

St. Urho? No, it's just Aldo

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

■ 'It's good to be a saint.
You don't see too many of
them in politics.'

Aldo Vagnozzi
—Farmington Hills Mayor

Somewhere in the weeds, snakes and grasshoppers congregate and spew a few unkind words about of their respective nemesis saints.

Everyone knows St. Patrick was no friend of the serpents in Ireland, but the spring-legged insects also had their own evictor, according to legend. St. Urho ran the grasshoppers out of Finland to save the grapes, and thus, the wine.

For 10 years, St. Urho's Day has been celebrated at Farmington Hills City Hall. On Monday, city staff gathered dressed in green and purple and ate pasties for lunch in Farmington Hills Fire Department Headquarters.

The fact that St. Urho's tribute is the day before St. Patrick's Day might raise the ire of an Irishman, but the spirit is in good fun.

"It's quite a coincidence, eh?" said Rick Lampi, Hills city planner who spearheads the annual luncheon. "Former 47th District Court Judge (Michael) Hand gave me some

gratification about it once, though." Finnish culture is ingrained with the Lampis. His father John was from Crystal Falls in the Upper Peninsula, which was settled by many Finnish immigrants. Suomi (Finland) College in the U.P. city of Hancock was started by Finnish speaking people in 1896. St. Urho's Day is a tradition celebrated in the Upper Peninsula.

The Lampis also lived in Southfield's Ever-shire Subdivision, which was known as "Little Helsinki" because of the numerous Finnish people living there.

The celebration of Finnish culture had an added attraction this year: Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi dressed up in the regalia of St. Urho, complete with crown.

The costume was made available courtesy of the Finnish Center where Lampi's mother, Helen, is treasurer.

"This is the first time St. Urho joined us," Lampi said. "We didn't know his first name was Aldo."

Said Vagnozzi: "It's good to be a saint. You don't see too many of them in politics."

Ship from page A1

himself as a nervous dad.

The following day, dad learned his son ventured up the mast to repair a sail ravaged during a rain storm.

Such leadership is only one of the changes Duane and Daniel's mother, Denise, have noticed. Daniel has become more self-disciplined and mature during the past six months, they said.

His mother talks to him by phone when the ship is in port. She admits she wanted him to go to college.

"I think why Danny wanted to join the Coast Guard instead of going college was because he wasn't sure what he wanted to do," said Denise Symanski, who plans to visit her son in Boston in July. "He said, 'I'm not sure what I want to do and you'd be throwing away all that money for college.'"

Daniel pursued the Coast Guard assignment with unfettered determination, Denise said. He studied vigorously and completed eight weeks of boot camp at Camp May in New Jersey.

He ran cross country and track at Farmington High, but his seafaring legs were trained on numerous sailing trips on Lake Erie.

"A lot of the recruits were get-



Special sunsets: Daniel and Duane Burgoyne aboard The Eagle.

ting sick at the beginning," Daniel said. "Now everyone is starting to used to the sea and it's all going great."

"I haven't gotten seasick yet." His day includes maintenance work, making sure the ship is clean for the thousands of visitors who tour the vessel when docked. Then there are three-day sail stations to make sure they are set, furling or trimmed.

Crew members relax by laying out on the deck, dubiously named "Teak Beach" or watching videos.

The experience on the 295-foot ship is a far cry from the 40-foot sailboats he helped navigate on the Great Lakes.

"This is like the creme de la creme of sailing right here," he said.

Training from page A1

"We've pretty much been able to answer all the calls," said Farmington Hills Fire Chief Rich Marinucci.

Before, firefighters could only provide Basic Life Support while waiting for Community EMS or another trained paramedic crew to arrive to treat critical care cases.

So far, 30 Hills firefighters are ALS-certified. That number is expected to rise to 35-40, which will include both career and paid call-back firefighters. New hires have to be paramedics or become certified within a year.

Advanced Life Support calls are answered out of Station No. 5, fire headquarters on Orchard

Lake and 11 Mile. Station No. 1 on Nine Mile will have ALS-trained paramedics and equipment in April.

By August, all five department stations will be equipped with medical units to offer the service. To help with the transition, a West Bloomfield paramedic rides with two Hills crew members as part of an exchange between the two departments. A Hills firefighter is sent to observe paramedics in West Bloomfield, which has offered Advanced Life Support for several years.

On Monday, West Bloomfield's Dan Dawe joined Hills firefighter Steve Biebel on runs.

"When I hit the wall on some-

thing, I turn to Dan and ask, 'Is this (Advanced Life Support) or (Basic Life Support)?' To him, it is as clear as day," Biebel said. "Hopefully, a month from now it will be that way for us."

Other bugs are still being worked out.

One problem is paramedics are sometimes stranded at out-of-the-area hospitals such as Beaumont in Royal Oak or Sinai in Detroit. A paramedic unit will start treatment and a crew member will later ride with the patient in a Community ambulance to the hospital. That allows the department's medical unit vehicle to be put back into ser-

vice.

"They drive and we treat," said Lt. Michael Garr.

Someone from the department then has to pick them up at the hospital. More than 31 percent of patients are taken to Botsford Hospital.

Another difficulty has been lining up two trained paramedics on every shift. In order to be certified in Oakland County, two paramedics must go on every run.

"We've had to juggle them around a bit," Marinucci said.

"Scheduling has been an exercise in mental gymnastics to make it work."

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Brittani Pulver

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Farmington High School senior Brittani Pulver, the daughter of Tracy Smart, was awarded a University Challenge Grant from Capital University.

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