

# Go-getter

## Hills police officer captures Optimist award

Farmington Hills police officer Robert Burkart is the recipient of the 1992 Farmington Optimist Club Police Officer of the Year award.



Robert Burkart

Burkart joined the Farmington Hills Department in 1978 and after only three years with the department was transferred out of the patrol division to serve as an undercover officer in what was then known as the SPOT (Special Patrol Operational Team) unit.

"He has that uncanny ability to know when a situation or an individual looks 'unusual' or fits a certain profile. This is extremely beneficial when serving in an undercover assignment," said Farmington Hills police Chief William Dwyer.

While a member of SPOT, Burkart turned in "an impressive" arrest record and served more than seven years in undercover assignments before returning to the patrol division, Dwyer said.

The Optimist award was presented to Burkart for his actions on Jan. 16, 1991, when on routine patrol during the midnight shift he saw a suspicious vehicle cruising a gas station in the 12 Mile and Orchard Lake area.

The vehicle matched a descrip-

tion of one wanted in a Southfield armed robbery. When the vehicle's driver saw Burkart, he sped out of the gas station onto I-696. The suspect abandoned his vehicle in Southfield and Burkart chased him on foot and apprehended him.

"This officer's actions resulted in the apprehension of a dangerous fleeing felon who was later discovered to have a criminal history involving armed robbery and dangerous drugs," Dwyer said.

Shortly after joining the Hills department, Burkart arrived at an accident scene on Nov. 29, 1980, to find the driver trapped in a burning car. After being driven back twice by flames, Burkart on his third try was able to drag the motorist to safety, Dwyer said.

For pulling the motorist to safety, Burkart received the department's valor citation and medal, as well as the gas station officer of the year award. Burkart also has received a merit citation, one citation, three unit citations, four letters of appreciation, and six commendations.

"He also received 10 citations in Highland Park where his law enforcement career began as a cadet. After eight months, Burkart was promoted to police officer with the Highland Park department in 1973.

Burkart has a bachelor's degree from Mercy College and has served as the president and vice president of the Farmington Hills Police Officers' Association. The Farmington Hills resident and his wife, Susan, have three children.

### CLARIFICATION

A list of honor students at North Farmington High School, published in the May 25 Farmington Observer,

should have included seniors Kenneth Molder and Tracy Stern, and junior Chris Buatti.

## Harrison team tops all Michigan entries

By CASEY HASS STAFF WRITER

A group of eight Harrison High School students received the highest score of any Michigan school at the national competition for TEAMS — Tests in Engineering, Aptitude, Math and Science.

Team captain Ben Pinsky and members, Stephanie Sprague, Christopher Murphy, Deron Cook, Julie Ritter, Maria Slutsky, Andrew Gaininger and Sarah Cannon competed on April 19, garnering 668 out of 1,000 possible points, according to coach Dennis King.

The next closest score was 599, achieved by Kalamazoo Math and Science, a magnet school for high achieving math and science students. Other nearby schools and their scores included Livonia Stevenson with 548 points and Detroit Country Day with 510 points.

King, a Harrison physics teacher, said the TEAMS competition promotes "deep thinking" skills and "isn't something you're going to pull off the top of your head quickly." He said he was proud of the school's improvement this year's team placed seventh in the nation out of 44 regional champions competing, while last year's team placed 13th.

Harrison was named state champion in Division 5 — the same honor the school received last year — which includes schools with open enrollment and a senior class size of 160-250 students.

King said the students were selected to participate in TEAMS because of "their outstanding performance in specific areas" taking into account their academic achievements including scores on advanced placement tests.

## Book store hosts Clifford

Cuddly story book character Clifford the Big Red Dog will be appearing at the Little Professor Book Center at the Grand River/Halsted Shopping Center Saturday, June 6 at 11 a.m. until noon.

All children are invited to attend. Children will be "transformed" into Clifford puppies, and will be led in a game of Simon Says by Clifford. The Clifford books, written by

Norman Bridwell and published by Scholastic, are geared toward children from kindergarten through third grade. The Clifford party at Little Professor, however, is appropriate for children of all ages.

For more information about the scheduled events, call Beth or Paula Herstein at the Little Professor Book Center, 478-2810.

## Election from page 1A

His main issues are curriculum improvement, fiscal issues and accountability of the board and district. DeVries holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in mathematics from the University of Michigan. He lives on Chesapeake Court in Farmington Hills with his wife, Jill, and has three children, two of whom attend Hillside Elementary.

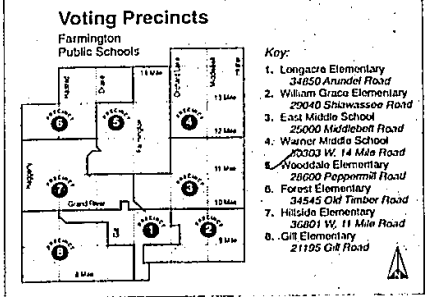
Challenger Swoke, an avid school board watcher, is one of the few people still remaining in the audience at the end of meetings. His motivation for running for the board involves his four children — all of whom attend the school system at various levels. His top three issues include school finances, quality of education and performance and accountability of everyone involved in the system. He lives on

Braceclaster in Farmington Hills with his wife, Rachel, and four children.

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Monday. School election offices at the Lewis Schulman Center will also be open this Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for others wishing to cast absentee ballots.

Voters Monday may encounter commuters from Advocates for Excellence in Education, a local education support group, which will be doing an exit poll survey of five questions about school financing. The polls will have nothing to do with Monday's election or candidates, AEE organizers said.

There are approximately 53,775 active, registered voters in the Farmington district.



THESE MAPS BY STAFF

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