

Volunteers lauded by Hills police

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Volunteers give, but Farmington Hills police officials wanted to make sure they also get — some well deserved recognition.

The department honored 30 people who donate their time for the city's handicap parking enforcement program and perform other clerical duties.

Volunteers received plaques and words of thanks from police and city officials Friday during a luncheon in city council chambers.

The police volunteer contingent makes up a portion of the 21,000 hours donated to city in help, which ranges from work as board and commission members to stuffing envelopes in the tax assessor's office.

Using the hourly rate of \$13.24 provided by Points of Light Foundation, that works out to a \$280,000 value to the city, City Manager Daniel Hobbs said.

"It shows a commitment from the community to the

community," Hobbs said.

Chief Bill Dwyer credited volunteers for having a role in two of the department's recent awards — from the Michigan Municipal League and National League of Cities — for its community policing programs.

Auto thefts, burglaries and larcenies are also down this year, Dwyer said.

"This has to be one of the greatest years this department and this community has ever had," Dwyer said.

"It's a team effort across the board. I'm proud of everyone in this department. . . . Everyone does a great job."

Those honored range in experience from a few months to eight years. Those contributing 1,000 hours or more include: Bill Choma, 1,094 hours; Ray Haefner, 1,336; Stan Leeman, 1,577; Sam



Honored: Earl Bliss accepts congratulations from Chief Bill Dwyer. Also shown are police staffer Juliette McGlinch, City Manager Dan Hobbs and Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi.

Ross, 1,352; Herb Schwartz, 1,060; and William Shortt, 1,082.

"I got a big kick people cheering me on for writing a ticket for an illegally parked car," said Schwartz, 70. "It gives me an appreciation that I'm helping the elderly."

Others honored: Ken Abrahams, Larry Abramson, Jean Alspector, Isabel Berlin, Earl Bliss, Charlie Caruthers, Jerry Connor, Harold Dubin, Mary Lou Denavit, Arlene Everett, Thelma Goldstein, Bob Haber, James Kelemen, Walt Kesselring, Alda Larson, Sandra Lewin, Peg and Dick Lukey, Fran Manning, Gerald Mutual, Peter Najorka, Kenneth Perrin, Al Slonim, Bill Walker and Al Woodell.

Beating from page A1

cutor's office aware of the subsequent findings.

"They never checked," Radzinski said. "It's unbelievable how our system of justice works; it's frightening."

She enlisted the help of state Rep. Andrew Raczowski, R-Farmington Hills. Raczowski plans to be with the Radzinski family during today's sentencing in probate court.

If the referee gives a stiffer sentence, the defendant can withdraw his plea and go to trial. Maximum penalty for a juvenile convicted of assault with intent to do great bodily harm less than murder is incarceration until age 19.

Therein lies the problem, Raczowski said.

"They get tried once; they're a juvenile. Once they reach age of

majority, that record is expunged," Raczowski said. "They get out into the real public and they create another crime and, guess what, they're treated as first-time offenders."

"From a national perspective, this is where we in the state level have our hands tied. How can you put a LEIN system together when you don't have one governing head above you telling you to put one together?"

Juvenile records are often sealed, making it difficult to check backgrounds of young offenders.

"The other problem is we're dealing with different states; The left hand doesn't know what the right is doing," said Barry Goldstein, private investigator. "The fact of the matter is he was still on probation (in California) when the assault was committed."

The key in this instance was finding where the defendant's father lived in California.

"It was certainly accessible," he said. "You have to know the specific place where the incident took place. If you do a general search, it doesn't show up."

The teen's attorney wasn't ready to accept the private investigator's findings as fact. The boy's mother told attorney Loren Dickstein the family "has never set foot" in California, he said.

"The victim's family has made many allegations that are untrue in this case," said Dickstein, attorney for the defendant. "I tend to believe that these would be no different. It may just one in a long line of untruths."

"The complainant's family has been very motivated to make (the defendant's) life hell."

Party from page A2

either stay inside or leave the premises."

However, Davis questioned why, if "there was nothing going on" at the house, the parents wouldn't allow police "to come in and check things out" Oct. 25.

Noting the police have teen-age

witnesses from the party, Davis said there is "strong circumstantial evidence and/or direct evidence that they knew what was going on."

"They (parents) don't have to monitor, but they certainly shouldn't be furnishing" beer, as was

reported, "and they should be cognizant of what's going on," including whether laws against underage drinking are being broken.

"Anyone and his brother knows that if you get 100 kids in a house, there's a chance there's going to be alcohol," Davis said.

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