

POLICE AND FIRE NEWS

The following are police and fire reports made during the past week in Farmington and Farmington Hills.

Stolen vehicle

In Farmington Hills:
A 1999 Cadillac Catera stolen from a carport at Muirwood Apartments Jan. 28 was recovered three days later in Highland Park. Police there found it on the street at around 1:30 a.m. The steering column had been broken and the car was stripped.

Livestock roaming

In Farmington Hills:
Police responded Friday morning to a report of llamas, donkeys and sheep in the street at Eleven Mile and Power Road. The livestock was gone by the

time officers arrived on the scene.

Carrying a concealed knife

In Farmington Hills:
A 41-year-old Webberville man stopped for suspicion of driving under the influence at M-5 and Grand River Boulevard Friday morning didn't completely fail sobriety tests, but still found himself in a bit of trouble.

After observing a "marginal" performance and a preliminary breath test result just below the legal limit, officers searched the man's vehicle and discovered a machete resting on the floor next to the driver's seat. The suspect indicated he kept it for protection while driving in Detroit.

Officers later learned he was on probation for aggravated stalking.

Prescription fraud

In Farmington Hills:
A Farmington Hills man told police Saturday he suspected a woman hired to clean his mother's house may be responsible for stealing her prescription pain killers.

The man went to pick up his mother's Vicodin prescription and found it had been filled and picked up the previous day. He suspected the house cleaner because the medication had been disappearing unusually quickly and some bottles had simply disappeared since her employment six months ago.

Cigarettes and minors

In Farmington Hills:
A 14-year-old Farmington Hills girl and a 45-year-old Dearborn man were both ticketed late Saturday night after an officer discovered the girl in possession of three packages of cigarettes.

The girl attracted the officer's attention when he spotted her standing outside a gas station on Middlebelt, wearing a tank top and no jacket. He asked her where she'd gotten the cigarettes, and she identified the clerk who sold them to her. The girl said her friends had dropped her off, and she'd purchased the cigarettes on a dare.

The clerk said the girl lied about her age and told him she'd forgotten her identification. A

background check uncovered a 1998 arrest on the same charge for which he was ticketed Saturday night: selling tobacco to a minor.

Retail thefts

In Farmington Hills:
Three Detroit women were arrested Sunday afternoon and charged with stealing items from Lane Bryant, Bath & Body and Sally Beauty Supply.

A clerk at Lane Bryant reported three suspects had stolen an unknown amount of clothing from the store and left in a maroon Oldsmobile Cutlass. The suspect's vehicle was stopped on I-696, and officers were able to confirm property inside the car belonged to the stores.

Cocaine possession

In Farmington Hills:
Officers who stopped a 32-year-old Highland man at Grand River and Middlebelt Sunday evening located a glass vial with suspected cocaine residue, concealed in a black day planner. A background check revealed he was on probation for a sex offense.

A 41-year-old Jackson man, stopped just after 10 p.m. Sunday for an illegal turn at Eight Mile and Denby, failed a preliminary breath test and was arrested for operating a vehicle under the influence.

A routine search after his arrest turned up powder cocaine and paraphernalia.

Tower from page A1

permission from Sisters of Mercy to sublease space on its tower to Sprint and to Nextel. The Sisters of Mercy declined both requests based on safety, ecological and aesthetic concerns," she wrote.

While acknowledging the city is within its rights to grant permission for a cell tower at the Costick Center, which was purchased from the Sisters five years ago, Gragana's statement indicated the Sisters have expressed their uneasiness to city officials about the proposed new tower being so close to the children's day care center and school, which lease space at the back of the building, and so close to where the retired Sisters live.

"More is now known about the possible hazards of prolonged exposure to microwave radiation than when the original leases were signed," the statement read. "The Sisters found that these two long-term lease agreements were not easily broken, and they have no interest in entering into a third."

While officials approved Nextel's proposal, they did so contingent upon approval of a site plan and certificate of need, as required by Farmington Hills ordinance - touted by officials as

one of the toughest in the state. Therein lies the rub.

Had a private developer been involved, city attorney John Donohue explained, Nextel would have negotiated an option to lease the property, depending on whether the company could obtain local government approval.

Approval of the lease meant that, if the company met local requirements, the city would agree to let them use the property.

"Nextel needed to get direction from the city council as to whether to even proceed on that site," Donohue said.

With the lease approved, Nextel was left to obtain site plan approval and a certificate of need. A public hearing has been tentatively scheduled for Feb. 14, the second pass for which Barnett has been waiting.

However, if Nextel meets the city's stringent ordinance requirements, officials may be powerless to keep them from building the tower, since they've already approved the lease as landowners.

"The point some of the council members made in a study session was the question, 'Would we

be acting in bad faith?'" Donohue said.

The whole situation strikes Council of Homeowners Association (COHA) representative Marcia Van Creveld as something of a "chicken and egg" issue. Which comes first, a lease agreement or

a certificate of need?

The surprise for homeowners, she said, came in learning the city has been negotiating the lease at all.

"If you've been negotiating a lease with the cellular phone company ahead of the discussion

about whether there is an issue of need," Van Creveld said, "the homeowners association doesn't understand which comes first."

The ordinance requires Nextel to show that the tower is needed for specific reasons and that it will be designed to operate with-

in federal standards. City officials have tentatively scheduled a public hearing on that issue at their Feb. 14 regular meeting.

The Observer asked Nextel to comment on the issue, but the company declined to respond.

GOP pollster to speak

Steven Mitchell will be the guest speaker at the Sunday alternative of the Center For New Thinking at 10:30 a.m. Feb. 6.

Mitchell is the leading pollster for the Michigan Republican Party. He is also a local TV personality. He will discuss "The Future of the Republican Party in Michigan." Program host is Jack Lessenberry.

The location is the Pike Street

restaurant in Pontiac. Breakfast will be served and admission is \$15 per person.

The Center For New Thinking is a forum for the public discussion of important issues in science, art and politics. It was founded by Rabbi Sherwin Wine of the Birmingham Temple, a congregation for Humanistic Judaism in Farmington Hills.

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