

Hills police department swears in 2nd chaplain

By Joanne Maliszewski
Staff writer

Becoming a chaplain for the Farmington Hills Police Department is a fulfillment of one of the Rev. Ralph Rebandt's dreams.

"We, as a church, have been anxious to be involved in the community. This is one fulfillment of that dream," said the pastor of the Oakland Hills Community Church, Farmington Hills.

As Rebandt, 32, quotes his wife, Carol: "We want to be a church for the community, not just a church in the community."

For the past couple of months — before he was sworn in as chaplain March 8 — Rebandt has been riding with police officers and getting to know them. "I've been asking myself how I can have a positive impact and create a positive atmosphere."

"My personal philosophy is that I feel the church has been pretty much extinct from society. I want to reach out to the community to show the church still has the answers," said Rebandt, chairman of the Farmington Hills Citizens Crime Prevention Advisory Committee.

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— Rev. Rebandt

Farmington Hills police chaplain

REBANDT IS the department's second chaplain. The Rev. Richard Karr of Northwest Baptist Church, Farmington Hills, is the department's longtime chaplain.

Their duties include, among other things, talking with police officers, helping police officers notify residents about relatives' injuries or death and assisting at police emergencies and natural disasters.

"The chaplains are also here to assist the department with civilian employees," Farmington Hills police Chief William Dwyer said. "There's always a need to have chaplains in a department. There's no cost involved. And they always provide an

open door for police officers."

Rebandt, the father of four children, became pastor of the Oakland Hills Community Church in 1987. He is a member of the central coordinating committee of the Farmington Public Schools, a clergy representative of Farmington Families in Action and manages a South Farmington Little League Baseball team.

Rebandt's church is the founder and sponsor of the Annual Baseball Fests and a host for Family Emphasis Series.

"I know chaplain Rebandt will do an excellent job. He's been very well-received by the rank-and-file," Dwyer said.



Farmington Hills city clerk Kathy Dornan swears in the Rev. Ralph Rebandt of the Oakland Hills Community Church as the police department's second chaplain.

SHANON LEMUEUX/staff photographer

Derby excites Scout dads

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who took the competition so seriously that he refused to allow his son to touch his racer, intricately designed and balanced, and kept it tightly packed away in a foam-filled carrying case.

Yet most tend to look at the race as an opportunity to share some of the fleeting moments of their son's younger years in an activity that combines woodworking skills with the urge to compete.

Of course, some go a bit to the extreme. Webelos leader Joe Bender recalls one father a few years back

who took the competition so seriously that he refused to allow his son to touch his racer, intricately designed and balanced, and kept it tightly packed away in a foam-filled carrying case.

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