

## Farmington Observer

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**JEWEL GALLERY**

## Police power play stops hockey gear thieves

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Thieves thought they scored a hat-trick after stealing a bag full of hockey equipment, but they weren't able to get past the police blue line.

Police arrested a Farmington Hills male, 17, and a Southfield male, 16, after two teens were seen trying to break into vehicles at Botsford Apartments Oct. 6. Thieves broke into a van parked at Vladimir's on Grand River and made off with \$1,200 worth of hockey equipment, skates and a cellular phone, which was found near the scene.

Coincidentally, the van belongs to Farmington Hills

police Commander Chuck Nebus.

"My son, Mike, and I went there because he forgot his hockey equipment in his mom's car," Nebus said. "It was just funny to find the damage and call it on the radio and have one of the officers come back and say he had a hockey bag and a telephone."

When police arrived at Botsford Apartments, they found hockey equipment strewn across the parking lot. Two youths said they were approached by two teens earlier trying to sell hockey equipment and that some of the gear was dumped in the Emmett and St. Joseph area.

Officers on Sedalia near Ontaga stopped a blue four-door Fly-

mouth, which contained two teenage males who matched the description of the pair trying to break into a 1994 Chevy Cavalier at the apartment complex.

One of the males arrested later told police that he taught the younger teen how to break into cars. He said he was on his way to a local restaurant when the other teen picked him up that afternoon.

The younger teen said he had stolen hockey equipment and a cell phone in the trunk.

The older teen denied any involvement in the vehicle break-in at Vladimir's where the passenger side window was broken out of the 1997 Chevrolet Astro van. Several break-ins

were reported at Botsford Hospital, but it's not known if all the cases are related, Nebus said. Nebus speculated thieves were going to sell the hockey equipment to a resale sporting goods store. Son Mike missed a scrimmage game as a result of the missing gear.

"It was about one o'clock in the morning we went back in the neighborhood. There were a couple of things missing," Nebus said.

"So we found the athletic supporter and cup out in the Eight Mile and Colwell turnaround and it had been run over," he said. "At least I wasn't in it dad." He was glad to get his stuff back."

## Talk offers tips on diversifying workplace

BY TIM SMITH  
STAFF WRITER

With Farmington and Farmington Hills becoming increasingly diverse, it just makes good business sense for that diversity to be represented in the work force serving those communities.

But there is no set way for area employers to go about dealing with the issue, which was the topic of Thursday morning's panel discussion, "Recruiting, Hiring and Training of a Diverse Work Force."

The program, presented by the Multicultural/Multiracial Community Council, featured five panelists with human resources backgrounds: Margo Gorchow of Botsford Hospital; Debra Nance of Nissan; Valida Strong of Michigan National Bank; Dana Winery of the City of Farmington Hills; and Sue Zurvalec of the Farmington Public School District.

Among those attending the talk were business representatives, clergy members, educators and residents such as Sid Alexander of Farmington Hills.

"I thought it was a very good discussion," Alexander said. "I think they were talking about interpersonal dealings with employees. I don't think they talked about their dealings (with customers) over the counter."

There was a lot to absorb."

Tom Shortliff of the City of Farmington Hills said "Everybody's fighting the same battle. But there's still a lack of tangible how-to's."

Meanwhile, the lack of a small business representative on the panel was of some concern to Jody Soronen of the Farmington Chamber of Commerce.

"Frankly, the resources, the time, the dollars that are needed to accomplish the things that the larger companies have done is a real challenge for the small businesses," Soronen said.

Each of the panel members was given time to discuss what is being done where they work to bring in qualified men and women from various races, religions, ethnic backgrounds and ages.

"Managing diversity in the workplace doesn't just mean managing fair employment practices," Strong said. "At Michigan National Bank, we support diversity for several reasons. First of all, it's the right thing to do."

Strong said the bank wants to have an employee base that "reflects the communities we serve." And, from a business standpoint, companies can only be strengthened by hiring people from various backgrounds

and perspectives pooled together.

Flexible work schedules for working mothers and employees with parents who need special care shows how the bank wants to take into account different needs, she added.

According to Nisan's Nance, those companies who will survive in the 21st century will need to hire the "best and brightest. Like it or not, the best and brightest will come in a multitude of colors and ethnic backgrounds."

