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Twenty-five cents

Probe launched into juvenile burglary ring

By M.B. Dillon Ward
staff writer

The arrest of two juveniles for a breaking and entering at Fairmont Apartments in Farmington Hills February 16 has led to a full-scale investigation of a teen-age burglary ring by Farmington and Farmington Hills police.

Police are "interested in nine other breaking and enterings that happened in December in Farmington's south end that could be tied in," Farmington Detective James Madigan said.

Through interviews with the youths,

police have learned of several others who have burglarized residences or received and concealed stolen property.

Madigan and Farmington Hills Detective Paul Cavin say more persons could become involved as the investigation continues.

"Each time we talk to one kid, it implicates another," said Madigan. To Cavin's knowledge, these youths are names have cropped up so far all are students or graduates of Farmington High School.

Officers have noticed a pattern in the break-ins they believe may be attrib-

uted to the burglary ring.

"It's not an operation being conducted by criminal masterminds," said Farmington Public Safety Director G. Robert Seifer.

It's obvious "a bunch of high school kids" are responsible for quite a few breaking and enterings in Farmington, he said.

Items stolen most frequently in the burglaries include jewelry, especially gold, and 35mm cameras, Madigan said.

"They can hook a ring and take it into a pawn store for its gold value. But they really take a beating on what they're paid," he added.

No value is placed on diamonds or other stones, or on aesthetic or sentimental value. Because of that, people pawning jewelry often smash it with a hammer, making it unrecognizable, yet retaining its gold value, Madigan said.

THROUGH NAMES and information gleaned in interviews with the juveniles responsible for the Fairmont Apartments burglary, Madigan was able to obtain warrants for two adults Friday — one for breaking and entering, and one for receiving and concealing stolen property. He petitioned Oakland County Probate Court for two more warrants for a pair of teen-agers.

Cavin today is seeking a warrant

from 47th District Court for an adult he interviewed. Two or three other juveniles may be arrested, pending the issuance of warrants from probate court, Cavin said.

Information obtained in police interviews enabled officers to recover about \$2,000 in cameras, jewelry, and sporting equipment from the home of a 17-year-old Farmington resident (for whom Madigan obtained a warrant Friday).

Also, Farmington police believe they have solved a February 14 break-in on the 3400 block of Arundel Street in Farmington. Stolen goods included jewelry, cameras, a pewter service set

and calculators valued at \$2,000.

One factor that raised the suspicions of Farmington police was the proximity of the breaking and entering at Fairmont Apartments (at Nine Hills and Drake) to burglaries that have occurred recently in Farmington, Madigan said.

Farmington Hills police were informed of Wednesday's break-in by a couple residing near the burglarized apartment on the 22000 block of Braeside Street.

Farmington Hills officers discovered the youths had entered the apartment by kicking in a window and had ransacked the apartment.

Extra-hours bid is lost by eatery

By M.B. Dillon Ward
staff writer

It looks as though the Ram's Horn Restaurant's petition drive to remain open 24 hours a day was all in vain.

The newly opened restaurant at 32435 Grand River in Farmington collected more than 300 customers' signatures and presented them to the Farmington City Council, asking that a city ordinance be changed. But in an approved motion introducing an ordinance amendment at Monday's council session, restaurant hours were extended only for one hour.

Restaurants in the city whose parking lots lie within 150 feet of a residence may operate from 5 a.m. to 1 a.m. Monday through Friday, and from 5 a.m. to 2 a.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Kirk Ramsay, part owner of the Ram's Horn, said the move will render his restaurant 10-20 percent less profitable.

"This cuts us off from any late night action — the bar crowd, people from the bowling alleys and square dances — it hurts us a lot," Ramsay said.

"We're just frustrated and hanging back at this point. We've invested a lot to beautify this community, and they (councilmembers) don't seem to be concerned with whether we make it or not."

BUT FARMINGTON Mayor Alton Bennett said "we definitely care. With any project you have to sit back and take a look at it and decide which way you can best serve the residents of the city. That's what we attempted to do... when Ram's Horn leased property."

The ordinance was drafted at a time when "to our knowledge, no one was operating a restaurant 24 hours. We took action at that time to see that any restaurant that abutted residential areas was not operating 24 hours," said Bennett.

Councilmember Ralph Yoder said Ram's Horn owners should give up trying to change the council's mind.

"They were well aware (before opening) that they wouldn't get 24-hour operation."

"We gave them an extra hour, and knew it wouldn't satisfy them. Nothing (short of 24 hours) would. But they won't get it," said Yoder.

The issue was considered by council from a "sustenance standpoint. Councilmembers don't believe that the three hours Ram's Horn will be closed will be enough to put it out of business, said Yoder.

Cheese is distributed

About 300 five-pound bricks of cheese will be distributed from 10 a.m. to noon tomorrow from the Department of Special Services at Farmington Hills City Hall.

Farmington-area residents will be asked to provide proof that they are unemployed in order to receive cheese. The giveaway is being conducted through the city's emergency food operations program mandated by former Gov. William Milliken.

For more information, call city hall at 474-6115.



