

Shop, swap and sell

Young entrepreneurs learn the fine art of business

BY TIM SMITH
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Young entrepreneurs who participated in Thursday's "Shop, Swap and Sell" event seem to already have their priorities in place.

"What he makes will go for a Nintendo game," said Farmington Hills mom Amy Long, watching his 8-year-old son James try to sell tie-dyed socks, T-shirts and pillow cases he made himself. "This is his first venture as a salesman, but he's always loved shopping."

With more than two hours remaining in the free event, sponsored by the Farmington Downtown Development Authority, James had sold enough to nearly break even for all of the supplies.

A little marketing also went on at the table. James and his sister Hannah, 4, enticed customers by offering free plastic toys with each tie-dye item purchased.

But what if bargain browsers didn't buy a \$8 T-shirt or pillow case? Well, they had to spend a quarter for each toy.

Amy Long said she liked the idea of a kids-only garage sale, for various reasons.

"There's really no other place that the kids can do this on their own," she said. "They priced it on their own, they're selling it on their own. It gives them a chance to learn about business."

Another mom agreed that the swap event is something kids can benefit from.

"They decided what they wanted to sell and they discussed the price," said Peggy Haapala, of Farmington. "... I want them to do it themselves. But I have a pretty good idea they're spending more than they've made."

Items being sold by the Haapala kids - Megan, 10, James, 7, Mary, 6 - included everything from a Baby Bop doll to pre-school educational toys and puzzles.

"This is their first year (working a table) but they've attended them before," Peggy Haapala said.

They were having fun buying stuff, too. James spent 50 cents for a plastic bag filled with hockey cards.

"He's really excited about that," Peggy added.

At one of the other tables set up in the parking lot were three 12-year-olds from Farmington, David Lin, Alex Roe and Alex Zaks. Like many of the other swappers, they grabbed items from around the house that they don't par-

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Amy Long
-Parent

ticularly use anymore and put them up for sale.

Spread out on their table was quite an assortment. There were compact disks (such as "Weird Al" Yankovic and the Bee Gees), action figures and comic books, to name just a few.

"I inherited all my comic books for free," said Alex Zaks. "I'm selling them for \$2 a piece. So far, I've made about five bucks."

But he hopes to unload whatever he can. "I've had some of this stuff for six years."

David said he likes the bartering aspect of the garage sale. "If you give customers a price, and they don't like it, you ... have the freedom to bargain."

"So far I haven't sold much," said Alex Roe. "But all of this stuff's just hanging around the house and isn't worth much."

The eighth annual event, dubbed a "garage sale by kids for kids," was held at the Orchard Street Park in conjunction with the nearby Farmington Founders Festival, said Judy Downey, executive director of the DDA.

"The kids really enjoy it," Downey said. "They usually wind up spending the money they make by buying other kids' stuff."

According to Downey, "Shop, Swap and Sell" - part of Downtown Farmington's Summer Fun Series - was intentionally scheduled for the same week as Founders Festival to draw a good crowd.

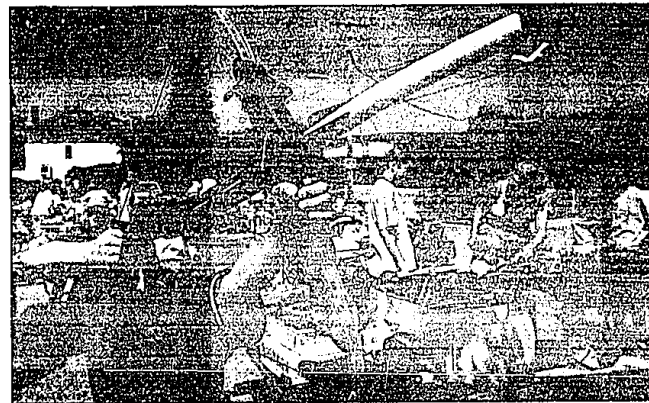
"This is a family oriented event," Downey explained. "And in order to really make this viable, you need to have a lot of people wandering downtown."

Most of the other programs in the DDA series entail performers doing shows for an audience.



Big gulp: Eddie Wheeler takes a pull at his water bottle while waiting for buyers. He had a large selection of sports cards and reported that so far he had made "about 30 bucks."

STAFF
PHOTOS
BY BILL
BRESLER



Ready, aim: Nick Bringardner demonstrates the proper form to use with a nerf bow-and-arrow, one of many items at Thursday's garage sale for kids.

POLICE AND FIRE CALLS

The following are police and fire incidents that occurred in Farmington and Farmington Hills during the past week.

THEFT

In Farmington Hills:
Someone stole a woman's purse with \$160 cash and credit cards from inside a 1998 Plymouth Caravan July 4.

BURGLARY

In Farmington Hills:
Burglars broke into a Botsford Terrace Apartment and stole a \$200 pair of diamond earrings between July 3-5. The resident found items scattered in several rooms. The victim thinks the culprit might be a former roommate, police reports said.

Someone stole seven crystal pieces worth \$1,600 from a display case at Vecna's Cards & Collectibles on 12 Mile between July 3-6.

Thieves stole two passports, a gold chain, wedding ring and eight silver dollars worth \$500 from a Lona Drive home July 7. Thieves entered through an attached garage door and pried open an inner door.

DRUNKEN DRIVING

In Farmington Hills:
Police arrested a Clinton Township man, 63, for drunken driving on southbound Power Road, north of 10 Mile, at 10:45 p.m. July 7. Police stopped the 1985 Cadillac after getting a tip about a possible drunken driver. The man had a blood alcohol level of .10 percent, which is above the state legal limit.

ATTEMPTED BURGLARY

In Farmington Hills:
Thieves broke the front door glass in an attempt to break-in to Meadows Party Store on Farmington Road during the night of July 7-8, causing \$200 damage. A store burglary was reported on Farmington and Seven Mile in Livonia. A gray Ford F-

150 pick-up is believed to be the suspect vehicle in that case.

LANDLORD DISPUTE

In Farmington Hills:
A man told police his landlord grabbed him by the throat and screamed profanities at him during a dispute on Hardonburg Street July 5. Police didn't see any injuries.

DUPLICATE CHECKS

In Farmington Hills:
Employee cashed payroll checks that turned out to be duplicates at Arby's on Orchard Lake March 22. Some of the 10 workers said they'd reimburse the money to avoid being prosecuted. One employee refused to answer questions and said he would have an attorney present, police reports said. Others couldn't be reached or no longer work at the restaurant. Checks ranged from \$160 to \$584. One woman said she cashed the check sent to her home, thinking it was a bonus, according to police.

DOMESTIC ASSAULT

In Farmington Hills:
Police arrested a Hills man, 38, after his live-in girlfriend said she was punched several times July 3. Her left eye was bruised, police said. She also had bruises on her left and right arms and leg. She told officers she tried to phone 911 but her boyfriend took the phone from her and wouldn't let her leave the apartment for three days. The man had an outstanding warrant in Wayne County and told officers he had been arrested two years ago for domestic violence.

AUTO THEFT

In Farmington Hills:
Someone drilled the door lock in an attempted to steal a 1993 Jeep Cherokee parked at Nantucket Townhouses on Atlantic Pointe July 7.
A 1988 Chevy Corvette was stolen from Village Green Apartments on Floral View Drive July 7.

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Nursery school taking students

Nardin Park Nursery School in Farmington Hills is enrolling students for their 3- and 4-year-old programs. An enrichment - pre-kindergarten - program for 5-year-olds is also available. Limited opening for this fall are available for all programs. Call Pam at 474-6987 for enrollment information.
Nardin Park Nursery is a non-profit school.