

Council from page A2

what they've started with a Planned Unit Development agreement for a shopping center on 14 Mile Road.

"There are still a lot of outstanding issues that concern me, and a lot of them are probably going to happen in my area," Oliverio said. "And this is such a good council."

Grant said he had been thinking about whether to run for some time and did consider step-

ping down.

"I've decided after talking to other people that there is a value to my 12 years of experience on the council," he said. "I feel that has something to offer to the city."

Ellis said he also seriously considered not running, but decided he liked being part of getting things done in the city.

"I guess I must enjoy this," he laughed.

Tim Smith covers education for the Observer. Contact him with story ideas, 248-477-5450

Plymouth attempt leads to robbery suspect's arrest

By JOHN HUBBRED
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Farmington Hills police say motel and hotel staffs should breathe a little easier, with the arrest of a suspect in a string of armed robberies.

The 30-year-old Detroit man was taken into custody Friday afternoon. According to Assistant Police Chief Chuck Nebus, he was expected to be arraigned Saturday on charges related to the March 21 robbery of the Comfort Inn at 12 Mile and Orchard Lake Roads.

However, Nebus added, the man is a suspect in other crimes, including the March 22 robbery

at Motel 6 on Grand River and business robberies in Canton and Livonia. The road to his arrest began in Plymouth, however.

"They believe he was casing another motel," Nebus said. "They were alerted about the robberies."

In fact, motel employees had a copy of a crime watch flyer Hills police issued last week, he added.

A Plymouth police officer's observation of a suspicious vehicle and subsequent check on its plates, along with a report filed by the Plymouth motel employee led to the officer's contacting Hills Police. Armed with the

license plate identification, detectives learned while the registered owner had a clean record, her son did not.

They obtained a warrant, Nebus said, and staked out the Detroit home.

"We knew the son had been thrown out of the house, but we expected him to return, and he did," he commented.

A short chase ensued into a foot chase, with Detectives John Haupt and Kevin Cronin giving chase. A Livonia police officer who was assisting saw the suspect throw a loaded .357 handgun, believed to be the weapon used in the armed robberies. It was later recovered.

Nebus said police would be notifying businesses about the arrest.

"I'm sure the hotel managers are breathing a sigh of relief," he said.

Woman charged with thefts at area stores

By DAN WEST
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A Bloomfield Hills woman on a Wayne County Jail work-release program could see even more trouble stemming from a theft and fraud investigation in West Bloomfield.

Sabrina Parker, 37, was arrested and arraigned on three felony larceny charges in 48th District Court in Bloomfield Township last Friday. Police accuse Parker of stealing credit cards and cash from purses at several Orchard Lake Road stores.

The purses, investigators said, belonged to store employees who had stashed them behind counters. While the employees were in the back rooms, the suspect removed the unattended purses and stole wallets containing credit cards and cash.

The stolen credit cards were used to make \$20,000 worth of unauthorized purchases; \$2,000 in cash was also stolen.

Since November, police filed seven theft reports by store employees at Orchard Mall, Boardwalk and The Plaza.

Parker works a job during the day and stays at the Wayne County Jail at night in an arrangement made after a conviction for retail fraud.

Parker has returned to the Wayne County Jail where she was locked up and her work-release program was suspended.

Parker is scheduled to return to 48th District Court for a preliminary examination Monday. Each charge against her carries a maximum penalty of four years in prison and a \$2,000 fine. West Bloomfield police continue to investigate because Lawson said other suspects may be involved.

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Board from page A1

hopefully increase voter participation, said Cheryl Cannon, assistant superintendent of business and operational services.

Recent school elections have been plagued by voter turnouts as low as 2 percent.

More than \$54.2 million for operations would be generated for the district in 2002 if the tax renewal is approved, according to the proposal presented at the March 13 board meeting.

This millage represents 45 percent of the district's foundation grant (state dollars for per-pupil spending), Cannon said. The proposal includes levying 18 mills on non-homestead property (businesses, etc.) and more than 13.7 mills for homeowners. A blue ribbon panel charged with studying district finances included five residents and nine district staff members.

According to the proposal, developed by the Blue Ribbon Financial Strategies Committee, the state "will not make up any reduction in revenue as a result of non-renewal of millage. Without the renewal, the district would experience catastrophic budget and program reductions."

Voters would see almost the same proposal they saw in March 1997, Cannon said.

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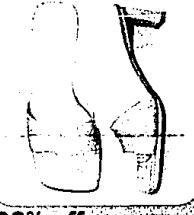
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