

Business gives \$50 to imposter

A man who said he was a sergeant seeking donations for the Detroit Police Department yearbook unit tricked a Farmington Hills business out of \$50 Saturday, Farmington Hills police said.

"There's nothing to indicate a Detroit police officer was involved," said Farmington Hills detective Pat Sledge. "We're treating it as a larceny by trick."

Farmington and Livonia police report similar incidents. "It's just somebody who says, 'Here's my name, here's my badge number, I work for the yearbook unit,'" Sledge said.

Sledge urges anyone approached for a donation by a Sgt. West of the Detroit Police Department yearbook unit to call Farmington Hills police: 474-6181. No such unit exists, Sledge said.

The man provided no identification and no receipt. There was no answer at the telephone number he left behind.

The man was described as black, 5-10, 145 pounds, with a slim build, buck teeth and short black hair. He was wearing a dark suit and

brown-rimmed glasses.

According to a Farmington Hills police report:

At 11 a.m. Saturday, the cashier at the Mobil station at 37810 Grand River received a call from a man identifying himself as Sgt. West. He said he was soliciting donations for the Detroit Police yearbook unit.

The man told the cashier the station manager was aware of the request and had approved a \$50 donation. In exchange for the donation, the station would receive two tickets to a Detroit Lions game.

The cashier said he'd have to check with the station manager. The caller said he'd stop by the station later.

At 11:45 a.m., a man identifying himself as Sgt. West arrived and asked for the donation. The man spoke by telephone with the manager, who said she'd have to check with the district manager.

Meanwhile, the cashier, thinking the donation had been approved, gave the man \$50. The man said he'd return at 3:30 p.m. with the football tickets, but he never came back.

State sues car dealership

By Casey Hans
staff writer

After a three-year investigation of advertising by 90 Michigan automobile dealers, Farmington-based Bob Dusseau, Lincoln Mercury and two other Detroit-area dealerships are accused of violating state and federal laws.

On Sept. 7, Michigan Attorney General Frank Kelley filed a lawsuit in Oakland County Circuit Court against the Farmington dealership, at 31825 Grand River.

The action seeks a \$25,000 civil fine and a permanent injunction against advertising, which allegedly did not fully disclose all terms and conditions of sale.

Suits containing the same allegations against two other Detroit-area dealers, LaFontaine Toyota in Dearborn and Dick Seymour Volvo in Detroit, were filed in Wayne County

Circuit Court the same day.

Legal counsel for the Farmington dealership could not be reached for comment, but news reports stated that the Dusseau dealership believed the issue had been handled previously.

"Since 1986, the vast majority of the Detroit-area dealers have agreed to comply with proper advertising standards," Kelley said in a prepared statement. "It is unfortunate that these three dealers have not yet joined the effort and have ignored at least eight warnings."

IN FEBRUARY 1988, an investigation by the state showed advertising problems at some 90 dealerships across the state. In the past three years, all but the three dealerships named in the lawsuits signed agreements saying they would not violate truth in lending laws, according to state officials.

Chris DeWitt, Attorney General spokesman, offered an unrelated example of a problem advertisement: "Say they advertised a payment of as low as \$50 a month," he said. "That would catch your attention. If it failed to say that was for 25 years — now that would be a pertinent fact."

DeWitt said he believed the three cases may be resolved out of court. "In general, the vast majority of these cases will settle," he said. "I would be surprised if this does have to go to trial."

Dennis Schwartz, administrative assistant for the Michigan Automobile Dealers' Association, said he recalled the 1988 investigation involving the dealers, but could not recall the details. He also said dealers advertise individually, at their own risk.

"The advertising practices of individual dealers are solely within their

individual discretion," Schwartz said.

He said advertising guidelines from the National Automobile Dealers' Association are available at a dealer's request and include information on statutes and laws.

ONE THING the attorney general's investigation accomplished was to set up a relationship between the Detroit-Area Better Business Bureau (BBB), the Detroit Automobile Dealers Association (DADA) and the state attorney general's office.

Advertising concerns about dealerships are now handled mostly at the local level by the BBB and the DADA; the attorney general's office becomes involved only if that route is not effective, DeWitt said.

Dan Hayes, executive director of the Detroit Automobile Dealers Association, could not be reached by phone to comment.

police/fire calls

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

WEAPON SEIZED

A 21-year-old Detroit man faces a felony charge in connection with the

discovery of a weapon in his car during a traffic stop at I-96 and Orchard Lake Road in Farmington Hills Friday night.

A bludgeon, apparently used for protection, was found on the rear floor board after the driver was stopped for having tinted windows

on the driver's-side door, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

The man also faces a misdemeanor charge of driving with a suspended operator's license. Conviction of possessing a dangerous weapon carries a penalty of up to five years in prison and a \$2,500 fine.

REVOLVER FOUND

A Redford Township man found a .22-caliber revolver under the sofa in his room at the Knights Inn, 37527 Grand River, Sunday.

The pistol was loaded.

FURNISHING ALCOHOL

A 21-year-old Farmington Hills man was ticketed for furnishing alcohol to a minor Sept. 4 outside the 7-Eleven convenience store at 22333 Middlebelt, police said.

The man was seen furnishing a bottle of beer to three teenagers, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

WINDSHIELD DAMAGE

Damage was estimated at \$200 when a stone was tossed from a construction area into the windshield of

a car westbound on 11 Mile, near Inkster, at 6:15 p.m. Saturday, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

TEENS TICKETED

A 19-year-old Farmington Hills man was ticketed for transporting open alcohol in a motor vehicle when open bottles of beer and malt liquor were found in his car during a traffic stop on Leamington Friday.

An 18-year-old passenger, from Farmington Hills, was ticketed for possessing alcohol, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

THEFTS REPORTED

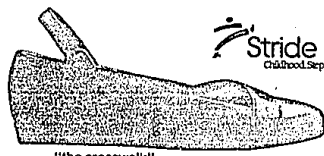
Two rifles valued at \$950 were reported stolen from a house on Elmwood, Farmington Hills, between July 18 and Sept. 11.

Camera equipment valued at \$500 was reported stolen from a house on Waldron, Farmington Hills, Aug. 26-27.

A lawnmower valued at \$450 was reported stolen from a garage on Derby, Farmington Hills, between Aug. 27 and Sept. 8.

Hand tools and garden equipment, valued at \$750 were reported stolen from a garage on Larkspur, Farmington, between Aug. 28 and Sept. 1.

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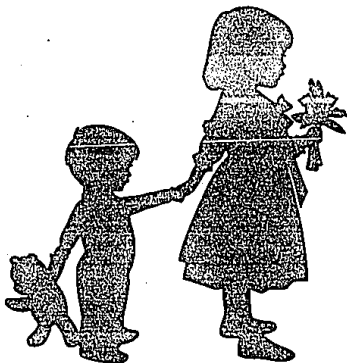
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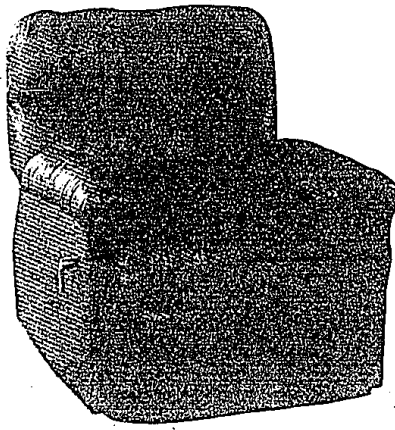


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