

Farmington's Herrmann top officer for '97

Versatile detective helped crack antique fraud case

Scott Herrmann takes on a variety of tasks as a detective for the Farmington Public Safety Department. Apparently, he does them all very well — well enough to have been chosen Officer of the Year for 1997.

The 29-year-old Herrmann was honored, along with other members of the department and civilians, during Tuesday's special public safety awards presentation. He was out of town on personal business and was not able to be reached for comment Thursday or Friday about the honor.

"Scott's contributions to the department are many," Public Safety Director Gary Goss said during the awards program. "He is a Pressure Point Control instructor and Verbal Judo instructor. He has set up our computer for the Smith and Wesson Ident-a-Kit composite program and is a master in the Tele-Warrant process."

He also takes videotape and photographs of police business, is the department's representative to Farmington Families in Action, completes background investigations for new public safety employees and takes on new challenges with vigor, Goss said. One example was seminar on cellular phone cloning.

"After attending this seminar, he provided a training bulletin for the rest of the

department and shared his practical skills for identifying a cloned phone with his fellow officers," he said.

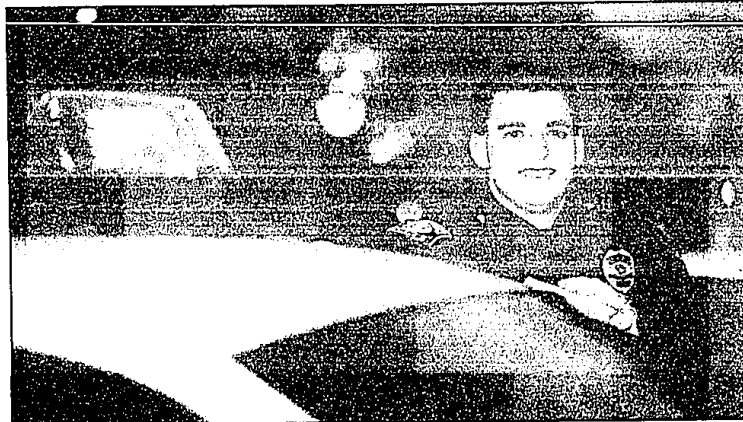
About background checks, Goss said Herrmann "is able to find the most hidden secrets and has a unique ability to gauge an applicant's personality."

But Herrmann, a Western Michigan University graduate who joined the department as an officer in February 1992, also does his primary job pretty well. He was promoted to detective in 1995.

According to Goss, Herrmann last year "handled more than 100 fraud complaints stemming from the Hickory Hill Antique store incident."

"These cases have been very difficult and the prosecutor's office has been reluctant to issue warrants. Scott has worked with the current owner and has recovered approximately 15 percent of the more than \$200,000 worth of property stolen."

Herrmann lives in Farmington with his wife, Sandy. The St. Joseph native attended the Kalamazoo Regional Police Academy and, after graduating from WMU, served on the Sodus Township (Mich.) Police Department before coming to Farmington.



Scott's the man: Farmington Public Safety Detective Scott Herrmann's desire and teamwork are only two reasons he was selected the city's best police officer for 1997. He also consistently receives one of the highest performance ratings on the department. Herrmann and colleagues, along with citizens, were honored last Tuesday night.

Residents, officers recognized for heroics

Those whose quick thinking helped rescue Melissa Garr after a tragic July 1997 poolside accident were officially recognized during Tuesday's Farmington Public Safety Department Awards Night.

The honorees included members of the department as well as civilians. Melissa, 16 at the time of the accident, was baby-sitting three children at the Farmington Glen Aquatic Center when a heavy tree branch fell. She was struck on the head and knocked to the pavement, suffering a fractured skull and coma.

She probably would not have survived without the heroics of lifeguards Laura Hryczyk, Melissa McKay and Officers Duane Cowger and Christine Schutz. Hryczyk and McKay performed CPR, including rescue breathing and chest compressions, until the officers took over.

Within a minute, a pulse was restored but Melissa could not breathe on her own. Oxygen was administered with a bag valve mask and bleeding was controlled by applying a pressure gauze.

"This was a circumstance where seconds counted," said Public Safety Director Gary Goss. "The four individuals responding to Melissa's injury are directly responsible for saving Melissa's life."

Melissa Garr, who was at Tuesday's awards night to help honor her rescuers, is now continuing her recovery at the Rainbow Rehabilitation Center in Farmington and is attending a limited number of classes at Farmington High School.

Hryczyk, meanwhile, was not able to receive her award Tuesday. She will receive it at a future meeting of the Farmington City Council.

Award winners

Other awards presented Tues-

Winners:
Officers
Duane
Cowger,
Christine
Schutz,
lifeguard
Melissa
McKay.



day included the following:

■ **Dispatcher of the Year:** Patricia Sullivan, described by Goss as "quick thinking with a lot of initiative. ... She is professional and will keep her composure under the most stressful situations."

