

Beggar finding little luck

He says his name is Gilbert Smith and that he's not too proud to beg for money and food. He was out begging Monday afternoon on Orchard Lake Road, just south of 10 Mile.

Smith displayed a hand-lettered sign ("Desperate — Can you help? Wife needs heart medicine — need food for my family — 2 kids — Thank you — Keep the faith") for passing motorists on busy Orchard Lake. Most ignored him. A few blew their horns or gave the thumbs-up sign.

Smith, 60, took time out to explain his plight to a reporter and photographer.

"I'm in sort of a 'Catch-22' situation," said Smith, who said his wife and two teenage children live in Bay City. He's staying with a friend in Detroit.

"I'm disabled to the point where I can't work... but not enough to get disability," said



SHARON LEMIEUX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Plea for help: Gilbert Smith, begging sign in hand, chats with a motorist on Orchard Lake Road in Farmington.

Smith, who indicated that his back and legs were giving him trouble.

Smith said he was a mechanic, "but the work just got too hard for me. Those transmissions got too heavy."

Smith said despite the relative affluence in the area, his efforts hadn't raised much. "Considering how many people drive up and down this road, I'd say (begging there was) not too good," he answered.

"But people have given me groceries, Hamburger Helper, things like that," he added, indicating a nearby paper bag.

Smith wouldn't say why he picked Farmington for his asking spot, but he's glad to be in the Detroit area.

"I'd be worse off in Bay City than I am here," he said.

INKWELL

Inkwell provides information about education issues and people in the Farmington area. Mail information to: Inkwell, The Farmington Observer, 21638 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336. Send information via fax to 477-9722. Please include a daytime phone number on your news release. Items will not be taken over the phone.

FULL-TANK SCHOLARSHIP
Harrison High student Bethany Millican is one of 60 children of Marathon employees who have been honored as 1993 Marathon Scholars for outstanding academic achievement. She will receive a \$2,000 award to go to college. She was chosen from 221 applicants. She is the daughter of Marathon employee Robroy Millican.

LATIN LEARNERS
Detroit Country Day sophomore Uday Gorapat of Farmington Hills won five awards in Level II Latin competitions at the Michigan Junior Classical League state convention April 30 at Michigan State University. Gorapat won first place in vocabulary, history and culture and grammar;

second place in mythology and third place in derivations. He was elected state parliamentarian of the Michigan Junior Classical League and won the state championship in Certamen (quiz bowl), along with his teammates Junior Allen Felix of Troy and freshmen Rakesh Navuluri of West Bloomfield and Chandu Venuri of Riverview. Senior Heather Shenkman of Farmington Hills won first place in Level V vocabulary.

A GRAND DAY
Grandparents and special people related to students were invited to visit Kenbrook Elementary May 10 to mark Grandparent's Day. Those who attended were asked to write letters giving their grandchildren helpful hints from their vast experiences, which will be posted in the main hall. First graders also presented a program in the media center for the guests.

LEAD STORY
Sophomores Amy Behr of Harrison High and Barbara Chwalko of Mercy High have been selected to attend the 1993 Hugh O'Brain Youth Foundation Michigan Book Leadership seminar May 13-16 at Eastern Michigan University.

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