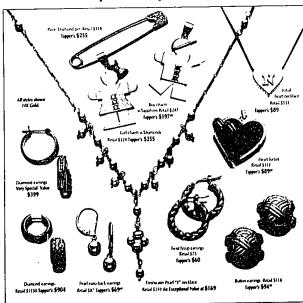


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Arson claims more lives; report suspicious events

BY BILL COUTANT
TATP WATER

Arson is one of the most serious crimes, and as Farmington-area firefighters and police will tell
you, it can have deadly consequences.

Farmington Hills officers didn't have to look far to cite examples of the destructive crime and its victims. May 5-11 is Arson Awareness week nationwide. Recent events make it more important in Farmington Hills.

"The fire department is sometimes limited to working at the scene," said Hills Fire Marshal Steve Hume. "We have to process the scene and can't interview all the people wid like to at the time."

And time becomes a factor

the people we in the to at the time."

And time becomes a factor when a witness to a fire doesn't hear about it being an arson and may not think to call police if he saw something unusual.

"It's imperative in an arson investigation that people come forward who have seen something unusual," said Hills Detective Ron Shankin. "If there is a car in the area either before or after a fire, that's something we need to know."

Shankin said many potential

know."
Shankin said many potential witnesses, such es a jogger who happens by, won't be interviewed unless he or she comes forward.
"We'll never know he was there." Shankin said. "And some people are reluctant to come forward."

ward."

When a witness does come forward, it can make the difference between conviction and not solv-

ing a crime where much of the evidence is consumed in the fire.

"In the Rhonswood fire that killed Marione Edwards in 1985, we had a neighbor who pieced her husband at the scone," Hums sald. "He had denied being there."

The city of Farmington had two fires of a suspicious or incendiary nature in 1995, Fire Marshall Jos Schornack said.

"Our goal is to keep this number as low as possible," Schornack said.

our goat is to acep this solutions of the said.

Nationwide, arson fires and fire-related loses have have been decilining slightly, but the number of aron fire deaths has risen 33 percent since 1984 seconding to the National Fire Data Center.

Some high-profile arons have not only caused serious damage, but have claimed victims in Farmington Hills.

There have been several notable arsons in recent months including a fire on Country Ridge March 2 that caused more than \$400,000 in damage, a fire on Fonnington March 6, a sleed fire on Albion March 6, a sleed fire on Albion March 9, a fire at Warner Middle School on March 12, a car fire at the Independent of Green Apartments on March 10, a van fire at the Clattion Clud Apartments on March 21, an attempted arson of a car at the Clateway Apartments on April 4, and a boat fire on Barfield on April 13.

An arson of a podiatrist's house on March 20 of 1095 on Glengrove

April 13.

An arson of a podiatrist's house on March 20 of 1995 on Glongrove not only caused more than \$300,000 in damage, but could

have killed the doctor and his family. And the Docember 1993 arson of a house on Quall Hollow resulted in the death of two Farmington Hills women. Two men have been charged with arson murder in that case.

Fire Chief Richard Marinucci said streighters try to get police involved with an arson investigation to see soon as possible, not only to help with the investigation, but to make officers more expert in arson investigation.

"We try to work with them as closely as possible," he said.
Shankin said police become involved in arson investigations early on, usually long before the fire marshal or fire investigators are propared to call it arcon.

"If it deem's look accidental right out of the chute, we are called in," he said.
Hume said the sooner a witness

right out of time church, we acided in," he said.

Hume said the sconer a witnes calls police or the fire department, the sconer that evidence or clue can be used to trace a fire. Firefighters often know early on that there is an arson, but they have sift through evidence at the scene. Several Farmington Hills officers have been trained at the state's Arson Traffing Center in Tustin, Mich.

Anyone with information about a possible arson or suspicious circumstances surrounding a fire should call the police or fire department.

An arson hot-line number, 1-800-442-7768, has been set up for people whe have information on suspicious fires.

people who hav suspicious fires.

Judge reduces teen rape charges

BY LARIN O'CONNOUS
FATFWAITS
An Oakland County Circuit
Court judge has reduced charges
egainst two men accused in a
1994 rape case involving a Farmington teen-ege girl.
Jeremy Lizezweki, 17, of Farmington Hills, and Anthony
Palushaj, 18, of Novi, still face
third-degree criminal sexual conduct charges in the reported rape
of a 16-year-old girl at a house
party in Farmington.
No trial date has been set. Both
are free on \$10,000 personal bond.
Lizezweki, and Palushai were

Liszewski and Palushaj were initially arraigned and bound over to Oakland County Circuit Court on one count each of first-degree CSC as well as third degree. However, Oakland County Circuit

Court Judge Barry Howard dropped the first-degree charge against both in a pro-trial hearing April 24.

"(The judge) quashed the information on the basis that it didn't show anything more than mere presence," said attorney Richard Lustig, representing Liszawski. "Plue the fact she indicated that she was drunk and blacked out." Palushaj's attorney Barry Resnick doclined comment. The victim, who is now 17, said she drank the equivalent of three beers and passed out during the attack, according to preliminary exam testimony.

The girl testified she was forced to have oral sex and intercourse after 13 teens came to her Farmington home uninvited.

She identified Palushaj as

making her have oral sex in the basement. Liszewski was linked to the crime by DNA tests of semen found on the victim's shirt.

emen found on the victim's shirt.
The judge ruled there was not enough evidence to bound Lizzewski over for siding and abetting in the alleged stack. Howard also ruled there was no evidence in regard to physical injury in the first-degree charge against Palushaj.

December on considering the control of th

Prosecutors are considering an appeal, said Oakland County assistant prosecutor Charles Suell.

"I think there is enough in the record to support the first-degree (CSC charge," Snell said. CSC III involves penetration and is a felony. If convicted, each count carries a maximum sen-tence of 15 years in jail.

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