

# Farmlington Observer

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## Fire destroys Hills' condos

Fire destroyed six units in the Hunters Ridge condominium complex on Fourteen Mile in Farmlington Hills early Tuesday morning.

Although the blaze is still under investigation, a faulty furnace in one of the units is the suspected cause, according to acting fire chief Tom Johnson.

The first report was called in to the Farmlington Hills fire department at 7 a.m. The firefighters found the blaze limited to the basement of the unit where it started.

"There was a gas unit which we couldn't get off and it kept re-igniting the fire," said Johnson. "We had to leave it burn. It was a danger to our men."

Earlier in the year, Hunters Ridge was converted from apartments to condominiums. The destroyed units sold for \$200,000 each. One of the units was empty while another unit's occupants were on vacation. No injuries to residents were reported.

Firefighters' efforts were thwarted when the blaze reached the attic and spread to the remaining units, with flames fanned by a westerly wind.

The units, according to Johnson, were built before the code required fire walls between each apartment. This further hampered firefighters' efforts to contain the blaze to one unit.

"But each one of these units is separate. So we had to go from one unit, in and out, to the next, to fight the fire. It made it more difficult to fight the fire," said Johnson.

Three of the four Farmlington Hills fire companies, approximately 35 men, were called to fight the fire.

By 10 a.m. the blaze was under control.

"The men did one hell of a good job considering the construction of these units. One of the units is actually in pretty good shape," said Johnson.

While neighbors stood in the cold watching the blaze, the fire's victims huddled in the club house. "After seeing this, I'm not sure I want to continue to live in a place like this," said one neighbor as she surveyed the damage.

In May 1978, two Hunters Ridge residents were killed when their apartment caught fire. Officials suspect that blaze was caused by a cigarette which ignited a cotton-filled living room sofa.



Firefighters had the sub-freezing temperatures and wind to contend with in their battle with an early morning blaze which destroyed six

units at the Hunters Ridge condominium on Fourteen Mile in Farmlington Hills.

## Enforcement team stalks the county for drunk drivers

By MARY GNIEWEK

A word to partygoers who plan to drink and drive tonight: don't.

Even small amounts of alcohol can affect driving, warns Jerry Peddersen of the Traffic Improvement Association of Oakland County.

"The worst person to ask if he or she is too drunk to drive is the person who has been drinking," Peddersen said. "Have someone else take him home, call a cab, or let him stay over."

A special alcohol enforcement team coordinated by TIA and the Oakland County Sheriff's Department has been responsible for 650 arrests of drunk drivers since April.

In the second year of financing on a

four-year federal grant, the program isn't against people who drink, Peddersen said. It's designed for drunks who insist on driving.

"It's been pretty effective so far," he said. "We can account for 650 drunk drivers who didn't get involved in alcohol-related accidents."

An eight-car enforcement team operates with six sheriff's department vehicles, one state police car and another cruiser from whatever jurisdiction the team is working.

A portable breath testing unit is carried to the scene so that arresting officers don't have to spend time conducting tests back at the station.

A PERSON IS declared legally

drunk if the blood alcohol level reaches .10.

The average blood alcohol level of those arrested by the team is .17. One person in every four arrested has had prior alcohol-related offenses.

"Consequences depend on the district courts," Peddersen said. "Normally, the penalty of a first conviction includes a stiff fine, increased insurance costs, and the person is required to go to alcohol education school."

Penalty for a second conviction could mean lifetime loss of driver's license, he said.

Farmlington Hills police plan to have extra patrols on the roads tonight when the bars close two hours later than usual at 4 a.m.

"We might have anywhere from 10 to 15 cars out," said Captain Russel Conway of the Farmlington Hills traffic division.

"No doubt we'll run into a few more drunks than usual. It all depends on the weather, too."

"Let's hope that everyone gets home safely."

Farmlington's public safety department will make do with its usual number of night cruisers, four cars.

"It seems to provide an adequate level of protection," said G. Robert Seifert, Farmlington's public safety director.

"We've had no particular problem in the past on New Year's Eve."

THE DEPARTMENT'S policy 365 days a year is to help anyone within the city arrange transportation home if they're too drunk to drive, Seifert said.

