

# Farmington Observer

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IN THE PAPER

**TODAY**

**Something's brewing:** Throw another pot on the stove. A second coffeehouse is opening in downtown Farmington. /3A

**Talking back:** another Walled Lake Schools bond issue is going before the voters, including some from Farmington Hills. Here's what some residents are saying on the issue. /3A

**Bye-bye beard:** A Warner Middle School teacher got trimmed by a student, all to benefit the Salvation Army. /3A

## COMMUNITY LIFE

**Firm on fitness:** As a youngster he was in the hospital at least once a year with health problems. But he grew up to be a physical fitness expert. /9A

**A man for Kiwanis:** Guest columnist Lloyd Smith, a Farmington resident, tells why Kiwanis has been a big part of his life. /9A

## OPINION

**A Grand idea:** Some architecture and design students are about to put Farmington's main drag under a microscope. /12A

**MADD message:** Thanks to Mothers Against Drunk Driving and law enforcement agencies throughout the state, the message, it seems, is finally getting through. /12A

## LET'S GO!

**Going 'XTINCT':** Locally produced "XTINCT!" is a mishmash of the pop culture icons we love and despise. /1B

**At the movies:** John Monaghan shares his list of the 10 best movies of 1994. /5B

## CREATIVE LIVING

**Pain and promise:** Paintings in the retrospective by Samuel Bak, continuing at the Janice Charach Epstein Museum/Gallery at the Jewish Community Center in West Bloomfield, tell of the horrors of the Holocaust but also hopes for the future. /1D

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## Woman saves girl's day



A woman saved the day — Christmas Day — for a Farmington Hills youngster when she spotted some wrapped gifts in the street.

By LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Santa doesn't always wear a red suit and ride in a sleigh. Sometimes she drives in a gray 1987 Toyota Celica.

Elsaine Stewart, a Wixom resident who works at Ingersoll-Rand in Farmington Hills, was about to pull into the Kmart on Grand River on the

morning of Dec. 22 when she spotted some wrapped gifts lying in the road. Stewart pulled them out of the way. A passerby mentioned the packages fell out of a van heading east.

So, Stewart put them on top of her car and waited for a few minutes. No one showed up.

She returned later and waited another 20 minutes. At that point, some

people would've given up. Some might have even kept the packages. "That never even entered my mind," she said.

Then Stewart drew up a sign, adding a pink fluorescent bow for good measure.

The placard caught a passing motorist's attention, who in turn, contacted Farmington Area Goodfellows. Goodfellow volunteer Kathy Dreher had been driving the van when the backdoor suddenly flew open, spilling gifts onto Grand River.

See SAVE, 2A



Elaine Stewart

## Inspector passes torch to longtime pal



Police department doings: Farmington Hills Police Inspector Ernest Miller (left) is retiring after a long career with the department. He'll be replaced by Lt. Richard Murphy (right).

By BILL COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills Police Inspector Ernest Miller knows he is leaving his job in good hands, those of his longtime friend, Inspector Dick Murphy. Miller, 53, is passing the baton to Murphy, who was recently promoted to Inspector, after 26 years with the Farmington Hills police. The two have been friends since the age of 15, when they went to school in Redford.

When they graduated in 1959, both decided to join the service. Miller joined the Navy at 17 and Murphy joined the Army. But their paths were to cross again.

After serving aboard the USS Talabach and another ship home ported in Norfolk, Va., Miller finished his tour and came home. "When I came out (of the service), I kind of thought that I'd like to become a police officer," Miller said.

He wasted little time, graduating from the Detroit Police Academy in May of 1963, only nine months after Hills Chief Bill Dwyer graduated.

When Murphy returned, Miller was already a police officer. Murphy started work at a steel company, but also tried to join the police.

"The trouble was that I was 5-foot-8 1/2," Murphy said. "The minimum height requirement was 5-foot-9."

Murphy tried going to a chiropractor and other measures to try to make up the quarter inch, to no avail. But with a good word from Miller, who was next of the mobile tactical unit, Murphy got his chance in the 10th Precinct.

But Miller's unit moved downtown, far from his west-side home, prompting him to consider joining the fire department, and be closer to home.

Miller joined the Detroit Fire Department just in time to be a part of one of the city's most tragic events — the riots of July 1967.

"At one point, I was up for 66-hours straight," he said.

But despite enjoying the work, Miller could see problems ahead. "Residency was becoming an issue in the fire department," he said. "My wife (Gall) and I had two daughters, and we had just bought a house in Livonia."

So Miller moved again, joining the Farmington Township Police Department in December of 1968.

See TORCH, 2A

## Liquor sting comes up dry; police chief pleased

By BILL COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills Police Chief Bill Dwyer has attained a goal he's had since his department started a liquor sting operation in 1986.

"My goal is to have no violators," he said prior to the Dec. 21 liquor sting in the city.

And that night there were none. No one in the 52 establishments visited would sell alcohol to a 19-year-old police decoy. That is the first time since Hills police began the program in the fall of 1986 that no one was ticketed.

"What it tells the department and the city is that through the combined efforts of the licensees and their employees, we can achieve full compliance," the chief said.

The sting was the ninth involving Class C licensed restaurants, taverns, hotels and bars that serve alcohol. The department has also conducted a sting involving package liquor stores in the spring to coincide with the graduation season.

The sting was instituted after an alarming number of fatal car accidents and serious-injury accidents in

the mid-1990s in Farmington Hills involving underage drinking and driving, Dwyer said.

"The community was starting to get a reputation as an easy place for underage people to purchase alcohol," he said.

In the fall of 1986, the department's first sting operation found that out of 30 on-premise licensees, such as restaurants, 23 or 76 percent, were caught selling to minors. Out of 34 off-premise licensees, such as party stores, 26 or 76 percent, were caught selling to minors.

In 1987, 12 out of 34 establishments, or 35 percent, were ticketed. In 1988, 20 out of 36, or 55 percent were ticketed. In 1989 and 1990, seven out of 41, or 17 percent, were ticketed.

In 1991, three out of 42, or 7 percent, were ticketed. In 1992, 10 out of 45, or 22 percent were ticketed. In 1993, four out of 50, or 8 percent were ticketed.

Despite the 100 percent compliance, the department will continue the operation, Dwyer said.

## In the wake of the news

The flag of the Republic of Ireland was snapping in the breeze last week outside the Heesey Sundquist Funeral Home. Why? By the Irish flag in downtown Farmington? Well, the family of the late Joseph D. Reid Sr. — who was proud of the Irish in him — requested it, and the funeral home was happy to oblige. "We had Irish music going constantly during the visitation and the funeral," said a Heesey Sundquist employee. "The family brought in about 15 CDs."

## FARMINGTON FOCUS

Mr. Reid of Farmington Hills died Dec. 17 of cardiac arrest at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit. The retired J.L. Hudson Corp. divisional manager was 74. "He came from a large Farmington Hills family with a proud Irish heritage," said Mark Ziegler,

partner and general manager of Heesey Sundquist. "They asked if we had an Irish flag. We often get requests like that."

The flag wasn't the only Irish touch. The eulogy was given by another proud Irishman — Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court Michael Cavanaugh — at St. Coleman Catholic Church in Farmington Hills.

Nine limousines were required to transport the family from the funeral home to the church to the burial to the wake. The Irish-style wake, catered

See FOCUS, 3A