

'Sweeps month' takes on new meaning

BY TIM SMITH
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The parallel struck Farmington Mayor Bill Hartsock as being somewhat amusing.

On Saturday, Hartsock and other city dignitaries, along with downtown merchants and members of the Farmington Beautification Commission, swept in — literally — "Keep Farmington Beautiful" month. They broomed a portion of the sidewalk under the Farmington Civic Theatre marquee.

That marquee read "An American Beauty," the Academy Award-winning movie that stars Kevin Spacey.

"The marquee said 'American Beauty,'" Hartsock said, "but the theme could have been a Farmington Beauty."

Hartsock said the first program showed how "a lot of effort is being made by a lot of segments of the community to keep the city sparkling. He listed businesses, homeowners and the city department of public works.

"It was the first time for this," Hartsock said. "And it's tough on a Saturday to get merchants out of their stores. But, overall, I was happy" with the degree of participation by retailers.

"It was a nice little gathering of people to help kick off Keep Farmington Beautiful Month," said Carol Eve Hyska, of the beautification commission. "We have stuff planned for almost every other weekend."

Merchants did more than just start sweeping, with several supplying push brooms and paint



Keeping it clean: Hilde Fagerlie sweeps the sidewalk in front of Deb's Crafts where she works.

STAFF PHOTOS BY BILL HANSEN

brushes for businesses in the downtown district to use. ACO Hardware, Deb's Crafts, Metrobank and Three Oaks Furniture supplied the brooms, while Damman Hardware provided the paint brushes.

Upcoming events include:
■ "Flower Day in Farmington," Saturday, May 20; youngsters in Cub Scout Pack 110 (Our Lady of Sorrows) and Brownie Troop 858 (Flanders Elementary) will walk the streets of downtown Farmington, distributing flower and vegetable seed packets donated by ACO Hardware and Detroit Edison.

■ "Litter-Free Day in Farmington," Saturday, May 27; the staffs at Colonial Car Wash, 33500 Nine Mile, and the Grand River-Halsted Shell station, 87376 Grand River, will distribute free litter bags to all car wash customers, compliments of the city of Farmington.

The local program is in keeping with "Clean-Up Days in Michigan," proclaimed for April and May by Gov. John Engler. The Farmington City Council recently proclaimed May "Keep Farmington Beautiful" month.

FARMINGTON BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION



Opening remarks: Pat Shelton of the Farmington Beautification Commission addresses the crowd of merchants and Farmington city dignitaries gathered for Saturday's clean sweep.



Windows, too: Pasta Stop owner Roger Ratkowski cleaned his eatery's windows.

Back to back calls lead to Hills house fire, man burned when engine alights

BY JONI HUBBARD
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Farmington Hills firefighters had a busy Tuesday morning, with back to back calls involving a house fire and a burn victim.

The Sarcevic family lost most of the top half of their two-story residence on Old Homestead Trail, after a fire consumed an upstairs room and its contents. Assistant Fire Chief Pete Baldwin said smoke and water also damaged the rest of the house.

"The house is not livable because of smoke damage," Baldwin said.

Hills firefighters were called to

the scene around 11:15 a.m., as flames shot out a second story window and smoke poured across the rooftop. After extinguishing the blaze, they cleared out charred insulation and other damaged items.

Though clearly upset as he watched them work, Ron Sarcevic also realized things could have turned out much worse. His wife, Jennifer, and 5-year-old daughter were inside when the fire started. They escaped without injury, as did the family dog. The house could also have been more severely damaged, he said.

"If (the Hills Fire Department)

wouldn't have gotten here sooner, the whole house would have burned down," Sarcevic said.

Firefighters may have sweltered a bit in the 80-degree heat and high humidity, but they were in and out of the home fairly quickly. Baldwin said the cause of the fire wasn't immediately known. Damage was estimated at more than \$240,000.

"It's a little too early to tell," he commented.

Sarcevic indicated his family would be staying with relatives for the time being. He owned the home for several years, a family member said, and married about a year ago.

While Hills Stations 1, 4 and 5 were wrapping up their work, rescue personnel responded to a call on Roosevelt, where they found a man suffering from 2nd degree burns to his back, arms, face and head.

