

Policewoman probes lives of troubled youths

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When she found herself raising her voice with one of her own five children, she asked herself: How important is a messy room or shoes left in the middle of the floor?

"I often identify with Erna Bombeck," she chuckled.

EVEN THOUGH none of her children have chosen police work as a career, she speaks proudly of them. One recently was graduated from University of Michigan, two are still students there, one is a graduate student at

Wayne State University, and her 14-year-old son is at East Junior High School in Farmington.

Officer Dempsey didn't plan to become a police officer when she graduated from University of Detroit in 1947 with a bachelor's degree in business administration.

In 1948, she saw an ad in the paper for a police officer. The people at the blueprint company where she worked during college and for a year after she graduated, laughed.

"I'd never even seen a woman police officer," she said. But she applied. And she made the right choice.

"I can't remember getting up and not wanting to come to work," Officer Dempsey said.

"Every day you deal with different people. You don't know in the morning what you're going to meet," she said. She likes finding new solutions, trying to work out problems within the structure of the family, she said.

"The most challenging cases are the sex crimes," she said. "You pit your skills against somebody else's."

There's lots of investigation, details to follow through to build the case, she added.

"We're fortunate to have a woman of

her caliber and ability," said Lt. Collins.

OUT OF the 168 rank and file police officers, there are five female officers and three or four female cadets going through training, Officer Dempsey said.

Shortly after Livonia incorporated in 1959, the police department hired its first female officer, Mary Ford. Women officers did not do much of the police work that men officers did in those days.

Now, women hired into the force are hired in as patrol officers and go

through the same training as men. They are geared to street work. They break up bar fights, pull people out of cars and write tickets, Officer Dempsey said.

In Livonia, the first policewoman on patrol was hired in April 1978.

"When I joined, it was different," Officer Dempsey said. "I've never written a ticket or been on patrol."

But women on patrol can be very effective, especially on domestic runs. "Women seem to have a calming effect," she said.

OFFICER DEMPSEY enjoys working with Lt. Collins because "he takes an interest yet gives you freedom to make decisions," she said.

However, she misses Police Captain Marge Setzer who retired in January 1980. They worked together in Detroit and were partners for 13 years in Livonia. "When you work with someone that long, you don't even have to finish sentences," Officer Dempsey said.

But she praises her new partner, Officer James Pardo, who had worked in the Livonia Youth Bureau.

Poking his head in the door, Lt. Collins teased Officer Dempsey, saying she'd better not retire. He couldn't get along without her.

"No way they'll ever get me out of here," Officer Dempsey said, smiling and putting the cap back on her pen — ready to start another day.

Sen. Ross asks for halt of nuclear waste run

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cross and which routes to take. We have a new shipper, Nuclear Assurance Corp. of Atlanta, Ga., and they make the arrangement."

WHILE the material being shipped is more radioactive than many loads, Tracy said it falls well below the maximum allowable millirem level of 200 mrem per container permitted by Canadian authorities. A millirem is a unit of

ionizing radiation. The "hottest" load ever shipped from the plant was 40 millirems, Tracy said.

Gary King, sales manager at the Nuclear Assurance Corp., says his company leases containers to store nuclear

waste and makes arrangements such as planning routes, escorting vehicles, checking on regulations and notifying

authorities if notification is required by state law. The firm subcontracted the hauling to Tri-State.



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