

Needed:

More religious members to participate in coalition

**BY TIM SMITH
Special Writer**
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It was almost as if St. Alexander's Catholic Church Deacon Mark Springer had a crystal ball.

Springer, during and following the Thursday, Oct. 21 meeting of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Call to Action Coalition, spoke out about the need for more members of the religious community to "Commit to the Journey" — the official coalition slogan.

"I would make it part of my action plan to get other churches involved," Springer said, following the 90-minute session at the Farmington Training Center.

"It's discouraging to me that there's not more (religious leaders) participating. But it's going to happen."

The role synagogues and churches can play to better connect the community dots was strongly repeated the very next day.

Milton Creagh, keynote speaker at the Friday, October 22 Farmington Families in Action's community breakfast, urged religious leaders to tie the zero tolerance message into services.

The reason given by Creagh

CALL TO ACTION

was that such services are offered when there is a "captive audience" where there is no choice to listen about the importance of staying away from drugs and alcohol and setting a positive example for young people.

During the Call to Action meeting, members also talked about ways to back the "Driving Change, Changing Attitudes" theme and about specific things they can do to help out.

Farmington High School parent Julie Devine discussed a "hunker-down" meeting for early December.

"It's a big challenge," Devine said. "... We're trying to get parents, the community and kids all to be understanding of each other" and, more importantly, to talk about what zero tolerance means to them.

"A hunker-down session, I know it's not a novel idea. But I don't want a panel discussion. I know what everyone would say," Devine added.

The Call to Action Coalition's mission statement is to "create a community wide intolerant atti-

tude toward behaviors that threaten the health and safety of our children," through various endeavors and strategies.

Coalition briefs

■ Dave Walsh, administrator of 47th District Court, and Harrison High School police liaison Officer Pat Sidge will coordinate a project, "Fatal Vision," a drinking-and-driving-prevention program to be later implemented at the three high schools.

■ Wednesday, Dec. 15, has been set for a Call to Action Youth Summit to focus on two interactive cablecast programs. Walsh will discuss new state laws regarding drinking and driving. "Rave" party drugs will be the topic of a session featuring Sidge, North High School police liaison officer Duane Fox and Farmington High School police liaison officer Christine Schaefer.

■ The Call to Action Web site is officially up and running. It is <http://www.farmilb.org/calltoaction/>.

■ Members of the communications media were honored for their support of the Call to Action campaign. Cited were Diane Bauman and Lisa Bur of Farmington Public Schools; Karen Collins of the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission; Carleigh Flaherty of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce; Tim Smith of the Farmington Observer; and Jim Stark of the Northwest Gazette.

■ A scheduled update on the Shop to Stop Drugs program, involving Kroger and Farmer Jack stores in Farmington, did not take place. Michaelson said a report will be forthcoming. In the Shop to Stop Drugs program, shoppers redeemed \$1 coupons at check-out counters, with a dollar electronically added to the bill but earmarked for community programs that "directly serve families and kids."



Halloween treat: Ken Woods (back row, left), manager of the Grand River-Halsted Kmart store, and Farmington Public Safety Officer Hilton Hyde (back row, right) pose with three costumed children from the Dellar family (front row, from left) Deborah, 6, Nicholas, 2 and Matthew, 5.

Cops, kids and candy unite

Hey, kids. If you see the white Farmington Public Safety Department Crime Prevention Van crawling around your street early on Halloween, don't be scared.

They're just police officers looking for trick or treaters to give goodie bags to.

Beginning about 5 p.m. today, Halloween, the crime prevention van will cruise Farmington subdivisions.

The van's occupants — officer Hilton Hyde and Carole LeBlanc, executive secretary for the public safety department — will look for kiddies to distribute about 100 plastic bags, complete with everything from chips to stickers.

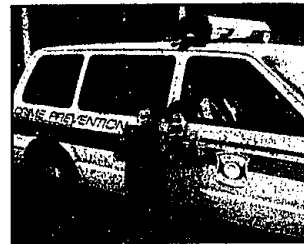
The bags also will include "Magic in the Night" glow-in-the-dark sticks, donated by the Grand River-Halsted Kmart store.

It is the third consecutive year that the Kmart store and public safety department have united for the Halloween giveaway.

"We're serving the community and that's our way of serving it," said Ken Woods, Kmart manager.

Hyde said such a program is beneficial because it enables youngsters to enjoy a positive first experience with police officers.

"It's a detail we look forward to every year," Hyde added.



This is the van: Matthew Dellar, 5, (left) and his 6-year-old sister Deborah stand in front of the Farmington Public Safety Crime Prevention Van. Officers on Halloween night will drive the van around neighborhoods, looking for children like Matt and Deborah to pass out goodie bags.

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The Great 8, the Government Access Channel of Farmington Hills, and Farmington 15, the Government Access Channel of Farmington, have joined with government access channels across the country in a national campaign, The Great City Hall Tune-In to be celebrated election week 1999.

Endorsed by the National Board of NABCA, the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors, The Great City Hall Tune-In is an awareness week to encourage citizens to watch their local election results, meetings and other informational programming.

Farmington Hills City Council meetings are televised live on the Great 8 three times each month, the second, third, and fourth Mondays beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Farmington residents can tune in to Farmington 15 for complete up-to-the-minute election coverage on election night as well as informational programming about issues important to Farmington residents.

"It is our hope that this awareness week will cause people in Farmington Hills to tune in to our meetings and become an active part of the community pol-

icy-making process," said Farmington Hills Mayor Aldo Vignozzi.

"Given people's busy lifestyles today, the televising of these meetings enables voters to be more informed about pressing local issues that can impact on their daily lives, helping them to better exercise their voting and petitioning privileges, as well as their active response to areas of concern," Vignozzi said.

According to Frank Lauhoff, Farmington city manager, the Great City Hall Tune-In will have a significant impact on local affairs throughout Southwestern Oakland County.

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