

Police seize marijuana

By JONI HUBRED
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A 28-year-old Detroit woman and the two men police say served as her armed escorts were arrested in Farmington Hills Wednesday night, after officers seized 69 pounds of marijuana, an M-14 rifle and a semi-automatic handgun.

Hills Police Chief Bill Dwyer said the arrests were made by officers from the South Oakland Narcotics Investigation Consortium, which consists of officers from Farmington Hills, Novi and West Bloomfield, the Oakland County Sheriff's Department and Michigan State Police.

A uniformed Hills officer

stopped a 1990 Buick Regal and a 1999 Cadillac Escalade at 10 Mills and Beech, after undercover officers watched the cars leave a home on Moran Street that they had been watching in preparation for a raid. Officers found 69 pounds of marijuana in the trunk of the Regal, driven by the Detroit woman, Dwyer said.

The Escalade was being driven by a 46-year-old Detroit man, whose 20-year-old passenger was from Mississippi.

"The two men were believed to be the armed escort for the female transporting the marijuana," Dwyer said in a statement released Thursday.

Dwyer credited the Detroit Police Department's Narcotics

■ FORFEITURE PROCEEDINGS

Conspiracy Intelligence Unit and Homicide Section, both of which worked with SONIC to intercept the drugs, which have a street value of about \$83,000.

"SONIC will initiate forfeiture proceedings for the Moran Street residence, a boat, motorcycle and the vehicle used to transport the drugs," Dwyer added.

Hills detectives were expected to present a request for warrants to the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office late Thursday.



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL DEARER

Nabbed: Confiscated suspected drugs nearly filled a conference room at the police station.

City council says court equity fund needs revamping

By JONI HUBRED
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Farmington and Farmington Hills residents pay for a third class court, and they're getting third class treatment when it comes to additional funding, officials say.

Hills council members passed a resolution Monday calling for redistribution of funds that support second class courts, maintained by the county for more than 30 years. They believe an "equity fund" designed to pick up the slack in communities with smaller populations is no longer equitable.

"As I understand it, the bottom line is, taxpayers in Farmington and Farmington Hills are funding their court, the 47th District Court, as well as sending funds to support courts in other communities," said councilman Jerry Ellis.

Dave Walsh, administrator for the 47th District Court in Farmington Hills, explained the Court Equity Fund, established in 1996, requires all 62nd Division District courts to contribute fees and fines. Those funds, along with county tax dollars, support second class courts like the 62nd District, which has divisions in Troy, Rochester Hills, Clarkston and Novi.

In Michigan, Walsh explained, courts are divided into three classes. Most out-state counties maintain first class courts, which serve the entire county. Second class courts receive county tax dollars, city revenues, and now, Court Equity Funds.

However, third class courts are supported entirely by their communities.

"Third class district court

■ In Michigan, courts are divided into three classes.

units receive no (equity) funds," Walsh said.

While the initial idea was to give courts in smaller communities additional support, some — particularly in the northern portion of the county — have grown substantially. Oakland County also differs from others in the state, Walsh said, because its communities support far more third class courts, while maintaining second class courts.

The Hills resolution will go to Oakland County officials, who are looking at a redistribution of equity funds that would include third class courts. Walsh hasn't heard whether a specific formula has been determined, but he's heard a number of percentage numbers bandied about.

He said third class courts currently contribute about 63 percent to the Court Equity Fund, with no return on those dollars. The issue is doubly important in this area, Mayor Nancy Bates said, because growth is pushing the need for a new court building.

Once residents begin to look at the costs, she said, "We'll really begin to understand the inequity."

While he considers the county's action important, Walsh said lawmakers in Lansing should take notice as well.

"I think, long-term, what I'd like to see happen is this issue be considered at the state level," he said, "but this is a good step."

Center is a dream for arts advocates

By JOANNE MALJEWSKI
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Right now it's just a dream, but area cultural arts advocates are hoping one day to have a center.

