



RANDY BOST/Staff photographer

Farmington Hills Police Capt. Russ Conway was the department's first detective back in the township days. Between 1951 and 1981, Conway served as a part-time and a full-time officer and an auxiliary officer for the city of Farmington and for Farmington Township.

A true blue cop

Changing times don't dim love for police work

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Russ Conway's office on the first floor of the Farmington Hills Police Department holds a treasure of memories when concrete and glass buildings were nowhere to be seen.

"What you have to realize is that back in the 1950s, we didn't have a township police building. We worked out of our vehicles and our houses," said Conway, head of the department's special operations bureau. "You have to remember the Farmington area was rural back then."

Black-and-white photos decorate the police captain's office. They show Conway in township days with other officers, when only a handful patrolled the then-sparsely populated area. He remembers the names of all the officers, many now gone, in the photos.

Conway opens a drawer and retrieves photos of himself and fellow officers helping with disaster control at the site of the tornado that hit Flint in the 1950s.

"We worked it. We cleared the area, looked for victims and stopped the looters," said Conway, the department's first detective.

Two years ago, Conway's 20-year-old investigation of a beauty shop murder resurfaced, when the husband convicted of murdering his wife while she was styling a customer's hair received a new trial.

THAT WAS no easy job. Though his files were complete, finding witnesses who testified 22 years ago was not easy. Some had died. Some had moved far away. And others were ill or incapacitated.

"As a hallmark of his tenacity . . . his efforts

people

in coordinating the case, and the location and delivery of witnesses, resulted in a second conviction," Farmington Hills Police Inspector Richard Niemisto wrote in his successful nomination of Conway as 1988 Police Officer of the Year.

" . . . while Captain Conway maintains the aura of a hardened experienced command police officer, he is in reality a generous, caring person who can always be relied on to help out an associate in need whether it is in terms of advice, help or moral support in trying circumstances," Niemisto continued.

Conway documents his life simply. He has three great loves: his family, his law enforcement career and the Farmington area.

His children, now grown, in fact, were part of the reason he became a full-time police officer. Originally, Conway lived in Redford Township where he was a part-time officer and managed a Ford dealership.

"With the kids growing up, I thought if I don't spend more time with them, they'll grow up before I know it," Conway said.

Little did he realize then that law enforcement required longer hours than the long hours he was putting in at the auto dealership.

BETWEEN HIS first step into Farmington Township in 1951 and the beginning of his actual tenure in 1961, Conway served as a part-time and a full-time officer and an auxiliary officer for the city of Farmington and Farmington Township.

He also organized, trained and commanded the

Auxiliary Police Unit. The auxiliary is still under his command as is the property division, vehicle maintenance, traffic and disaster services.

"You just got to fit in wherever you go," Conway said, referring to his years of varied service, ranging from detective to patrol to special operations.

Civil defense has always accompanied Conway's law enforcement career. From 1953 to today, Conway has been either the director or coordinator of civil defense in Farmington Township and Farmington Hills. He has redrawn the city's civil defense plan and initiated, developed and implemented training for emergency programs.

But he'll also admit that the lure is crime investigation. It's hard to imagine there's a case Conway doesn't recall, particularly during his 15-year tenure as head of the detective bureau.

"They (officers today) have a little more scientific assistance than I had. But it's like being a salesman. You've got to ring enough doorbells."

LIKE ANY other community, Farmington Township and Farmington Hills has its occasional murder. But Conway particularly recalls 1975. It was "the worst year for murders."

During his 36-year career with the department, Conway has run the gamut of police work. Today, police officers are more specialized than when Conway was a detective or patrol officer. "In those days, we worked on anything and everything. I feel that's better because you get a lot more experience."

The captain particularly enjoys the chance to work directly with people and to help them. "The thing that gets to me is when youths are hurt, killed or in trouble," Conway said. "Police work . . . I don't think that is hurting people. I think basically we get to help a lot of people."

Downtown A&P won't close

Continued from Page 1

ate 112 grocery stores, capturing 40 percent of the Detroit food market and becoming the biggest grocery chain in the area.

The changes will probably occur over the next several months, Rourke said. Jobs likely will remain intact, because the company has no intention to bring in new people, he added.

GILBERT BORMAN, spokesman for Borman's Inc., believes two Farmer Jack stores can survive profitably within the city limits of Farmington.

