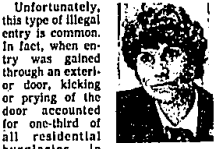


Reinforce your doorjamb, strikeplates

The following column is another in a series written for the Farmington Observer by Chris Cogar, a technician with the Farmington Hills Police Department's Crime Prevention Unit.

It was obvious to the homeowners that their house had been broken into. The back door stood ajar with the telltale mark of a footprint prominently visible near the lock area.



Chris Cogar

Unfortunately, this type of illegal entry is common. In fact, when entry was gained through an exterior door, kicking or prying of the door accounted for one-third of all residential burglaries in Farmington Hills during 1985. Most often, the lock remained intact but the doorjamb and/or strike plate did not. Statistics show that most burglars will concentrate on an exterior door and jamb before resorting to another means of entry. For this reason, residents should devote some time to securing their doorjamb and reinforcing strike plates in addition to installing strong doors and locks. To ensure that the doorjamb affords you the best protection possible, check the entire structure for proper fit. There should be no more than one-eighth inch clearance between the door and the jamb. The larger the gap between these two units, the greater the risk to the door of forced entry with a crowbar or comparable tool.

SIMILARLY, a door hung on a rotted jamb can also be easily compromised. So, be sure to repair any areas that show signs of deterioration. As an added precaution, you may wish to install metal edging strips on the jamb, which would make the use of a prying device more difficult. Even if the door is properly fitted, a burglar might find little resistance to his prying efforts due to the way many doorjamb are constructed. Oftentimes, when doorjamb are installed, they are placed one to two inches away from the wall studs on each side. This allows room for the carpenter to insert small blocks of wood which permanently hold the doorjamb in place while they correctly adjust the position of the door. Unfortunately, these spaces make it easier for the intruder to spread the jamb away from the door. To reinforce this area, you must remove the molding around the door frame and fill the hollow spaces between the doorjamb and wall studs with solid pieces of wood. Make sure that you cut the pieces to fit snug, since these that are too wide

crime watch

could bow the doorjamb, making the door hard to close. After you fasten the wood sections with nails, you are ready to replace the original molding around the door frame.

ANOTHER AREA not to be overlooked is the strike plate on the doorjamb, which accepts the bolt of the locking mechanism. This important companion to the

lock should be of heavy metal construction and larger than standard size to allow for the use of additional fastening screws. These screws should be at least 2 1/2-3 inches in length so that they will extend past the jamb and into the studs of the wall frame. By following the suggestions listed above, you could improve the strength of your doorjamb and strike plate and reduce the chances of a burglar forcing

his way into your home through an exterior door. The old adage that the strength of the entire chain is as strong as its weakest link could not be more true in this case. Your doorjamb and strike plate, along with the door and locks, form a chain of protection which could make entry into your home by kicking or prying of the door very difficult.

carrier of the month Farmington



Keith Bullock

Keith Bullock, 13, was named the Farmington Observer's Carrier of the Month for March. He has delivered the Observer in Stamen Acres since October 1983. The Temple Christian School eighth grader's favorite subjects are shop and science. His hobbies include basketball, swimming, reading and cycling. He plans to become an ophthalmologist. "Not being tied down on weekends is one of the things he likes about being an Observer carrier. "It gives me a taste of responsibility of what a real job is like," he said. Keith is the son of Michael and Beth Bullock. He has one brother, Kevin, 17. If you want to be a Farmington Observer carrier, please call 591-0500

He's a winner

Larry Hayden of Farmington Hills and his pair of goldeneye ducks placed second in a \$100 stamp contest sponsored by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Winners were announced Feb. 22 during Outdoorama, hosted by the Michigan United Conservation Clubs at the Michigan State Fairgrounds.

ART HOUSE LECTURES PRESENTS "THE AGE OF BOUCHER" with J. PATRICE MARANDEL Curator of European Painting at the Det. Inst. of Arts Slide & Lecture Series Tuos. 10 A.M.-12; Mar. 18-Apr. 8 ART HOUSE info: 10 A.M.-4 P.M. • 832-2022

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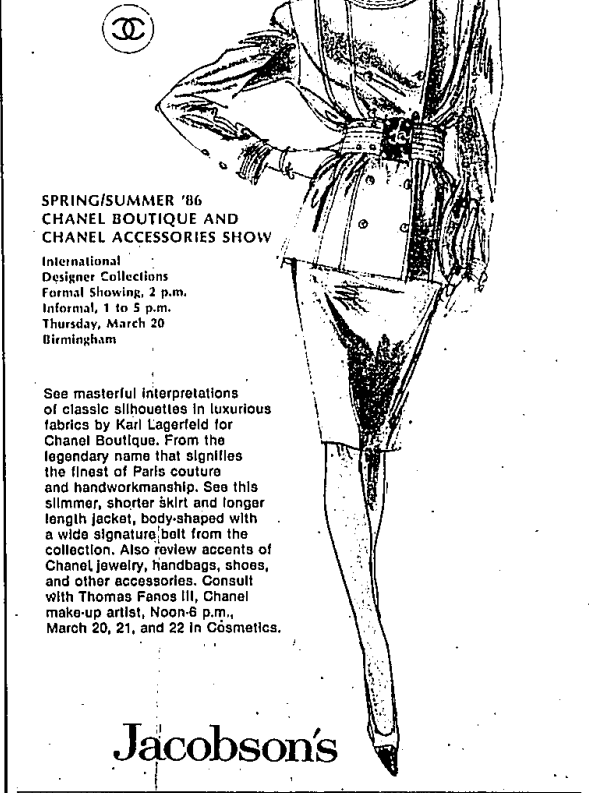
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