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in cleaning your business is to have a background program that eliminates serious criminals or repeat felons," Timmons said. "If you have them in there they tend to repeat."

Somebody has to do it

While Timmons' work history is in law enforcement, Paul Harris, chief investigator of field operations at Shadow Investigation, Inc. in Livonia, had 13 years in the military before becoming a private investigator. Most of his work involves fraudulent workman's compensation cases.

His day often begins early in the morning, waiting for the person he's investigating to leave home. He hopes to catch him or her going to work or doing physical activity that disposes a disability.

About 20 percent of Harris' workload is looking into domestic cases.

"We follow around a possible cheating husband or a wife and about 90 percent of the time we catch them," he said. "If the person thinks their husband or wife is cheating on them, most likely they're correct. We let our clients base their opinions from the video tapes afterwards. You have to have patience. We basically handle anything that comes across our way."

Harris said he avoids confrontations at all costs, but that doesn't mean the people he's investigating feel the same way.

"We've had people bust out our vehicle windows and try to steal the car tires while we were in there," he added.

Roger Kehrier, owner of

Pathfinder in Plymouth since 1994, was a Special Agent for the Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Agency before he started his own business. The average rate for private investigators is about \$40 an hour, plus mileage, he said.

Most of Kehrier's clients are insurance companies wanting him to check claims; attorneys needing background information that involves interviewing neighbors, locating witnesses and serving subpoenas; and private citizens asking for a wide range of services, like investigating a spouse suspected of having an affair. Some of his most satisfying cases involved identifying bars that had pirated closed-circuit boxing fights.

A few times a year Kehrier provides a service called "check mate," which involves doing an investigation on someone who is interested in getting involved with a man or woman, but wants to know about the person's lifestyle first.

"It's not the most exciting work," Kehrier said. "It's not like Magnum, P.I. Most of it is kind of stick-to-it-iveness, boring work waiting for something to happen. Ninety percent of the time, what you're waiting to have happen doesn't occur. Sometimes it's just better to be plain lucky."

As far as danger goes, Kehrier relies on his instincts.

"I'd like to think I'm street wise enough to recognize danger and not place myself in a position that I would get hurt," he said. "It hasn't happened yet, knock wood."

Richard Cray, owner of Cray

Investigative Agency in Farmington Hills, handles a lot of fire investigations and corporate embezzlements. Fire investigations involve getting calls all hours of the day and night, and his satisfaction comes from giving victims peace of mind about the cause.

"I really don't have an average day, or a normal day," Cray said. "It drives my wife crazy."

Some of his most exciting moments have been proving that people were stealing from their employers.

Cray said he believes the average person has a glorified image of what a private investigator does that's filled with cloak-and-dagger intrigue. The truth is, much of his work is mundane.

"They envision someone peering in windows. That's not the case," he said. "Most of the investigators I know conduct themselves very professionally and abide by all the laws of the state and if they don't the Michigan State Police will take their licenses, and once it's gone you don't get it back. Private investigators are professional people and they try to do the best they can for the client."

Many people have a skewed idea of private investigators, because they think television shows where someone gets a case and solves it in 60 minutes is portraying the real thing, Kehrier said.

"You can't force activity," he added. "You can wait for something to happen and it's eight or 10 hours later."

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experience it, before you wonder where it went.

Marilyn Suttle brings skill building seminars to corporate

and educational settings. E-mail her at MsSuttle@aol.com or visit her web site: <http://members.aol.com/MsSuttle>

RELIGION CALENDAR

Send items for the Farmington Religion Calendar to Katie McManus, Farmington Observer, 3341 Grand River, Farmington, 48335. To fax, call (248) 477-9722.

RELIGION CLASSES

Faith Covenant Church in Farmington Hills will host ALPHA, a series of classes that offer a practical instruction to the Christian faith. Classes meet 6:30-9 p.m. Thursday, through May 2. Some of the topics to be discussed will be: Who is Jesus? Why did He die? Does God heal today? Dinner and child care will be provided. Call (248) 661-9181.

LENTEN PROGRAMS

First United Methodist Church in downtown Farmington holds one-hour Lenten programs at 7 p.m. Sunday, March 3, and March 17. The theme this year is Putting the Pieces Together. Child care is available. On Palm Sunday, March 24 and Easter, March 31, the Chancel Choir will sing at the 9:30 and 11:15 a.m. services.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN SERVICES

In addition to regular worship services at 8:45 a.m. and 11:00

a.m. First Presbyterian Church of Farmington celebrates the Lenten Season with a post-luk dinner and worship service at 6:30 p.m. each Sunday evening through March 17. The theme of the worship services is Life on the Edge of Faith. Visitors are welcome. The church is located on the Northwest corner of Eleven Mile and Farmington Roads. Call the church office at (248) 474-6170 for further information.

ENGLISH LESSONS

Farmington Hills Baptist Church offers free lessons in English as a Second Language. For more information call (248) 851-0310.

MOMES TO MOMES SALE

Nardin Park United Methodist Church, 29887 West 11 Mile, just west of Middlebelt, Farmington Hills, will hold a sale of used toys, baby equipment, furniture and clothing, from 9 a.m.-noon, Saturday, March 9. Admission is \$1.

QUEST SPEAKER

Grady S. McMurtry will speak at 8 p.m., Sunday, March 3 and at 7 p.m., Monday through Wednesday, March 4-6, in the Harvest Ministries Church, 23233 Drake,

Farmington Hills. McMurtry talks about creative versus evolution, both from a biblical viewpoint as well as secular science. (248) 478-1511.

DIVORCED AND SEPARATED RETREAT

A spiritual weekend retreat for men and women of all ages, titled "Sons and Daughters of God — Moving Forward," will be held March 22-24 at the St. John Center in Plymouth. Presenters include Fr. Ed Farrell and Bishop Kevin Britt. The cost of \$100 - \$115 includes lodgings and five meals. Registration must be received by March 15. Divorced of all faiths are welcome. For more information, call George (313) 886-7413, Mike (248) 662-3860, Barb (734) 453-0222, or visit the website at: <http://www.bethanyoftheeast-ernmichigan.org>.

ORGAN CONCERT

Noriko Ernst will perform a Lenten concert at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, March 3, at Our Lady of Sorrows, 23815 Power, Farmington. Two University of Michigan graduate students, Michael Eisbernd and Carole Halmekangas also will perform. There is no admission charge.

Harvest Ministries hosts speaker

Dr. Grady S. McMurtry, a Biblical Scientific Creationist, will speak during services at Harvest Ministries Church March 3-6.

Dr. McMurtry will speak during the 6 p.m. Sunday service and at 7 p.m. each weeknight at the church.

A recognized international

speaker on the subject of creation versus evolution, he speaks from both biblical and scientific views.

The topics in his series include "The Evidence of Noah's Flood," "The Contrast of Two Worldviews," "The Dinosaurs, the Bible and the Fossil Record,"

"The Road to Man?" and "The Origin of the Races."

A creation bookstore will also be available, with books on a wide range of subjects that are suitable for all age groups. Harvest Ministries Church is located at 23233 Drake Road, Farmington Hills.

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