

Farmington Observer

Volume 89 Number 15

Thursday, December 8, 1977

Farmington, Michigan

72 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

©1977 Suburban Communications Corporation. All Rights Reserved

Stress

Cops' macabre companion haunts ranks

By LYNN ORR

If you last through 25 years as a police officer, there's a more than average likelihood you'll end up divorced, alcoholic or a suicide.

That dismal prediction opened a recent class in police stress for Oakland County police recruits.

More police officers committed suicide in 1975 than were killed in the line of duty that year. Alcoholism among police officers is at least one third higher than the national alcoholic rate; and more than one third of the police officers in Chicago are divorced, higher than the rate for professionals.

But it's only in recent years that the personal impact of police work have been recognized, and there are few studies statistically indicating how severe the problems are, says Lt. John Santomoro of the City of Farmington Public Safety Department.

Santomoro is attempting to give police recruits a truer picture of their future in an unusual class at the Oakland County Academy.

The class on police stress is the first of its kind in Michigan, although police agencies all over the country are beginning to recognize that on-the-job stress affects the officer, his work and the community.

Last week he gave 35 police recruits from such communities as Southfield, White Lake Township, and the Oakland County Sheriff's Department, a

'Many professions have the luxury of venting their frustrations but you lose that luxury when you pin on your badge and put on your gun.'

—Farmington Police Lt. John Santomoro

preview of what lay in store for them if they stuck with police work.

"I wish I had been able to know this stuff while I was training," Santomoro says; and although he doesn't want to scare the recruits, he's convinced that a realistic vision of police work may help the recruits to overcome on-the-job liabilities.

POLICE WORK is highly stressful, according to Santomoro, because the work is reviewed by the public; there is no outlet for venting frustration; and the police are the most highly visible element in the criminal justice system, which puts them smack in front of the rising tide of criticism of that system.

"Many professionals have the luxury of venting their frustrations, but you lose that luxury when you pin on your badge and put on your gun," Santomoro told the recruits.

In the past, venting frustrations through drinking or abuse usually cost a police officer his job. Even over-eating could mean the end of a career. Today, however, courts are siding more often with police officers fired for obesity, says Santomoro.

The actual extent of the problem

nationwide is unknown, he says, for two reasons: Departments don't want to publicize it and a lot of it isn't recognized.

Only three studies of police suicides exist, he says. One such study conducted by the New York Police Department in 1934 indicated a suicide rate nationally of 80 per 100,000 police officers—an epidemic proportion. A 1960-68 study done in Wyoming revealed that the rate had jumped to 203 per 100,000, double the frequency among doctors, the next highest.

And a British study discovered that the suicide rates of metropolitan and rural police departments were the same.

Suicide statistics may not be a true indication of the number of suicides, Santomoro adds.

"How many police officers are killed in the line of duty who in fact put themselves in a suicidal situation?" he says. "You can go out in a blaze of glory. And how many officers are killed 'accidentally' cleaning their guns."

High divorce rates among police officers has long been recognized, he adds, but as yet few departments have tried to deal with the situation,

although divorces dramatically affect work.

"Divorces are an administrative problem as well, because you've got your mind elsewhere," says Santomoro.

Most departments prefer to ignore the problem.

The alcoholic rate among police officers is 15 per cent, compared to the 10 per cent among the general public, according to one study. But Santomoro doesn't believe it.

"To be honest, I think 15 per cent is very low," he says, and peer group pressure is one of the reasons why police officers drink.

ANOTHER INDICATOR of police stress is what Santomoro calls the John Wayne syndrome.

"We like to say recruits are badge-heavy, but this is something more. When recruits discover that not everybody is as impressed as we are with the job, it mellows out, but a high dose of badge heaviness hampers judgment and concentration."

The John Wayne syndrome starts out as self-importance but changes into a form of paranoia.

"We're trained to be suspicious, but as a result of job stress, you begin to question everything and everyone."

Santomoro believes police officers are more susceptible to job stress because of the nature of the work, and he points out three major causes of stress: the conflict between the ideal of police work and the reality, the

(Continued on page 4A)

Suspects nabbed in jewelry heist

Four Detroit men face trial on charges stemming from a robbery of a Farmington jewelry store.

The four men stood mute before 47th District Court Judge Margaret Schaefer Tuesday. Bond was set at \$15,000 each for Marvin Edward Moore, 20, and Roger Allan Moore, 18, both of 14506 Warwick. Bond was set at \$20,000 each for Robert Leroy Walker, 19, of 14886 Warwick, and James Sherman Smith, 18, of 18504 Curtis.

None of the men posted bond as of Tuesday afternoon and were transported to Oakland County jail.

