

# Community zeroes in on problem corridor

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publicity to Farmington Hills and its teenagers.

But through the din of anger — teenagers pushing, shouting and shouting, which immediately drew adult reprimand — and argument, police and parents reached agreement on several methods of attacking the teen problem.

Farmington Hills Police Chief William Dwyer offered a 13-point plan of action designed to curb vandalism and rowdiness along Orchard Lake Road as well as "head off" future problems.

Barry Fogel of the recently formed Parents Against Violence, announced formation of a committee of parents, police, merchants and school officials to work with police and to develop "peaceful solutions" to the teen problem.

And to the apparent delight of Fogel, the police and some parents,

leaders of the Detroit-area Chaldean community, offered their help.

FROM THE meeting's start, Fogel tried to clear the air of rumors. "This is not a problem of one ethnic group against another," he said.

Teens of many ethnic backgrounds, but particularly Chaldean and some Jewish youths, have been identified as responsible for vandalism, assaults and rowdiness. "We are talking about 50-100 people," Fogel said about the reported group of youths that has been battling it out to call Orchard Lake Road their "turf."

After documenting the reported incidents along the thoroughfare, Fogel said, "We're not trying to distort the facts. We don't believe it is one-sided. But we want it stopped."

Fogel acknowledged that while the blame is being put predominant-

ly on Chaldean youths, Farmington Hills teens are not without fault, whether by making racial slurs or taunting.

"I have seen these incidents. So let's not anyone deny these things are going on. The police know who the kids are. We will do whatever we can, whatever peaceful measures... we are not a vigilante group."

Acknowledging a problem, parents and teens nonetheless offered their own versions of the incidents, placed blame and chided police for not taking more action.

DWYER TRIED to set the record straight.

"You know who the troublemakers are and some are here tonight. We can't do it alone. We need your help and your support," Dwyer said, asking parents for help.

The police chief also tried to turn around rumors that it's Chaldean teens who are solely to blame.

"For those students who think this is a joke, you aren't being quite honest with your parents. Let's not fool each other."

At least one parent criticized Dwyer for speaking strongly to and about teens.

"Are you happy with the way he just talked with the teenagers?" one parent asked.

Yet some parents admitted they have problems controlling their teenagers.

Both Fogel and Dwyer, as well as other parents, charged that parents must control their children.

"Obviously, we have a parental problem. Police can't control everyone. It's the parents' responsibility to control their own kids," Fogel said.

MANY PARENTS agreed with Fogel.

"Maybe if there were more parents around, their kids wouldn't be claiming it as their turf," said Farmington Hills resident Pat Race. She suggested parents accompany their teens rather than drop them off or give them the car to go to Tally Hall or other restaurants and stores.

Yet some teens and parents chided her suggestions. One man recalled watching a fight outside one Orchard Lake Road store while adults watched.

To that, Fogel and Dwyer urged parents and teens to call police and report incidents and, if possible, provide names of youths involved in incidents.

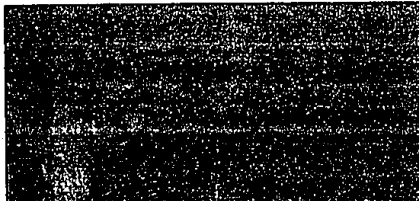
"How am I supposed to know the names when 20 of them jump you?" a teen shouted at Fogel and Dwyer. The teen accused Chaldean youth gangs acting as an exclusive clique that taunt and goad other youths into fighting.

When the teen mentioned Chaldeans, however, the audience moaned.

One teen asked why the Chaldeans are being singled out. "It's not only the Chaldeans. It's everyone. We never hear the other side of the story. It's always us," he said.

ANOTHER TEEN argued that he believes the antagonism is definitely ethnically rooted. "Fights do not go unprovoked. They start because of nationalism," he said.

The teen referred to continuing animosity between Jewish Boys Inc. — a group with West Bloomfield Township roots — and a Chaldean group called the A-Team.



Sami Jihad of the Arab-Jewish Friendship Group listens to the discussion at North Farmington.

But Sgt. Charles Nebus of the Farmington Hills Police Department's juvenile section refuted the teenagers' claims.

"There is a chance some of these groups claim because of their names," he said, adding most of the problems are not ethnically rooted and are not religious conflicts.

"The police department sees it mostly as disorderly conduct and assaultive behavior," Nebus said. "It's a very complex social problem. It's something that has been going on and on for years."

A leader of the Detroit-area Chaldean community, Sami Jihad, also denied the conflicts are based in religion or culture. "I don't think there is a racial issue here. I think there is a show of muscles here," he said.

WHILE NO agreement was reached on the cause of the problem, some maintained that one of the underlying catalysts for teenage problems is the use of alcohol and drugs.

"I feel that obviously the young people involved in these problems either cannot or are not controlled by their parents. As long as parents condone or allow the drug problems... alcohol... weekend parties, we are going to have problems," said Betty Nicolay, Farmington Families in Action president, to a round of criticism from teens in the audience.

"What does that have to do with what we're talking about here?" a teen shouted from the back of the room.

As teens grew louder, some walking to the front of the meeting room and demanding to be heard, Fogel took charge. "You students are not going to take over the meeting," he

said.

Many teens told of incidents where they or friends were stopped by armed members of the so-called gang of youths along Orchard Lake Road.

"Some of my friends have been threatened with guns. This social group is trying to prove something. I don't know what they are trying to prove but I don't know why they are using guns," a teen said.

BUT IN each case detailed at the meeting, police refuted the use of guns and weapons other than fists and baseball bats. In many cases, the weapons students believe are guns are, in fact, replicas or fake guns. And in other cases, after questioning from Dwyer during the meeting, teens admitted the incidents were never reported.

