Purchases from page A1

daughter Kristine Balow of Livo-nia and said the economy hasn't drastically changed their shop-ning habits

ping habits.

It did cut my spending down maybe 10 percent, said James.
Linda McCann of Detroit said her income was the same, so her shupping for the holiday didn't change. Things were a little different for Farmington Hills resistent Pay Jameso, who was

ferent for Farmington Hills resident Rny Jonson, who was recently laid off from his maintenance job at a local hotel.

He said he was still shopping for gifts, but was being cautious because of losing his job and concerns about the economy.

Local businesses reported holiday sales were even or up from last year.

Larry Sallen, owner of the Clothes Encounters on Grand River; said sales at his unique

clothing store for women did

well.
"We were very satisfied," he said. "We were on key from last

year."
He said the store's cruise wear business dropped by half after the terrorist attacks.
"We still found a lot of people when the still found a lot of people the still found a lot of peo

We still found a lot of people were not going out of town like they were before, he said. 'Our sales were pretty blessed, though. We have a nice customer base and do our annual mailings to customers during the holiday. We offer some really good barding.' Sales were also very good for the Target Store on Grand River. "(Sales) were turning up before he holiday," said store manager Tanya Simson. "We were expect-

ing a good holiday. The commu-nity really supports this store." Sales were about even com-pared to last year for the Bon Ton Shoppe in Farmington. General Manager Connic Sta-

General Manager Connie Sta-ley said the company's four-stores, including Brighton, Livo-nia and Milford, did about the same business this holiday com-pared to the year before. Danny Marshall of Detroit said his shopping habit this holi-day has been the same as in the past: wait until the last two days to do it.

"I just don't know what I am going to get people until the last

oing to get people until the last day." he said outside of Target on Christmas Eve.

The economy hasn't changed his shopping habits, he said, as he casually rolled his full shopping cart to his parked car.

Woodcreek aids hospital

A new program that unites senior volunteers with children in need at Detroit Receiving Inspital may not have a name yet, but it has the support of students at Woodcreek Elementary School in Farmington Hills.

On Dec. 20, students made a donation of books and card games to the hospital's children's unit. The drive started after third grader Maya Menlo asked the Student Council for help. Her mother, Etta, is a doctor at Detroit Receiving.

"They're trying to put together a program to bring elderly people into the hospital to play with the children," said teacher Barry Nofzinger, who coordinated the presentation. "This is a new program. They're just getting up and running."

More than 400 students

and running."

More than 400 students brought in new and used books and card games from Dec. 10

through Dec. 20. Student Coun-cil members made speeches in classrooms and at weekly school programs to encourage dona-tions.

Nofzinger said the drive ful-fills the goal of responsible citi-

Woodcreek

Elementary students donated 380

hooks in two

weeks. Teacher

Barry Nofzinger

and parent Etta Menlo

Zenship, which is part of the Farmington Public School Dis-trict's student profile. For more information about the hospital's volunteer project, contact Etta Menlo, 248-387-4160.

Finances from page A1



remains in excellent standing from Moody's and receives an AA- from Standard & Poors for unlimited tax general obligation

bonds.

The city's property tax rate continues at 10.1649 mills. A mill is \$1 for every \$1,000 of a home's taxable value.

3.7 percent from \$3.21 billion to \$3.336 billion. About 1.9 percent of this increase was due to economic adjustments to existing properties. Of that, \$56.5 million of the increase was from new construction, which amounted to 1.6 percent of the tax real.

■ The city's bond rating

Attacks from page A1

In both cases, the woman escaped after being grabbed from behind and told not to scream. The boy is being held in Oakland County Children's Village and is expected to be charged in the Friday night incident in Oakland County Probate Court today. Dwyer said the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office decided there was not enough evidence to charge the youth as an adult.

Calls to the assistant prosecutor handling the case were not returned Wednesday.

Dwyer said police records show the boy's family has had run-ins with police. In the last two years, each par-

In the last two years, each parent filed an assault charge against the other. The boy faced three assault investigations and on three occasions he was listed as a runaway. In each assault investigation against the boy, the victim refused to cooperate with police, Dwyer said.

The chief said twice the boy's mother was offered a way to work out the problems with the boy through counseling in the

Farmington Youth Assistance program, but that both times the mother never carried out process to get the program inflated.

The chief noted residents in the complexes made many a concerted effort to find the person responsible for the adduction attempts by the many tips the department received.

I want to compliment the officers and the detectives and the citizens, he said. This was a community team effort to get this violent person off the streets.

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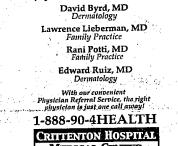
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Letters from page A3

what I'd like:

Top ten list (1 being the most favorite) 1. Survivor C.D. (Destiny's Child) 2. art set, 3. set of markers, 4. fifth Harry Potter book, 5. The Peter Pan movie, 6. The movie Atlantis: The Lost Empire, 7. mechanical penelis, 8. toe socks, 9. a pair of shoes, 10. some book marks.

I know it's a lot. But try your best. You don't have to get me all

of them.

I go to Dunckel Middle School.

My friend Murphy said she
might write to you too. Her full
name is Murphy Thiel so expect a letter from her too.

WAll, that's about it. Have a wen, thus a mout it, have a merry Christmas and a happy new year. Sincerely, Shruti Konda

Dear Santa,
For Christmas I would like a
snowboard and peace on earth.
Merry Christmas!

Dear Santa, I was a good girl. My mommy aid so. Hope you think so. Alex Frsh



NEW YEAR'S



GET YOUR FIRST

NIGHT BUTTON December 10th
at these locations:
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Birmingham City Hall
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