

It All Began With A Gift ...

... and the world has never been the same since. True, then, as now, many did not recognize the gift, and others failed to see the importance of it, and some even responded with contempt. But to multitudes that one gift has been life's focal point. It has to us.

The gift? Jesus Christ
The giver? Almighty God.
The event? Today we call it Christmas.

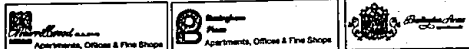
And it all happened in Bethlehem in Judea almost 2,000 years ago.

Today He remains the world's greatest gift.

We extend to all the best wishes of this season that means so much to us.

Paul H. Johnson
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Motorists can help nail drunk drivers

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Police officers have found it hard to keep ahead of the drunk driving problem, especially during the holiday season when parties are more frequent and alcohol is abundant.

So now, along with other police agencies, Farmington Hills police are encouraging motorists with car phones to help them out.

"We're just asking people to pay attention to other people driving down the road," said Sgt. Joe Rebb, dispatch supervisor for the Farmington Hills police. "This is nothing new. We get a lot of calls from cell phones on drunk drivers."

But police and Mothers Against Drunk Driving are emphasizing the reporting method this season and giving motorists tips on how to spot drunk drivers.

■ So now, along with other police agencies, Farmington Hills police are encouraging motorists with car phones to help them out.

"If someone is driving too fast or too slow, or in a reckless or erratic fashion, that's an indication of a drunk driver," said Sgt. Dennis Green, traffic supervisor. Farmington Hills has seen a decline in the 1990s from a whopping 467 drunk driving arrests in 1990 to 299 in 1991, 264 in 1992 and 244 in 1993. In 1994, arrests were up slightly to 264. But 1995, with 290 arrests already, looks to be the highest since 1990.

"We don't know how much that is affected by the fact that more people have cellular phones and call in," Green said. "But I'm sure it's a factor."

Rebb said 9-1-1 calls are free on cellular phones and connect callers to the Michigan State Police who then direct the call to the appropriate local police agency. "It's not surveillance," Rebb

said. "You shouldn't try to stop a drunk driver yourself because you don't know how they'll react, if it is narcotics or if they are dangerous."

Green said police have not had any incidents involving overzealous motorists taking matters into their own hands.

"This is the type of thing where the public's involvement can really help us avoid tragedy," said Hills Police Chief Bill Dwyer.

Police and MADD offer the following tips on how to spot a drunk driver:

- Look for turning with a wide radius.
- Straddling the center of the road or lane marker.
- A drunken appearance where the eye is fixed or the face is close to the windshield.
- Almost striking an object or another vehicle.
- Weaving or zigzagging across the road.
- Driving on other than a designated roadway.
- Swerving or abruptly turning away from a generally straight course.
- Driving slower than 10 mph below the speed limit.
- Stopping without cause in a traffic lane.
- Following others too closely.
- Drifting or moving in a straight line at a slight angle to the roadway.
- The left-hand tires are consistently on the center line or lane marker.
- Erratic braking.
- Driving into opposing or crossing traffic.
- Signaling that is inconsistent with driving actions.
- Slow response to traffic signals.
- Stopping inappropriately.
- Turning abruptly or illegally.
- Accelerating or decelerating rapidly.
- Driving with headlights off at night.

A drunk driving report should include the exact location of the vehicle, including the road and direction; a description of the vehicle and the manner in which it is being driven.

Trash pick up day later

Refuse and recyclables will be picked up a day later than the usual pick-up date during the two weeks beginning Tuesday, Dec. 26, and ending Monday, Jan. 8, in the Farmington area.

For example, if your collection day is Monday, Dec. 25, your

trash will be taken away on Tuesday, Dec. 26, and so on. Normal pickup resumes Monday, Jan. 8.

Christmas trees will be composted if placed at the curb on the regular collection day during the week of Jan. 2-6. Trees should not be placed in bags.

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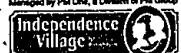
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