Though some parents offered tough talk about teens beating up their children, other parents asked for peaceful solutions.

"When someone asks what are the consequences of someone being bludgeoned to death, that alarms me," said a woman. "I don't think our answer to this problem is more violence."

Another man told the audience that it's about time parents learned to control children and that both parents and teens learn to solve problems without violence.

And yet another parent seemed to summarize the frustration voiced by many in the audience: "We got all sorts of problems out here. The statement is, we are sick and tired of it, and we're not going to take it anymore. We're not going to be a Detroit!"

Staff photos by Bob Sklar



Police Chief William Dwyer — with Barry Fogel of Parents Against Violence at his left — responds to questions as the TV cameras roll.



Betty Nicolay of Farmington Families in Action addresses the crowd at North Farmington.

## short takes

If you recently opened a shop, captured an award, earned a promotion or are planning a new venture or project — and there's a Farmington-area business angle — we'd like to hear from you so we can share your news item with other Farmington Observer readers. Send items to: Short takes, Farmington Observer, 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

**MOVING UP**  
Sandra Weissenauer was promoted to vice president of Hiram Walker Inc.

The Farmington Hills resident joined Hiram Walker as a brand manager in 1976. In October 1984, she was named group product manager for cordials and liqueurs, a newly created position. Since June 1985, she has been the group product manager for the company's new ventures division.

Weissenauer gained marketing experience at Parker Brothers, General Mills and Monsanto Co. before joining Hiram Walker.

**NEW IN TOWN**  
Bruce Berndt of Farmington Hills has opened a certified public accountant practice at 25882 Orchard Lake, Suite L-7.

He will cater to small or new businesses. He also will provide assistance to individuals with tax preparation and financial planning.

Berndt is a former Illinois resident who moved to Michigan in pursuit of career growth after obtaining his license to practice as a CPA last spring.

**PRODUCTION MANAGER**  
Jonathan Grant, president and owner of Reliance Forms & Supplies Inc. in Farmington Hills, has appointed David Nelson production manager for Reliance Business Forms & Computer Supply Store in Farmington.

Nelson is in charge of all printing accounts and productions at the store. He was formerly production manager for Harmony Print in Farmington Hills.

**HE'S HONORED**  
Robert Markey of Farmington Hills was honored by the American

Red Cross, Southeastern Michigan Chapter, for his superior job performance as American Red Cross Chapter House Technical Services blood laboratory assistant director in Detroit.

As one of 16 employees nominated for the Manager's Employee Excellence Award, Markey was recognized for his "willingness to take time out to discuss a problem with an employee and achieve a solution that benefits both the individual and the American Red Cross."

**DENTAL CARE**  
A Warren dentist will offer free dental care to needy youngsters Tuesday mornings, Feb. 3, 10, 17 and 24.

Dr. Howard Flink — a Farmington Hills resident — timed the program for Children's Dental Health Month, sponsored by the American Dental Association to spotlight children's dental needs. About one-third of all children in the midwest require dental care that they are not currently receiving, according to the ADA.

Flink will provide exams, cleanings and general dental service for children 15 and younger whose families are unable to afford dental care. Parents will not have to prove financial need nor qualify through a social service agency.

The idea for the program grew from Flink's commitment that those who can should provide for the less fortunate.

"Some years ago, I watched Johnny Carson read letters to Santa from youngsters who would not be receiving an array of holiday gifts and in whose homes there was little cause for joy," he said.

He and his wife Lynn went to the local post office, were given some "Letters to Santa," and bought family-oriented gifts for a number of needy families. They continued that tradition a second year, Flink recalls, then began providing gifts and holiday extras for certain families within his practice.

Flink and his staff of five will offer exams, cleanings, X-rays, fillings, nerve and pain treatments, and all other basic general dental services free-of-charge Tuesday mornings in February. Patients must register between 8:30-9:30 a.m. They will be treated on a first-come, first-served basis until 12:30 p.m. Working with Flink will be dental hygienist Kathryn Fishman.

The office is at 30055 Hoover, between 12 and 13 Mile, Warren. Advance registration is not necessary. "I feel that we can serve as many as 120 youngsters during the month," Flink said.

Flink, 40, is a 1972 University of Detroit Dental School graduate. He has been in practice in Warren for 14 years. The Flinks have two children.

**NEW MEMBERS**  
Farmington Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce has welcomed 16 new members.

They are Marketrends, 31205 Lamar, market consultants to small business; Mechanical Heat & Cold, 24535 Hollywood Court, heating, air conditioning, refrigeration, energy management and control service; Mariposa Ltd., 22998 Warren, trade show and exhibition/retail show; American House-Farmington, 24100 Middlebelt, retirement residences; Medical Dental Management Consultants, 31168 Perry's Crossing, consultants and management specialists to professionals; Farmington Area Advisory Council, 21450 Middlebelt, substance abuse education, treatment and rehabilitation; Image-works Marketing Concepts, 38965 Lancaster, full-color business cards; San Marino Golf Club & Pro Shop, 2684 Haledale.

Athletic Supporter Ltd., 24455 Haledale, imprinted sportswear and advertising specialties; Superior Enterprises, P.O. 2561, painting contractors; Corporate Financial Services, 31800 Northwestern Highway, Suite 100, corporate financial consulting; Minuteman Press, 34549 Grand River, printing; Jim Corvett Engineering, 50370 Eight Mile Parkway Business Systems, 24780 Hathaway, Suite 201; Prestelite WireCorp., 32871 Middlebelt, wire and cable products; Servicemaster of Birmingham, 30748 Grand River, professional cleaning.

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