

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Declaring April as Child Abuse Prevention Month in Farmington Hills, a city council proclamation calls on residents "to love all our children as we would want them to love us."

"To enrich the lives of our youth, we must replace abuse with love as we must understand that we all live on this planet," Mayor Terry Sever said, reading from the proclamation March 27.

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

To achieve the kinder and gentler nation that President Bush has called for, child abuse, "a horrible problem" that harms or kills thousands of young children, must be stopped, Sever said.

"Our children lack understanding of our adult world of stress, alcohol, illegal drug use and anguish of adult failure, which too often lead to senseless outbursts of madness," he said.

Farmington Hills resident Vernon Kieplinski, who has single-handedly tried to raise community awareness about child abuse and neglect, addressed the city council after the proclamation was adopted.

Speaking to fellow residents, he said: "If alcohol is in your blood and causes you to abuse your children, stop using it. If you're using illegal drugs, which causes you to abuse your child, stop using them. If stress is your problem, find a way to get rid of it."

AFTER ACCEPTING the pro-

clamation, Antoinette Cosentino of the Oakland County Child Abuse and Neglect Council reminded the city council that child abuse knows no bounds.

"Child abuse does not know any class or race or religion," she said. "It occurs everywhere."

She said it's very easy to dismiss child abuse as a family problem. But the council can't idly stand by, she said.

To help promote a community response, her council, a 12-year-old nonprofit agency, hosts educational forums for professionals, speaks to community groups, and provides referral for the public.

It also coordinates a multidisciplinary team of professionals, who consult with protective service workers on some of the more difficult cases.

The council is developing Care House — a project to reduce anxiety for sexually abused children while increasing the rate of prosecution in such cases.

Care House will bring together investigators "for a single interview, in a homelike environment, so children can feel very comfortable," Cosentino said.

Between October 1987 and September 1988, Oakland County logged 2,168 cases of child abuse or neglect — 200 involving sexual abuse. Many cases go unreported, Cosentino said.

She called on the public to heighten its awareness of child abuse and of the need to work harder to prevent it.

police/fire calls

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

● STORE ROBBERED

A man posing as a customer took less than \$100 at gunpoint from Silk Plants, 30901 Orchard Lake Road, in Orchard Place Plaza Thursday.

According to a Farmington Hills police report:

After an employee carried the man's plant selection to the counter, the man, thought to be in his 20s, offered five \$20 bills as payment but then produced a handgun.

After ordering the employee to lie on the floor, the man retrieved the five \$20 bills and also took cash from the register. He then ordered the employee into the back room, but soon fled.

● GAS STATION STICK-UP

A gunman took about \$200 from an attendant at Mid-12 Shell, 29370 12 Mile, at 5 a.m. Friday.

According to a Farmington Hills police report:

A man thought to be in his 20s told the attendant he was out of gas and needed a gas can. When told there was a \$20 deposit on the can, the man asked for change to use the phone.

While the attendant made change, the man stepped behind the counter, produced a semiautomatic pistol and ordered the attendant to the floor. The gunman took cash from the register and fled. No vehicle was seen.

● SUSPECTS NABBED

Three Detroit teenagers face felony charges in connection with the at-

tempted theft of a car from a Farmington Hills townhouse complex April 10.

According to a Farmington Hills police report:

After receiving a report of suspicious activity in the parking lot at Foxpointe Townhouses, on Halsted near 11 Mile, at 12:10 a.m., officers found evidence that someone had attempted to steal a parked car.

Officers arrested three men leaving in another car because they matched the descriptions of the suspicious persons reported by the resident. That car, a 1984 Ford Mustang, proved to be stolen in Van Buren Township April 3. Burglary tools were found inside.

Later, police found signs of attempted theft of another parked car at Foxpointe.

Arraigned Monday before District Judge Michael Hand of Farmington, Robert Allen Rice, 18, Eric Ozane Tate, 19, and Damon Terrance Floyd, 18, pleaded not guilty to a charge of attempted car theft. Floyd faces two counts of that felony charge.

Rice also was charged with receiving and concealing stolen property over \$100 since he was driving the Mustang, police said.

The defendants face up to five years in prison if convicted of attempted car theft.

● REGISTER TAKEN

A customer took an electronic cash register containing \$75 while an employee filled his order at 3:20 a.m. Friday at Dunkin' Donuts, 27919 Grand River.

As the employee was filling a soft drink cup, the man, thought to be in

his 20s, reached over the counter, grabbed the 50-pound register and ran out the main door. No vehicle was seen.

The register was valued at \$205, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

● BB ATTACKS

Damage was estimated at \$650 when vandals fired BBs into windows of cars parked along S. Stockton and Malden early Tuesday. About the same time, a window of a car parked on S. Brandon was broken out.

At 3:45 p.m. Tuesday, a BB was fired into the windshield of a car westbound on Hills Tech Drive. The Detroit woman driving the car was not hurt. Damage was estimated at \$125, according to Farmington Hills police reports.

● HOUSE DAMAGE

Minimal damage was reported at a Farmington house after two men apparently tried to break into it April 13, according to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report.

An occupant of the house on Meadowlark heard a window break, then saw two men running north, then east of Salvador. Nothing was reported stolen and no one was hurt.

● CAR RUN-OFF

A Taylor man was not hurt April 9 when he was run off the road as he drove along M-102 in the city of Farmington.

According to police reports, the man's car became stuck in mud in the highway median after the incident.

● YOUTH CITED

A 17-year-old Ann Arbor youth was ticketed for trespassing at Farmington High April 7, according to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report.

An assistant principal spotted the youth at the school day on April 7, after hearing a disturbance involving the youth and four to five students.

Officers spoke with the violator and forwarded a ticket to his house.

● THEFTS REPORTED

Jewelry valued at \$4,400 was reported stolen from a house on Ely March 6-18.

A 1983 Chevrolet Camaro and contents valued at \$5,400 were reported stolen from the parking lot of the Rustic Pub, 31030 Grand River, Farmington, April 7-8. The car was recovered in Detroit on April 10.

An AM/FM cassette stereo and speakers valued at \$369 were reported stolen from a car at Kensington Manor Apartments in Farmington April 8.

A Pontiac Trans Am valued at \$17,000 was reported stolen from the parking lot of the Drakeville Professional Building in Farmington April 8. It was recovered in Detroit April 9.

A portable car phone valued at \$800 was reported stolen from a car parked at Bel Aire Lanes, 24001 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington, April 8-9.

A VCR and TV monitor valued at \$1,175 were reported stolen from the Farmington Advisory Council Alcohol Education Center, 23450 Middlebelt, Farmington Hills, April 12-13.

Fund-raiser aids Mercy High

The Mercy High Dad's Club and Mother's Club will host a fund-raiser Wednesday, April 19, at Great Scott, 11 Mile and Middlebelt, to benefit the private, all-girls school in Farmington Hills.

Part of the proceeds will be donated

ed by Great Scott, which is across from the high school, to support Mercy sports and extracurricular activities.

Prizes, gifts and entertainment are planned.

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