Laymon Fleenor said he'd been putting fuel in his truck's carburetor when the engine compartment caught fire. Paramedics wrapped him in sterile burn sheets and transported him to Botsford General Hospital. He was flown to the University of Michigan Wednesday morning, via Survival Flight.

POLICE AND FIRE NEWS

AUTO THEFT

In Farmington:

It was reported about 10:45 a.m. Monday that a 1990 Ford Aerostar van was stolen from the parking lot of Farmington Vacuum, 30780 Grand River.

A suspect was seen getting into the van, which was turned off but the keys left in the ignition, and then driving away on Grand River. The suspect then turned east onto Nine Mile Road.

The van is valued at about \$2,000, but it also contained an estimated \$8,000 worth of miscellaneous household appliance parts and another \$2,000 worth of hand and power tools.

The suspect was described as a white male with a slim build, 25-30 years old, with dark brown or black hair and mustache. He also was wearing a baseball cap.

OPEN INTOXICANTS

In Farmington:

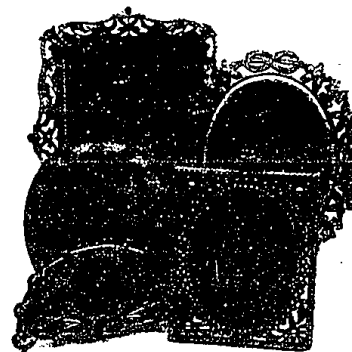
A 59-year-old Melvindale man was arrested on charges of having open intoxicants in a vehicle, fleeing and eluding officers and leaving the scene of an accident, all stemming from a bizarre incident taking place about 12:45 a.m. Monday.

Police officers were dispatched to the Old Winery, 31505 Grand River, at approximately 12:45 a.m. Monday, on a report of a one-car accident.

A maroon, 1995 Chevrolet Astro Van, which appeared to have been involved in the reported accident, then starting moving forward. The driver ignored an officer's orders to stop and then accelerated out of the parking lot, east onto Grand River.

The driver of the van then

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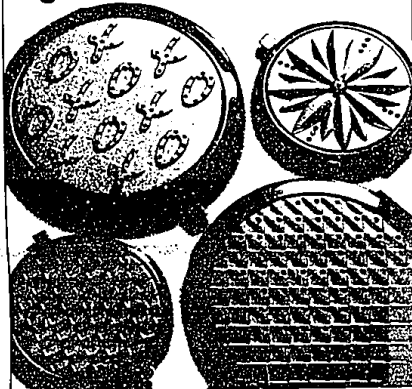
Exquisite Russian-influenced frames by Edgar Berolbi for Edgar, Inc. 24K gold-plate museum finish embellished with Austrian crystals, decorative easel back. Rectangular, \$165. Oval, \$142. Medium oval, \$100. Small half-round, \$85. Squared oval, \$130. In Stationery.

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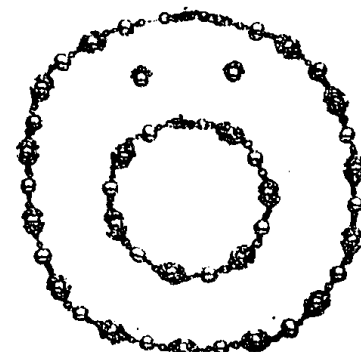
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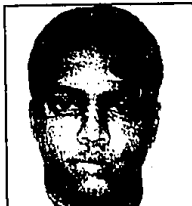
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Police search for armed robber

Farmington police are investigating last Thursday's armed robbery of the Nine-Grand River Party Store in which a gunman nabbed \$800 in cash.

According to police reports, a man entered the store at approximately 7:15 p.m. Thursday, May 4. The suspect displayed a revolver, possibly a .38-caliber, and demanded cash from store clerks.

When he received the money, the suspect left the store and ran northbound. Anyone with information is asked to contact Detective Frank Demers, (248) 477-4700, ext. 239.



Suspect: This is a composite drawing of the man suspected of robbing a party store.

Please see POLICE, A5