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Watch program bears fruit

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Farmlington's nine-month-old Neighborhood Watch Program has had its first success story.

With the help of a couple of phone calls from members of the Farmlington Meadows watch program, Farmlington police nabbed four persons Sept. 1 for allegedly taking about \$1,000 worth of items from a garage, said Detective Chuck Lee, investigator and crime prevention officer.

"This is the first arrest that this department has made on information they have received from Neighborhood Watch people," Lee said.

As of last Friday, Lee said, the suspects, two age 15 and two age 18, were free pending the issuance of warrants on the adults and the filing of petitions on the juveniles.

Police are also questioning one of the 18-year-olds about other larcenies in the area, Lee said. Police refused to divulge the suspects' names.

The four were arrested just after 11:35 p.m. Sept. 1 when police received a call from a resident who noticed a "strange vehicle sitting in his driveway," Lee said.

As officers went to Laurelwood in Farmlington Meadows Subdivision, dispatchers received a second call from that Neighborhood Watch area. That caller reported that his garage had just been broken into and gave a description of a car with youths inside.

THE CAR MATCHED the description of the one parked in the first caller's driveway just a few minutes earlier, Lee said.

The car in the first caller's driveway, Lee said, contained about \$1,000 worth of items that the second caller identified as just stolen from his garage.

About seven minutes after Farmlington police dispatchers received the Neighborhood Watch call, three of the four suspects were apprehended while walking near some homes a few blocks away, Lee said.

A fourth suspect was later picked up in Livonia, Lee said. "Because of the alertness of the homeowner who investigated why his dog was barking and his wife quickly going to the phone and telling the police about the 'suspicious vehicle' the police were able to respond to the area quickly and armed with detailed information," Lee said.

The Farmlington Meadows Subdivision is one of 21 Neighborhood Watch streets in Farmlington.

Farmlington began the Neighborhood Watch program last January when residents on Lamar, off Orchard Lake Road, first organized.

"What's difficult to measure is how much crime has been deterred by the signs on the street and stickers in the (homeowners) windows," Lee said.

"Signs are the big selling feature," he added.

BESIDES THE 21 streets already organized under Neighborhood Watch, Lee has three organization meetings scheduled for other areas of the city this month.

"So far everything has been word of mouth," Lee said.

The watch program doesn't mean a lot of hard work or attending regular meetings, Lee said.

"We ask our people to meet twice a year and that's to get their initial certification. That's it," Lee said.

Certification boils down to neighbors receiving Neighborhood Watch stickers, a manual and having signs posted on their streets, he said.

Through the program, callers remain anonymous by identifying themselves by a number in reporting something suspicious, Lee said.

The caller's responsibility ends with the call, Lee said.

"We don't want them patrolling the streets or taking things into their own hands," he continued. "We are trying to make people aware, teach them how to spot and report suspicious vehicles to the police. They are taught to report these things immediately."

Residents interested in forming a Neighborhood Watch program in their area should contact Lee at the Farmlington Public Safety Department.



Suzanne Miller covers herself with memorabilia from the Republican National Convention which she attended in Dallas and where she had one of the best times of her life.

She'll take GOP brand politics

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Suzanne Miller is hooked on politics. Any type of politics won't do though. As far as the 19-year-old Farmlington Hills resident is concerned, the Republican Party is where it's at.

But watching the Republican Party and rooting for President Ronald Reagan's re-election from her living room wasn't good enough.

Instead, she decided to be right in the heart of the party by volunteering to work at the party's convention last month in Dallas.

"I thought it would be a chance to meet people and help toward the re-election," said Miller, a Wayne State University sophomore.

As a volunteer, Miller was required to pay for her flight as well as her expenses while in Dallas.

HER DUTIES included just about every kind of help the convention-goers and organizers needed.

"I haven't come down yet," she said. "It was an incredible experience. I liked the spirit."

One day she helped transport Republican women from one hotel to another to meet with First Lady Nancy Reagan. A short time later she was watching the door, making sure no one without a ticket got into the luncheon. Later in the day she delivered messages and answered phones at the Lowes Anatole Hotel — the Reagan and Bush headquarters.

While standing near the luncheon site for Nancy Reagan, Miller said she met every body. Jeanne Kirkpatrick, Elizabeth Dole, Olympia Snow, Phyllis Schlafly.

Despite her volunteer work, Miller found time for fun.

The first day in Dallas she witnessed

"Tears came to my eyes as he (Reagan) spoke. His sincerity is so real."

— Suzanne Miller
GOP volunteer

Vice President Bush's arrival, went to a reception for U.S. Rep. Jack Kemp, R-New York, and later to a party given in honor of the delegates and guests.

While Miller worked during the day, the big question was how to get into the convention center at night to watch the proceedings and listen to the famous speak.

ARMED WITH a guest pass for two of the convention nights, Miller was faced with finding guest passes for another two nights at the center.

That's where her job as a volunteer came in handy.

"It was a search," she said.

But luckily all delegates were given guest passes. After noon she had met some of the delegates without guests, the passes were hard.

