

City sleuths can try detective skills in contest

It will be a case of misleading identities for sleuths want-to-be's as they compete in the Downtown Farmington Identify Downtown Contest.

Sponsored by the Farmington Downtown Development Authority and the Farmington Observer, the I.D. Contest will challenge entrants to identify photographs of specific parts of downtown Farmington buildings.

Twelve photographs and an entry form will run in the Thursday, March 1 edition of the Observer. Entrants will have a little

more than two weeks to comb the streets of Downtown Farmington to discover the location of the photographs to meet the March 19 entry deadline.

"There may be a photograph of a part of a business logo, rooftop, or entranceway," said Wendy Strip Sittsamer, executive director of the DDA. "Whether or not entrants figure out all 12, this contest will be a fun way for them to discover what downtown Farmington has to offer."

To coincide with the contest's downtown

theme, there will be "top of the town" prizes as follows:

- first prize — one week's use of a Lincoln Town Car, Motor Trend's Car of the Year, courtesy of Bob Dusseau Lincoln Mercury;
- second prize — the chance to paint the town, or just your home, with paint and home improvement items valued at \$200 from Damman Hardware in downtown Farmington;
- third prize — the sounds of Motown on

five compact discs from Harmony House Records & Tapes in downtown Farmington.

WINNERS WILL be announced at the Downtown Day festivities, a history-making event in Downtown Farmington slated for Wednesday, March 21.

Saluting downtown Farmington as one of the few, remaining historic downtown areas, Downtown Day will feature a 500-foot long hot dog — long enough to serve all of Downtown Farmington's supporters — at a noon-

time free lunch. At the event, the first prize Lincoln Town Car will be presented to the I.D. contest winner.

Complete contest rules will be included with the contest photographs and entry form. In addition to appearing in the Observer, copies of the photographs will be available to pick up at both the DDA office, 33411 Grand River in downtown Farmington, and at the Farmington Observer offices, 21898 Farmington Road, just south of Nine Mile.

Local indictees await trial on federal charges

By James Radebaugh
staff writer

Two West Bloomfield men indicted by the federal government on wire fraud and other charges are free while awaiting trial.

Federal authorities don't consider businessman Alvin Gendelman, 58, and radiologist Dr. Steven Lewin, 42, at risk of fleeing from prosecution and won't seek their detention, assistant U.S. attorney Sheldon Light said Tuesday. The men are expected to be arraigned either later this week or next week.

Kenneth Weiner, the former Detroit civilian deputy police chief who last week was indicted with Gendel-

man and Lewin on 10 counts of wire fraud and 28 counts of interstate transportation of property taken by fraud, is in federal custody.

The three men are accused in the indictment of operating a pyramid scheme in which investors were defrauded of millions of dollars via promises that Weiner could, with his business and other contacts, deliver large returns on short-term investments in gold coins and other commodities.

Weiner is at the center of a separate investigation of the Detroit Police Department's Secret Service Fund.

Federal prosecutors have declined to discuss the case beyond what was

included in the 12-page indictment that was released last week, but Light described Gendelman and Lewin as long-time area residents. Both currently live in West Bloomfield.

Gendelman's attorney, Martin Crandall, said Tuesday his client is innocent of the charges and was himself a victim of a fraudulent investment scheme run by Weiner.

"After reviewing the indictment I am convinced my client is absolutely

not guilty of the charges brought," Crandall said.

Crandall blamed the investment scheme for the failure of Warfield Steel, which Gendelman principally owned, saying Warfield managers spent so much time planning investments with Weiner that they neglected the business. He said Gendelman never induced anyone to invest in the scheme.

Crandall said his client, who currently is employed as a business con-

sultant, met Weiner socially in 1985. Lewin's attorney, Richard Lustig, did not respond to a request for comment.

Light, who is prosecuting the case with assistant U.S. attorney John Roth, said Lewin is a radiologist who

practices in the area.

"In a case like this the trial could come in a month or two or it could be considerably longer than that," Light said.

The case has been assigned to U.S. District Court Judge John Feikens.

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