"I'm just curious if anybody has thought about that again," said Mike Wieser, president of the Farmington Community Band.

It's not that anyone wouldn't want a center, but the emphasis today is on coordinating and publicizing the many arts groups in the community, members of a steering committee said.

Committee member Marlowe Belanger, for example, said it's still premature to consider development of a cultural arts center

while the emphasis remains on getting people involved in arts activities.

"Our hope is to encourage the new development of organizations," Belanger added.

Belanger and 14 other steering committee members heard lots of praise of the area's arts activities and organizations, as well as hopes and dreams for the future as part of a public hearing Wednesday night on a proposed cultural arts master plan.

The steering committee has in the recent past developed a survey and tabulated results, and held focus groups with different segments of the community in preparation of the master plan, which is not yet complete.

Nancy Coumoudouras, community cultural arts director, moderated the hearing and invited an audience of about 20 people to offer their comments.

"Our focus right now is on the arts," said Farmington Hills Mayor Nancy Bates. "Things are happening without a center."

Bates, however, said community officials continue to "touch base" with other communities about a cultural arts center. "I do think it will be the only way it will be affordable."

Bea Scaglione of the Farmington Musicals, however, pointed out that storage space for arts organizations such as hers is needed for productions.

"We need a home. We have so much stuff," she said.

Well-known potter John Glick said he is thankful the community allows home occupations, such as his. He also complimented the community on its attitude toward the arts.

"It's a real growth and nurturing positive attitude," he added. Steering committee members said it is time to encourage corporate sponsorship of the arts in the community. The city of

Southfield, for example, engaged businesses in promoting and supporting the arts for its center.

"If we become more organized and involved in the arts festival (for example), people would soon recognize the arts are an important factor in our community," Belanger said, adding the public would then recognize the need for a center.

Tina Theeke of the Farmington Community Library said she was surprised the results of the cultural arts survey showed that respondents still do not think of the library as a center for cultural arts.

Belanger drove home her point that arts in the community continue to need citizen involvement, as well as publicity.

"It is our job as citizens of this community to go out and talk about the arts," Belanger said. Steering committee member Paul Barber, Farmington Public School music director, said that organizations are growing together and media coverage of activities continues to help.

Please see ARTS, A2

SPOTLIGHT ON

Orthodontics

by Josephine Pinazzo D.M.D.

ONE TOO MANY

While the normal number of permanent teeth in the adult mouth is thirty-two, some people have more than this number of teeth. Extra, or supernumerary, teeth occur more often among permanent teeth than primary ("baby") teeth. The most common type of extra tooth is a small supernumerary incisor called a "mesiodens" (or "hidden tooth"), which erupts up between the upper central incisors (top front teeth). The tendency to produce supernumerary teeth seems to be inherited. And, owing to the fact that they are both usually easily extracted. This, of course, leaves a space

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SEEING THE DOCTOR & COMING BACK AGAIN

You may have experienced the following: You have swelling of the knee, see your doctor, who drains the knee, injects medicine, and sends you home. Both you and the doctor expect that your knee pain and swelling will resolve, and you can return to the activities of your life with no restrictions. However, the next day you don't feel much better, and the day following you still have not improved. The same experience can occur when you receive a new medicine, or make a change in how you take medications. You expect that seeing the doctor would improve your joints. When you realize you are not improving as expected, call your doctor. You should be ready for a lot of disappointment even displayed in his voice. Doctors' take pride in their work, and when they haven't succeeded, they react in a human fashion. What your doctor will provide is a professional response. He may want to see you as soon as possible, ask you to wait a day or two more, or call a prescription for further therapy to counter what went wrong. If possible, contact the doctor before deciding to go to an emergency room or seeing another physician. From my own experience, I can vouch for the fact that every therapy or procedure I have done, even repeatedly, has at some time had unintended consequences. Over the years, I have learned a number of countermeasures. Often doctors can make the second attempt work when the first effort did not.

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