



BILL BRISLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

City council members congratulate Farmington Public Safety Officer of the Year Dan Potter. Pictured: Mike Harrison, Mary Bush, Joanne McShane and Chief Gary Goss, who also received a surprise award for 25 years of service to Farmington.

OFFICER

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In addition, he has received two Unit Citations. The first was when he first joined the department and he worked on the Great Scott homicide. That case had more than 600 tips that needed investigation. The second was for leading the initial attack on a house fire.

Potter received five Life Saving Awards, one of which was for saving a 4-month-old baby who had stopped breathing.

"Dan is an outstanding officer and a valuable asset to the community," Goss said. "It is no wonder that the Uniform and Citation Board unanimously decided on Officer Potter as Officer of the Year."

Potter joined the department on Oct. 2, 1978, after serving as a Detroit police officer. He was assigned to the detectives bureau twice. The first was for two years starting in 1983 and the second was for four years starting in 1988.

"Also, he is an outstanding evidence technician and is probably our best photog-

rapher," Goss said. "In addition, he volunteered to become an EMT."

Potter commented after the awards ceremony about his response when learning about the high award.

"My initial response was that I knew what other officers had done throughout the year and I was humbled by the fact that it was me getting the award," Potter said. "I work with a great bunch of guys and each one of them could very easily be standing up here for what they do."

Potter had a number of family members with him, which included wife Brenda, mother Maxine Hubert, aunt Mildred Puckett, and Pat and Don Hubert, his aunt and uncle.

Daughter Jessica, 19, a senior at Farmington High School, couldn't attend. Potter has been a resident of the city almost since he was hired, Goss said.

"His commitment and involvement with the community are exemplary," Goss said. "Whether it was participating in the bowlathon for Special Olympics or delivering Meals on Wheels, Potter has always been there. For seven years, he was the

department's representative to Farmington Families in Action."

"He was one of the first school liaison officers having taken on this assignment from 1990 until 1992. There are literally hundreds of children that will remember Potter from the countless tours of the station he conducted for them."

"He has always taken the time to help out a citizen whether it was pulling the fire truck out of the barn so a parent could take their child's picture in front of it or volunteering his thumbprint for the Leave Your Mark Project."

Potter is best known for his upbeat and cheerful personality, Goss added.

"His personnel file has 62 letters of appreciation," Goss said. "Twenty of these letters come from medical emergencies that he did an outstanding job on. These letters describe Dan as compassionate, caring, sensitive and kind. One letter describes Potter as being like the cavalry only, 'You smell better.'"

Potter also received a 25-year longevity award.

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PLAYERS

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Ternes said it was luck that the Players were able to take advantage of such an opportunity. Players member Marge Wetzel got the idea of asking the owners of the Burns if they were willing to donate the interior equipment, Ternes said.

The more than 200 donated seats saved the Players nearly \$40,000 alone.

Phil Hadley is the project manager for the new Barn.

"Theater people are notorious scavengers," he said with a laugh. "There's a lesson to be learned here. The owners were able to take it as a tax write-off and we got all this."

Hadley said the George Burns' demise lead to another beginning for the group of 130 people who belong to the Barn.

"It was a win-win for everybody."



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Farmington Players member David Ternes sits among the rows of audience seats at the new Players Barn. The chairs were donated to the Players and came from the inside of the George Burns Theatre in Livonia.

The Farmington Players are currently performing the musical Nunsense until May 17. The box office number is (248) 553-2955.

To be a member of the non-profit theater group, call (248) 554-0782.

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CITIZEN

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outstanding citizens and are certainly deserving of this award."

The Farmington Hills couple will be honored at the Citizen of the Year Award dinner Tuesday, May 6, at the Farmington Hills Manor, located at 23666 Orchard Lake Road.

Hors d'oeuvres and cash bar will begin at 6:30 p.m. and the dinner and program begins at 7 p.m.

The cost is \$40 per person and the community is encouraged to attend.

Tickets are still available, said Joyce member Valerie Knol.

To purchase tickets, call Knol at (248) 615-1754.

The Barbers' list of support in the community is long, but it started out simple enough.

"The two share a laugh about the busiest year of their lives together, 1966."

"We both got jobs in March, graduated in May, got married in August and started the Farmington Community Band in September," Paul said with a chuckle.

The community band start-

ed with a handful of members for its first concert and as the years progressed has grown to more than 100.

The two have also been involved with the Farmington Hills Arts Commission, Farmington Community Arts Council, Village Gazebo Project, Farmington/Farmington Hills Multicultural/Multiracial Community Council, Heritage Festival, Farmington Musicals

and the InterAgency Council.

Through their passion for music and the arts, the Barbers have shown innovation, leadership, compassion, and an ability to listen to the members of the community, said Bessen.

Fern is currently the band director at Walnut Creek Middle School in the Walled Lake Consolidated school district while Paul is the director of fine arts for Farmington Public Schools.

Looking back, the two said they were lucky to find a community like Farmington and Farmington Hills where people work to make positive changes.

"We get to live out our passion," said Paul.

"To do what we truly love to do and make a contribution to the community, how much better can it get?" he said.

Paul and Fern will be retiring from their respective school districts this year and plan to enjoy their retirement in North Carolina.

And it comes as no surprise that they've already joined the local music community down there where they are building their new home.

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