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Man In The Middle

What Does A Cop Think About Pot?

By DAN McCOSH

If you are a cop, you enforce the law. Whether you think it is too strict or too lenient, that's your job.

But what happens when the law changes? Or some people think it should change, or it's in the process of changing. What then?

Last April possession of marijuana without intent to sell became a misdemeanor instead of a felony.

The "narcotic and drug law" arrests in the City of Farmington jumped from 18 to 31 so far this year, not a large total, but a big percentage.

CAPT. DANIEL Burns, who runs the Farmington Police Dept., sees some significance in the figures that goes well beyond the numbers.

The arrest figures are part of a pattern of attitudes and legislation that will probably lead to the legalization of marijuana, he feels. He doesn't like it, but not for the usual reasons.

It wasn't so much an increase in use that caused the jump this year, he said.

"If you check all around us, you will find it is just part of a pattern," he said. "Farmington and Farmington Township are no different from other communities around here."

Although a few new, enthusiastic patrolmen account for some of the arrest jump, he says it is mainly "careless" almost

lighthearted attitude on the part of the marijuana smoker.

"We end up playing the devil's advocate on this issue."

--Capt. Dan Burns

"It's just like it used to be to catch a teenager drinking," he says. A check with the courts confirms this; most offenders are getting suspended sentences and put on probation. Surprise. "That is just what the courts were doing when it was a felony," Burns said.

BUT AN ARREST and conviction still gives a person a criminal record.

"A lot of the people who wanted it reduced to a misdemeanor argued a lot of kids were getting a criminal record," he said. "You still get one, but it is a misdemeanor."

"This still hurts a lot if you want to be a doctor or a lawyer, even applying for a job in some fields."

Despite this, he hasn't experienced any great parent pressure one way or the other on the arrests, he says.

"The kids know they are breaking the law; they don't give us any trouble when they get caught," he continues.

Does this make the kids lose respect for the police? "Yes, we end up playing the devil's advocate on this issue," he said.

A PATTERN is developing, Burns feels, and with increasing arrests on the

misdemeanor charge, there will be more pressure for legalization.

"Eventually, we won't be able to enforce the law, and if a law is unenforceable, it ought to be taken off the books.

How does he feel, personally, about pot?

"I think its terrible," he said.

"It's not the harm to the individual. "Some people who use it are going to end up psychologically dependent, and that is going to end up as a big social problem, probably as big as alcohol.

"One thing that irritates me is people who say 'it's no worse than alcohol,'" Burns says. "Who says alcohol is so great?"

A teetotaler himself, he is no moralizer. He just points out about half the trouble he runs into as a cop is caused directly or indirectly by people drinking, between fights, accidents and alcoholics.

HE WOULD like to see better efforts at the state and federal level to stop drug pushers. "Were spinning our wheels on the street," he says. Meanwhile, the local patrolman gets a whiff of grass outside a car and he still searches the car, makes the arrest.

At least most of the time. If marijuana is really like underage liquor, the arrest figures don't show it yet.

There were 17 reported liquor law violations in the same time period-about half the narcotics arrests.



Musicale To Host Convention

FARMINGTON MUSICALE members are planning a mini-convention of the Southeast District of the Michigan Federation of Music Clubs. On the planning committee are (from left) Mrs. Paul Notestine, Mrs. George Rickey and Mrs. James Skillman. The convention will be held all day Wednesday, Oct. 11, in Nardin Park United Methodist Church. Members of the Farmington group will perform excerpts from their musical "Mackinac!" and there will be workshops. Some 100 delegates from 19 clubs are expected to attend.

Farmington Community Center Will Be Busy

The Farmington Community Center has announced events for October which include a bridge luncheon, coffee concert, a trip to Keatington Antique Village, and a children's magic show put on by "Lenardo Jr."

On Oct. 11 the first bridge luncheon in a monthly series will begin at 10 a.m. in the community center. There will be a buffet luncheon served at noon and prizes for first, second and low at each party.

The series will continue through May and take place on the second Wednesday in each month. There is a \$3.50 donation and a grand prize will be given at the end of the entire series. Reservations should be made through the center by Oct. 9.

A coffee concert trip to the Detroit Symphony Orchestra will be sponsored by the center on Oct. 13. Featured will be Charles Mackerras, director of the Sadler Wells Opera Company of London, England and soloist Eugene Istomin.

A continental breakfast and fashion show will precede the concert. Cost for the day is \$4.50. Buses will leave the center at 9 a.m. and return at 1:30 p.m.

A field trip to the Keatington Antique Village is planned for Oct. 19. Plans are to tour the 13 shops in Keatington and to view the fall colors.

Box lunches may be purchased or you may bring your own lunch. If it rains an area will be provided for eating.

On Saturday, Oct. 21, Lenardo Jr., the magician, will perform at the center at 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. Tickets must be reserved.



MAGICIAN AND ENTERTAINER Lenardo Jr. will appear at the Farmington Community Center Saturday, Oct. 21 at 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. Reservations must be made.

Our Opinion

The recent flap over campaign contributions deserves some comment. Some changes in the campaign practices are called for, as pointed out in an editorial on:

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Community Calendar

Nothing to do? Not if you read through the Community Calendar. A regular feature of the Farmington Enterprise and Observer, it is the most complete listing of local events available.

Page 3A

For Their Art

Farmington artists now have a place in which to display their works of art, thanks to cooperation from the staff of the new library.

Page 12B

Casting Call

If you like comedy or if you like Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, better check our casting call this week. Two groups are looking for volunteers.

Page 12B

Church Doings

A Farmington church's new approach to worship and education, a lecture series on controversial topics in Plymouth, bazaar in Livonia and a church fair in Westland are among those reported in our Church Section today.

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A COMMUNITY service citation was presented to Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Stetler of Farmington by VFW Michigan Commander William Bishop at the 27th anniversary celebration of the Farmington VFW Post.

School Board Confirms Sale Of Rink Site

The Farmington School Board approved the sale of school property at Farmington High School to the City of Farmington for the construction of an ice rink. The board will receive \$65,000 in payment for the plot of land on the southeast corner of the school, at Orchard Lake Road north of Shawwassee.

The sale agreement states that the land will be returned to the school if voters turn down approval of construction in November.

A citizen at the Oct. 3 board meeting expressed concern over the possible increase in traffic on the already much used Orchard Lake Rd.

Board Member William Corliss said that driving conditions on Orchard Lake could possibly improve because of planned improvement of the road due to the construction of the ice rink.

Township Trash Pickup Monday

	Friday
	Thursday
	Wednesday
	Tuesday
	Monday
	No Pickup

A pickup of large junk items in Farmington Township will be held beginning Monday Oct. 9 and running for a week, according to Township Supervisor Earl Teeples.

The Willard Sanitation Co., which was awarded the contract for the pickup, will begin at Eight Mile Rd. and work north in two-mile stretches each day, picking up heavy items, appliances and other items not normally picked up by the township.

The schedule is:
 Monday, Oct. 9, from Eight to 10 Mile Rd.
 Tuesday, Oct. 10, from 10 to 11 Mile.
 Wednesday, Oct. 11, from 11 to 12 Mile.
 Thursday, Oct. 12, from 12 to 13 Mile.
 Friday, Oct. 13, from 13 to 14 Mile.



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