

Fords are top choice

Car thefts beset shoppers

By JACKIE KLEIN

The southeast corner of Southfield is a target area for car thieves. From June 3 through June 8, 11 of 22 "rip-offs" were reported in the section bounded by Nine and Ten Mile, Southfield and Greenfield, according to an analysis by the police department crime prevention bureau.

During the afternoon hours, auto thieves relieved owners of nine vehicles or 41 per cent of all autos stolen for this period. Fourteen of the 21 cars stolen were Ford products.

"Indications are that the 1972 and 1973 models were taken most frequently, especially in the Mercury, T-Bird and Maverick lines," a police spokesman commented. "Sunday, Wednesday and Friday seem to be the major days of operation for auto thieves."

IN MAY, of 58 cars stolen, 35 were in the city's southeast district. Police said auto thieves were continuing their taking ways in and around Northland Shopping Center with a change in time of activity from the afternoon to the day shift. Seven autos were stolen from Northland, six between the hours of 11 a.m. and noon.

According to police reports, more than 80 per cent of total auto thefts in May occurred during daylight hours.

"About 60 per cent of cars stolen in May were Ford products," the spokesman said. "The Ford Torino and Lincoln Continental seemed to be the most popular. The demand for General Motors vehicles has been on the decline in the auto thief's market and there appears to be no overwhelming preference for particular model years."

Over a weekend in May, about 18 attempted auto thefts were reported at the Holiday Inn on Telegraph and Eleven Mile. The northeast side of the city was the scene of 71 per cent of successful rip-offs from May 30 to May 31.

"IT CAN be determined that more than 30 per cent of the auto theft problem is occurring in about two per cent of the total area of the city and is concentrated in the southeast corner."

In another period in May, two auto thefts occurred at the Franklin Towers Apartments and three within the Twelve Shopping Center area. A number of attempts also were made at Franklin Towers on Franklin Road and North Western, indicating to police this could be a new target area for auto thieves.

Auto thefts in Southfield were down 17 per cent in 1975 compared to a 45 per cent increase in 1974. According to Police Chief Milan Sackett, the decline was partly attributed to a concentrated effort by the patrol division.

Last year, 1,875 cars were stolen in the city. Police maintained thieves used more sophisticated tools and did their thing faster, beating detection and dumping cars after ripping off accessories like tires and radios.

Pickings were ripe at Northland as well as apartment complexes and hotels. The pattern remains, but time will tell how many auto theft targets will be hit again in 1976.

Mansfield honored for scholarship

Michael Mansfield, son of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Mansfield, 2386 Frederick, Farmington, ranked in the top two per cent of his class at Michigan Technological University, Houghton, for the past academic year. Mansfield, who is majoring in civil engineering, earned a 4.0 (straight A) average. He is among 61 students in the College of Engineering who were named to the annual dean's list.

Howe promotes local student

William Russell Boncher, son of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence J. Boncher of Farmington Hills, has been promoted to cadet corporal at Howe Military School. Boncher holds this rank effective last April by direction of Senior Army Instructor, Major Andrew L. Tryck. Boncher, a second year student at the school in Howe, Ind., is in the 18th grade.

Servicemen are honored

Two Southfield area servicemen have been cited for their achievements by the Air Force and Marine Corps. Airman David G. Eshbach, son of Mr. and Mrs. George E. Eshbach of 3447 Edgemont, has been selected to receive specialized training after completing Air Force basic training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

The airman, a 1973 graduate of Southfield High School, now goes to Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, to attend the Air Training Command's mechanical-electrical specialist course.

Marine Private John R. Barch, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Barch of 3280 Candlewood Lane, Southfield, graduated from recruit training at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego.

The 1973 graduate of Southfield-Lathrup High School joined the Marine Corps in December 1973. Physical conditioning, discipline and teamwork were emphasized during training as well as instruction in close order drill. Marine Corps history, first aid, uniform regulation and military customs and courtesies.

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It takes a thief, and sometimes a co-thief, to break into a car, as demonstrated here. (Staff photo)

Jean Musselman receives honors

Jean Lesbe Musselman, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George H. Musselman of 2240 Heartstone, Farmington has received a BA with honors from Earlham College in Indiana. She also graduated with departmental honors in biology.

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