Sitting in the guest section — located behind the Dole of the convention center where delegates and alternates sat — Miller came face-to-face with people, who before the convention, were only names or photographs.

"I met Bob Dole (the Kansas senator and 1976 vice presidential running mate on the Gerald Ford ticket). I got his autograph. I figured it might be worth something someday," said Miller, recently elected the Farmlington Hills 10th precinct delegate.

Miller's favorite moment came while Nancy Reagan was speaking.

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Newscaster turns her skills to teaching

By Tom Panzenhagen
staff writer

Former TV news anchorwoman Charlene Mitchell is the new broadcast instructor and general manager of student radio station WSPJ-FM at Southfield High School.

She moved into an isolated office behind the station's studios about two weeks ago.

"My first days here, some teachers came down and said, 'Don't keep yourself buried down here, come out to lunch with us.' That would never happen in TV," Mitchell said.

"In TV, they stab you in the back. They stab you in the face. You can walk down a hall and someone will come right up to you and stab you in the face, tell you they want your job."

"Here it's relaxing, fun, challenging. It's new to me, and I'm beginning to learn again. And when you go home at night, you feel like you've accomplished something."

MITCHELL SPENT 13 years in TV news, joining in Toledo with stops in Baltimore, Washington, D.C., Boston and Detroit. She left WJBR-TV, Chan-

nel 2, in January after a one-year stint at the Southfield-based station.

She left, she said, because she was learning little and teaching a lot.

"I'd become disenchanted in the last couple of years, seeing the people who were coming into broadcasting. A lot of them were neophytes, barely literate as far as that goes, barely journalists," Mitchell said.

"After a while, you find yourself angry — not because they got a break but because you worked hard and you want them to, too. And the sad thing is, they're not going to get any better."

Mitchell, 34, was at a crossroads.

She and her husband, Richard Rodgers and their 3-year-old son, Jonathan, had moved to the Detroit area to be near her parents in Toledo, "because I thought it was a good idea for my son to know his grandparents," Mitchell said. So they moved to Farmlington Hills.

But her job at Channel 2 wasn't working out, "and the hours were atroc-

ious. That's the way TV is. You work a lot of overtime and you get burned out," she said. Mitchell often worked the 7:35 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. newscasts on the same day.

THEN A FRIEND called with news that the broadcasting instructor and station manager's job was open at Southfield High School. At the time, Mitchell admitted, she didn't know the radio station existed.

But she was aware of the school's reputation for excellence and familiar with school superintendent Carl Hassel, whom she had interviewed once for Channel 2 news.

She interviewed for the job and quickly realized: "I could not have designed a better job for myself. . . . I was afraid not to take it."

"I'm at a point in my life where I'm more concerned about the rest of my life. I'm past the ego stage. And I wanted a challenge."

"I've worked at top-notch stations,

won three Emmys (for news reporting). I know I can make it in the big time. I've done that. But I'm tired of being a 9-to-5."

"And I wanted to work with people who can teach me something. Last year (at Channel 2), I was doing more teaching than learning," she said.

MITCHELL SAID she misses the limelight and the urgency of her TV news jobs but foresees a smooth transition to a teaching career.

"I'm not all fun and games," she emphasized. Mitchell said "I can be stern," as students already have discovered, she added.

She plans to run hands-on radio classes, with students filling the airwaves from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily. WSPJ, she stressed, is a fully operational, FCC-licensed radio station.

"A lot of high schools have closed circuit (radio) or whatever; this is real," Mitchell said.

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Hearing set for cable

The Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission (SWOCC) will hear residents' comments and questions about MetroVision cable firm's proposed rate increase at a public hearing scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Farmlington city council chambers, 33600 Liberty.

MetroVision wants to increase rates beginning Nov. 1, 1984. The proposed increase would affect residents who subscribe for the Tier III level of service.

Subscribers currently pay \$7.25 a month for Tier III (channels 2-113) service. MetroVision wants to increase the monthly rate to \$9.93. The installation

charge would remain the same.

The proposed rate increase would not affect residents who are subscribing to three or more pay services, such as HBO, Cinemax or Showtime. Monthly rates and installation charges for Tiers I and II would remain the same.

The cable firm is also requesting an increase from \$15.50 a month to \$4.80 for each additional outlet (without remote control).

REASONS FOR the requested rate increase are:

- to ease MetroVision's additional upfront costs for building the system;
- to offset the firm's increased

costs for providing the entertainment channels;

and the general financial condition of the entire cable industry.

Following the public hearing, SWOCC members are expected to make a recommendation to MetroVision's request. The Novi, Farmlington, and Farmlington Hills city councils then have 60 days to consider the recommendation, according to Larry Samonelson, SWOCC executive director, who is the public representative to the privately-owned cable firm.

Amendments to the tri-city cable franchise are also expected to be discussed during the public hearing.

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| ATTENTION | 47-64-66 |
| HOME DELIVERY | \$61.00 |
| CLASSIFIED ADS | \$910.00 |

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Classified advertising begins in SECTION C of today's paper.