

Mobil owner steps on the gas for the community



Donation: Jeff Huiskens and Jack Staszak and John Gebhar, all of Mobil, Bill Smith, principal of Longacre School, Dick Carvill of the Warner Mansion Museum, Mary Bush, mayor of Farmington, and Cornell Harris of Mobil are on hand to receive a donation from Staszak's Mobil station.

By TIM SMITH
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When Jack Staszak took over the Mobil gas station at Grand River and Drake Road in Farmington last year, one of the first questions he asked was whether the station was hooked up with an area school, joining together in Mobil's national partnership program.

After all, when he ran a Mobil station in California, he donated money to two schools.

Soon after landing in Michigan, he jump-started a dormant partnership with Longacre Elementary School, donating one penny per gallon every Tuesday to the Farmington district school. A year later, Staszak's penchant for being a good, civic-minded neighbor has another beneficiary — namely, the city of Farmington and its famed Warner Mansion.

With hopes that the money will help generate community interest in visiting the historic home once lived in by former Michigan Gov. Fred Warner, Staszak and other Mobil officials last week presented Farmington Mayor Mary Bush and city historian Dick Carvill a check for \$500. That was the amount generated since last spring, when an arrangement began to donate one penny per gallon to the museum on the first Tuesday of the month. Longacre still gets the money from all other Tuesdays.

It adds up. They must pump a lot of gas here. And when they approached us about sharing this (program) with the city, I was more than happy to do that. We have a connection. We use the facility a lot.

*William Smith
—Longacre principal*

"The concept of giving back is becoming real popular," said Bush, adding that the money will be put into a separate account with all spending well-documented. Bush noted that "maybe this is an opportunity for other (businesses) to get on the bandwagon" and do something to benefit the museum, which is viewed by some as a forgotten or overlooked Farmington landmark.

Longacre funds

Also during last week's presentation, checks totaling \$2,000

were given to Longacre, including \$1,500 in penny-per-gallon proceeds and a \$500 corporate grant from Mobil. Accepting those checks was school principal William Smith, who stressed that the school gave up one Tuesday's proceeds to the museum because it is a community jewel that has strong educational value.

"It adds up," Smith said. "They must pump a lot of gas here. And when they approached us about sharing this (program) with the city, I was more than happy to do that. We have a connection. We use the facility a lot."

Longacre is within walking distance of the Warner Mansion, and pupils take annual field trips there. Also, Smith said, a new third-grade curriculum focusing partly on Michigan history offers yet another good reason for the current set-up.

Students will have a chance to show their appreciation for the

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