

Two School Pals Gain Green Beret

When Rick Weston and Terry Kemp first became buddies a decade ago as classmates at O.E. Dunkel Junior High School, they probably would have punched in the nose the first guy to suggest that they might look handsome in berets.

But in the winter of 1967-68 the berets Rick and Terry have been awarded by the United States Army can be worn with a pride born of knowledge that they identify the most highly trained fighting men in American history.

They're both 23 now and still as inseparable as in the years they went through the Farmington school system, graduating together in 1962 from Farmington High School.

CHRISTMAS for these two men and their families will be something extra special this year, for they are at home on brief leaves before leaving for Vietnam early in January with others of the Army's 5th Special Forces Group, wearers of the Green Beret.

Their paths have been parallel since they first met as pupils at Dunkel, when Rick's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Weston, were residents of the Kendallwood subdivision and Terry's family, Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Kemp, lived in Staman Acres.

They were football teammates—both playing guard—in high school where Weston also lettered in wrestling and baseball while Kemp gained added monograms as a sprinter on the Farmington track team. The latter also was president of the student council in his senior year.

For a while they attended Eastern Michigan University together, and although as students they could have had further selective service deferment they enlisted in the Army in Feb., 1966.

After basic training at Fort Knox they again volunteered as a tandem, this time for the Special Forces. Passing the required tests, they spent the next 14 months in the most highly specialized training America offers.

Of the 110 men who were in their Special Forces class when the rigorous program began, only 11 graduated—and not only were the two Farmington soldiers among them but Weston tied for first in the ratings of the 11.

THEY ARE in the service willingly, and accept the assignment to Vietnam as being exactly the duty for which they have been trained. They go there as Special Forces medics and those berets they wear command the respect of an entire nation.

Perhaps it would be more accurate to say an entire nation except for the draft card burners and their ilk—and for such demonstrators Kemp and Weston have little truck.

When the job is done in Vietnam, both expect to finish college. Weston wants to go to medical school and become a doctor, while Kemp plans to enter his father's hardware business on Eight Mile Rd. Meanwhile, they are just two sons at home for Christmas with their parents—but those berets tell a story that the smell of war is not far distant.



RICK WESTON AND TERRY KEMP

Beauty Operator's Slaying Is Relived

The Farmington Township beauty salon slaying of 18-year-old Sharon Ann Merlo of Redford, 11 months ago was relived this week in Oakland County Circuit Court as the accused husband stood trial for first degree murder.

The fact that Attorney Dan Devine did not begin submission of the case for the defense until Friday morning caused speculation that the jury would not begin deliberations until Monday or Tuesday.

Devine planned to place the 24-year-old Merlo on the witness stand, and said he also would call "three or four" other witnesses.

The attorney said he does not contest the fact that Merlo shot his wife, but does question the first degree charge. He said it would be his attempt to show Merlo acted with provocation.

Conviction of first degree murder carries a mandatory penalty of life imprisonment. This is not true of lesser counts of murder and manslaughter.

OF THE SIX customers who were in the Crest Beauty Salon at 27432 W. Eight Mile Rd. at the time of the shooting on the morning of Jan. 6, three testified that they were direct witnesses to the event.

One of them, Mrs. Lois Whitaker, said Mrs. Merlo, an operator at the salon, was just ready to start work on her hair when the shooting occurred.

"Sharon was behind my chair when Mr. Merlo came from a hallway to within two feet of where I was sitting," reported Mrs. Whitaker.

"He pointed a gun straight out and started shooting at Sharon over my left shoulder. Neither one said a word."

"I ducked and when I looked around Sharon was sliding down the wall."

Earlier testimony had established that Merlo had entered the beauty shop shortly before, and had beckoned his wife to come to the back room for a conversation. Sharon emerged from that room first, advancing to Mrs. Whitaker's chair, and Merlo had followed immediately behind.

THE COUPLE had been separated for some time, and it was reported that Mrs. Merlo had started a divorce action against her estranged husband. Meanwhile, Mrs. Merlo was living with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. George Kamek, of 19340 Gaylord, in Redford Township.

