

# Farmington Observer

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## Cloverdale cleared in hepatitis death

By Joanne Maliszewski and Tom Beer staff writer

Oakland County health officials say they doubt that a Farmington Hills teacher's aide who died of hepatitis B last week contracted it through contact with students at the school where she worked.

They say this despite the fact that six students at the Cloverdale Developmental Center, a Farmington School District facility for severely mentally retarded children, are carriers of the disease, according to Lew Schulman, superintendent of Farmington schools.

"We did an epidemiological investigation and we could not find any incident in the school setting that would make us believe she picked it up in the school," said Elaine Bevan, administrator of personal and health services for the county health department.

Elaine Dohr, 53, died May 9 in Livonia's St. Mary Hospital about a month after the disease was diagnosed. Hepatitis B is the form of the disease usually associated with unclear conditions. Members of Dohr's family believe she was infected when a Cloverdale student spat in her face shortly after she had oral surgery. But Bevan said that when the disease is transmitted through saliva, it's usually associated with a bite. Hepatitis B also can be transmitted through blood and sexual relations.

Staff members at special education centers are in a "moderate risk category" for contracting hepatitis B, according to Bevan, because of the influx of children into public school systems from state mental institutions.

Bevan said that institutionalized children are susceptible to hepatitis B because of unsanitary conditions. CHILDREN COMING from institutions are tested to see if they're hepatitis carriers, but children from private homes are not, according to Bevan. Schulman said that a federal law prevents administrators from isolating known hepatitis B carriers from other students in the school.

"The law says that they must be admitted to school," Schulman said. "Two cases have been brought to the courts, one in Maryland and one in New York. The case in New York says you can not exclude them or isolate them. They must be given the full education they're entitled to."

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## Some parents keep kids home

By Tom Beer staff writer

No way was Jean Schmidtke going to allow her 3-year-old son to participate in his usual activities at the Cloverdale Developmental Center, a Farmington School District facility for developmentally disabled students.

Schmidtke feared for her son's safety after Elaine Dohr, a teacher's aide at the school, died of hepatitis B last week. Farmington schools Superintendent Lew Schulman said that several Cloverdale students are carriers of the disease.

"My son's home today, and he's staying home until I speak with my pediatrician about this," said Schmidtke last Friday morning.

Her son was one of 14 absent that morning in a student population of 77, according to Cloverdale records.

"That's a pretty typical day for us considering the type of children we have," said Cloverdale Principal Doug Smith. "Some of them are always missing because of doctor appointments."

Later Friday, 54 Cloverdale and Farmington Training Center staff members and employees were to have received hepatitis B inoculations.

Myra Burger, president of the Cloverdale Parents Group, had no qualms about sending her 11-year-old son to school last Friday.

"He's in school where he belongs," Burger said. "I feel it's safe. The school seems to be doing everything possible to make it safe."

BURGER JOINED other Cloverdale parents in asking that their children be tested and inoculated.

"I feel that all students at Cloverdale should be screened," she said. "Then we'll know who all the carriers are and we can take all the proper precautions. And I feel the inoculations should be

made available if the parents want their children to have them."

The testing, which involves taking blood samples, may be difficult to administer to all Cloverdale students, according to Graham Lewis, assistant superintendent of Farmington's special education services.

"You just can't go out and mandate that blood tests be given," he said. "We'd have to get a medical opinion on that. This is a medical field, not an educational one. We're acting here without a precedent."

Schmidtke, whose mentally and physically impaired son has been at Cloverdale for six weeks, said she appreciates the job staff members are doing. But she's still worried.

"I'm not blaming the school at all," she said. "I'm sure they're doing their best. But I'm concerned for my son."

"He's only 3 years old. Some of the kids around there drool, and his hands are always in his mouth. That's why I'm keeping him home."

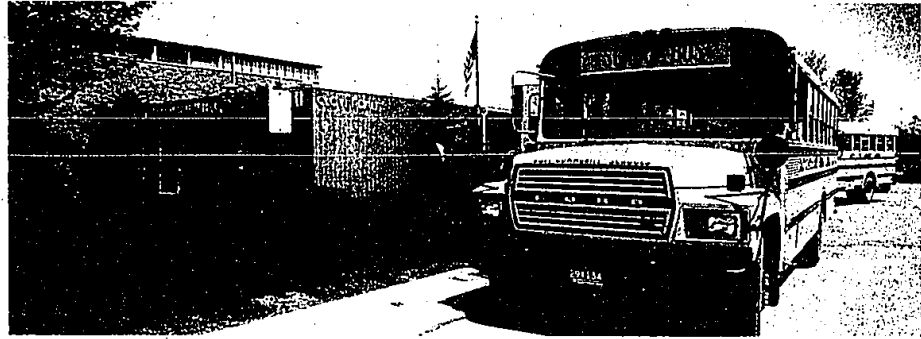
SCHMIDTKE SAID she believes that known hepatitis carriers should be removed from the school population — despite a federal law which prohibits excluding them.

"I believe (the carriers) should be able to get an education," she said, "but I don't believe they should be mixed in with the others."

"What if my son became a carrier, infected other kids and they took it to their schools?"

Lewis and Schulman met with doctors at Royal Oak's Beaumont Hospital Friday afternoon "to further discuss the nature of hepatitis B and receive more medical information and advice" in Lewis' words.

"We want to impress upon our staff and our parents that we're trying to become as knowledgeable as possible so we can react accordingly," he said.



