

Court workers have generous hearts

BY JONI HUBBED
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The toys start appearing in Judge Fred Harris' office in the 47th District Court building around mid-November.

Every year since 1992, court employees have supported the U.S. Marine Corps' "Toys for Tots" campaign, donating hundreds of Christmas gifts for needy boys and girls in southeast Michigan. On Wednesday, U.S. Marine Corps Gunnery Sgt. Derrick Small presented Harris, Court Administrator Dave Walsh and Gerald Surowiec, president of the Advocates Bar Association, with a plaque recognizing their efforts.

"We love to recognize the folks that make this happen," Small said. "We couldn't be the second or third largest program in the country without the efforts of the good folks here."

Those efforts started with Harris, a retired Marine colonel. In 1957, when he left active duty, the Toys for Tots program was just getting started in southeast Michigan. Founded by Major Bill Hendricks in Los Angeles in 1947, with just one cloth doll, the program mushroomed when ABC Television got involved.

"In 1959 or 1960, ABC, through WXYZ-TV (in Detroit) took over Edgewater (Amusement) Park, and the entry fee was a toy," Harris said. "They collected 25,000 toys."

Harris continued his involvement with the program,

even after he retired from the Marine Corps in 1993. He served on the Toys for Tots board, which has since been disbanded. A foundation now oversees operations.

Eight years ago, 47th District Court jury clerk Marilyn Rotole came to him and said the staff wanted to donate. A few years later, the Advocates Bar Association joined the effort.

"This year, we donated close to 150 toys from here,"

Harris said. "Maybe more."

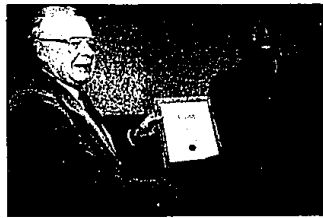
Those were included in a collection of more than 200,000 toys distributed through local social service agencies and directly to families in southeast Michigan. Walsh said Harris worried a little last year that people were getting involved because of his ties to the program. He didn't want them to feel obligated.

"The staff overwhelmingly said they wanted to continue," Walsh said. "It's really a staff-driven event."



Generous: Gunnery Sgt. Derrick Small presents a certificate to Marilyn Rotole. Court employees gathered for the photo are Dorothy Crane, Sandra Briggs, Kristina Merkys, Dyanise Mays, Judy Bloom, Shannon Yates, Bernie Schraw, Cindy Glowacki, Terri Clarament, Brian Casterline, Mary Gabler, Joy Cottle, Anita Schwartz, Jacki Bretz, Joann Kmiec, Stephanie Sittler, Diane Stoll and Stacy Park.

STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRIDLER



Thank you, Judge: Judge Fred Harris accepts an award from Gunnery Sgt. Derrick Small.

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Hills promotes several police officers to new jobs

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As Farmington Hills Police Commander Dennis Rochford heads to Florida, five officers have moved up into positions as the result of his retirement from a 32-year career in law enforcement.

They were honored during a ceremony held Jan. 19, in a City Council chamber packed with relatives and co-workers.

"Promotions are always a special day," said Police Chief Bill Dwyer. "I think one has to be in law enforcement to understand how important these promotions are."

Words like "commendation," "awards" and "citation" appeared frequently in the biographies of each candidate for promotion. Dwyer noted each had combined education and accomplishment to earn their achievements.

Lt. Craig Summers, 43, will assume Rochford's position in command of the patrol division. A 19-year veteran, he has worked in the patrol division, as a detective, with the narcotics enforcement and criminal surveillance units. He holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Wayne State University and a master of science in administration from Central Michigan University.

Like the other candidates, Summers thanked Mayor Nancy Bates and City Council members, city manager Steve Brock and the Chief for their support and encouragement.

"I have so much to be proud of and so much to be grateful for," he said. "Each and every day, I get to come to work with fantastic people."

Officers described their department as "second to none" in the state and the country, crediting the leadership of Dwyer and his administrative team.

"I am just as proud as could be to work with the greatest bunch of civilian and sworn employees who have ever worn a uniform," said Sgt. Tim Connor, who was promoted to the rank of lieutenant.

Connor, also 43, is a 20-year veteran who has served in patrol, training, crime prevention and as planning/tactical/research as a



I Swear: Cadet Anthony Bateman is sworn in as an officer by City Clerk Kathy Dornan. Below, officers are at attention for the ceremonies.

STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRIDLER

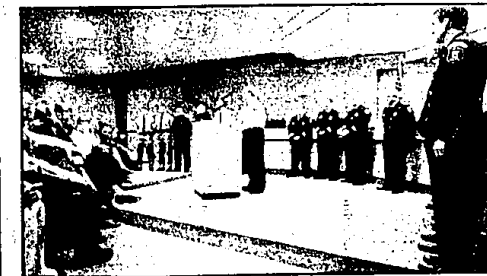
sergeant. He holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Madonna University and a master of science in administration from Central Michigan University.

Like Summers, Connor is a graduate of the Northwestern University Traffic Institute's "School of Police Staff and Command." So did Sgt. Timothy Swanson, promoted to the rank of lieutenant. The 26-year veteran said his mother spotted an ad in a Southfield newspaper announcing the Farmington Hills Police Department's search for cadets, in 1974.

His response? "I said, 'Where's Farmington Hills?'"

Also promoted were Officer Matthew Koehn, to sergeant and Cadet Anthony Bateman, to patrol officer. Koehn, 33, has served in the patrol division, surveillance unit and detective section in 14 years with the department. He recently completed a bachelor's degree in community development and public administration at Central Michigan University.

Bateman, who joined the department in May 2000, sponsored himself through Schoolcraft Police Academy. The 24-year-old probationary officer has also earned 110 credits toward a bachelor's degree from Grand Valley State University.



St. Fabian to celebrate Catholic Schools Week

During the week of Jan. 29-Feb. 2, St. Fabian Catholic School will celebrate Catholic Schools Week. The purpose of Catholic Schools Week is to celebrate the Catholic education students receive at St. Fabian and to thank the school, parish and

community for the support received throughout the year. Events include:
 ■ Monday - pastor appreciation day/thank the community. All Farmington bus drivers will receive thank you letter and rose.
 ■ Tuesday - student appreciation day.

■ Wednesday - family parent appreciation day; 7:30-8:30 p.m. open house/ice cream social.
 ■ Thursday - staff appreciation day.
 ■ Friday - teacher appreciation day.

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- Learn what a 529 plan is and how Alliance's CollegeBoundfund™ can benefit you.
- Get a step-by-step explanation of the tax and estate planning benefits of CollegeBoundfund™
- Discover the investment choices that CollegeBoundfund™ offers and how they are applicable to each type of investor.
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