"We'd be happy to."

The Michigan Licensed Beverage Association, whose members include bar owners across the state, and the Secretary of State have jointly issued and distributed 2,000 charts throughout Michigan listing the relationship between number of drinks and driving.

According to the chart, the weight of an adult determines how many drinks can be consumed safely.

Persons weighing between 100 and 240 pounds are safe with one drink, according to the chart. A 100-pound person who has two

drinks has a blood alcohol level of .08, close to the limit.

Persons weighing 120 pounds are reaching the limit with three drinks; those weighing 140 pounds surpass the limit with four.

A 180-pound person is legally drunk after five drinks, while a 220-pound drinker reaches the limit with the sixth drink.

Other factors affect drinking and driving, Peddersen says.

"If the person is overly tired or drinking while taking other medicines, alcohol can have a double effect."

Peddersen also recommends not allowing guests to pour their own drinks at parties.

"Sometimes one drink is equivalent to two or three."

## Morning after cures range from sensible to the exotic

New Year's Day brings out a desire in some persons to reform — to make noble resolutions for the coming year in which they'll face the world a little more trustworthy, slightly more organized and a few pounds thinner.

For some, the yearly ritual of forming resolutions begins the first thing in the morning when they resolve never, ever again to endure such a hangover.

A survey of Farmlington area bartenders and one hospital spokesman brings to light some time-honored advice for

this segment of the celebrating population.

The home remedies range from sensible, Dutch uncle like advice to recipes for some exotic cures.

The sensible approach is advocated by Russ Tuttle, spokesman for Botsford General Hospital in Farmlington Hills.

"There's no such thing as a hangover cure," he said. "Except don't get yourself in that position in the first place."

If, against all good advice, you do get yourself into that position, Tuttle re-

commends eating a light meal and staying in bed until the hangover runs its course.

"Rest. It should be metabolized into the system," he advised.

Exotic homemade remedies aren't part of Tuttle's arsenal against hangover, but he concedes, "If it works psychologically, there's nothing wrong with it."

"Part of medicine is belief. But there is no medical data to support all these weird mixtures."

The weirdest mixture Tuttle would recommend is tomato juice, although he has heard of a remedy consisting of one-part beer and one-part tomato juice.

"That sort of hair-of-the-dog-that-bit-you attitude toward hangovers prevails in advice from other quarters around town."

Debbie Lahner, who mixes drinks for Dunleavy's Pub and Grub on the afternoon shift, says that some patrons prefer to start where they left off the pre-

vious evening. In such hangover cases she recommends an alcoholic drink which contains cream such as a banche.

For persons who like to start out slower, she recommends a cola for the first drink followed about one-half hour later by a rum and cola.

For the truly wary, she resorts to Alka Seltzer and water.

"You know, plop, plop, fizz, fizz," she said.

Tomato juice and that souped-up-tomato juice known as a Bloody Mary are recommended by others.

"Tomato juice fills you up," said Carol Renodin of the Old Village Inn in Farmlington.

"But a lot of our customers ask for Bloody Marys the day after."

## Murder baffling

Farmlington police are still without clues in the murder of an 18-year-old woman whose nude body was discovered in a parking lot snowdrift near Grand River and Drake roads on Dec. 24.

"There are no leads at this time," said G. Robert Seifert, Farmlington public safety director.

The body of Debra Ann Rentschler, of Detroit, was found by an employee arriving for work at Tektronix, Inc., 24155 Drake, at 8 a.m.

Seifert believes the murder occurred

elsewhere and the body was dumped at the Farmlington site.

Police at first were unable to identify the victim, whose body was covered with tattoos on both arms, wrists and ankles.

Identification was completed Friday using fingerprints; an acquaintance of the victim also identified the body.

DETROIT HOMICIDE investigators are looking into a connection between the victim and 18 other murders of

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Downhill racer

Bob Hein gives his son, J.C. Hein, 7, a shove down the hill at Sblawsee and Farmlington roads. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

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Ed Nelson sold his VW Rabbit with many happy returns through his hometown Observer & Eccentric Newspaper. "I can't begin to tell you how many calls I received!" Remember, one call does it all.

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