



Gearing up: Ready to enter the building, officers listen to the scenario.

Officers learn how to handle deadly scene

BY PAUL R. PACE
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Officer Mike Bjork was shot more than a dozen times in Farmington Hills Thursday.

Fortunately for him the bullets were just paintballs.

But the role the Troy Police officer was playing out — a crazed gunman in an occupied building — could be real someday for the Farmington and Farmington Hills police officers who were being trained in how to contain a gunman on a shooting rampage.

Bjork was dressed as the lone assailant in blue jumpsuit, complete with football padding underneath to keep from having to go home black and blue from the paintball shots.

"It stings," he said of being nailed. "It feels like a bee sting."

Officers split up in teams for the afternoon training at an abandoned office warehouse in Farmington Hills. The officers not playing the role of response team members acted as citizens in danger in the building.

More than 20 police officers from Farmington Hills and Farmington police departments took part in the annual training.

Given four different scenarios,

the team would enter certain parts of the building after being briefed on the situation.

Farmington Hills Training Officer Brian Bastianelli said the program is important because while the departments hope such a scenario never happens, national events in recent years have shown it does, with tragic results.

Troy police help with the program that takes officers out of duty for a 40-hour, week-long training session.

"We've seen national incidents where the gunman can have high-powered assault rifles," Bastianelli said while unloading specially modified automatic rifles from a command vehicle.

The rifles and handguns used at the session had blue tips to show the weapons were modified to only shoot paintballs and not real ammunition.

The officers are trained to tackle a real-life scenario where a gunman is shooting at people and must be contained immediately without waiting for SWAT or backup teams, Bastianelli said.

"They have to know how to do it as a team and the equipment used, so people know what to do," he said.

"Our goal is to stop the person



STAFF PHOTOS BY BILL BRADLEY

Prepared: After learning the details of the scenario, officers enter the warehouse.

as best they can."

A command officer stays outside the building, giving the team the description of the gunman and where he was last seen.

Shots could be heard outside the building. After the event, which usually lasted only a few minutes, the officers discussed what they did wrong or right in the situation

with the command officer.

Besides advanced rapid deploy training, Farmington Hills officers are trained in defensive tactics, firearms, CPR, and legal updates in the weeklong training sessions.

The department has 118 sworn officers, so the sessions usually go from January to May, Bastianelli said.

Layoff list OK'd; teachers will likely be called back

BY SUP BUCK

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Seventeen Farmington teachers received layoff notices this week, after school board members approved a layoff list April 23.

The staff cuts are part of the district's plan to reduce the budget deficit of \$5.3 million. However, Larry Lobert, executive director of personnel, expects that most will be called back by the beginning of the 2002-2003 school year.

The terminations take effect the last day of the school year. The last day for students is June 11.

The district typically approves a layoff list annually and calls teachers back in the fall, after more is known about staffing and finances. This year's a little different.

"There's maybe four or five more than in the previous year," Lobert said. "We will count on leaves and unexpected enrollment growth."

The district offered an early retirement/severance incentive, of which 79 teachers took advantage. Under the agreement with the Farmington Education Association, if 46 or more take the option, they will receive a one-time amount of \$35,000.

Because of this, Lobert doesn't expect any surprise retirement announcements as in previous years.

Sue Zurvaloe, assistant superintendent for staff and community services, said the early retirement offering exceeded the district's expectations. "We expect it will help us save money in the short term. This will have a significant impact and we are real pleased."

CAMPUS PIPELINE

MSU GRAD

Sarah Martinez, a 1998 graduate of Farmington High School, is graduating in May from Michigan State University's College of Education. She made the dean's honor list this past fall semester and recently passed her certification test. She will begin student teaching first graders at an East Lansing elementary school this fall.

SPRING VOLUNTEER

Maxim B. Nikodin, a member of Albion College's Wayfarers International Group for Service spent spring break in Costa Rica hard at work helping others. Nikodin joined with five other members of the Albion College community to perform a variety of community service activities in the village of San Ramon. Nikodin is a senior majoring in chemistry. He is the son of Viorol and Luminita Nikodin of Farmington and a graduate of Farmington High School.

LAWRENCE DEANS

The following Farmington Hills residents were named to the dean's list at Lawrence Technological University following the fall semester:

Rebecca Miller, Heather Kassab, Stephen Clark, Michael Brown, Zina Zala, Thejus Joseph, Cathy Kinsler, Adam Azar, Kathleen Brown, Jason Shaw, James Knusalla, Jared Ankawi, Phillip Crossman, Parks Owens Jr., Bryan Campbell, Jason Hammond, Igor Muminovic and Jerry Turza.

WALLES DEANS

Nicole Semposki of Farmington was named to the dean's list at Johnson & Wales University following the winter semester. She is majoring in hospitality sales/management.

SPRING DEANS

Rebecca Chisom of Farmington was named to the dean's list at Spring Arbor University. She is majoring in contemporary music ministry and is the daughter of Mike and Susan Chisom.

U OF M GRADS

The following Farmington/Farmington Hills residents earned degrees from the University of Michigan: Tanya Bennett, Kyra Copeland, Brendan Hug, Peter Ketcham, Joongsab Kim, Judith Na, Kristofor Norman, Christopher Temporelli and Michael Zorette.

FERRIS HONORS

Mary Lantchney of Farmington Hills was recently honored for academic excellence at Ferris State University.

HOPKINS DEANS

Sumit Sharma of Farmington Hills was named to the dean's list for the fall semester at Johns Hopkins University. He is the son of Dr. and Mrs. Rajinder Sharma of Farmington Hills.

ALBION HONORS

The following local students received academic awards at Albion College's annual honors convocation held earlier this month:

Lindsey T. Densmore received an Ernst & Young Scholarship. Densmore is a sophomore majoring in psychology and economics and management and minoring in economics. She is the daughter of Robert and Sharon Densmore of Farmington and a graduate of Mercy High School.

Anne M. Polmanter received the Michael P. Noonan Award for Leadership in Public Life and a Julian S. Rammelkamp Junior Scholarship in history. Polmanter is a senior majoring in history and the daughter of Robert Polmanter and Kathryn Polmanter of Farmington and a graduate of Walled Lake Western High School.

Eric B. Springer received a William C. and Joyce G. Ferguson Award in Mathematics and Professional Management. Springer is a junior at Albion College and the son of Mark and Paula Springer of Farmington and a graduate of Harrison High School.

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