Managers must also learn to see how recognizing differences, and gaining input from those diverse groups, will translate into business success.

One example cited by Nance was about a female employee on a product planning team who noticed that her skirt was pulled up by seat material every time she entered the car. "If a woman wasn't there, no one would have noticed that," Nance said.

Winery said Farmington Hills strives to have minorities in the finalist pool every time a position is being interviewed for. "We are opening as big a door we can to all applicants."

He stressed that the changing makeup of the community cannot be ignored in hiring new employees.

"Our stockholders are our taxpayers," Winery said. "It's important to meet their needs."

Over the past year, the first full-time minority firefighter was hired, as were the first full-time women firefighters.

Winery also talked about how temporary employment services such as Kelly Co. can help businesses without resources for targeting good minority candidates.

"Let them (agencies) know you have a strong interest in hiring minorities. It's one more score."

With a temporary employee, you have three-to-six months of evaluating. By the time you're ready to hire, you have a known commodity."

Botsford's Gorchow talked about how it is important for hospitals to have a qualified-but-diverse staff to sensitively treat people of various backgrounds and cultures.

"We don't just want to be able to see aggregate numbers," Gorchow emphasized. "That 'x' percentage of our work force is Afro-American, or 'x' percentage is Asian. We want to be able to look at the quality of that diversity."

Gorchow said companies and communities can only benefit from the promotion of a "shared vision" in the workplace.

"It's learning to recognize what pulls us together," she said. "Whether it's designing a car, working in a municipality or caring for the sick. There needs to be a shared vision that is strongly communicated. That's the tie that binds."

No matter the efforts of companies to bring in minorities, however, transportation woes that keep people from applying for certain jobs is an issue needing attention, Gorchow said.

Concurring was Soronen, noting the increasing number of Help Wanted signs in area business windows.

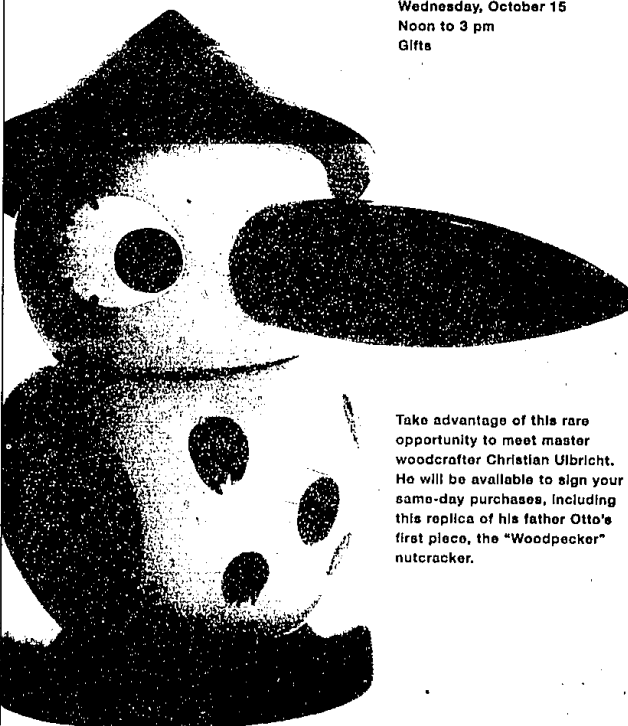
"Sometimes, it's a case of getting a willing, talented, qualified worker to the workplace," Soronen said. "Particularly in the case of young people who have jobs that don't pay enough to get a car."

## Christian Ulbricht personal appearance

Wednesday, October 15

Noon to 3 pm

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**The Farmington Observer**

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THE LAW

by Stuart M. Feldheim

Attorney at Law

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Have you been injured? Call the LAW OFFICE OF STUART M. FELDEHEIM at 338-501-4900 (toll-free) or 248-932-3505 for a free consultation. We'll get the facts of your case, advise you as to whether we believe the other party is legally liable for your injuries, and explain our recommendations. You can count on us to work diligently to fight for any damages you deserve, and keep you informed of the progress of your case. Our office is conveniently located at 30300 Northwestern Hwy., Suite 108, Farmington Hills.

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