

## police beat

The following column is the second of a series of articles written for the Farmington Observer by Chris Cogar of the Farmington Hills Police Department's Crime Prevention Unit.

Good home security measures start where the burglar begins — at the outside. Although it must be understood that no home can be made 100 percent burglar proof, the majority of burglars tend to pick the easiest and least risky targets. Oftentimes, these targets are made possible through lack of knowledge, carelessness or neglect by the homeowner.

One area often overlooked in home security is landscaping. In addition to providing privacy and beauty, your landscaping can create a serious security risk. To accurately assess those weaknesses, you will need to focus your attention to your yard in the same manner a burglar would. While doing this assessment, be sure to consider the following areas:

**HIGH AND DENSE PLANTINGS:** Dense plantings around doors and windows provide convenient cover for a

burglar to work undetected. Here, burglars can force doors or break or remove glass very easily without being seen. In addition, these areas provide an excellent opportunity for an intruder to hide while waiting for your return and possibly mug you. A good rule of thumb is to plant bushes and shrubs at least five feet away from the foundation of your house. All shrubs should be kept trimmed to provide a clear view.

**LARGE TREES OR TRELLISES:** Trees located near your home tend to provide assistance to the burglar where limbs extend close to an upper porch deck, window or roof. Prune all tree limbs that can be easily climbed. Trellises look great, but be sure to place them where they can't be used as ladders to second floor windows.

**DRIVEWAY BORDERS:** When you come home at night, the lights of your car should illuminate your driveway, front walk and door. Studies have shown that burglars consistently select homes with hedges or large shrubs that block visibility and offer concealment.

Consider low plantings for driveways and walks.

**RANDOM LAWN LANDSCAPING:** Large trees or bushes planted randomly in the lawn area may be aesthetically appealing but in addition to making the grass harder to cut, these areas cast shadows at night that allow burglars more places to hide. Try to limit these areas or consider low bushes or shrubs.

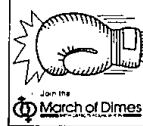
**FENCING AND MASONRY WALLS:** Unless your fencing or wall is more than eight feet, it should be considered as a definition of your property line or as a measure to direct or control traffic only. Fences and low walls keep out the honest person but do not deter the determined burglar. Even high fences can allow a burglar to slip in and work unobserved with little fear of being caught. Consider as an alternative, a stand of thorny rose bushes or low prickly hedges for these can be just as effective as a brick wall in deterring the burglar or directing traffic.

Remember, a house clearly visible to you, your neighbors or the police is a definite deterrent to a perspective burglar. You may have to sacrifice a bit of your privacy but you can decisively minimize your risk of becoming a crime statistic. Oftentimes, the simple solutions, such as those listed above, can be the most effective.



McGruff, crime dog.

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## Vision research reaps reward

Dr. Harry Maisel, professor and chair of the anatomy department in Wayne State University's School of Medicine, is the recipient of a \$25,000 award from the Alcon Research Institute in recognition of his outstanding contributions to vision research.

Maisel, whose work also is funded by the National Institutes of Health, will use the award to continue his studies into the structure and function of the lens.

Maisel, a resident of West Bloom-

field Hills and vice president of Adat Shalom Synagogue in Farmington Hills, also recently completed editing a book titled "The Ocular Lens" (Marcel Dekker, 1985).

The award, one of only 17 worldwide approved by a committee of the institute, is funded by Alcon Laboratories Inc. Since 1982 the institute has recognized contributions to vision research with one-time cash awards to be applied to further research.

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