"I happen to believe in the Farmington market, we can support both stores," he said. Conversations to the Farmer Jack

name would begin immediately. "I think people will be surprised at how quickly this will happen," he added.

Richard Rosenbaum of the Southfield-based Equitable Management Group, which owns the Downtown Farmington Center where the A&P is located, said he had yet to be advised of any change from his tenant. But he speculated there may be no change in the Farmington grocery market.

"They may need to keep those (two) stores open just to cover the market," he said, adding that both grocery stores draw from different areas of the city.

Rosenbaum said he had no idea about the impact of the merger on any of the more than 30 Equitable centers, which house "a lot" of

A&P and Farmer Jack stores.

Farmington Downtown Development Authority executive director Wendy Strip Sittsamer said city officials had not received official word either, but are watching the situation closely.

"We consider the A&P to be a vital human service," she added.

THE NAME change will revitalize the A&P stores by capitalizing on the popularity of low prices offered by Farmer Jack, explained Fred Marx, a Berkeley retail consultant.

"A&P means a national chain with private labels," he said. "It means 8 O'clock Coffee and Ann Page. Farmer Jack is in Detroit. A&P is Anne Page and she lives in New Jersey somewhere."

Peddling produce under a single name also will save advertising money for both grocery chains, said Ryan Mathews, senior editor of Grocery Marketing Magazine in St. Clair Shores.

"There's no point in advertising against yourself," he added.

The Associated Press and staff writer Diane Gale contributed to this report.

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I'M SO TIRED IN THE MORNING

You may have heard that if you wake up in the morning more tired than when you went to bed, you are suffering from depression. Not so, if you have arthritis.

First, you feel the aching of strained muscles. During the night, these muscles make their protest for being worked beyond their capacity during the day. The throbbing discomfort makes it almost impossible to fall asleep.

Next, tendons slowly strain, are further stretched when you roll over in bed. The result is pain in your shoulder or hip that wakes you when you roll over.

Finally, joints become stiff from lack of movement. To avoid this ache, you may awaken several times ostensibly to go to the bathroom. Really you are moving to avoid joint stiffness; the result is further disruption of your sleep.

A night's sleep for a person with arthritis can become a night's distress. Through no fault of your own, you may arise more tired in the morning than when you went to bed. You are not suffering from depression, but are experiencing to the core what having arthritis means.

Agencies set holiday schedule

The U.S. Postal Service will operate on a holiday schedule the day observed as Washington's Birthday, Monday, Feb. 20.

Farmington Hills City Hall will be closed Wednesday, Feb. 15, which is observed as President's Day. Both the Farmington and Farmington Hills city halls will be open Feb. 20.

The 47th District Court in Farmington, however, will be closed Monday, Feb. 20.

Farmington postmaster Kenneth Harris said there will be no regular residential or business mail delivery Feb. 20. Special delivery, express mail and post office box service will be provided. Limited carrier service will be available only for customers who regularly pick up their mail at both facilities 8-10 a.m.

Mail will be picked up from all residential collection boxes as late in the day as possible to meet first class mail service standards. All business collection boxes, with the large 5:00 decal, will be picked up after 5 p.m. Washington's actual birthday is Feb. 22.

clarification

Farmington Hills city councilwoman Jody Soronen was mayor last year — 1988 — not 1987, as reported in a Farmington Focus item Thursday, Feb. 9. Councilman Ben Marks was mayor in 1987.

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February/March of Events

See the shape (and color!) of things to come as we welcome the return of spring in our Livonia store. Mark your calendar: Breakfast shows include leading designer fashions for day, evening and weekend wear.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18

9:30 a.m. Signature Collection Spring Breakfast Show.
Continental breakfast in our restaurant.
3.50 per person, R.S.V.P. 591-7696, ext. 275.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25

9:30 a.m. Suit and Coat Spring Breakfast Show.
Continental breakfast in our restaurant.
3.50 per person, R.S.V.P. 591-7696, ext. 264.

11 to 4:30 p.m. Suits and Coats Informally modeled.

THURSDAY, MARCH 2

7:00 p.m. Spring Spectacular! Formal show featuring fashions from Collection Sportswear and our Designer and International Salons.

SATURDAY, MARCH 4

9:30 a.m. Clairewood Spring Breakfast Show.
Continental breakfast in our restaurant.
3.50 per person, R.S.V.P. 591-7696, ext. 271.

11 to 4:30 p.m. Clairewood fashions Informally modeled.

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