Merlo left the beauty shop without capture, but was apprehended in a Philadelphia, Pa. bank two weeks later after engaging in a scuffle with a bank detective, Frank Morris.

After subduing Merlo, Morris disarmed him of a .32 caliber pistol which was identified in court Thursday as being the death weapon.

Lt. Charles Myers, ballistics expert of the Michigan State Police crime laboratory, testified that his tests of the gun showed it had been used to fire the bullets found in Mrs. Merlo's body, as well as two bullets found elsewhere in the shop.

In the autopsy, one bullet was removed from the victim's head and another from the rib cage. Two other shots had passed through the body.

Since his capture in Philadelphia, Merlo has been held without bond in the Oakland County Jail.

The case got under way Tuesday in the court of Judge Farrell E. Roberts in Pontiac before a jury of seven women and six men, including one alternate to be excused before deliberations begin.

Saturday Hours Set For Taxes

Farmington Township Treasurer Elise P. Avery announced this week that in addition to the normal weekday schedule her office in the Township Hall will be open three Saturdays in December and February for the payment of taxes.

Mrs. Avery said her staff will maintain Saturday office hours on Dec. 30, Feb. 10 and Feb. 24 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday of each week the hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The office is located on 11 Mile Rd., west of Orchard Lake Rd., west of Feb. 14 a four per cent penalty will be added to all unpaid tax statements as required by Michigan law.

City Treasurer Kathryn Cotter reports that her office will open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. A night depository box is located in the lobby of city hall just across from the police station on Liberty south of Grand River.

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'Anastasia' Is Set

Rehearsals have started by the Farmington Players for their second production of the season, "Anastasia," which is scheduled to open in the Players' Barn on Feb. 2.

Directing a cast of 13 in the suspenseful drama is Merle Pedicino, a drama major who also directed last year's comedy, "Never Too Late."

Rehearsals will be interrupted during the Christmas holiday period and will resume in January. "Anastasia" will be presented on three weekends in February.

The play, based on fact, is by Marcel Maurette, with the English adaptation by Guy Bolton. It deals with a woman who may be the Russian Crown

Princess Anastasia, her escape from the murder of her family by the Bolsheviks, and the scheme for her acceptance as the real princess.

Joanne Kaman will serve as assistant director, and Don Briggs, Players' president, will act as technical director.

Pflieder Heads Seminar Panel
Larry Pflieder, of 26714 Greythorne, Farmington, will be chairman of one of three seminars to be held Dec. 21 by the Detroit Chapter of the National Association of Accountants in the Pick-Fort Shelby Hotel.



AMATEUR HOCKEY -- Winners were named in the Farmington Hockey Association's second annual contest for the benefit of the amateur hockey program. Among those who helped stage the contest were, from left: Harry Fitzpatrick, president of the association; Ray Johnson, a Farmington Flyer; and Harry Wenner, exalted ruler of Farmington Elks Lodge 1986. First place winner was William Sustick, second place, W. Golinski; third place, Robert Goss.



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Kendallwood Komments

By EMILY ORR 474-7499

There is a group of folks at Antioch Lutheran Church who number about 50 and call themselves the "Fun Seekers". In the past few months the group enjoyed a hayride, progressive dinner and a bowling party. Next on the agenda is a mystery trip.

At the last general meeting officers for the new year were elected with Mr. and Mrs. Ken Corns as presidents; treasurers, Mr. and Mrs. Russ Cloud, and program chairman, Mr. and Mrs. Ken Walker.

"Welcome" to Mr. and Mrs. Kling who are now residing on Heathstone. The folks number six and have two youngsters in high school and two preschoolers. Kling is a state trooper and their former home was in Paw Paw.

NOW FOR A serious problem. The gas lights in K-1 are the target for vandalism of late. Latest report from the committee is that a bill of \$37.50 had to be paid due to breakage at the Tulipwood and Farmington Rds., entrance.

Dances Planned

Alpha Phi Omega, service fraternity, of the Orchard Ridge Oakland Community College will sponsor a weekly dance Thursday for all Oakland Community College students. The dance is held from 8:30 to 11:30 p.m. on campus.