and in Greece.

He doesn't paint much these days, but he still likes to make pictures, now using computer programs.

"Painting for me was not a way to make a living," said the retired machinist who lives in Farmington Hills with wife Stemma, who also enjoys being creative by making large dolls.

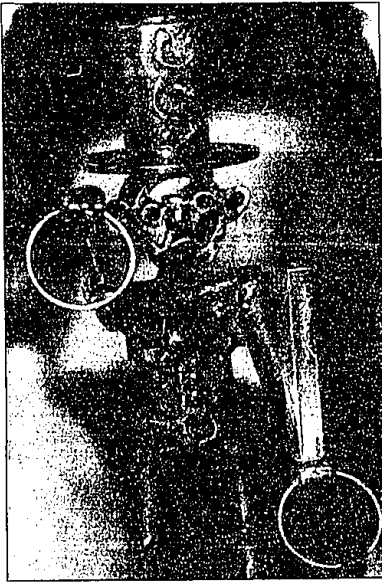
Hadjimarkos does what inspires him when it comes to making art. He keeps busy with his and his wife's garden in the summer (their neighbors enjoy the harvest of vegetables) and the dozens of bird feeders that fill the back yard. Not surprisingly, each bird feeder is hand-made.

Hadjimarkos painted landscapes of his homeland in Greece; pictures of his work and his metal sculptures fill the house. He and Stemma have two grown children and two grandchildren.

He said coming to America through a Farm Training program, through which he learned skilled trades, was like discovering a new world filled with opportunities.

"It was a different world," he said, his eyes lighting up at the memory.

Hadjimarkos said selling his paintings wasn't as much as a thrill as the people wanting to



Hadjimarkos works on canvas as well as with three-dimensional materials. FILE BREKLER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

display his work in their homes.

The steel sculptures he made from scrap metal tubing picked up from work are intricate in detail, including an old-fashioned, horse-drawn wagon with a couple holding the reins.

A saving grace from his difficult childhood in Greece was being invited back to the village school he attended and showing his artwork to students.

"I told them when I was your

age what happened to me when I would draw," he said. "I tell them you're lucky being born in a different time."

Nick and Stemma will be going back to Greece this year, as they do often. But he'll be glad to come back home.

"In this country, all you've got to have is a little imagination," he said. "We're the greatest country in the world."

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**LAUHOFF**  
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heard people talking about what's going to happen when the "new guy" is on board. "That's just change," Lauhoff said with a smile. "When that starts to happen, you know everybody else is ready, too. You realize things will be fine once you're gone."

It also helps to look back at a long and successful career. He started as a public safety officer at age 22. A decade later in 1984, he became the youngest director of public safety in Oakland County. He was named city manager 10 years ago.

"I always enjoyed the satisfaction of accomplishing things in the way I thought was best," Lauhoff said of his upwardly mobile career path. "Making decisions never bothered me. You don't look back to your decisions. You make the best one you can and you move on."

Even though Farmington is a smaller city, that doesn't mean less work for city staff. With fewer people, Lauhoff found himself having more direct contact with residents. While he is proud of the big accomplishments - purchase and renovation of the historic Civic Theatre, road and utility improvement projects - he says that's not the part of the job that meant the most to him.

"Sometimes, you get as much out of helping somebody with something everyone else would think is small," he said. "You get satisfaction out of the things you do on a daily basis as much as the big projects. There were hundreds of things we were able to accomplish here that all rise to the same level of satisfaction."

Lauhoff has been instrumental in a number of projects that will see the city into the next 50 years, like the expansion and

"I always enjoyed the satisfaction of accomplishing things in the way I thought was best."

Frank Lauhoff  
former Farmington city manager

rebuilding of Farmington Road and the lining of the city's sewers, which saved hundreds of thousands in tax dollars.

He believes the new city manager will have many opportunities to help move the city into the future as well. Chief among them will be the Main Street grant, awarded to the Farmington Downtown Development Authority. It provides three years of technical assistance and will require a cooperative effort that includes the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills, as well as the Chamber of Commerce.

Lauhoff believes Farmington will be much further ahead five years from now, primarily in the attention to and investment in the downtown area. Already, contacts with developers indicate a growing interest in the area; the addition of a pavilion in the Downtown Farmington Business Center parking lot and the transformation of Cowley's will help drive progress.

"All it's going to take is another project or two in the downtown area," Lauhoff said. "Other developers will see that, and it builds on itself."

"People don't realize the downtown is for 95,000 people in Farmington and Farmington Hills," he added.

Those 95,000 people will be needed to keep the area vibrant and growing. Government can only make the kinds of improvements that create an atmosphere for opportunity, Lauhoff said.

While willing to share memories, he had no advice for his replacement, who will likely be

Isabella County Administrator Vincent Pastue. Lauhoff was equally reticent to talk about his own managerial style, which he says has really been a blend of many he has studied over the years.

"You have to be able to adjust to the people who work for you," he said. "You have a goal in mind, and then you have to find a way to get there. And it's never as easy as you think it's going to be."

There's also the added trick of keeping the people involved funneled in the same direction as well. "A manager doesn't do these things alone."

Lauhoff started and ended his career with the same idea in mind, which he learned from his father, who worked for the phone company for 44 years.

"I came here wanting to do a good job," he said. "If I was taught anything, it was that."

He also credits former city managers like Bob Siefert and Bob Deadman with teaching him a lot about city government.

Over the years, Lauhoff believes he has changed quite a bit.

"I've become a lot more tolerant of how people perform their duties and how they get things done," he said. "That's a good thing. When you're younger, you're in a hurry. You don't let people learn from doing things."

"In this job, I think you have to be tolerant if you're going to succeed. What you try to do as a manager is you try to bring everybody up to a higher standard. I think that's what we've done here."

**PROPOSALS**  
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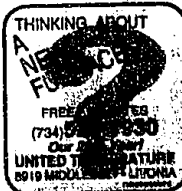
second annual Lessons in Love Contest. Winners receive a romantic evening on the town Thursday, Feb. 13. We want to hear about your romantic - or funny - wedding proposal. In 100 words or less, tell us how he (or she) popped the question. You could be one of two lucky couples to receive the following:

- Transportation, compliments of J.R. Tours, Inc. of Novi.
- A dozen red roses from Wesley Berry Florist of West Bloomfield.
- A romantic dinner for two at Little Italy in Northville.
- Candy from Kilwin's in Birmingham.
- A \$250 gift coin from Orin Jewelers of Northville and Garden City.
- One-night stay at Fraser Inn of Northville.
- Two tickets for the Feb. 13 Red Wings game.

Sorry, you'll have to buy the fancy duds, tip your hair stylist and pay for the baby sitter - a small price for romance.

Orin Jewelers plans to make an album of all the entries for future customers in need of wedding proposal ideas. Your words - from "Hey, babe, wanna get hitched?" to "May I have thy petal-soft hand in marriage?" - will forever be immortalized. Sigh. Now for the contest rules. They're simple: You must be at least 18 years old, limit your entry to 100 words or less and send your Lessons in Love entry to us by Friday, Jan. 24. Entries must include name, age, address, phone and/or e-mail.

And, of course, you must be very romantic or very funny - or both! Winners will be announced in your hometown newspaper Thursday, Jan. 30. Send entries to: "Lessons in Love Contest," Cathy Young, promotion manager, the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36281 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150; e-mail: cyoung@oe.homecomm.net; or fax: (734) 953-2232.



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