

## Crime from page A1

cell phones in the car. But if you do, lock the door and put it out of sight.

Goss also advised that people make sure their cell phones are turned off whenever they are not making a call. Instead, they should carry beepers. The reason: to minimize "cloning," where an outsider could place calls and charge them to the owner's account.

In the Part Two crimes summary, Goss reported that instances of assault and battery jumped from 61 in 1996 to 69. The largest hike, though, was in reports of fraud, which grew from 10 in 1996 to 114 last year. Goss said most of these cases were linked to the Hickory Hill antique store closing, and not part of a widespread problem.

Other Part Two categories, with their 1996 to 1997 comparisons were: vandalism, 120 to 110; drug violations, 28 to 46; and drunken driving, 153 to 177. Goss and council members were concerned about the increases in drug and alcohol offenses.

Mayor Mary Bush lamented reading, on a regular basis, accounts about drunken driving in the Observer — despite increased awareness in the community through efforts such as the recent Call to Action Summit by Farmington Families in Action.

"There's no way to get through to some people," Bush said.

Goss called it "a very frustrating part of this job." He added, however, that "it is becoming

## Trustees from page A1

feeling of accomplishment in my life."

Inch and Vice President Cathy Webb recently announced they plan on seeking reelection to the board. But as of Friday, neither had officially filed for the Monday, June 8 election, said Judy Steinhilber, executive secretary for Assistant Superintendent for Business and Operational Services Cheryl Cannon.

"I'm still gathering signatures on my petition," said Webb, who is the second most senior board member with eight years served. "Legally, you need only 20, which is kind of astounding."

Webb, who said she is looking forward to the race, concurred with Inch about the importance of experienced officials overseeing construction projects.

"I feel I'm a steward to the community and want to see that things get done" in a cost-effective, yet high-quality fashion, Webb said.

Meanwhile, Webb stressed that she is totally committed to the school district and

has no intentions of again running for state office. In 1996, she sought election to the 37th District House of Representatives.

"Had I been elected, I would have had to give up my board seat," Webb said. "But now, I know I can contribute more. I can be far more effective at the local level than I could be in Lansing."

Steinhilber said that one person has pulled out a petition, but she did not wish to release his name. "He tore out a petition before, and we never heard from him again."

Meanwhile, candidates have until 4 p.m. Monday, April 6, to file for the election and until 4 p.m. Thursday, April 9, to withdraw, she said.

Residents who want to vote in the election have some time to sign up, too. The deadline is 5 p.m. Monday, May 11.

There are two four-year terms up for grabs in the Monday, June 8, election. In addition, voters will decide who gets three six-year terms on the Oakland Community College Board of Trustees.

## Search from page A1

that it is the district's right to search them.

Farmington Hills Police Cmdr. Chuck Nebus, on Friday, said the school district enlisted both city police departments to lead the search. He added that "it's been an secret" that a search would take place sometime in '97-'98. "The idea is to provide a drug-free environment."

Of the 10 "alerts," six were at Farmington; three at North and one at Harrison.

At those lockers, where dogs uncovered a scent of drugs but no physical evidence, Cowan said "it will be clearly difficult to identify" the responsible students. "But we'll continue to pursue that."

The Harrison student whose locker contained marijuana will go through the usual disciplinary process permitted by the code of conduct, he added.

Cowan noted that the district's Student Assistance Program teams will follow through "with intervention and support for those students identified."

## Fire from page A1

Individuals who commit malicious attacks on the basis of race, color, religion, gender or national origin face up to 2-years in prison and a \$5,000 fine. Honigman introduced the bill which became law in 1988 after discovering Michigan had no law protecting victims of racial crimes.

"The underlying crime, in all these cases, is already illegal," Honigman said.

But he wanted legislation that added years to the sentence of an offender who was racially motivated to commit the crime.

"Not only is the individual vic-

tim harmed, but the whole class of people is harmed," Honigman said. "It kind of tears apart the social fabric."

