

Hills police plan 1st ever tour, open house June 5

By Joanne Maliszewski
Staff writer

The Farmington Hills Fire Department has done it for nine years. Now the Farmington Hills Police Department will follow suit.

On Sunday, June 5, the department will host its first open house in the one-year-old facility at 11 Mile and Orchard Lake Road.

"This is the first summer we're really going to be in the new building. And now we have an appropriate setting for an open house," police Chief William Dwyer said. "We encourage the public to come out."

The open house is designed to acquaint residents with the police department, its role in the community and the new building. Scheduled from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., the open house will highlight themes of drug awareness, crime prevention and Neighborhood Watch.

In addition to providing educational literature at various displays throughout the building, the open house promises to provide residents with entertainment, ranging from the musical to well-known crime prevention personalities and a competition of muscles and strategy between the police and fire departments.

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THE DETROIT Police Blue Pigs band will play between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. When the band completes its final song, McGruff the crime prevention dog and Sparky the fire safety dog will arrive by Detroit Police helicopter to join the festivities.

"They will just be mingling around," said open house coordinator Sgt. Dennis Green, about McGruff and Sparky.

The Oakland County Sheriff's Department Mounted Division will be on hand though a formal program is not planned.

Self-guided tours of the new building will be available. A weapons display will be in the indoor firing range and the cell blocks and communications center will be open for viewing.

Televisions will be in four locations showing videos of the average police roll call, drug awareness, the E-911 emergency telephone system and a welcome address by Dwyer, Green said.

"In the Sally Port area, evidence technicians will be putting on live demonstrations of the work they do," he added.

Throughout the afternoon, a tug of war will take place between the police and fire departments. Two out of three successful pulls will determine the winner. The winning team will be awarded a plaque with plenty of room for additional names for planned future tugs.

"The tug of war (teams) will actually meet twice a year. Once at the police open house and another at the fire open house (during National Fire Prevention Week in October)," Dwyer said.

THE POLICE and fire departments will have their vehicles available for public viewing at the open house. Community EMS also will have an ambulance open to the public. EMS personnel will offer free blood pressure tests during the open house, Green said.

At 3 p.m., Ronald McDonald will make his entrance. "He does a little skit for the kids. I'll be fun and games," Green said.

Refreshments will be provided by the Farmington/Farmington Hills Optimists Club and the Farmington Rotary Club.

Hitachi opens Hills Technical Center

Tradition was as important as high tech at grand opening ceremonies of the Hitachi Farmington Hills Technical Center May 3.

The two-hour opening ceremonies were kicked off with remarks and speeches by company president Tadahiko Otsu, Farmington Hills Mayor Jody Soronen, state Department of Commerce director Doug Ross and Hitachi executive vice president Yutaka Sonoyama.

While welcoming Hitachi officials to the city, Soronen accepted a \$10,000 donation from the Japanese company to build a picnic shelter in the city-owned, 210-acre Heritage Park.

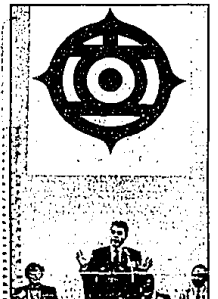
With greetings and speeches at an end, the traditional Japanese practice of planting cherry trees followed.

Each of the trees boasted a plaque, one of which featured the city of Farmington Hills. Other trees boasted companies that Hitachi services, such as Mazda, Chrysler, General Motors, Subaru and Nissan.

The next observance on the agenda was the ancient tradition of breaking the sake barrel, which was completed by city manager William Costick, police Chief William Dwyer and fire Chief Richard Marinucci.

The Hitachi Farmington Hills Technical Center provides engineering services to support the company's high tech products, such as engine control systems, supplied to the auto makers.

The company provides auto makers with technological services, including product development, design and analysis.



PHOTOS BY RANDY BORST/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Doug Ross, state Department of Commerce director, speaks during opening ceremonies. The Hitachi logo, visible in the background, is a combination of Japanese letters that mean rising sun.

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