

Working with people makes his job special

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HARRIS' CAREER with the U.S. Postal Service isn't something he planned. His dream was to become a police officer after he completed a three-year stint in the U.S. Marines.

"I wouldn't be here today if I hadn't been in the Marine Corps. That gave me the self confidence to do anything. They make you believe you can walk through a brick wall."

When he was discharged, he was unemployed. "It was a case of finding a job. There was nothing open with the police. So the post office was supposed to be a temporary job."

"It didn't turn out that way. Harris built his career as a clerk on midnights, unloading trucks for the Southfield

Post Office. "Back then, everything came in bags and pouches."

When Harris was switched to days, he got into the financial, accounting and administration end of the post office. He never wanted to deliver mail. "I tried it a couple of times. But I knew I didn't want to do it for the rest of my life. I wanted to be in supervision and management."

His career move into management was self-initiated. "I kept asking questions and taking manuals home. I took the books home and I memorized them."

HARRIS CHUCKLES when he talks about manuals. If there's anything that a government agency has, it's manuals and regulations and rules covering just about everything. "We have manuals and we have manuals. We even have a manual on manuals."

'We have manuals and we have manuals. We even have a manual on manuals.'

— Kenneth Harris
postmaster

the credit to employees. They have a sense of involvement."

IN HIS career, Harris has witnessed major changes in the postal service.

Today, mechanization has come of age. Optical carrier readers are programmed to read the zip codes on pieces of mail. The next step will be for the machinery to sort directly for carrier routes. "It's coming," Harris said.

Harris ensures that postal employees realize they no longer are the only game in town what with private mail services and parcel companies. "We look at our customers as customers, not patrons. But there are certain things that are tough. If we let each customer decide when they get their mail, we'd never get it delivered."

It's been a treat for him to work in the high-growth areas of Southfield and be Farmington. Postal clerks in the Farmington area handle 113 million pieces of mail a year. And it doesn't appear that telephone service has much damaged the public's use of the postal service.

But Harris has an answer for that. "Anyone can call, but the old letters that you save really mean a lot. That old note is really hard to replace."

police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police incidents, fire calls and court cases reported during the past week:

● 2 CHARGED

Two Detroit men face felony charges in connection with the break-in of two cars parked at Corbata Apartments between Feb. 29 and March 1.

Arraigned March 1 before District Judge Margaret Schaeffer of Farmington, the two, one 23, the other 17, stood mute to two counts of breaking and entering of a vehicle with damage. Innocent pleas were entered.

Bond was set at \$1,500 pending a preliminary examination in 47th District Court. Conviction could bring a penalty of up to five years in prison.

Special Patrol Operational Team officers arrested the two in connection

with the theft of an emergency flashing beacon and two liters of opium from the two cars, said Detective Charles Hubbard of the Farmington Hills police department.

● TICKETS ISSUED

● A 29-year-old Union Lake man was ticketed for possessing drug paraphernalia and having open toxicants in a motor vehicle during a traffic stop on westbound Grand River near 10 Mile March 3, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

● The Dairy Mart, 20750 Farmington Road, received three tickets for selling liquor to minors Feb. 27, and a report was filed with the state Liquor Control Commission the following day, according to Farmington Department of Public Safety reports.

The minors who purchased liquor also received tickets.

● THEFTS REPORTED

A pipe groove machine valued at \$5,000 was reported stolen from a construction trailer between Feb. 29 and March 1.

Copper tubing valued at \$1,000 was reported stolen from an office building at Farmington Hills Corporate Center, 22260 Haggerty, between Feb. 29 and March 1.

A TV, a VCR, stereo equipment, an answering machine, a clock radio and cash of undetermined value were reported stolen from Country Ridge Apartments March 1.

An air compressor valued at \$450 was reported stolen from a house under construction on Ardmore March 2-3.

A cellular telephone valued at \$1,500 was reported stolen from a car parked at Northwestern Financial Center, 30533 Northwestern Highway, March 3.

A leather jacket valued at \$415 was reported stolen from a locker at Harrison High School, 29995 12 Mile, March 3.

● DAMAGE REPORTED

Damage was estimated at \$75 during a break-in at a house on Hamilton March 1-2.

Hearing is delayed on rezoning request

By Jackie Klein
staff writer

Southfield and Farmington Hills residents in the 11 Mile-Inkster Road area — who for a two-story apartment on a 50-acre tract owned by the school board — will have to wait for a city recommendation on the proposal.

Southfield's Planning Commission delayed until March 23 a public hearing on the request by Southfield Public Schools to rezone the single-family residential land for the apartment development.

The commission, at that 7 p.m. meeting, is expected to make a recommendation to the Southfield City Council to approve or deny the rezoning.

The site is on the east side of Inkster Road between 10 and 11 Mile.

Occidental Development has offered the school board \$2.5 million for the property, contingent on rezoning. The city council last April turned down Occidental's original bid for a 671-unit, three-story apartment complex. Since then, Occidental submitted a scaled-down, two-story version of the plan.

SCHOOL BOARD trustees have threatened to join Occidental in a lawsuit against the city if the rezoning is denied.

A few residents showed up at a

February planning commission meeting and were disgruntled by the delay of the scheduled public hearing on the project.

Area homeowners, who gathered in the hall of the municipal building, spoke about wildlife in the wooded section that would be destroyed by "more and more concrete."

They talked about the expense of sanitary sewers that would have to be installed to serve the proposed project. Adding apartment units would c. vice president of the board of directors of the Cumberland condominium association in Southfield, spoke at earlier meetings for the 200 condominium owners and for Farmington Hills residents across the street.

"Approval of the request would be a violation of the master plan for single-family homes and of transitional zoning," he said. "Without national zoning in this area, the added traffic couldn't be handled."

"The city would be sending out the wrong message if the property is rezoned. The city has pledged to promote owner-occupied housing."

City council members denied the mid-rise (three-story) apartment rezoning because the site abuts single-family homes and condominium townhouses and because the requested zoning doesn't conform to planned future land use.

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