

Farmington LIFE

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(F) 18

CB radio operators are today's good Samaritans

By LORRAINE McCLISH

Members of Helping Hands responded to a request from the West Bloomfield and Farmington Hills Police Departments during the March 30 weekend tornado to keep all-night vigils on damaged property in protection against looters.

They relay messages, assist drivers in trouble, and do all we can to help, with the members we have and the time we have to give," said Nyla Pilz.

Ms. Pilz runs her citizens band radio every day 4-9 p.m. in the basement of her home, 2815 Powers, Farmington Hills, which carries a 60-foot antenna. She is a charter member and vice president of the three-month-old group of CBers who banded together in an effort to give community service.

"We're out there because we enjoy it. We want to help," is the way Mike McCaughan put it.

McCaughan lives at 3318 Biddlestone in Farmington. He is 21 years old, is owner and operator of Charley's Maintenance, and carries a CB radio in his Ford pickup.

His friend Dave Richards, also of Farmington, is 21, a computer operator for Bendix Corporation and carries his CB radio in a Blazer.

MS. PILZ CITED the two as "typical members of our group. Most of the members are between 18 and 28. About 80 percent of us live in Farmington or Farmington Hills. We all have CB radios, in cars, trucks, on motorcycles or in our homes."

Ms. Pilz' 16-year-old daughter, Shawn Lotz, is one of the youngest in the group and her son, Terry Lotz, 12, is also a member of the 44-member club which is now on duty from eight base stations covering Farmington, Farmington Hills, parts of West Bloomfield and parts of Novi.

Members work as they can, patrolling given areas or otherwise monitoring their

radios, generally helping drivers in distress situations.

"I've done everything from calling wives telling them their husbands were caught in a snowstorm to pulling people out of ditches," McCaughan said.

Richards once spotted a brake drum on fire during a patrol and alerted the driver, perhaps preventing a disaster. In another instance, he followed close behind a truck with no tail lights "for miles so no one could get in between us, until we found a place where he could get them fixed."

PRESIDENT of the club is Martin Thery, a Farmington resident, who works as a salesman out of offices in Southfield.

Sponsors of the club are Mike Bialorek, owner of Gentlemen's Choice hair salon in West Bloomfield, and owners and operators of Nugget Restaurant on Twelve Mile and Orchard Lake, who have committed themselves to buy identifying jackets for the club members.

The hope of the members is that their group will become large enough so they can merge and become part of REACT, a radio emergency assistance group based in Detroit's Fisher Building which requires member chapters to patrol 24 hours a day, seven days a week in a given area.

"For this we need more members. We know they (potential members) are out there. This area is loaded with CBers, and we want them to join us," Ms. Pilz said.

She said she believed Farmington was particularly in need of such a 24-hour service because "being located between 4888 and 1-81 could almost be called a central location for accidents."

Membership requires a valid FCC license for a citizen band radio housed either in a home or a mobile unit, coupled with a desire to help in emergencies.

However, Ms. Pilz, who helped write the by-laws and constitution for Helping Hands, is very adamant on the subject of the professional conduct of its members.

"WE ARE DOING everything we can to upgrade the image of the club and to promote the club, and we are not going to destroy that," she said.

On the subject of credibility, she said, "You have to earn that, and we are doing that. It is an intrinsic part of our constitution."

McCaughan added, "We have that now from the police department. They know that when I turn in an accident it is no wild goose chase. They honor my calls, and we want it to stay that way."

Members dues are \$4 per year and are used "mostly for mailing and coffee at our (once-a-month) meetings," Ms. Pilz said.

The group is strictly volunteer and makes no charge for its services.

In one of its most recent letters, signed by Hewey McClelland, whose property was protected against looting after the March tornado, the letter said, in part, "Helping Hands is worthy of the name."

Members will be out in force, working all day in cooperation with the Farmington Joyce chapter when it holds its "Walk for Farmington" scheduled in May.

Ms. Pilz will take inquiries and requests for Helping Hands at 478-6386.

Staff photos
by
Harry Mauthe



NYLA PILZ



MIKE McCAUGHAN



Thunder leaves Longacre

Third graders Corrine Haremski (left) and Michael Finegan say goodbye to "Thunder" who leaves Longacre Elementary School this week for a stay in the Farmington Community

Library on Liberty Street. The papier mache dinosaur was created by youngsters in Joanna Parente's class for a science project and measures about 3 1/4 meters long by a meter high.

Soroptimists honor student

James Marie Hoffman, a student at Franklin High School, Livonia, is the recipient of a youth citizen award given by the Soroptimist International of Livonia.

A leader who is president of the Franklin High School Club, Miss Hoffman, 16, Frederick, was selected from numerous recommendations by Livonia High School counselors.

Ann Marie Stewart of 2148 Collingwood, Farmington Hills, a senior at Cranecroft High School, was runner-up.

Also nominated were Jane Davis of Bentley High School, Vrona Ojeda of Churchill High School, Matthew Blasko of Franklin High School, and Lynn Walden of Ladywood High School.

global winners are eligible for the national \$1,000 award.

Miss Hoffman plans to major in chemistry and mathematics at Michigan Technological University. She has served on the school board advisory council and has held office in the Student Congress and Interact Club.

Miss Stewart plans to attend Michigan State University. She has been yearbook editor, senior class secretary, student congress secretary and honor society vice president.

Judges were Esther Heuser, director of curriculum of the Livonia school district; Harry Tulligan, city attorney, and the Rev. Robert Taylor, senior minister at Rosedale Gardens Presbyterian Church. Contestants were judged on the basis of

service, dependability, leadership and a sense of purpose. They also answered questions about good citizenship in home, school and community.

"The club is grateful for the opportunity to recognize the accomplishments and aspirations of these fine young people," commented Catherine Tremm, chairman of the awards committee, as she made the presentation.

Assisting in the award giving were Virginia Handzik and Frances Moore, members of the awards committee.

Soroptimists are executive and professional women organized in more than 1,000 service clubs active in 13 countries. Each year the international organization contributes more than \$60,000 in awards to graduating seniors and mature women.



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