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Twenty-Five Cents

Educators get once-over

Students pan stereotyping

By LYNN ORR

If you're a teacher's pet or a jock, you've got it made in Farmington high schools. If you're labeled a burn-out, you have to watch your step. That's the consensus of seven Farmington students who recently got together to discuss their high school experiences before they graduate in June. Although they admit to bringing their own prejudices to a discussion, the students contend that many of the gripes and much of the praise would be shared by a majority of the student bodies. Some of the students were highly academically motivated, while others were barely squeaking into graduation. But they seemed to surprise themselves as to the lack of essential differences among themselves. "The trouble is that it's one extreme or the other in high school," says Terri Lewis, FHS senior. "You're labeled a jock or a jelly." And what students don't like, although they contribute to its continued use, is labeling.

JOCKS, BURN-OUTS, jellies—they're all used by students to label each other and by teachers, administrators, and parents to label teenagers.

Jocks are usually athletically oriented, although the term is loosely applied to kids who are particularly active in school, the students say. Burn-outs and jellies achieve their fame in a variety of ways—drinking habits, marijuana taking, or just plain goofing off. But teachers often label a student a burn-out who may just be a troublemaker, often a non-conformist.

"Burn-outs and jellies achieve their fame in a variety of ways—drinking habits, marijuana taking, or just plain goofing off. But teachers often label a student a burn-out who may just be a troublemaker, often a non-conformist. Jocks have the ability to show their leadership," says Megan Saunders, NFHS senior and active in girls' sports at school. Jocks have a show-off for their abilities that other students don't have in our high schools.

Terri Lewis agrees and resents the time, money and support devoted to athletics at FHS. "This is a jock-oriented school," she says. "To get awards you have to be that type of person, and people support sports—like the boosters' clubs. You can spend months and months on a play and nobody shows up."

'Teachers demand respect, but you don't get it from them. What everyone should have is equal opportunity, but they don't always get it.'

—Gary Cook

Athletics get a disproportionate piece of the pie, according to the students. "When you look at the athletic budgets, you can see that," Megan says.

"RADIO CLUB at North Farmington is made up of a wide variety of kids, and we've bought all our equipment ourselves," she explains. "Our advisor's helped us a lot, but the administration hasn't helped us at all."

In addition to financial support, the students believe athletics and athletes get too much time and attention. "How often is a burn-out in your school paper?" asks Frank Stajka, FHS senior, who resents being labeled a burn-out.

Frank admits to learning how to cope with school the hard way. He's

presently attending night school along with his regular daily classes to graduate in June. When he entered FHS as a sophomore after attending Our Lady of Sorrows, he "cut loose" in his terms. "I didn't adjust to attending classes, doing homework or following some of the rules."

But he also believes he was labeled a troublemaker and treated as such before he lived up to the reputation. "They've always given Frank a hard time," says Jerianne Gugel, FHS senior and chairperson of the Student Roundtable, a group of students from all three Farmington high schools who meet monthly with school board members.

"The teachers got to fly case really

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TERRI LEWIS



FRANK STAJKA



DAN TOGASAKI



MEGAN SAUNDERS

Family fights birth defects

By LOIS WHITE

Ten-year-old Laura Miller's fingers moved with sureness as she fastened leather and steel on her two-year-old brother's stiel legs.

You could tell it was something she had done hundreds of times. Her Camp Fire Troop, with leader Barbara Lanigan, watched as Laura put him in position and he crawled across the Miller's tan living room carpet.

What's unusual about a two-year-old crawling? Plenty, if he's a child with a spina bifida birth defect—a child who has no feeling from the waist down.

Laura, a fifth grade student at Our Lady of Sorrows, is the oldest of five children of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Miller of Farmington. The other four are all adopted children with serious birth defects.

Laura is so intensely proud of her part in little Derek's achievements, she recently invited her Camp Fire Troop to see him at the Miller home.

"When we adopted Derek nearly a year ago, the doctors said he would never even crawl," says his new mother, Beth, a former nurse. "But he not only crawls normally, he can pull himself up by using just his hands and arms."

"He's made such great progress that next June the doctors at Ford Hospital will replace the short braces he now wears with long-leg braces that will allow him to stand. We're all so thrilled we can hardly contain it."

Derek beamed at the Camp Fire Troop and happily pried folded diapers on top of his blonde head. The new braces, which will extend from foot to torso, are part of a program involving surgery and therapy that will culminate in Derek being taught to walk with crutches.

SPINA BIFIDA(spine-ah-biff-eh-dah, with the accent on the biff) is an abnormality of the development and covering of the lower end of the spine. Two hundred spina bifida children are born in Michigan each year, most of them girls. Although 80 per cent develop hydrocephalus, a dangerous accumulation of fluid in the head that

puts pressure on a growing brain, 75 per cent have normal intelligence. The majority of the children afflicted have bowel and bladder problems; many, like Derek, are completely paralyzed from the waist down.