Cloverdale School received statewide attention last week after a person working in the school died of hepatitis. Although health officials think it's highly unlikely the victim contracted the disease at the school, some of the victim's family disagree.

## 2 protest

### Community coordinator gets the ax

By Philip Jerome Novi-Walled Lake News

Walled Lake's school board voted 5-2 last week to terminate immediately the contract of Gerald Beers, Regional Schools community coordinator, on allegations that he used school time for his "own, for-profit interests."

Trustees Betty Campion and Janet Cellahan dissented. Campion said she considered the termination "an improper action by the Walled Lake School Board" because it had not followed due process.

Callahan offered no explanation of her vote. However, she had pushed to have the board extend the termination notice to Community Education Department Director Robert Duff at an April 29 session, arguing that Beers had acted with Duff's full knowledge and approval.

THE BOARD voted to terminate

Beers on the grounds that he violated his contract with the district.

The board alleged that Beers violated contract provisions which obligate him "to restrict his activities during normal working times to the interests of this school district rather than his own for-profit interest, and to fairly and accurately submit reports for purposes of expense reimbursement when engaged in the affairs of the school district, and to otherwise not use the school district's assets and subordinate personnel for personal, proprietary endeavors."

Beers, however, maintains he developed the program on his own time and is entitled to ownership.

Beers received an official reprimand from Superintendent Don Sheldon earlier this year, and the charges were discussed at a closed board session March 31.

Beers has refused to accept the reprimand, calling it "totally unwarranted."

Robert McCall, an attorney representing Beers, said the charges leveled by the board were "vague and unclear" and referred to Beers' 13 years of "unfurnished service as an administrator with the Walled Lake schools."

McCall said Beers was given a verbal directive to begin the computerization of his operation in May 1981.

"There was no specific directive as to how the computerization was to be accomplished," McCall said, "and he did it as he saw fit."

McCall also referred to a portion of

Beers evaluation for the 1981-82 school year in which he was lauded by his supervisor (Duff) for developing a micro-computer system "which has tripled the efficiency of his department."

"THE ALLEGATION is that he used some of his work time for his own personal gain," McCall said. "But his job description says 'his work day has no limits,' and he has to work days and nights as well as weekends. There was no specific directive and no defined work hours."

"I think the board would find it very difficult to determine that he developed his program on district time instead of his own time," the attorney said.

"Mr. Beers has been here 13 years with no previous problems. Now he has copyrighted one of three microcomputer programs he has developed. He's letting the district use it at no charge. I don't think it can be assumed that the district owns the program."

## Suspect gets new warrant in pedestrian death case

After a manslaughter charge was dismissed against him two weeks ago, Jeffrey Scott Jones of Farmington Hills was served with a new arrest warrant.

He now is free on \$10,000 personal recognizance bond following his arraignment May 9 in 47th District Court. Jones is charged in the March 4 traffic death of 11-year-old Jennifer Kaupowitz.

The original manslaughter charge against Jones, 24, was "dismissed without prejudice" after Oakland County assistant prosecutor Gary Chopp's witnesses failed to appear for Jones' preliminary examination before District Judge Margaret Schaeffer on April 27.

"It was a procedural problem," said Lt. Ernest Miller of Farmington Hills police traffic safety division, referring to police officials who failed to subpoena witnesses for Jones' preliminary examination in April.

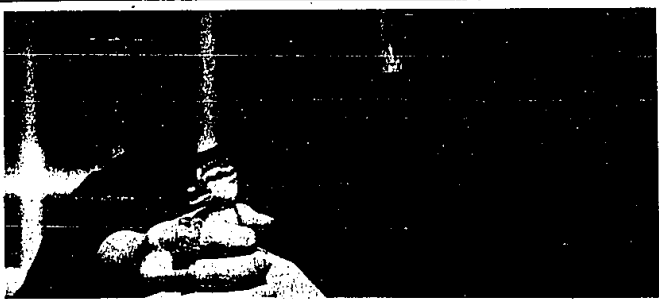
When Schaeffer dismissed the manslaughter charge against Jones in April, she indicated that it did not prevent the prosecutor from issuing a new arrest warrant and starting the case again.

A PLEA of innocent was entered for Jones at his arraignment last week. A

preliminary examination on the new manslaughter charge is scheduled for June 10, Miller said. Conviction of manslaughter carries a maximum 15-year prison sentence.

Jennifer, a fifth-grade student at Beechview Elementary School, was struck by a car at 7:15 a.m. at 1 1/2 Mile and Middlebelt. She was dead on arrival at Botford General Hospital of multiple injuries.

A lifelong Farmington Hills resident, Jones is employed in the Detroit area.



### A ducky affair

Every spring at Mercy High School the ducks come to roost on the campus. And for at least 10 of those seasonal visitations Margaret Ducharme (right) has taken it upon herself to take on the happy task of caring for the many ducklings which, she said, hatch on Mother's Day like clockwork. While not taking care of the visitors, Ducharme is the schools administrative assistant. Also getting into the spirit of the season is Cris Bonds (above) of West Bloomfield, a Mercy student.



RANDY BONNET/staff photographer

## Youths arrested

Three Farmington Hills teen-agers have been arrested in connection with a May 13 break-in at the Farmington area YMCA. A dollar bill changer, two video games and the administrative offices were damaged.

The youths, who are awaiting preliminary hearings before Oakland County juvenile authorities on charges of breaking and entering, were arrested

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