

Goodfellows reach out for community

By Chris Rizak
staff writer

Bob Rebtoy has had his share of volunteering.

For as long as he can remember, he's been pumping annoyed, shy or even belligerent drivers for Farmington Area Goodfellows donations during its annual newspaper sale.

He usually succeeds but not without noting the clever ways some drivers have of avoiding his glance — his way of first attracting their attention when they drive past.

"You'd be surprised," said Rebtoy, "at how some people will try to get out of giving money."

Some, he said, stop their cars 40 feet from the intersections, blocking traffic behind them in an effort to synchronize their approach with a green light.

Others, he said, "will be fussing with their gear shifts or fidgeting through their purses. It's kind of funny."

Funny is not the word, however, to

describe the amount of money collected by Goodfellow volunteers during this year's drive.

REBTOY AND 11 fellow volunteers from the Farmington Hills Fire Department solicited \$8,372 from hurried drivers, bringing this year's department total up \$1,500 over last year's.

A good amount, Rebtoy said, but not enough to satisfy some Station 3 firefighters who initiated an unofficial competition between the department's four stations.

"It's what keeps it fun," said Rebtoy. "A lot of the guys schedule their vacations and personal days around the drive."

Volunteers from such local groups as the Farmington and Farmington Hills police departments, the Farmington Elks Lodge, the Farmington Exchange Club, local Kiwanis clubs and the Farmington Area Jaycees solicited enough donations to bring the 1987 overall total to \$18,539, up some from last year, according to

Goodfellows secretary Allee Williams.

The goal now is to begin coordinating food and toy baskets, and the canned food and shirt and dress drives in time for Christmas, she said.

LOUISE MCLOUD, coordinating this year's toy drive, said the drive, which usually generates plenty of toys for youngsters, always fails to turn up enough gifts for older children.

Goodfellows provides gifts for children up to the age of 14.

"We always run out of things for young teens," McCloud said. "What we're looking for are the mini hair dryers, posters, puzzles and games. Nowadays, the kids grow up fast. They're 8 years old and worrying about their hair."

Goodfellow general chairman Richard Tupper said historically, volunteers have had to go out and

buy additional items once all the donations are inventoried.

He expects the same for this year when attempting to fill 350 food baskets intended for more than 100 Farmington and Farmington Hills families and senior citizens.

This year, the Goodfellows will be

organizing food baskets and clothing at a new location, in the Village Commons Shopping Center on Grand River.

The Goodfellows is always looking for donations of money, clothing or food. Most of the drives will conclude this week but those wishing to

donate can contact the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce at 474-3440.

The shirt and dress drive runs to Dec. 11.

The Goodfellows is looking for volunteers to help pack food baskets, which will be delivered Dec. 19.



BOB SKLAR/staff photographer

Farmington Exchange Club member Ralph Yoder sold newspapers at Farmington Road and Grand River during the Farmington Area Goodfellows newspaper sale Friday.

Goodfellows need help

Again this year, the Farmington Area Goodfellows need your support to help provide a holiday lift to needy children and less-fortunate elderly residents in Farmington and Farmington Hills.

With the money donated, the Goodfellows deliver baskets of joy typically containing canned foods and knitwear. Each includes gift certificates redeemable for fresh food and winter clothing. Toys, games, dolls and children's clothing are included when appropriate.

Family makeup dictates the size and content of each basket. Potential recipients must document need. Special dietary requests are honored when practical.

Cash donations come back to the community. About the only things the Goodfellows have to buy are stamps to mail solicitation letters and boxes to make into baskets. Volunteers are the Goodfellows' backbone.

Please fill out the coupon below and mail it, along with your donation, to: Farmington Area Goodfellows, c/o Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce, 33201 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

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