

Gift givers



Good turn: Officer Rick Coble (left), Cadet Gino Martin, Katherine Gardiner, Dan Duffey, Katie Manion, Officers Rose Mackie and Jim Knittel help wrap gifts as part of Farmington Hills Police Officers Association's annual fund-raiser for needy families. Officers bought 140 gifts for tots to seniors.

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The following are police and fire items that occurred during the past week in Farmington and Farmington Hills.

RECKLESS DRIVING

In Farmington Hills:

A 24-year-old Northville woman was issued a ticket for reckless driving and a 55-year-old Redford truck driver was ticketed for malicious damage to property following a 7:45 p.m. traffic incident Dec. 19 on Grand River near Halsted.

According to a witness, the driver of the white semi-trailer truck ran up to the woman's car at the stoplight and began screaming at her after she had cut him off near the intersection.

The woman told police she was trying to get onto the M-5 expressway and said the cutoff

was accidental, but the truck driver, located by police a little later, told them that after she uttered an obscenity at him, he became angrier and kicked the rear driver's side passenger door. The woman claimed the trucker also grabbed something from her hand and threw it onto the street. Police said the woman's car sustained about \$75 damage.

INTIMIDATION, THREATS

In Farmington Hills:

Police are investigating an incident in which a 25-year-old former resident of the Gateway Apartments who left owing \$3,600 in back rent threatened apartment management by telephone after he was contacted by a collection agency. The man, the subject of a personal restraining order and an injunction prohibiting weapons ownership or possession, said one manager's children would not "live to see their graduation" and that he knew people he could hire to kill both managers.

VANDALISM

In Farmington: It was reported that someone, between 10 p.m. and midnight Sunday, vandalized floodlights at Heritage Condominiums, at Heritage Court and Drake Road.

POLICE AND FIRE CALLS

The lights had been used to illuminate the condominium complex sign. Approximately \$150 in damage was caused.

DRUG ARRESTS

In Farmington Hills:

A 19-year-old Redford man who just missed hitting a police car on a motel parking lot was charged with narcotics use and possession after police stopped him at Eight Mile and Middlebelt at 7:40 p.m. Friday and found a razor blade with cocaine residue on it in a pack of cigarettes in his car. Police had followed the car after it left the Park Motel at a high rate of speed. The man said he bought the cocaine from another man at the motel.

A 23-year-old West Bloomfield man was charged with possession of marijuana and drug paraphernalia after he was observed lighting a pipe with the drug in it in a car at 14 Mile and Haggerty Dec. 19 around midnight. The man gave police a baggie containing the substance.

EMBEZZLEMENT

In Farmington Hills:

A 16-year-old West Bloomfield youth employed for about two months at Office Max, 31219 14 Mile Road, admitted Dec. 19 to stealing electronics items and

computer games valued at several hundred dollars. He returned several of the items from his home.

A 40-year-old Detroit woman employed as a cashier at the Big K Mart, 30800 Orchard Lake Road, admitted Dec. 20 to embezzling merchandise valued at \$590 after she was videotaped passing some of the items to another woman without ringing them up. The cashier said she was trying to make extra money for her sick son's medical bills.

OPEN HOUSE PARTY

In Farmington Hills:

Police charged two teen-agers Dec. 18 and 19 with violating the city's ordinance against open house parties in separate incidents.

The 18-year-old was charged after police, investigating a noisy party complaint in the 37800 block of Riverbend Dec. 18, found more than 30 youths in a dark basement with an empty beer keg plus empty beer cans all over the house. The youths ran when officers attempted to check them for intoxication.

About 40 youths were at a party Dec. 20 given by the 19-year-old in the 28100 block of Kilturban. They left without incident.

ASSAULT

In Farmington Hills:

A loss prevention detective at Marshall's, 31145 Orchard Lake Road, told police she was verbally abused, then kicked, scratched and slapped Sunday, Dec. 21, by a Detroit woman whom the detective observed steal a pair of earrings from the store. The detective managed to retrieve the earrings, valued at \$6.99.

THEFTS

In Farmington Hills:

A \$1,000 AM-FM radio with CD player was taken from a 47-year-old woman's green 1997 Chevy Blazer at her Echo Valley Condominiums residence during the night of Dec. 18-19 after thieves punched out the driver's side doorlock. Police got some fingerprints and are investigating leads.

A 1991 blue Ford Explorer and a '91 Ford Thunderbird, both left unlocked in the driveway of a home in the 29500 block of Chilchrest the night of Dec. 18-19, were ransacked, with a cell phone valued at \$150 and a checkbook were taken from the Explorer.

DRUNKEN DRIVING

In Farmington:

Officers spotted a motorist driving erratically on westbound Grand River, about 1:10 a.m. Dec. 10, and stopped the driver near Brookdale. The driver, a 25-year-old Farmington Hills man, subsequently failed various roadside dexterity tests. He also registered .27 percent on the preliminary breath test and was then arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol.

Dog

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Cause has not been determined, though fire investigators are looking closely at an area where the blaze started, near a wood-burning stove.

The Pansvalones, including children ages 10, 8, 4, and four months, are staying with relatives, Kish said. The home was insured.

Kowalczyk was working in his back yard Sunday when "he turned to see what Indy was barking at," according to his wife, Paula.

"He saw smoke and thought they were just burning wood," she said, "but then he noticed smoke coming out of the eaves." Interestingly, his back yard is the only place from which he could see the burning house.

Kowalczyk called 911 and then ran to the one-story wood-frame structure, where he and the woman who lives next to it tried knocking on its doors and windows to alert the children, whom they feared were inside.

But all they could see was heavy black smoke and the heat from the fire drove them back. When they didn't see the Pansvalones' van, they figured no one was home.

Indy, so-named because the Kowalczyks got her on Independence Day two years ago from former neighbors, only barks at people approaching the house or walking past it. "She's good with the kids in the neighborhood," said Paula Kowalczyk.

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