

Farmington grad on her way to Naval Academy

By Kara Kurtz
special writer

It's not just a job — it's an adventure, says the U.S. Navy in its recruiting commercials.

Maureen O'Dell, who graduated June 13 from Farmington High, will begin one of the longest adventures of her life, one that few women ever experience.

When she arrives at the Naval Academy on July 3, O'Dell will become a part of an elite group where only the best of the best, and roughly 100 women, are accepted each year.

When she began the application process 13 months ago, admission to the Naval Academy seemed like an impossible dream for O'Dell, so the nomination from U.S. Sen. Don Riegle, D-Michigan, in mid-December (the academy requires either a congressional or senatorial nomination for consideration) came as a pleasant surprise.

The battle had just begun, however, and O'Dell settled down to wait for the academy to narrow the applicants down from 14,000 to 2,500, and finally to 1,600, approximately 1,300 will be enrolled for the next year.

Only 8 percent of those students selected are women.

"ALL THE waiting was very hard for me," O'Dell said. "Most of my friends' plans for next year were already finalized, and I still wasn't sure where I was going. I had been accepted to U-M earlier, and they were beginning to get restless."

Being one of these chosen few entitles O'Dell to many privileges. She will attend four years of schooling at

the Annapolis, Md.,-based academy for \$1,500. She hopes to major in engineering, and minor in political science. She will spend her summer months cruising the shores of places like the British Isles, or exploring the underwater world at SCUBA Camp, and other similar specialty camps.

O'Dell will graduate as a lieutenant, and in return for her education, she must serve five years in the Navy. Though at first this may not sound very appealing, the starting pay for a lieutenant in 1989 was approximately \$30,000 per year.

This opportunity was not simply handed to O'Dell on a silver platter. It took a great deal of hard work, perseverance and sacrifice on her part.

WHILE MANY of her peers tended to "blow off" high school, O'Dell was active in school, worked part time, and graduated with a 3.98 grade point average (she received her first "B" this year).

As a senior, O'Dell was a captain of both the track and cross country teams, a National Honor Society executive board member and president of the French Club. She was also on Farmington's Student Advisory Committee and a Student Against Driving Drunk member.

"My mom and dad have always been very supportive and instrumental toward my success," O'Dell said. "And, of course, my four years at Farmington High School have been unforgettable. I wouldn't have wanted to go anywhere else."

Even after graduation, O'Dell will



Maureen O'Dell
Navy-bound

serve as an example, for her peers and all the students at Farmington High School, that no goal is ever unattainable, and that you are only as good as you make yourself.



Power outage

Approximately 1,000 Detroit Edison customers in an area bounded by 11 Mile, Farmington Road, Nine Mile and a quarter mile east of Middlebelt lost power for 50 minutes starting approximately 8:45 a.m. Tuesday. In a thunderstorm Monday, lightning apparently broke the insulator on a transformer near 11 Mile and Middlebelt in Farmington Hills. The exposed wire eventually started a pole-top fire that damaged the transformer, causing the power outage, said Earl Floyd, Detroit Edison's Oakland County customer marketing services general supervisor. During the outage, stop signs were used to control traffic at major intersections in the city of Farmington. The intersection of Farmington Road and Grand River is shown above.

RANDY BORST/staff photographer

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Police have anonymous drug analysis program

The Farmington Hills Police Department has a program to assist residents in identifying suspected controlled substances they may find in their homes.

Residents who find such suspicious substances can bring them to the police station. A confidential number will be assigned and the name and phone number of a contact person will be provided.

The resident may call back in 10 days and, by referring to the confidential number, will receive the test results. Counseling and referral will be available and the resident's anonymity will be respected.

For information on this program, call the crime prevention section of the Farmington Hills Police Department, between the weekday hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at 473-9640.

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