

City will aid task force looking into child killings



These members of the Oakland County Task Force were among 200 men who were busy in the first hectic days of the investigation into seven child murders in the county. The task force will be reduced to about 12-15 police officers and the operation will be funded by contributions from Southfield and other communities. (Staff photo)

By JACKIE KLEIN

City of Southfield will contribute \$280 a month to Oakland County Task Force to assist in the investigation of seven child-murders in the county.

It is estimated, according to City Administrator Peter Cristiano, that with local support, the task force operation will continue for approximately six to nine months.

State Police Lt. Robert H. Robertson requested the financial help of the city in continuing the task force effort in federal funding expires Oct. 11, 1977. The force will then be reduced to 12 to 15 police officers and one typist, Robertson said.

"This request has been discussed with Police Chief Milton Sackett, and he strongly urges the continuation of the unit until all possible leads to the killer or killers have been exhausted," Cristiano said.

Under the federal grant, Sackett said, two Southfield police officers are assigned to the task force. When the grant expires, the department will continue to assign one man to the unit, he said.

THE CITIES of Birmingham, Troy, Royal Oak, Berkley, Oak Park, Ferndale, Livonia, Oakland County Sheriff's Department and Oakland County Prosecutor's office will also continue to financially support the task force.

Southfield in April appropriated \$3,482 towards an eight community effort in south Oakland County to apprehend the killer or killers of the youth, Jerry Tobin, Southfield Director of Public Safety, was instrumental in obtaining more than \$600,000 in state and federal grants for the operation when he was police chief of Birmingham.

Application for state and federal money was made after the body of

Birmingham's Timothy King, 11, was found in a Livonia roadside ditch March 22. One member of the task force recently said the investigation is focusing around King's murder, and it has been established at least four child-killings were perpetrated by the same individual.

After the discovery of King's body, the latest victim, more than 200 investigators worked around the clock for several days. Beginning in February, 1976, four Oakland County youngsters were abducted and found murdered.

VICTIMS WERE Mark D. Stebbins of Ferndale, 12, whose strangled body was found in Southfield in February, 1976; Kristine Mihelic, 10, of Berkley, discovered smothered to death in Franklin Village in January, 1977; Jill Robinson, 12, of Royal Oak, found last December murdered by a shotgun in Troy and King who was smothered to death.

Sheila Srock, 14, of Birmingham, Cynthia Cadieux, 16, of Roseville and Jane Louise Allen, 13, of Royal Oak were also murdered during the same period. But the circumstances surrounding their deaths, according to investigators, are different from the other four youths. The task force, however, has been investigating these murders as well.

Information and autopsy reports, according to a police spokesman, have indicated the murderer of the four Oakland County youths has "some unique ritualistic personality characteristics."

"The crimes were probably sex-motivated and extremely well-planned," according to one investigative report. "The murders are characterized by a treacherous premeditation to abduct, abuse and kill helpless young persons."

WSHJ-Radio returns to the air with brand new format

By CARL STODDARD

At 6 a.m. this Friday morning WSHJ returns to the air with an all new format.

During the day, the station's "Top 40" format will zero in on a youthful, rocking and rolling audience. Evenings the station will ease into a more relaxed, mature format for all those folks past the age of 18.

Interspersed every half hour will be seven minute news capsules and an in-depth local news program at 6 p.m. nightly. Other features include a series of vintage radio programs, interviews with rock stars, politicians, authors, live coverage of Southfield Board of Education meetings and maybe even a live debate between Southfield's two mayoral contenders.

The station will be on the air week-

days at 6 a.m. and keep on rolling until midnight. Weekend broadcasts, including complete coverage of local football and basketball games, is also planned.

The station is owned by Southfield High School. The station (88.3 on the FM dial) is the most powerful student-operated station in Michigan and has a broadcast radius of about 30 miles.

IN CELEBRATION of the station's return to the airwaves after a summer hiatus, WSHJ is sponsoring a "Back to School Disco" this Friday 9:30-11 p.m. in the Southfield High gymnasium. Tickets are 50 cents and proceeds will go to support the non-profit station.

Some 50 students, freshmen through seniors, will operate the station this year, performing function ranging

from disc jockey to promotion to engineer.

"People tend to think that just because their child is going into broadcasting, he's going to come out a disc jockey," said Robert Sneddon, the station's broadcasting teacher who oversees the station. "Actually, it's just like a play. There's more going on behind the scenes than just meets the eye."

This year, John Wettlaufer, a senior, is the operations manager. Sophomore Alan Shephard is program director. Reed Rubenstein, a senior, is news director; Shelley Sherman, a junior, is promotion director; Joel Kushner, a senior, is production director; Paul Bensman, also a senior, is assistant production director; Robert Corbin, a sophomore, heads up traffic and continuity; and sports director is Jeff Lesson, a senior.

Because many of the station's former department heads have graduated, Sneddon found he was not only able to reorganize the staff but also to institute a program of management by objective.

"I've found young people respond to that kind of system as well or better than adults," Sneddon said. "So far, it's been successful."

NEW PRINCIPAL Daniel Hagan wanted the Southfield High station to expand its format, Sneddon said, and the students have quickly geared up to meet the challenge.

News director Rubenstein, with his 20-student staff, plans to provide complete election coverage this fall of the mayoral races in Southfield and Detroit. On election day, students will

report live from the campaign headquarters of Detroit candidates Coleman Young and Ernest C. Browne. In Southfield, student reporters will be with candidates Judith Wisner and Donald Fracassi when the results of the election are announced. Another reporter will be assigned to the Southfield Civic Center for a firsthand report as precinct tallies come in.

Rubenstein would like to sponsor a debate between the two Southfield mayoral candidates in the high school auditorium, and ask the candidates to field questions from reporters and the audience.

Rubenstein has also arranged for comprehensive stock market reports from E. F. Hutton and United Press International.

In addition, WSHJ will present a fea-

ture program on the new Focus: Hope program begun in the Southfield high schools. There will be interviews with authors, entertainers and politicians. One interview Rubenstein still hopes to secure is Gov. William Milliken who promised an interview to the station last year.

As in years past, the station will broadcast Southfield Board of Education meetings and Southfield City Council meetings.

In remembrance of its roots, the station will broadcast more than 100 replays from the golden age of radio. The series of nostalgic broadcasts, all dating back to well before the students were born, will include "Richard Diamond", "Sky King", "Sam Spade", "Ozzie and Harriet", "People are Funny", "Topper" and "Mr. District Attorney."

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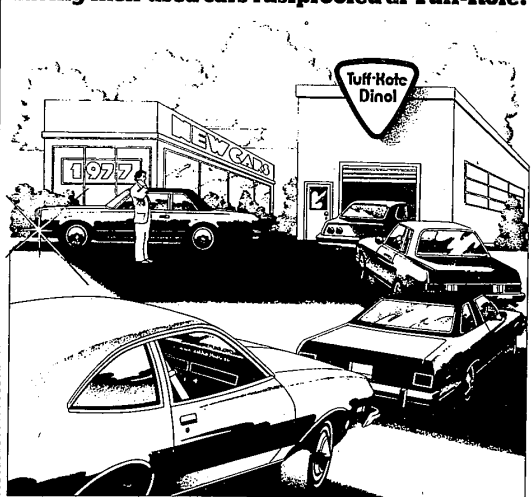
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