

# Farmington debate coach honored for his 55 years

By TIM SMITH  
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There's no sense disputing the dedication Lloyd Smith has toward the Farmington High School Debate Club. Nor the respect his team members have for him.

On Wednesday night, during a season-ending awards dinner at Botsford Inn, Smith was honored for 55 years of service to the debate club. Past and present team members were there when he was "surprised" by the awarding of a framed photograph of

the 1998-99 team.

"That was a nice party," said Smith Thursday afternoon, adding that he was thrilled to be recognized.

A note came with the picture, "thanking me for being coach for 55 years," Smith said. "Well... I do it because I like it."

Smith wouldn't say how long he'd continue. "One year went into another year and here I am."

Farmington High students such as Benjamin York are glad that the coach is still around, enjoying the point-counterpoint

world of debate.

"He's always giving encouragement. He goes everywhere with us," said Benjamin about the 80-year-old Smith. "... He's been paying coats for us to go to tournaments."

Asked if Smith could be considered the debate team's entire booster club, Ben replied, "Yeah, exactly."

Smith, who taught at Farmington High 1940-80, downplayed his role.

"I just visit every rehearsal, make remarks, critique them," he said. "And I line up tournaments, arranging transportation, that kind of thing. It's a busy, busy time during the season."

The next big trip is in May, when the debate club travels to Mackinac Island for a state tournament.



Recognized: The Farmington High School Debate Team ended its season with a tribute to veteran coach Lloyd Smith; here with team members.

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Smith said students develop important skills on the debate club, which meets Monday evenings during the school year.

"It gets them so they're not afraid to get up and say their say," Smith said. "They learn how to deliver their message in such a way to get a response. Most of them have a pretty good

technique."

Assisting him are FHS graduate Matt Zelman and teacher Dennis Skowronski, who stepped in to lead the squad in 1997-98 while Smith recovered from open heart surgery. There are 20 team members in grades 9-12.

The strategy of debate, and

tournaments, hasn't changed much since 1944 when the Farmington High team was formed. According to Smith, the goal remains for students to "think on their feet and win their points," to convincingly prove or disprove a given proposition.

But Smith said there have

been some changes over the years in how kids debate.

"The biggest difference is the speed (of a speaker) used to be slower," he explained. "With the tendency to race-horse, the judges understand it but the general public doesn't."

## Police seek info on robber armed with hammer

A robber armed with a hammer made off with a small amount of cash, ~\$50 to \$60 during a hold up at the 7-Eleven on 10 Mile Road and Middlebelt around midnight Jan. 27.

Around midnight, the man startled the night attendant, who was near the magazine rack, when two men entered the

store.

The robber held the hammer over his head threatening to hit the 53-year-old employee and ordered him to the register. A second man emptied the cash drawer while the robber with the weapon helped himself to cigarettes.

The pair left, leaving a trail of

U.S. government food stamps behind. Southfield police K-9 unit dogs followed a trail to the Farmington Public Schools building on 10 Mile where it ended next to a district truck.

A similar robbery took place at the Shell Station on Northwestern and Middlebelt. Madison Heights and Ferndale police are investigating if there is a possible connection to robberies in their cities.

The suspects are described as

two black males in their 20s.

The man with the hammer is 6 feet tall and weighs 170 pounds. He was wearing a black ski mask, gray sweat shirt and black pants.

His accomplice is 5-foot-9 and 160 pounds. He was wearing a blue bundanna on his face, black jacket and matching pants.

Anyone with information is asked to phone the Farmington Hills police at 473-9660.

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**Trivia Questions** (Please circle only one answer per question)  
Answers can be located within Laurel Park Place Shopping Center.

- According to studies, who receives the most valentines?  
a. Moms b. Sweethearts c. Children d. Teachers
- The first paper valentines were given...  
a. during the Elizabethan era (the 1500s)  
b. by cave-men  
c. by Ben Franklin
- We celebrate Valentine's Day on February 14 because:  
a. St. Valentine was born on that date.  
b. The first heart-shaped box of chocolate was manufactured on that date.  
c. It is said that bird mating begins on that date.
- Which statement is true of the roving twentys?  
a. America first began selling commercial valentines.  
b. Receiving a valentine during Prohibition was illegal.  
c. Shoes with hearts on them were all the rage.
- Cupid...  
a. is the whipped son of Venus.  
b. was born in the heart of an ankhoke on February 14.  
c. is said to be faster than a speeding bullet.

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