

Theft from page A1

plexes are fair game and so are those parked along residential streets.

Meanwhile, a small group of criminals are responsible for a large number of the cases. In other words, these are criminals who have a game plan and know how to execute it.

Some victims, however, knowingly leave the items out in the open to cash in on insurance money. "There is a lot of insurance fraud, or people out-and-out lie," Putt said.

Not only do victims make it easy for the cell phones to be taken, they don't follow through by filing a police report. "Because some of the cellular phones are older, people think they don't have value," Putt explained. Many police reports list stolen cell phones with a value of \$100-\$300.

Those who do file police reports often do themselves and the police investigators little good, because they do not provide enough detailed information about the stolen phones. Putt said owners often do not know the make and model of a phone, let alone serial number.

"By and large, they are out of luck," Putt said. "People don't know" that information. "They say 'Motorola phone.' Well, that slims it down to about nine million. You have to give us a fighting chance."

Stolen cell phones also can be easily cloned

before being pawned without a trace.

"They steal the signal and take another person's... air time and start using it," Putt continued. "It's not traceable. I've had it happen to me. There were calls on my bill to South Bend, Ind. I don't know anyone in South Bend."

Putt said there are some pointers for cell phone owners to avoid being targeted.

The most obvious, of course, are locking vehicles and making sure phones - or other valuable items, for that matter - are not in view.

Just in case, however, Putt suggested using the cell phone's locking feature. To unlock it, the owner's personal identification number has to be pressed in.

Above all else, "People need to take responsibility for the safety of their items, to at least give us a chance to combat crime," she added.



Obvious: Someone left their car phone plugged, an invitation to thieves.



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BAZELAK

Checking: Farmington Public Safety Commander Maria Putt checks autos in downtown Farmington to see how obvious it is for criminals to determine what to steal and how to steal, especially when doors remain unlocked.

Here's what to do if you're a victim

- Here's what police say someone should do if their cellular telephone is stolen:
- Contact service provider immediately to shut down service.
- Make a police report.
- Know what kind of phone it is. That includes model name

and number, serial number, color, and - yes - the phone number.

Unless those steps are followed, the "chances of recovery are slim," said Maria Putt, commander for Farmington Public Safety.

Hills firefighters score big

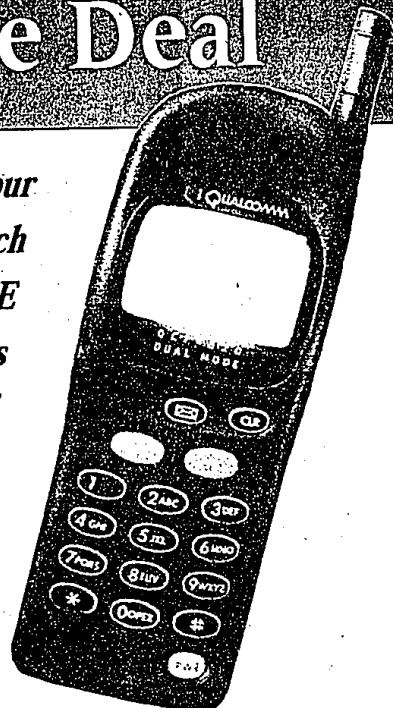
Five Farmington Hills firefighters participated in the National Firefighters Softball Championships, September 11-13.

Players with the Detroit Metro Softball Club were Denny Hughes, Mike Kish, George Baker,

Deriek Smith and Dave Handley. The Detroit Metro Softball Club finished the tournament with a five-win, two-loss record and an eighth place finish nationally.

More than \$85,000 was raised for muscular dystrophy.

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WHAT ATTRACTS ARTHRITIS?
According to some persons, the answer is magnets. Some do a brisk business in magnets that you attach to each side of your knee or to the top and bottom of your wrist. The idea is that electromagnetic waves draw out the inflammation.

If you have a background in science you will laugh at such an absurd idea. If you have read about the history of witchcraft, you will recognize the scam immediately.

The problem for physicians is that the number of such microprotections are more than the medical community can count or counter. Instead, you have to judge if something new is true or false.

There are clues. First, be skeptical if you are told that this new product is a new creation in treating "arthritis." There is no such entity as "arthritis." There is rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, gouty arthritis, Lyme arthritis etc. Each condition has its own features that require a specific therapy. There are therapies that are just as simple as getting a massage or taking ibuprofen.

Second, hold on to your wallet. If you hear that the product being pitched is an amazing discovery by "scientists." You should be told what institution sponsored the work. You can trust results from medical school centers as you can expect that researchers there will critically analyze findings before publishing their work. Bold and vague statements about scientific breakthroughs, hide lies.

Third, the old rule holds: If it sounds too good to be true, it isn't.

Now Accepting New Patients

Beata Weiermiller, MD, is a specialist in Obstetrics and Gynecology, treating women of all ages. She has a special interest in adolescent gynecology, laser and laparoscopic procedures, and urogynecology. Dr. Weiermiller earned her medical degree at Michigan State University College of Human Medicine, and completed her internship and residency at Indiana University Medical Center. She is a member of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and is fluent in Polish.

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