

# Haggerty overcomes fire and reopens business

It's almost business as usual for the lumberyard out on Haggerty Road, across the border from West Bloomfield Township.

For Haggerty Lumber and Supply Co., that is no small feat. After a May 8 fire that took firefighters from 13 departments to extinguish, the business is apparently thriving, and speculation is

that all of its buildings can be rebuilt within a year.

Any good scout knows that the major prerequisite for a campfire is an abundance of dry wood. At Haggerty, that prerequisite was more than adequately met, creating a bonfire that was visible for miles.

The fire was ruled accidental. Original speculation by insurance adjusters set the financial loss at some \$8.5 million, but Haggerty President John O'Riley estimates the loss closer to \$4 million.

People are the glue that helped put the business back on its feet, according to O'Riley. Employees had the company going full tilt the Monday after the Thursday night fire. Trucks were actually making deliveries the morning after the fire of stock that had been pre-loaded in the vehicles and avoided damage.

"We delivered the next morning with our trucks weaving in and out around

the fire engines," O'Riley said. "We registered cash sales Monday and would have opened Sunday, but it was Mother's Day."

**EMPLOYEES OF HAGGERTY** were at the lumberyard as soon as possible, helping to pick up debris.

"I remember that Saturday," O'Riley said. "There were huge throngs of people in Washington looking for handouts because they had no jobs. People were here cleaning up."

"Our main concern was keeping the business we had going," O'Riley said

few employees lost more than a handful of working days.

"Most of our people are from the area," he said. "They're some pretty tough people and have pretty deep stock here." Many Haggerty employees have worked at the lumberyard for up to 15 years, according to O'Riley. For many, it has been their first and only job, creating an organization of "prideful" people, he said.

But the resurrection of Haggerty extends beyond its employees.

Customers helped by bringing in sales receipts to aid in reassembling

records that were destroyed in the blaze.

**COMMUNITY CONCERN** was symbolized by the attention given the company's mascot, a gray cat named Ramona.

Nowadays, Ramona struts in and out of offices, up and down the aisles of the temporary building.

"She got burned pretty badly and spent 10 days in the hospital," O'Riley said. Enough questions about Ramona's health were raised to dictate that a portion of a post-fire advertisement be dedicated to describing her condition.

## College offers defense lessons

By MARY GNIEWEK

Oakland Community College students who begin summer classes today will get a free lesson in self defense: a brochure outlining procedures for assault victims.



RICHARD THOMPSON

The pamphlet is the first offering to students from a newly created task force organized to deal with victims of physical and sexual assault on campus.

The task force was the idea of OCC Womencenter staff at the Orchard Ridge campus in Farmington Hills. A 24-person committee of students, faculty and administrators from all five OCC campuses, was formed last month. The committee wants to develop a volunteer bureau of trained staff who will deal with victims of rape

or assault on a long-term basis. Short courses will be offered in self defense.

The college has established liaison between each campus and rape crisis centers specifically equipped to deal with rape and assault victims.

"We want to develop sensitization to the business of assault, its impact on a person and how to deal with it," said Richard Thompson, provost of the Orchard Ridge campus and co-chair of the committee.

Thompson said there were two reported simple assaults in the past year at Orchard Ridge, both involving women approached in parking lots by males. Though there was no reported cases of rape, he said there has been rumors.

"WE CAN'T RESPOND to the incidents of assault and rape because of the attitude of the victim," said Thompson.

"Victims are afraid to go to authorities. Assault is a fact of life. We ought to have an institutional posture to be able to deal with it."

"The committee attempts to place the college in a responsive rather than a reactive posture to violent acts," Thompson believes students who take a common sense preventive approach to danger are better prepared to deal with threatening situations.

OCC's public safety department is retraining officers to be more aware of sexual and physical assault. It's now part of police academy curriculum.

"I don't believe there's much (assault) going on. Nobody has a complaint," said a public safety officer at the Orchard Ridge campus.

## Student joins honor society

Martha Livingston of Farmington was among 38 students at Michigan State University elected to the student chapter of Phi Beta Kappa for achieving academic excellence in the fields of liberal arts and sciences.

A senior majoring in history, she is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Livingston, 23909 Farmington Road. She is a 1976 graduate of Farmington High School.

Those selected must be in the top ten percent of their class and must have pursued a broadly based course of study, including two years of language and one year of mathematics.

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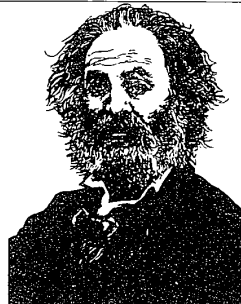
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