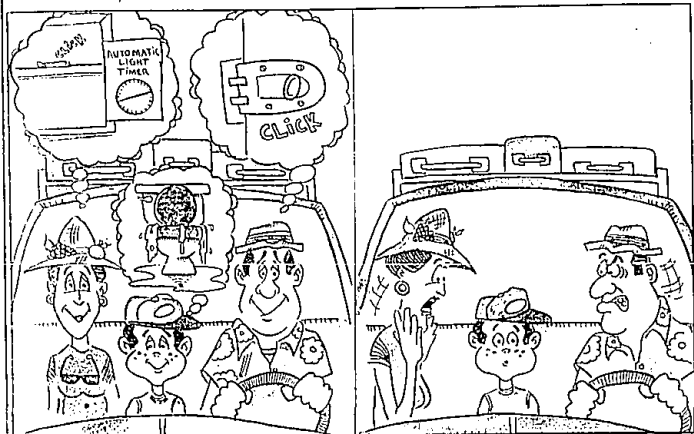


# Include crime prevention in vacation plans



When going on vacation, a little advance planning can help in keeping peace of mind.

By Julie Brown  
staff writer

In making vacation plans, thoughts of burglary prevention may not be at the top of the list of things to do. It's a lot more enjoyable to think about the fun stuff — where to go and what to see.

Nevertheless, spending a few minutes on burglary prevention is a good idea for vacation-planners, whether that vacation is to last a few days or several months.

Before leaving home, travelers should make sure all doors and windows are locked.

"Make sure the home is all locked up before you leave," said Officer Dennis Brills of the Farmington Hills Police Department. "Don't leave any windows open."

The garage door should also be closed.

"If at all possible, lock the garage door, even if you have to put a padlock on it," Brills said. Leaving a garage door open could allow burglars to pull a vehicle into the garage, and then load it with the residents' belongings, without being seen by neighbors.

The mail and newspapers is also a good idea, Brills said. A stack of accumulated newspapers "is a dead giveaway that no one's home."

That trusted neighbor should know where to reach the vacationers in the event of an emergency. The neighbor can also keep an eye on the home, notifying police if something appears to be amiss.

Making arrangements to have the lawn mowed is also a good idea. During the winter, arrangements should be made to have the driveway and sidewalks shoveled.

Automatic timers, designed to make household lights go on and off, are also useful for vacationers.

"The whole idea is to make the home look lived in, like someone's in the house," Brills said. "That's one of the ideas of using timers."

Timers can be attached to lights and to radios within the home. They should be set up to correspond to the family's normal use patterns, rather than going on and off at odd hours of the day or night.

"You want it to be in the same condition it would be in if you were there," Brills said.

"WE PREFER that they be left open, rather than closed. Closed shades around the house are a dead giveaway that no one's home."

Valuables, such as jewelry, should be stored in a safe-deposit box, rather than being left at home while the family is away.

The local police department should also be notified of vacation plans. Care should be taken, however, to avoid publicizing vacation plans. Even casual conversation in a public place could notify burglars of a family's absence.

"People pick up on that, they listen," Brills said.

While traveling, vacationers should also follow some common-sense guidelines. These include:

- Using traveler's checks, rather than cash;
- Not leaving valuables in the car, particularly not in the passenger's compartment;
- Locking hotel room doors, and keeping room keys with you;
- Storing valuables in the hotel's safe, rather than in the hotel room.

HAVING A trusted neighbor pick up

## YMCA highlights

**SPRING OLYMPIC SLEEPOVER** — This middle school sleepover starts at 8:50 p.m. Friday, May 31. It offers a chance to become the next YMCA sleepover olympic champion. Compete for the gold in relay races, swim races, diving games and TV games. Register now. Fee for members is \$15 and non-members, \$22.

**ANNUAL FOX TROT RUN** — July 20 is the date of this year's event. Support fitness in your community by participating in the Founders Day Festival Fox Trot Run. The race will consist of 5K and 10K runs. Details will be arriving soon.

**REGISTRATION FOR SUMMER PROGRAMS** — Registration will begin 6-9 p.m. Wednesday, June 12 for YMCA

members. This Midnight Madness Special offers an equal opportunity for all to become involved in summer fun at the YMCA.

**SUMMER DAY CAMP** — Have you registered your children for fun this summer? We have limited space still available in our weekly day camp for all ages. Check you camp brochure or call the Y for full details at 553-4020.

**SUMMER Y MEMBERSHIP SPECIAL** — This limited time offer is available to prospective members. From now through September 15, you and your friends are invited to use the Farmington Branch only for \$45 individual or \$69 family unit. This special offer is available for physical membership units only. Free racquetball, unlimited play included.

**SUMMER T-BALL IS COMING** — Registration will be accepted June 8 through June 29. This season begins practices the week of June 24. Games are played on Tuesday and Thursday evenings 6-9 p.m. This season of T-ball is open to K-2nd graders (eligible players must be entering said grades in the fall of 1985).

## Craft shows announced

Mersey High School, at 11 Mile and Middlebelt in Farmington Hills, has announced dates for its fall craft shows. On Oct. 5, the school will sponsor a one day Folk Art & Country Crafts Festival. All crafts associated with folk art and country are acceptable.

On Nov. 30 and Dec. 1, Mersey will present its annual Christmas Arts & Crafts Festival. The festival, now in its fifth year, contains approximately 200 tables of juried arts and crafts. Jurying for the Christmas Arts & Crafts Festival will take place on June 1, July 1 and Sept. 1. Folk Art and country crafts will be juried for the last time on June 1.

Additional information may be obtained by calling the school at 478-8020 during the school day.

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