

# Going for the gold

## Taormina thrills parents with motivational talk

BY TIM SMITH  
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Sometimes, the dark horse wins the race. That was the message United States Olympic Gold Medal winner Sheila Taormina gave Longacre Elementary School parents during a recent presentation.

### LONGACRE ELEMENTARY

Taormina, 27, a resident of Livonia, talked about how she overcame adversity to reach the summit, something she accomplished during the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Ga.

The diminutive athlete kept driving toward her goals, despite being told by some that she was too small (5-foot-3-inches) to become a world-class swimmer.

"She talked about perseverance, the ups and downs she faced," said Longacre Principal Bill Smith. "... The underdog can come out on top and she definitely was an underdog."

About 35 parents from the Farmington district school attended the program, Smith said.

"Every parent came up afterward and just raved about her," Smith said.

Among those parents was Sharon Russell. Her 9-year-old daughter Kelley and 7-year-old son Gregory attend Longacre.

"She was a very good speaker," Russell said. "She really had the drive to do this (swim at the top level). But none of the swimming world (originally) thought she had that kind of potential."

Russell said Taormina emphasized to parents to let their children pursue their own dreams — and not push their own wants and expectations on them.

"The best thing I got out of it was she talked about how her parents had let her do what she wanted to do."

It helped take undue extra pressure off of the swimmer, during the 20 years it took to advance to her desired level.

Smith said Taormina began swimming at age 7 and was 27 when she won the Olympic gold.

When she was part of the 800-meter free-style relay team, she became the second oldest woman to reach that lofty plateau.

Goal-setting was another key element of Taormina's presentation.

"It's hard not to be personally motivated when you hear her, and sharpen up your own goals," Smith said. "It invigorates you."



Gold-winning smiles: Longacre Elementary School student Kelley Bussell (right) experiences the thrill of victory by wearing swimmer Sheila Taormina's gold medal recently. Taormina (left), a Livonia resident, visited Longacre to talk to parents about how she set goals and overcame adversity to capture the gold for the United States in 1996.

**LIBRARY**  
**Books in Demand**

Editor's note: Every week the Farmington Community staff provides the Observer with their list of "Best Sellers," based on requests for titles by library patrons. The books are available by placing a request with the Hill Library 523-0300 or the downtown Farmington library at 474-7770.

**NOTES**

- *Saving Private Ryan*, David Leland
- *Witness*, Jonathan Kieferman
- *Personal Legend*, Scott Turow
- *Thelma*, Michael Crichton
- *Henry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, J.K. Rowling
- *Atlantic Front*, Clive Cussler
- *Teenage With a Plan*, Mitch Albom
- *Walk Mees*, Michael Connelly
- *Irresistible Force*, Danielle Steel
- *In a Class By Itself*, Sandra Brown
- *Pop! Goes the Weasel*, Janis Patterson
- *The Lion's Share*, Nelson DeMille
- *Nothing Butter*, Tony Hillerman
- *Portina's Rocks*, Anita Shreve
- *Soft Power*, Jayne Ann Krentz

## It's now time to register for winter classes at Oakland Community College

Oakland Community College has added a half day of registration for new and returning students wishing to enroll for the Winter semester. In addition to previously published telephone and walk-in registration hours,

Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 5-6 (9 a.m.-9 p.m.) and Friday, Jan. 7 (9 a.m.-6 p.m.), registration has been extended to Saturday, Jan. 8, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Classes begin Monday, Jan. 10. Prospective students may

apply, see an academic advisor to work out their class schedules, and enroll during the final registration period. There is no charge to apply to OCC, but payment for classes is due the same day that the student

enrolls. Michigan residents who are 60 years of age or before the first day of classes are eligible for a 20 percent tuition discount on OCC credit classes. Applicants must complete and file a Senior

Citizens Tuition Discount Verification Form with proof of birth date at the campus of their choice prior to registering. The discount does not apply to registration or other course fees.

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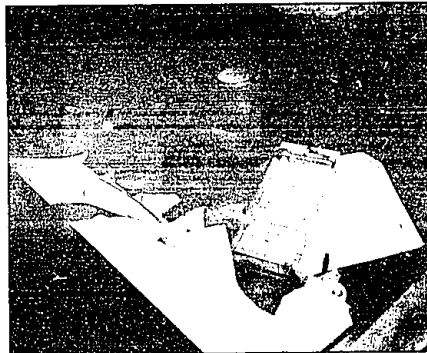
other businesses which sell packaged liquor also are periodically conducted using the decoys, Nebus noted.

Dwyer said his department was one of the first in the three-county area of Oakland, Wayne and Macomb counties to utilize the sting operations, which are "aimed at discouraging licensees from selling to minors."

Nebus said that, judging from the comments he gets when attending meetings of various civic and community organizations, "The community appreciates" what the police are doing.

Dwyer said the sale-to-minor violation was the first for the Bona Yard since 1992. Shalimar was cited in December 1997 and was fined \$700 by the Liquor Control Commission.

Cafe Venezia has no recent violations for sale to minors, the chief said.



STAFF PHOTO BY NEDRUM LEMLEY

Undercover: Of the establishments checked, three violated the law by selling alcohol to a minor, and were written a ticket on the spot.

## Holidays keep Scout pack busy

One would be hard pressed to find a local Cub Scout pack doing more to help the needy this holiday season than Longacre Elementary School Cub Scout Pack 45.

The pack participated in the recent "Holiday Hope Chest '99" and "Tree of Warmth" projects, for starters, said spokeswoman Keven Bliker.

The Cub Scouts helped create special shoe boxes to be filled with toys and trinkets. Special guest U.S. Marine Cpl. Don Hewes also participated, as did Longacre Principal Bill Smith, Cubmaster Calvin Clark and committee chairman Dick Heist.

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Note: Added registration hours, Saturday, January 8, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

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