It was the second time in two years that DuQuet Jewelers, located in the Farmington Plaza on Grand River, was the victim of a smash-and-grab burglary. In the spring of 1976, nearly \$300,000 was taken from the store, most of which was recovered.

Glass windows and showcase win-

dows were smashed to get at the watches and rings taken from the store, according to Farmington Public Safety Director Dan Byrnes.

CITY OF Farmington officers responded to an alarm at 2:30 a.m., Tuesday, and apprehended Marvin Moore near the store. Byrnes explained.

A Farmington Hills police officer picked up Roger Moore, who was on

foot, at the corner of Purdue and Grand River.

Redford Township police officers apprehended Walker and Smith about 5 a.m. in the area of Six Mile and Grand River, while searching for suspects involved in a similar incident at Rose Jewelers in the Seven-Grand shopping center in Redford Township.

About \$20,000 worth of jewelry was discovered under a van parked at Gordy's Garage on Grand River.

Smoke alarms get affirmative nod

A more lenient, but still costly, smoke alarm mandate got the nod from City of Farmington officials this week.

Mayor Richard Tupper's opposition to the smoke alarm ordinance, which requires the installation of battery-operated smoke detectors in all single family and multi-family dwellings in the city, failed to sway the majority of council members who voted to introduce the ordinance at Monday night's meeting.

Tupper expressed concern about lack of enforcement and whether the ordinance was the best way to encourage fire protection.

"I think the way we are going about it is wrong," he said. "I think the best course of action is the one that will get people to use them."

Council members Ralph Yoder, Warren Buckler and Alton Bennett, however, were satisfied with the revised ordinance, which deleted hard-wired, expensive alarms from the original ordinance proposed by the Public Safety Department in early October.

"I like this one much better, and it's much more palatable cost-wise," Yoder commented.

Enforcement of the ordinance for single family units will be accomplished at the time of sale, Bennett said in defending the ability to enforce the mandate.

THE ORDINANCE requires the installation of the alarms within six months for multi-family units and one year for single family units. In addition, the smoke detectors must meet the performance specifications of current Underwriters' Laboratory Standards. The detectors must be installed in sleeping areas, as well as at the top of stairways leading to an occupied area.

Owners of multi-family units are required to certify, in writing, to the fire marshal on or before July 1 of each year that the manufacturer's prescribed maintenance has been performed on all of their smoke detectors.

Enforcement of the ordinance for single residences would be accom-

plished at the time of sale, lease or sublease, according to Fire Marshall Norm Madison. Area real estate agents also will be notified of the ordinance requirements, added City Mgr. Robert Deadman.

The recent Valley View Condominium fire also prompted a readoption of automatic sprinkling systems in storage rooms and locker rooms of multi-family dwellings and commercial buildings. The provision was deleted from the city ordinances in 1975 when an alternate fire prevention code was adopted.

"THE DEPARTMENT has found that this requirement of overhead sprinklers in the storage areas of multi-family dwellings has been effective," Deadman explained.

Mailing deadlines set in Farmington

"Consistent with local customer needs, post office window and collection service will continue during the Christmas period as usual or be increased," according to Farmington Postmaster Kenneth Harris.

Harris said the Postal Service intends to clear from its office by Saturday, Dec. 24, all Christmas mail available in time to meet year-round service standards.

Normal window service will be provided except for Saturday, Dec. 10, and Saturday, Dec. 17, when the hours will be expanded until 1 p.m.

There will be no Sunday window service. Window service will be provided on Saturday, Dec. 24 and Saturday, Dec. 21, during normal hours.

On Christmas and New Year's days all offices will be closed. However, special delivery service will be provided on both holidays.

On Monday, Dec. 26, and Monday, Jan. 2, the post office will be closed. Only special delivery and limited collection service will be provided on those two days.



The aftermath of a burglary involves the dusting of prints, as demonstrated by Det. Tom Duquoy of the Farmington Public Safety Department who was called to investigate the burglary of DuQuet Jewelers early Monday morning. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

inside

Amusements12C
At Your Leisure5B
Club Circuit3B
Community Calendar2B
Down to Earth15B
Editorial Opinion14A
SportsSection D
Suburban LifeSection B

RIDE TO SUCCESS

"We were bombarded with calls!" reported Mrs. Herbert Gordon after advertising in the Observer & Eccentric classified section. She said they could have sold 100 trains from the calls they received, and just after one ad.

LIONEL GOLDEN State Arrow, OT-027 gauge train with track board & accessories, like new, \$25.

Hop aboard the express to a successful sale. Advertise in your hometown newspaper.

DIAL DIRECT
522-0900



It's a bitter pill to swallow when your shop is burglarized for the second time in 1½ years. Al DuQuet, owner of DuQuet Jewelers, will have to pay for the glass cases broken by the pre-dawn burglars. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)