



Laser fare: Farmington Hills police officer James Bretz trains in the gun range with Sgt. Darnel Krause, the room where the public will have access on Sunday's open house to do a "shoot, don't shoot" program with laser guns.

On target: Hills police officer Richard Blenda aims and is ready to fire.

STAFF PHOTO BY SHARON LEBREUX



Police open house to dazzle visitors

BY WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Sunday's 10th annual Farmington Hills Police Open House will display some modern technology that just seems like kid's play.

Among the popular attractions designed with families in mind, the Firearms Automated Training System is a big draw for kids.

"It's been that way every year," said Commander Chuck Nebus.

The FATS system allows police officers to use a special gun and laser-sensitive screen to simulate various situations in which an officer has to make judgments about using a fire arm.

Nebus said one of the programs involves situations where there is a "shoot or don't shoot" option that makes officers, and hopefully the public, appreciate

the situations officers face.

"Hopefully, people see that it's not that easy to tell when you are in one of those situations," Nebus said.

The open house, which is from noon to 4 p.m. at the city complex at 11 Mile and Orchard Lake, will also feature other educational and entertaining activities including child fingerprinting, the Dragon Tank, police robot car, antiques police cars, "Parkey the Panda," home security displays and live entertainment.

Also featured will be the Oakland County Sheriff's Department's Mounted Division, bicycle registration, moon walk, weapons display, evidence technicians, radar timed pitching, safety town display, fire department, building tours, refreshments, "Meowin' the Crime Dog," and demonstrations by police K-9 units.

Volunteers reflect the town's spirit

BY WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

Since the Farmington Hills senior volunteer program began more than 20 years ago, it has grown 200 fold.

That has been an inspiration, Senior Adult Program Supervisor Loretta Conway told an audience of about 260 volunteers Wednesday.

Conway, who began the senior adult program in 1974, will retire this year. She was one of many honored for her work at a Wednesday breakfast at the William Costick Activities Center on 11 Mile.

"We asked for volunteers and nine people came to the first meeting at the American Legion on Grass River," she said. "Three volunteers came from that group. Now we have 600."

Conway and her staff coordinate a variety of volunteer services that involve people in social programs, food distribution, counseling, teaching and many other types.

"Loretta has been a true role model who has guided us for many years," said Mary DiManno, nutrition coordinator.

Volunteers enjoyed a prepared breakfast while they were honored in what has become an annual event.

City Manager Dan Hobbes, who was attending his first such volunteer event, said the service volunteers give has a tangible benefit for the city.

"As the guy responsible for the budget, I see this as a great way to keep down the city's costs," he said.

Terri Warniak sang "People Who Need People" and "Wind Beneath My Wings" and the Farmington Steppers line danced to an appreciative audience.

Ray Briggs, 83, was given the Diamond of the Community Award. The award, presented by Harry Kerzert of the Farmington Area Commission on Aging, was presented to a volunteer who has reached the age of 75 and still actively volunteers in the community.



Ray Briggs

Briggs, who is active in the historical commission, women's club, travel program and others, said activity was the key to enjoying her golden years.

"I keep busy," said the 83-year-old Farmington resident. "I only feel 38 — or so."

City officials from Farmington and Farmington Hills passed out awards to volunteers from a variety of programs including the American Association of Retired Persons, Bereavement, Bingo, Blood Pressure, Bocephus, Bridge, Carogiver, Commission on Aging, Community Service, Computer Class, Crafts, Gift Shop, Current Events, Dance, Deaf/hearing Services, Entertainment, Exercise, First Step Stroke, Focus Hope, Food Co-op, Golf Men, Golf Women, Greeters, Holiday Meals, House chore, Hostess, Kar-do Stroke, Kiwanis, Legal Services, Library, Mailing, Medical Assistance, Newsletter, Holiday Meals, Meals-on-Wheels, Nutrition-on-Site, Office, Oil Painting, Organ, Outreach, Quilting, Pacific Rim Center, Police and Seniors Together, Pinocchio, SAGE, Senex, Sing-a-Long, Swimming Pool, Tax Assistance, Teacher/Instructor, Telephone Reassurance, Transportation, Volleyball, Widow's Group and World Medical Relief.

Fire victim tells police antique store closed without delivering her goods

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

A woman who was burnt out of her home said she was subsequently burned by a Farmington antique store that has since closed.

Farmington police have received 68 complaints from disgruntled customers since Hickory Hill ceased operations several weeks ago. Some cases are being reviewed by the Oakland County prosecutor's office for possible criminal charges.

The woman, 70, who lives in Wyandotte, told police she bought more than \$4,000 worth of furniture at Hickory Hill Antiques to refurbish her home, which was being rebuilt after a fire in February.

Items she bought included a \$2,150 two-piece walnut bedroom set, \$659 walnut needle chair, \$535 Victorian walnut table and two antique brass and pewter pieces worth \$800.

She paid for the items from an insurance settlement on her home, which was a total loss.

A woman at the store offered to hold the items while the home was being rebuilt.

When the woman returned, she found the store on Grand River was closed and empty.

"Everyone has a story in it," said Michael Wiggins, deputy director of the Farmington Public Safety Department. "None of them are happy."

A Plymouth woman filed a complaint Monday, saying she brought \$5,900 worth of

antiques to be sold on consignment in May 1996 but hasn't received any money.

A Detroit business owner also told police she took \$8,510 in antique furniture in October and hasn't been paid or received the items back.

A Farmington resident said he brought in a Japanese tapestry two years ago to be sold on consignment. He filed a complaint with police Monday.

"(Hickory Hill) has been there a long time," Wiggins said. "They felt their materials would be there for a long time and didn't check on them until they read about (Hickory Hill closing) in the newspaper."

Farmington Farmers' Market open for another season of peddling produce



grower Jean Winterbottom of Farmington Hills.

Their items will be a welcome addition to the flowers, bedding plants, fruits and vegetables previously on sale.

Farmington Florist is the only Downtown Development Authority merchant to sell plants and flowers at the market.

All DDA businesses who sell merchandise from the above categories will be welcome to have a space on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. free of charge. The

Farmers' Market runs from the second Saturday in May through the end of October.

Meetings planned

The Farmington Hills chapter of Business Network International will have its regular meeting from 7-8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, May 28, at Brady's restaurant at the Holiday Inn at 10 Mile and Grand River.

BNFI's Northwest Farmington Hills Chapter will have a regular meeting from 7-8:30 a.m. on Friday, May 30, at Korby's Koney Island, at Eight Mile and Hagerty.

For more information, call 313-844-3432.

Business Watch bulletin

During March, Tubby's Sub Shop and Subway Subs were both broken into on the same night with entry through the back doors.

A bay door window was broken at Brass World in March, but an alarm sounded, scaring off the

criminals. Nothing was stolen.

In April, Water Works Aquarium was broken into through the front door and merchandise was spray painted.

Bangkok Express restaurant was also broken into in April after phone lines were cut to silence the alarm. A siren speaker and video camera were ripped from the wall.

Businesses that have a central monitoring alarm system, must make sure that a phone line cutting option is included in the system. If not, your current system may not afford you the protection you need.

The summer months are almost here. Fireworks are an annual danger at this time of year and only some Class C fireworks are legal. For information on them, call Farmington Fire Marshal Joseph Schornack at 474-4700 ext. 241.

For further information about Business Watch, call Commander Maria Putt at 474-4700 ext. 246.

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