

Suspect nabbed in break-ins

BY WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills, police believe they have solved a rash of 11 break-ins in the Middlebelt and 10 Mile area, after the arrest of a suspect.

"This case took a lot of resources," said Inspector Marty Bledsoe. "I think the businesses in the area are relieved that we've caught what we think is the person responsible."

Police saw a pattern of smash and grab break-ins last year in the area beginning in February and ending in May.

The Happiness Is Forist on Middlebelt was broken into on Feb. 27 and again on Feb. 29, the same time as Midway Cleaners at Middlebelt and 10 Mile.

Police believe the same suspect then broke into Flair Cleaners on 10 Mile west of Middlebelt (March 4 and March 13-14), Liebig's Marathon at Nine and Middlebelt (April 19), Arc Spring on Eight Mile (April 19-30).

Smokers Only at Middlebelt and 10 Mile (May 2), the Farmington Party Store on 10 Mile (May 3) and Mai Kai Cleaners (May 3-4).

"It looked like the same type of crime in the same area," said Detective Al Soderlund.

When Smokers Only was broken into on May 31, the alarm went off and officers found broken glass and blood at the scene.

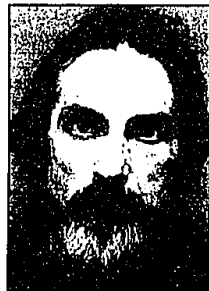
"They also found an abandoned bicycle with a cash drawer at a nearby creek after a search by K-9 dogs from the Michigan State Police.

They sent the blood samples to the State Police Crime Lab in Northville for analysis.

On June 10, a man with a cut that appeared to be caused by glass was arrested for child neglect and was taken in for questioning about the break-in at Smokers Only.

"He said the bike was his, but claimed it was stolen," Soderlund said.

Police issued more fingerprints



Gary Allen Dwyer

and a blood sample from the Farmington Hills man, 43, for DNA blood analysis, a process that can pinpoint the identity of a person to near certainty.

Late last summer, the man was arrested for operating under the influence of alcohol, his third such offense.

He was sentenced to serve time in the Macomb Regional Correctional Facility.

Just after the first of the year, results from the state police came back linking the suspect to the blood on the glass at Smokers Only and the bike.

"We believed we had our man because we've only had a couple of sporadic break-ins since June in that area," Soderlund said. "Everything else has stopped."

Gary Allen Dwyer stood mute at his arraignment Jan. 29 before Judge Maria Parker in 47th District Court in Farmington. He waived his preliminary examination and was returned to prison.

Parker set his bail at \$26,000 cash surety even though he remains in jail. His arraignment in circuit court hasn't been scheduled. Breaking and entering is a 10-year felony.

"I'm really pleased with the job our officers did on this case," said Chief Bill Dwyer. "We really had a bad situation in that area."

Last year was the first year that burglaries increased in Farmington Hills after 12 straight years of decline, Dwyer said.

Sexual assault case expected to go to trial

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

A 1994 rape case involving a Farmington teenage girl is expected to go to trial after all.

Jeremy Liszewski of Farmington Hills and Anthony Palushaj of Novi withdrew their pleas of no contest to one count each of third-degree criminal sexual conduct after Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Barry Howard refused to grant the pair home youthful trainee status.

The charges stem from the rape of a 16-year-old girl during a house party in the Farmington Meadows subdivision May 13, 1994.

The girl, who is now 18, testified she was forced to have oral sex and intercourse.

The victim protested the defendants receiving home youthful trainee status, which allows minors to have the conviction removed from their criminal record after a probationary period. The defendants were under 18 at the time.

A trial date has not been set but is expected to start later this month. Both are free on \$10,000 bail.

The case has been delayed

for many reasons, including a more than a year wait for DNA evidence.

"The concern you have with an older case is that evidence may have been lost," said Jonathan Couvatt, prosecuting attorney. "All the evidence has been retained in this case because we anticipated that they might withdraw their pleas — with the primary evidence coming from the victim."

"We've had conversations with her and she has no problems with proceeding."

The defendants entered into a Cobbs Agreement with the judge, Couvatt said. The agreement allows a defendant to enter a plea based on what type of sentence he or she would expect to get.

If the judge changes his mind after consideration, the defendant can withdraw the plea.

Palushaj's attorney declined to comment and Liszewski's attorney could not be reached.

Third-degree criminal sexual conduct involves penetration and is a felony. If convicted, each count carries a maximum sentence of 16 years in jail.

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