

Hills fire department unveils 1985 stats

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tion must be having an effect on the community. People are recognizing hazards and getting to it before it becomes a fire," Marinucci said.

"Also, it's smaller fires (that are occurring) with minimal damage. We can't prevent all fires but we can do things to keep them small," he continued.

The five major fires and damage that occurred in 1985 include condominiums, \$200,000 (accidental); Northwestern Party Store, \$65,000 (suspicious); Armatures Inc., \$445,000 (accidental); residence in Section 4 (north end), \$118,000 (accidental); residence in Section 31 (southwest), \$210,000 (arson).

MARINUCCI'S REPORT also shows that the 2,843 incidents reported to in 1985 represents an 11.3 percent increase over the 1984 total of 2,554 incidents. But total dollar loss increased by 16.9 percent.

While the number of fires that occurred in 1985 decreased by 1.7 percent, the department experienced a 30 percent increase in the number of vehicle fires with a corresponding 34.5 percent increase in dollar loss for mobile property, Marinucci said.

Although unsure why the increase in vehicle fires occurred, Marinucci said the amount of fire loss can be misleading because it doesn't always show the seriousness of a fire. For example, fire loss on two cars, a Corvette and Porsche, can total \$60,000.

While fires increased in commercial property and public assembly incidents increased, residential fires decreased by 19.7 percent, Marinucci said.

"We expect to see some increase because there are more buildings and more people," he said.

In the non-fire incident category, the department experienced an overall 14.2 percent increase over 1984. Medical emergencies, including injury accidents, increased 5.7 percent. The number of false alarms, investigations and cancelled runs also increased significantly, according to the report.

GROWTH in the city, including new construction and a greater transient population being brought in to work in the new office buildings, is much of the reason for increased fire department activity, Marinucci said.

The number of city plans the fire department reviews has also in-

creased as building has increased. In fact, an officer's position has been added to keep pace with the increased workload, Marinucci said.

Because of increased business activity and traffic in Farmington Hills during daytime hours, the fire department last year established peak hours staffing. The department's eight full-time employees work 10-hour shifts four days a week with part-time firefighters filling in the remaining hours of the week. The switch allows full-time coverage during business hours and traffic rush hours from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

"We have realized a lot of direct and indirect benefits," Marinucci said.

The new scheduling system also allows part-time and full-time firefighters to work together, allowing for better training of the part-time employees, Marinucci said. The department has 76 part-time fire fighters and is authorized to have 80.

WITH GROWTH expected to continue in the next several years, fire officials have developed a six-year fire development plan that details future

needs in vehicles, facilities and personnel for the department, Marinucci said. A preliminary development plan was presented to the Farmington Hills City Council last week. The plan will go through planning commissions for review and then back to council for formal adoption.

Reviewing the past year, Marinucci said it was one in which the department made giant steps toward modernization, as well as increased fire prevention programs and training for firefighters.

Last fall, the department received its first computers. Incident reports, payroll and training information are now computerized, easing workload and making the retrieval of needed information much easier. The computers aid in comparing types of incidents and other information over a period of years, he said.

The quick retrieval of information aids in determining the type of training that's required or the type of fire prevention programs needed, Marinucci said.

IN 1985, the department provided 147 paid fire education programs to approximately 7,334 children. The department also provided 92 fire safety demonstrations and sta-

tion tours.

"We would like to think somehow that has an impact on the overall results we see here," Marinucci said.

Just as physicians help patients practice preventive medicine, fire officials have come to recognize the need to teach residents about preventing fires, Marinucci said he is sure the increased public education and awareness has helped minimize the size and seriousness of fires.

Firefighter training also took priority in 1985, particularly with training in hazardous materials. The fire department is being faced with the need to keep pace with new, more complex materials used in buildings, as well as new building techniques. The city's proximity to major freeways on which trucks carry a variety of products has also increased the need for training in hazardous materials, Marinucci said.

"The building industry changes. We need to keep people educated. We need to know how the structure itself affects fire," Marinucci said.

BECAUSE THE public is becoming more educated and aware of hazardous materials, the department has been receiving more calls from residents asking how to

dispose of certain products.

In 1985, the department's training division also drafted a three-year set of guidelines for training. The goal is to upgrade all department members to firefighter level II in the state certification process. With the plan in place, the training division has been working to provide courses in a step-by-step process leading to the higher certification, Marinucci said.

Training has also included the use of new equipment, such as a new heavy-duty emergency vehicle purchased last year and delivered in early 1986 to Station 1. The vehicle carries a Jaws of Life extrication tool that can be operated directly from the vehicle. Another feature of the vehicle is a built-in foam tank for controlling gasoline fires, Marinucci said.

The department also refurbished its aerial ladder truck and a medical unit, as well as replace one of its older vehicles.

For 1986-87, Marinucci is proposing the purchase of a new vehicle for Station 2, as well as a second aerial ladder truck to be used in the city's north end.

Kensington park's superintendent steps down

Continued from Page 1

He credits his love of nature to his mother, who enjoyed many of the same things. He also points to "a natural curiosity."

"I had a natural desire for the outdoors," he explained.

FROM LAST January through his official retirement, Damm used several leftover compensation weeks, so really began his retirement several months ago.

He's now enjoying the fruits of his labors — including an occasional vegetable from his backyard garden. With the extra time, he'll "plant two weeks early and try to get an early crop."

"I put it down and if the good Lord lets it grow, fine — if not I try again next year," he added. The Damm yard is filled with perennials transplanted from the yards of many friends.

His yard holds not only flowers, but several projects — including a boat and a car — he's been saving for retirement. As of yet, he hasn't had the time to work on these projects, or making storm windows — another project.

"I love it," he said of his newfound lifestyle. "Don't know why I didn't do it sooner."

Since 1955, Damm and his wife have lived in the ranch on Manning Street

"I'm not a crusader. I like to keep a low profile and work with people."

— Charles Damm
City resident

watching neighborhood kids — including his son who now lives in Arizona and daughter who's getting ready for college — grow up.

He moved to Farmington "primarily because of the schools" and said the city's done "marvelously well." He's pleased with the current downtown revitalization, and remembers the changes that brought the Downtown Farmington Center.

ALTHOUGH DAMM worked locally to help the growth of the present Farmington Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), and helped organize the Association of Interpretive Naturalists — now a national group — he considers himself a behind-the-scenes person.

"I'm not a crusader," he said. "I like to keep a low profile and work with people."

Damm worked with people during

his high school years at Detroit Catholic Central, when he delivered milk for Twin Pines for "pin money."

"I saw enough of factory jobs to know they weren't for me," he said. Damm attended Michigan State University on the G.I. bill, graduating with

a degree in forestry and wildlife management.

THEN HE WAS off in an air boat to search for poachers in Florida's sparsely populated Everglades — just after the area was dedicated as a national

park.

He never knew if he was dealing with the native Indians, or people who arrived later. "People really couldn't hold property because of Prohibition," he said. "We would catch them there hunting and fishing illegally."

But he tried to treat all the people he

dealt with equally. "People are people," he said. "Sometimes, we get all mixed up putting labels on them."

His experience dealing with people included two volunteer stints in the U.S. Naval Reserve during World War II and the Korean Conflict. He retired from the Reserve in September 1977.



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Grades 3 & 4 1:00 p.m.
Grades 5 & 6 4:00 p.m.

April 12
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April 17-20
ACCENT ON HOME SHOW

April 26-27
INDOOR PLANT DISPLAY & LECTURES
12:30 African Violet Society
1:30 Bromeliad Society
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3:30 Indoor Gardening Society

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