

Pompon from page A1

With the election result still in question, Blazaitis and her All Star Director Kristen Winter were stumped.

"There wasn't a song that correlated with both candidates, so we picked our own," she laughed. "We couldn't wait for them to decide."

The 86 girls who will perform will dance to "Don't Stop Me Now," a song made famous by the rock group Queen.

"It's a real energetic song," Blazaitis said.

Winter has been running practices and working with the girls on their routine. They describe pompon as something less gymnastic than cheerleading, but with a little more flash than dance.

"It's a totally different atmosphere than dancing," said Mersey High student Linda Karbo, who lives in Livonia. "We don't use our voice, we don't yell. We're more like entertainment."

A dancer since she was 3 years old, Karbo was on a cheerleading team in grade school. When she chose to attend Mercy, she looked at both programs and picked pompon, because it incorporated more dance than cheerleading.

Hawk senior

Harrison High senior Christina Kjolhede had also been involved with cheerleading and dance when she decided to try out for the squad.

"Poms looked fun, and it ended up being fun," she said. "I like being in front of an audience and having them enjoy what we're doing."

"But it's more than just fun, Kjolhede estimates she spends 15 to 20 hours a week working on routines.

"It's a lot of dedication," she said.

The girls earn their spots on the All Star team at pompon camp, held during the summer. Mid American Pompon started as a summer camp business and grew to add sales of clothing, shoes and other items, Blazaitis said.

She started the business 21 years ago, while she was in college. When she married and moved to Farmington Hills with her husband, she worked a regular job to subsidize the one she really loved. Finally, her husband encouraged her to shoot the moon.

Blazaitis started the All Stars performing group in 1987 to give the girls a chance to shine.

"Poms don't get a lot of recognition," she said. "With the amount of time and effort they put in, I wanted to give them opportunities to perform and be recognized."

Since its inception, the All Star team of 204 girls has performed in Bowl parades, at Detroit Pistons basketball and Detroit Rockers soccer games, and in stage shows at Epcot Center and Seaworld in Orlando, Fla. This will be the All Stars' third inaugural parade performance.

The girls pay for their own trips, so not everyone attends every event. Mid American passes along only the costs it incurs, in an effort to keep participation affordable, Blazaitis said.

Some of the girls have gotten help for their trip to Washington, D.C. Heather O'Malley of Livonia, who attends Stevenson High School, said she and a few other girls from her school went to 10 or 15 local businesses, which donated a total of \$970 towards their trip.

"A lot of the people we talked to said they were real happy about it," she said.

Plymouth Salem senior Carol Liu, who lives in Canton, said her favorite part of being an All Star is the chance to wow the crowds.

"I love to dance, and I love to perform," she said. "It's really exciting to go to events like this."

Anyone interested in helping to support the All Stars or learning more about Mid American Pompon should call Blazaitis at 248-477-5248.

Chamber's awards dinner is Thursday

The Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce will recognize Hills Economic Development Commission Chair John Anhut and Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home as its 2000 Partners in Progress award winners at the Chamber's 37th Annual Meeting held Jan. 25.

The event, sponsored in partnership with Observer-Eccentric newspapers, will be held at The Hotel Baronette in Novi.

The Chamber introduced the "Partners in Progress" program in 1997, to honor those demonstrating leadership, creativity and initiative in their business organization and who work in partnership with the business community. Past recipients include Dr. John Richardson, Plaza Veterinary Hospital, Bernice Brandon, LOC Federal Credit Union, Botsford General Hospital and Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.

Newly elected board officers and directors will be introduced at the meeting, and with the help of Detroit Edison, the Chamber will honor businesses that have supported the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber for more than 20 years.

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Cost to attend the event is \$60 per person. To make reservations, call the Chamber Office, (248) 474-3440 or visit the Chamber's Web site, www.fsfchamber.com.

Established in 1963, the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber is an area business organization that represents more than 825 businesses in Farmington, Mich.

PARTNERS
Farmington Hills and surrounding communities.

■ Business Connection dinner planned, too

The Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce presents its first *After Hours Business Connection* for 2001 from 6 to 9 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 6 at Raman's Macaroni Grill restaurant at 32729 Northwestern Highway.

Holding true to the tradition of breaking New Year's resolutions, Chamber members will take advantage of Macaroni Grill's delicacies.

The *After Hours Business Connection* allows Chamber members the opportunity to gather after work in a relaxed atmosphere to create

relationships for their businesses. The event is meant to give those people that can't get out of their office in the morning a chance to get their fair share of networking. "The mixers are very laid-back and we know our guests will walk with a handful of business cards and perhaps a few friends," said Ara Topouzian of the Chamber.

For more information, call the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce at (248) 474-3440 to register, or check the Web at www.fsfchamber.com.

■ Chamber elects new officers for year

The Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce has elected the following individuals to serve as executive officers for 2001:

Jeffrey Sprague, Asset Planning Solutions, Inc., Chairman of the Board; Stephen Faine, Botsford General Hospital, Vice Chairman; Thomas Mulvihill, Boyes, Wright, Pittman & Co., P.C., Treasurer; Marci Frontier, Frontier & Associates; Linda Jolicœur, Target Equipment Leasing, Inc.; Terri McIntyre, Holiday Inn of Farmington Hills; Tony Madaj, Tilchin, Hall & Reynolds,

P.C., immediate past chairman.

The following individuals will serve as directors for the 2001 fiscal year:

Diane Christensen, The Rains Group; Raymond Davis, Executive Printing Solutions, Inc.; Richard DuRei, Farmington Family YMCA; Marci Frontier, Frontier & Associates; Linda Jolicœur, Target Equipment Leasing, Inc.; Terri McIntyre, Holiday Inn of Farmington Hills; Tony Madaj, Tilchin, Hall & Reynolds,

Yesterday's Memories Video Productions, Inc.; Barry Melamed, The Print House; Ken Nelson, Calonic North America; Raymond Randolph, Electronic Commerce International; Laura Remisz, Remtech Business Solutions; Rob Smigelski, Midwest Guaranty Bank and Nurten Ural, Ural Interiors.

Officers and directors of the Chamber will be introduced at the Chamber's 37th Annual Meeting and Business Awards Dinner.

Man robbed at gunpoint in Farmington Hills

BY JON HUBBARD
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A 40-year-old Farmington Hills man was robbed at gunpoint Monday night, as he returned to his home in Cordova

Apartments, just off 12 Mile Road.

According to a report filed with Hills Police, the man had parked in a carport and walked into the building, when he noticed a man come around the

west side of the building and enter behind him. The suspect pulled out a blue steel revolver and demanded cash.

Described as a black male, 20 to 25 years old, 6-feet-tall with a medium build, the suspect was

clean shaven and wearing a light-colored, full-length, puffy overcoat.

Anyone with information about the robbery is asked to call the Hills Police Department, 473-9660.

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