

Portage mayor recounts visit to Hills

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It's similar in size to Farmington Hills, but has about 25,000 fewer residents. The city has 11 parks and 400 acres of recreational land.

It is part of an industrial and marketing center that boasts 60 communities, 2,000 square miles and

500,000 people. A state university, two four-year colleges, a community college and a business college are within a five-mile radius of Portage.

MARSHKE'S VISIT to Farmington Hills left him with impressions of "a nice city — clean, progressive, a comfortable family community."

Typically, Mayor's Exchange Day, sponsored by the Michigan Municipal League, produces many worthy ideas for Portage.

"The number of administrators taking part demonstrates how important this exchange is to the operation of our city," said Marshke, mayor for 18 months and formerly a

consulman for five years.

In Farmington Hills, Marshke particularly liked the "Life Light" he read about in city literature. In emergencies, residents can switch this front-yard light to flashing so that police officers, firefighters or paramedics can easily find their house.

"We're going to look at the light to see if it would help increase the security of our citizens," Marshke said.

Marshke was impressed that economic development hasn't sidestepped Farmington Hills, even though the city shies from tax breaks.

"We use them liberally. We've given out a few dozen," Marshke said.

He prefers the conservative approach to tax breaks and applauds Farmington Hills.

"You seldom use them yet your economic growth is astounding," he said. "That goes to show you don't have to use them to have economic growth. I believe that's a very responsible way of handling citizens' money."

Through the Portage Business Relations Program, the city tries to solve problems identified by local businesses. The program also keeps businesses abreast of what government resources are available to them.

PORTAGE'S ROAD problems aren't as severe as Farmington Hills'. But the city still has 10 miles of residential roads that need rebuilding, Marshke said.

Traffic congestion is a particular problem near the city's two major malls, Crossroads and Southland.

To ease the slowdown, Portage plans to build a \$1.7 million, four-lane boulevard.

"We'll also improve the intersections to five lanes in all four directions and computerize the traffic signals to more effectively handle traffic flow," Marshke said.

When Farmington Hills officials visit Portage today, they'll see Woodbridge Hills, a planned unit development of apartments, condominiums

and single-family houses ringing a golf course. Through the woods is one of Portage's industrial leaders, Allen Test Products.

Today's agenda also includes viewing an artist's rendering of the new Portage City Hall, a \$3.5 million, 27,000-square-foot building planned for a site called "The Triangle."

The tour also may include a stop at Upjohn Pharmaceutical, one of 30 Fortune 500 companies headquartered in the Portage area.

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DAR names contest winners

Local Farmington students were state and national winners in the Junior American Citizens sponsored by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Students from Larkshire Elementary and Our Lady of Sorrows Elementary participated in several con-

test categories. They were sponsored by the Three Flags Chapter of the DAR.

National winners were third grader Margie Deward from Our Lady of Sorrows in the stamp design contest. She won an honorable mention. Jan Tobe's second-grade class

from Larkshire won first place for the banner contest at the second-grade level.

These national winners were first-place winners in Michigan and first-place winners in the East Central Division of states before being sent to Washington, D.C., for final judging.

Other state winners included Larkshire second grader Nicole Cruse in the poster area, and Larkshire fifth grader Meredith Gundy in stamp design. Each won a second place in the East Central Division.

This year's DAR contest theme was "The Making of the U.S. Constitution." Nineteen state awards were received in addition to the four divisional awards and two national awards. All entries were judged by grade level and by category at each judging stage.

right on the street — for parts.

More often than not, the vehicle identification number (VIN) is changed. Sometimes, the entire dashboard with the VIN is interchanged with dashboards in other stolen cars to make identification and tracing difficult, Haver said.

On the average, the youths can make \$50-\$600 for each car they steal.

"In some cases, the parts are worth more than the car," Haver said.

The parts are sold to chop shops and repair shops. The youths sell the parts for what they can get and the shops turn around and sell the parts at a profit.

Car thefts targeted

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anti-theft programs. "Some do it just to get the insurance money."

Whatever the reason, fraudulent cases only further contribute to increased insurance costs.

"EVERYONE PAYS in the cost of insurance and the cost of new cars," Haver said.

Police are increasingly setting up decoy cars complete with radar detectors primed on the dashboard — an advertisement for thieves — to nab thieves hunting for autos to steal.

Most youths steal the autos and drive them back to Detroit. The autos are then stripped — sometimes

you know the real facts about drugs, you'll say no to drugs."

Nancy Reagan is honorary chairwoman of the campaign, expected to involve 4,000 shopping centers and retail stores nationwide.

'No to drugs,' kids told

One Farmington Hills shopping center is among 45 statewide participating in the "Kids Say No" anti-drug campaign May 15-23. Hunters Square/Tally Hall is helping spread the campaign theme. "If

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