Such a situation for the six-year veteran took place in April 1997. She received a 911 call from the Farmington Plaza Apartments, that three suspects took the caller's car and were headed eastbound on Grand River from Mooney Street. Sullivan immediately dispatched Farmington units and contacted nearby police departments. The men were eventually arrested following a police chase that included Farmington Hills and Southfield units.

Also, Sullivan's keen eye for detail helped solve a string of armed robberies in Harper Woods and Detroit. She reviewed a teletype from the Harper Woods Police Department about a vehicle description and found that the license plate number given was not correct because the letter series had not been issued yet. She did find a vehicle matching the suspects' and relayed that information to Harper Woods. The arrests soon followed.

■ **Professional Excellence Award:** Officer Duane Cowger, an 18-year department veteran, the last 17 as a licensed emergency medical technician. As an



Honorees: Dispatcher Patricia Sullivan (left), Officers Dan Potter and Terry Purves, above.

EMT, Cowger has received six lifesaving awards and is recognized by his peers as the most competent and proficient in the department, Goss said.

"Beyond the technical aspect of his skills," Goss continued, "Officer Cowger displays a bedside manner that any doctor would envy. He is able to stay calm under the extreme pressure and the chaos which accompany life-threatening emergencies."

In fact, in one letter of appreciation, a mother of an injured child referred to Cowger as "a guardian angel."

■ **Life Saving Award:** Officer Daniel Potter, for saving 4-month-old Chloe Mehner at her aunt's Farmington Hills home in March 1997. Chloe, who was born very prematurely and required home oxygen, was lifeless and blue following an oxygen tank malfunction when Potter and a Farmington Hills police officer arrived. Potter helped clear the baby's airway and, within a minute her "color returned and she began to cry." Cowger and Schutz also collected awards for helping rescue Melissa Garr.

■ **Citizen Commendation Award:** Benjamin Achtenberg, Shawn Laderoot and Thomas James. Achtenberg telephoned the department after discovering a fire in his garage. He also awakened his 9-year-old sister and took her to safety. Laderoot saw someone starting a fire behind Frank's Nursery, then put it out and provided the department with information about the suspect. James heard noises at the rear of the former Magic Planet and contacted the department. Several suspects were arrested after trying to steal a helium tank.

■ **Department Citations:** After receiving the tip from James, Potter and Officer Terry Purves both apprehended the suspects in the attempted Magic

Planet helium tank heist.

■ **Citizen Citation Award:** Ray Torres, whose quick action in June 1997, helped the department catch two car thieves who stole a vehicle from an apartment complex on Nine Mile Road.

■ **Safe Driving Awards:** Officers Carl Swanderski, Christine Schutz, Cmdr. Daniel Dellar and Detective Scott Herrmann. (Herrmann also was honored as the department's Officer of the Year, see related story above.)

■ **Longevity Awards:** Swanderski, Schutz and Dispatcher John Foxton.



Thanks: Melissa Garr talks with Officer Duane Cowger after the ceremony. Cowger helped rescue the teen following last July's freakish accident.

fresh pick

Silk V-neck top from St. Kitts. Imported. Lime, banana, ivory, blue or black. Sizes S, M, L. \$39 Sportswear

AGENDAS

Farmington Hills City Council
City Hall
7:30 p.m. Monday

■ Consider partial watermain and sanitary sewer easement vacation for Arboretum Development (a.k.a. Gale Research), Section 16.

■ Consider introduction of Ordinance to amend City Code, Chapter 34, Zoning Chapter, Article XXII, Section 35-543, in order to establish regulations for the placement of signs.

■ Consider cost hearing for road rehabilitation for Kimberly Subdivision, S.A.D. #C-287.

■ Consider contract for pavement rehabilitation and drainage improvement for Kimberly Subdivision in Section 14, S.A.D. C-287.

■ Consider Consumer Protection Committee appointments.

■ Approve the preliminary plat for Oak Hills Estates.

■ Approve Collective Bargaining Agreement for Farmington Hills Police Communications Association/POAM.

■ Recommended approval of award of bid and purchase orders for DPW Equipment.

■ Award contract for Gill Road and Lytle Road rehabilitation and 13 Mile Road at Oak Point

Drive lane modification.

Farmington City Council
City Hall
8 p.m. Monday

■ Consider resolution to support the Small Cities Council of the National League of Cities re: Internet Tax Freedom Act.

■ Request from Roger Rakowski, owner of the Pasta Stop, 23631 Farmington Road re: weekly classic car cruise and display in a municipal parking lot.

■ City Manager's Recommended FY 1998-99 Budget.

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