

County bar owners angry at 'drunk squad'

By TOM LONERGAN

"We're not against drinking, I want you to know that," said Oakland County Sheriff Johannes F. Spreen.

Nonetheless, several of the 30 Oakland County bar owners who gathered at Morey's Golf and Country Club in Union Lake last week complained that the sheriff's new "Alcohol Enforcement Teams" — special squads who look for drunk drivers — were crimping their business.

A Pontiac-area bar owner was down-right miffed.

"We're loaded for bear," he said before the meeting, which included representatives from the Traffic Improve-

'I have my own reservations about the program. We're not out to harass anyone. I've given strict orders that they will not be just outside of any bar waiting for someone to stumble out.'

— Oakland County Sheriff Johannes F. Spreen

ment Association of Oakland County (TIA), co-sponsor of the four-year, \$1.2 million Alcohol Enforcement Education Project.

FOR THE PAST month, special teams of sheriff's deputies, state and local police officers have been patrolling targeted areas searching for drunk drivers. Among the spots are M-59, between Telegraph and Bogie Lake roads, and Dixie Highway between Telegraph and I-75.

The patrols, in marked squad cars, are on duty from 10 p.m. to 3 a.m. Wednesdays through Fridays. These are the times when TIA computers have shown, the most alcohol-related accidents occur.

"They're blowing out of our places at 10 o'clock at night to avoid you guys," said David Lemanski, a bar owner on Dixie Highway in Waterford Township. "This seems like easy pickings at 3 o'clock in the morning."

"We had to start someplace," said Bruce Madsen, director of the Bloomfield Township-based TIA. "This is a shakedown cruise that we're going through."

"THIS SLANTS against business," said another bar owner, "or else we wouldn't be all excited about this." The bar owners found Sheriff Spreen

Several owners said the program has scared customers away from their bars.

"The people say, 'I can't go out tonight,' or 'I've got to be home by 10,'" said Gary Crake, a bar owner on Cass Lake Road in Waterford. "That's why we're concerned."

THE PATROLS have been assigned to three areas of Pontiac during the past two weekends. The assignments are based on research which showed areas during 1978 which had the most alcohol-related accidents.

Among the targeted areas are sections of Woodward south of Pontiac and portions of Telegraph in south Oakland County.

There are "no definite plans" for moving the squads into those areas, said Jerry Feddersen, director of the project. "It's a question of when rather than whether," he added.

The Michigan Licensed Beverage Association (MLBA) has endorsed the alcohol enforcement program. Its deci-

sion has turned out to be controversial among its members.

"I'VE HAD bar owners come in and scream and holler at me and call me all sorts of names for supporting the program," said Sally Morey, an MLBA executive board member and president of the county group. Lemanski said it would take the bar owners, "two to three months to recoup

from all the aggravation this has caused."

But Mrs. Morey, owner of the bar where last week's meeting was held, said bar owners not in the areas where the alcohol squads have patrolled are also complaining of a drop in business.

"The economy is very bad right now," she said. "I don't know if we can attribute it (drop in business) to that (the sheriff's program) or not."

Art award for OCC prof

Kegham Tazian, art professor at the Orchard Ridge Campus of Oakland Community College, recently received a purchase prize for his terra cotta art work in a state-wide competition for art teachers at all levels of education.

The competition was sponsored by the Michigan Education Association (MEA) — and the Michigan Art Education Association.

Tazian, a Birmingham resident, is currently teaching painting, drawing,

and sculpture courses. He has been represented in several national shows and was recently honored as one of a select group of American artists whose works were displayed in Eastern Europe.

Tazian's winning entry will be displayed at the MEA headquarters building in East Lansing until May 30 and again at the MEA Representative Assembly later this spring.



SHERIFF JOHANNES SPREEN
No harassment

Zooperstars rally for Zoo

What's a zoo without animals? Right now it's just a shell. That's why several media celebrity teams, dubbed the Zooperstars, will be participating in an unusual olympics — Zoolympics to be exact — this week at Belle Isle. Seven teams will be competing to raise money to purchase animals for the new Belle Isle Zoo. The crazy feats will include paddling a canoe on Belle Isle, not with paddles but with brooms; running a course around the new zoo boardwalk, playing three holes of golf with just a putter, and taking turns pulling team members in a pony cart from the zoo to the new Belle Isle casino.

The Observer & Eccentric is represented on the Zebra team which will run through the course at 1 p.m. Thursday. The team is made up of Warren Pierce of WJR, Ron Scott of WTVS-TV and Kathy Moran, editor of the Troy Eccentric.

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