The newest craze sweeping across America is home video which permits the movie lover and connoisseur to enjoy their favorite entertainment in the comfort of their home. On Thursday, the Farmington Observer is featuring an entire page telling you how a significant part of that revolution is taking place right here. Readers will learn how the various systems operate, where to purchase the equipment and how the new industry has caused a legal stir which has reached all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. We hope you enjoy reading about these developments as much as we enjoyed putting this feature together.



On the prowl

If Michigan's latest addition to the world of professional football, the Michigan Panthers, have any opening night jitters, they can depend on their 38-member cheerleading squad for some encouragement. Roxanne D'Asconzo, the reigning Miss Farmington, will

be making her debut as a Panther cheerleader on March 19 when the Panthers play their first home game at the Silverdome. For a closer look at cheerleader's training camp, please turn to Page 3A.

Wins \$100,000

Hills man beats big oil in court

By Mary Klemo
staff writer

A Farmington Hills man will receive \$100,000 following settlement of a breach of contract suit that he filed against the Amoco Oil Co.

Edward Kling, who worked in various middle management roles at Amoco for some 20 years, charged in the suit that the company had promised him an opportunity to become an Amoco dealer and operate as an independent businessman.

Kling filed suit against Amoco in April 1981 after he claimed it refused to follow through because of a new corporate policy regarding former employees.

"It (the lawsuit) was based on the fact that I had a promise from Amoco Oil, they changed their policy, and I felt I was wronged," the 44-year-old area sales representative said. "I was standing up for Ed Kling and my family."

Detroit attorney Jean D. Artman, who represented Kling in the lawsuit, said the case is significant because

most suits against Amoco don't go to trial.

"More often than not (the case) is killed through a summary judgment motion," she said. "When the plaintiff survives the summary judgment, the settlement is usually for \$10,000 or \$15,000."

Attorney Daniel G. Wylie, of the firm Dykema, Gossett, Spencer, Goodnow and Trigg, who represented Amoco, said Amoco did change its policy concerning leasing stations to employees in mid-1980. But the policy change, which made requirements for employee leasing stricter, didn't affect Kling's situation, he said.

Kling had "rather general" discussions with his employer about leasing two planned stations, Wylie said.

One proposed station, to be located at Farmington and Schoolcraft roads in Livonia, was never built because the city denied the necessary zoning change he said. Amoco filed suit about the issue, which is scheduled to go to trial this year, Wylie said.

Amoco dropped plans for the other station, proposed for 12 Mills and Novi

roads in Novi, after reviewing its market potential, Wylie said.

"The main reason they weren't leased is they simply weren't built," he said.

"He did express a very strong interest in those two service stations," Wylie said. "It was his understanding they would be leased to him. He expressed an interest in them, and they never became available for leasing."

"The case has been settled," he went on. "It doesn't mean that anyone won or lost, it doesn't mean anyone was right or wrong."

Under the terms of the settlement, Artman said, Kling is to receive \$75,000 in a lump sum and \$25,000 in employment-related benefits, such as a three-month salary for the months of February through April of this year, when he won't be working for Amoco.

Wylie said the conditions of the settlement called for Kling to resign from the company in order to become entitled to receive the \$25,000 in benefits.

"That's not new money," Wylie said. "That's normal retirement severance benefits."

The settlement was negotiated during a 3-1/2-day day jury trial before

Federal Court Judge Robert DeMasco this month.

Amoco sought two summary judgments during the two years the case was in litigation. The trial began Feb. 7 of this year.

The first motion, filed in late 1981 or early 1982, argued that there wasn't a solid basis for a promise, Artman said. She said DeMasco ruled against the motion. However, Wylie said the judge granted the motion but gave Kling the right to amend the complaint to seek damages.

Both attorneys said it was a common transaction for longtime Amoco employees to ask the company for stations of their own and become dealers.

"Mr. Kling has several very close friends who learned the oil industry from the inside and out. That kind of background serves them very well," she said.

Kling, a 13-year resident of the city, said he and his family — consisting of his wife and two children — were pleased with the settlement. Artman said he has received the \$75,000.

"I'm looking to the future," Kling said. "This is behind us."

First-degree murder trial is set for May

Farmington Hills resident Phillip Wayne Crowley, also known as Wayne Smith, will be tried for first degree murder in Detroit Recorder's Court in connection with the shooting death of a Southfield man and his fiancée January 29.

Crowley, 29, of 28210 Eight Mile Road, stood mute at his arraignment February 22 before Recorder's Court Judge Robert Evans. He is being held without bond at Wayne County Jail. He is charged with two counts of first degree murder, and one count of possession of a firearm in the commission of a felony.

Crowley is accused of killing James Mathieu, 25, of Southfield, and his fian-

cée, Ann Marie Verdulla, in Verdulla's Detroit home.

Crowley worked as a machine operator at the A T & G Company at 31000 Eight Mile for about five years until recently and has held a variety of temporary jobs, according to his attorney, Farmington Hills' John McDonald. The case is tentatively set for trial May 11 before Recorder's Court Judge Justin C. Ravitz.

A preliminary examination was held before 16th District Court Judge Richard Lubinski February 14, and a pre-trial conference before Ravitz Friday.

Neither McDonald, Wayne County prosecuting attorney Douglas Baker nor A T & G officials wished to disclose further details about the case.

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