



1,000th detector installed

Smoke detectors can be lifesavers, but only if you have them installed in your house. Lt. Mike Garr and District Chief Al Smolen of the Farmington Hills Fire Department are

celebrating the 1,000th smoke detector installed in homes around Farmington Hills after seven years of the department's detector program.

SHARON LAMIEUX/staff photographer

Firefighters say plan your escape before fire strikes

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thought-out plan for escape," Garr said. "During the assemblies children will be given escape suggestions that they can take home and talk about with their families. 'Families with

children are being bombarded by our suggestions. But there are others, such as families with elderly members who have limited mobility. How do you get them out? Families need to plan this out," Garr said.

EVERY YEAR, more than 5,000 Americans die in fires. Four of five of those people die in their own homes. During the special week, firefighters around the country are spotlighting these deaths and the simple steps everyone can take to protect families.

By far, carbon monoxide — produced during a fire — not actual flames, is the greatest cause of death in house fires. That's why it's important to have smoke detectors installed to alert you before a fire stops you from getting out.

While children are learning at their assemblies, their teachers will be given fire safety posters, as well

as an 80-page booklet on fire prevention.

During the prevention week, firefighters also will be at Knart on Monday filming a fire safety message for employees. They also will be in the Nine Mile-Middlebelt area providing free smoke detectors — door-to-door — as well as house numbers, which are necessary for emergency vehicles to determine addresses.

Firefighters also will tape a school assembly to be aired for the public over cable Channel 12.

The 14th Annual Farmington Hills Fire Prevention Open House Sunday will kickoff the special week. The public is invited to the event from noon to 4 p.m. at fire headquarters, 28711 Drake Road.

While there you can practice escaping when you visit the fire safety house.

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Program dispute discussed

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activities. "Duplication is something that group has constantly been monitoring," Potter said.

Confident any duplication can be resolved, Marks said he has plans for monthly meetings to avoid problems.

The center, which is "just barely in the black," counts on revenues from classes, workshops, courses and activities, in addition to fundraising events and donations, Marks said.

Concern also abounds about competition between the center's outdoor concerts that patrons must pay an admission fee and free concerts at Heritage Park. "Where would people go?" Marks asked, referring to the free concerts.

HERITAGE PARK concerts draw from 150 to 400 patrons. The center's concerts generally don't draw that many. In fact, one recent concert at the center had just 15-18 patrons when police shut it down after a noise complaint from neighbors.

The park's concerts are different that those offered at the center. "Ours are just basically trying to concentrate on community-type organizations that provide entertainment," he said.

Marks described the center's concerts as "more geared toward cultural — jazz, quintets."

When planning commissioners recently gave the center its one-year approval to use its outdoor amphitheater, they also suggested that the center and parks and recreation talk about sharing outdoor concert facilities.

"We had offered the park to the community center," Potter said. "But it's difficult to collect fees at an open park."

Center officials offered the outdoor amphitheater to parks and recreation, Marks said. "The city recog-

nizes they can't close it down. Now we have permission to use it (with amplification)."

But Marks also sees an immediate problem with shared facilities. "The only problem I see is a \$45,000 investment out there (outdoor amphitheater). What do we do with that? Had we known that that was their (parks and recreation officials) intention (to have outdoor concerts), we could have done something else with \$45,000."

"I'm not laying blame on anyone," Marks said. Potter, however, said the park has offered free concerts for the past four years.

The center's outdoor concerts in 1989 heralded the center's new role as a community cultural arts center. Competition from other community agencies — that at the time offered programming and classes traditionally offered by the center — forced the center into the new role to stay afloat.

Special ed program pared

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tution students into the program from other districts and close the room at Fairview. In 1990-91, the Wood Creek room was closed, but two were kept at William Grace.

Because there were only four students in one room and 10 in an-

other at William Grace, the decision was made to keep only one room open for the current year.

The current room at William Grace has 15 students — the maximum allowed by state law — with students of all elementary ages. Richards said the state allows a six-year age span, but parents had

gotten accustomed to an age span of only three or four years.

Also, there are 14 paraprofessionals still working in the room this year, plus a student teacher. No paraprofessionals, or teaching aides, are required by the state, she added.

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