The other Miller children cope with physical problems also. Darcy, seven, was born with leg problems. As she raced through the cozy Miller living room, her dark braids swinging, it was apparent she now has full range of motion, although she still must wear plastic corrective devices in each shoe. Larry, five, like Derek has spina bifida, but he is not paralyzed. He also has grand mal epilepsy.

David, 3½, was born without a rectum. Last year, David had a colostomy, a surgical contraction of an artificial opening in the abdomen to allow for the elimination of wastes.

"But he's all put together again now," says Mrs. Miller, referring to the extensive surgery that allows him to function normally.

THE MILLERS' next major hurdle is preparing Larry for entry to public school. Now five, Larry attends special classes at Eagle Elementary School. Like most spina bifida children, Larry had no bowel or bladder control.

After several operations and more than a year in which Mrs. Miller catered the little boy every two hours around the clock, he has achieved some measure of bladder control.

He now is in an intensive bowel training program that, if successful, will allow him to enter first grade in public school. "And that's our goal for all of them—a normal life," says Mrs. Miller. "They have so much to give—God made them special."

Asked what prompted their special interest in children with birth defects, Escamé classified section. He had such a good response that he decided to run his ad for the whole month. "Who else would they have? They have a lot to offer, and we felt we had some thing to give."

MILLER, AN ENGINEER, will be doing a new job with Ford Motor Co. in Dearborn shortly.



Laura Miller, a fifth grader at Our Lady of Sorrows, sacrifices much of her spare time to help out her little brother, Derek who has spina bifida. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

7 community effort

Co-op urged for firefighters

By STEVE BARNABY
Farmington Editor

Farmington and Farmington Hills residents would receive more efficient fire protection if they joined other southwestern Oakland County communities in a cooperative fire fighting unit, according to a study made by Public Administration Service, a Chicago consulting firm.

"The firm came to that conclusion in their study after deeming that fire service in the seven communities under consideration was inadequate. Communities considering the possibility of joining a cooperative are Farmington, Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield, Novi, Wixom, Commerce Township and Walked Lake.

"The best alternative for meeting the area's fire and emergency service needs is areawide cooperation and involves the creation of an organization consisting of both public officials and fire service officials of the seven communities," said the report.

"The firm examined three alternatives for future fire fighting service and concluded that areawide cooperation was the best alternative since continuing the continuation of the present systems would be insufficient and

total consolidation would be politically unfeasible and too expensive for the communities to handle.

"THE MAJOR DRAWBACK to consolidation at this time is that services throughout the area would have to be equalized at approximately the highest level presently provided by an existing department, in this case West Bloomfield," said the consultants.

Presently, the seven communities have differing systems for fire service, ranging from paid volunteers to public safety officers, who serve both as police officers and firefighters.

Total cost for consolidation would be \$7.5 million carried out in two phases, according to the firm.

Maintaining present services also would adversely affect the communities monetarily, according to the report because of duplication of personnel, apparatus, equipment, training and communications.

Also the firm has labeled fire fighting services inadequate in six areas: manpower response time, inappropriate placement of fire station locations, inadequate training, need for improved fire prevention programs, lack of fire alarm communications and a need to establish planning.

BUT A COOPERATIVE approach seemed reasonable to the consultants in solving all of these deficiencies.

Under the firm's plan the cooperative would be directed by a board made up of local public officials from the participating communities, either elective or administrative, who would make decisions by simple majority vote with the exception of financial matter which would be decided by a two-thirds vote.

Under the board of directors would be a board of administrators made up of the fire chiefs from each community. The administration board would be directly responsible for daily operations. It would review and submit its recommendations to the board of directors.

"Perhaps the first order of business for the areawide organization is to establish a system of automatic aid whereby the nearest available stations respond to alarms involving fires in buildings," suggested the study.

This would be effective in fighting fires which occur on borderlines of the participating communities and in buildings with high value and public occurrence.

Such a system would include interde-

partment communications for dispatching of alarms, radio communications and fire-ground communications.

One of the primary criticisms made by the firm was that existing communications are faulty—leading to slow responses, wrong stations dispatched and wrong addresses being given.

Under the firm's proposed system this would be avoided by providing "running cards" which would list street locations of each city and any peculiarities of those streets. A file of running cards would be maintained in each station.

The report recommends that a minimum of three full-time or paid volunteer personnel be on each engine, while two dispatchers handle a centralized dispatch system, for each eight-hour shift.

The consultants admit that having a three-man, full-time crew at each station could put a heavy financial burden on the communities. It would cost Farmington Hills \$200,000 and the City of Farmington \$220,000. The total for such areawide manning would be \$37 million. Therefore, the study recom-

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inside THE PERFECT MARKET

Jerry Campbell found the perfect market for his wood supply: the 150,000 readers of the Observer & Escamé classified section. He had such a good response that he decided to run his ad for the whole month.

Who else would they have? They have a lot to offer, and we felt we had some thing to give."

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