### Rude awakening

The victims of this crime would have to agree. The homeowners and neighbors are outraged and fearful for their safety.

The Farmington Hills victims, an African American couple who wish to remain anonymous due to the epithets, sold their home to move to Orchard Lake. Now they have two months to move and no place to go. They don't know if they will rebuild on the

lot.

"I felt vulnerable because there's nothing we can do," the woman said. "We can't be there at all times."

The couple chose the area for its scenic views and school district. They were welcomed by residents when they decided to build last July.

It was through one of those friendly neighbors calling to express their sympathy that the couple learned about the fire and the hate graffiti.

"I thought the person who was telling me was playing a joke," the woman said.

Early last month, a fire damaged a small portion of the couple's home. They found that fire to be suspicious since little electrical work had been done in the home at the time. The cause of

the blaze was not determined and construction continued.

"I don't believe they found any accelerant for the first fire," King said. "There was no racial graffiti, no threats ... but this puts it in a whole different light."

The second blaze was much more severe.

"The flames had spread so wildly," King said. "That, in and of itself, makes it suspicious."

Orchard Lake Police are stepping up patrols in Hickory Point.

"This thing is really frustrating because we haven't been able to put anything together with it," King said. "It's very diverse in that subdivision. This doesn't fit."

Damage to the home was estimated at \$450,000. The cause of the fire remains under investigation.

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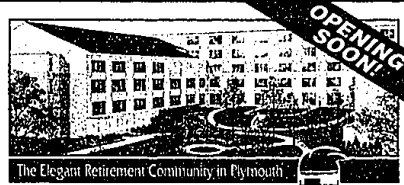
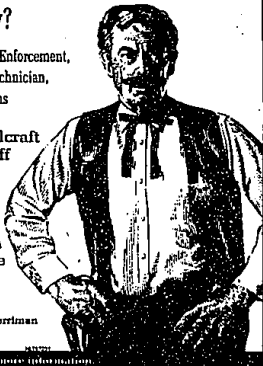
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Bunions are easy to spot: the inside edge of the foot just out at the base of the big toe, forming a triangular shape. This enlargement of the large toe joint is a deformity that often develops over time - and time can be the key to treating this painful, even crippling condition. If a bunion is diagnosed early enough, a podiatrist can evaluate the underlying structural weakness and prescribe a course of action that may stabilize the foot with minimal intervention. Treatment may include padding, prescription orthotics (foamwear inserts), wearing wider shoes to avoid pressure on the bunion, and inflammatory medication. If the deformity continues in progress, surgery may be necessary.

When surgery is recommended to get rid of bunions, you'll be glad to know that today's techniques make the process easier and faster, and recovery is quite a bit more comfortable than just five years ago. If you are an orthopedic or the unfortunate victim of a bunion pain, consider professional help. Our techniques are up-to-date, with three basic goals: to relieve pain, restore function, and improve appearance. Bunions can be corrected in our office or on an out-patient basis at the hospital.

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## YOU AND THE LAW

by Stuart M. Feldheim  
Attorney at Law

### WHAT IS A CASE WORTH?

When lawyers estimate the worth of their clients' cases, they usually draw upon their experience with cases, as well as review reports of awards. This is somewhat akin to the survey real estate agents conduct of comparable homes in the neighborhood when setting the price of a home for sale. Just as no two homes are exactly the same and therefore worth the same no two cases are exactly alike. Factors including age, sex, extent of injury and the county in which the case will be filed are important to an evaluation.

Wayne County has a reputation for having juries that are protective of injured workers. Still, a Wayne County jury expects to see real evidence to support a verdict.

If you've been injured due to someone's negligence, it is important to speak with an attorney as soon as possible. For a free consultation, call the LAW OFFICES OF STUART M. FELDHEIM at toll-free 888-505-4900 or 248-912-3505. We're located at 30300 Northwestern Hwy., Suite 108, Farmington Hills. We've been fighting insurance companies for over 20 years.

**HINT:** It is more difficult to assess the worth of cases with emotional injuries than those with physical injuries.