

Coping with winter



STAFF PHOTOS BY SHARON LEMIEUX

Flakes 'n' furries: The Farmington Public schools stayed open Friday despite the snowstorm that dumped 5-7 inches on the Detroit area, so the weather couldn't have been that severe. But, had you been stuck in the slow traffic on I-696, 12 Mile Road or any of the other major highways Thursday night, you might have had a different idea. The storm, the first major blow of the winter, did close many private schools such as Mercy High and St. Paul Lutheran School in Farmington Hills. Residents had to cope with winter. At left, Connie Carruthers of Farmington Hills blows the driveway of neighbors who weren't feeling well. She said they would clear her driveway had she been the sick one. In the photo above, 13-year-old Liz Brudi pushes her brother Josh, 4; mom Debby; and sister Rebekah down a small hill near their house in the Farmington Square subdivision. By Friday afternoon, things were pretty much back to normal.

Committee floats North Farmington pool plan

By LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

The Farmington Board of Education Building and Site Committee has decided to dive in and build a new swimming pool at North Farmington High.

Swimmers are splashing with ideas over the decision.

The new pool could be completed by next school year and would cost \$500,000. To high school swim teams, it means a return to hosting full competitive meets.

During the past two years, the three Farmington high schools have not used their swimming pools for full competitive swim and diving meets because of warnings from the health depart-

ment and the Michigan State High School Athletic Association and the potential for lawsuits.

Standards mandate pools be at least 4 feet deep for use of starting blocks. Farmington's pools are 3 feet deep at both ends with a 10-foot deep diving well.

Home meets have been limited to events where swimmers had to "push start" once inside the pool instead of using starting blocks.

"From a swimming coach's standpoint, it's like going from tackle football to touch football," said North Farmington girls swim coach Pat Duthie. "It's that much of a difference."

Also, pools at each school are 23 years old.

North Farmington's tank is most in need of repair, school officials said. A leak in the main drain is causing the loss of two inches of water a day.

In addition to the high school competitive swim teams, the Farmington Stingrays and the Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Department use the three pools.

The committee considered three options.

One was to replace the main drain at North Farmington and remove the diving boards at all three pools. That would've cost \$230,000, but the pool wouldn't be used for competitive meets.

Another proposal also included

deepening one end of the North Farmington pool to 7 feet, which would've allowed for competitive swimming but no diving. That would've run \$425,000.

A new pool complying with current swimming and diving standards appeared to be the most viable option.

"There's no going back," said Building and Student Services director Don Cowan during the committee meeting. "If we decide to do the minimum and if we decide to do something a couple years later, everything we did before would be wasted money."

The plan also calls for increasing air circulation in the equipment room, providing a barrier-

free lift and revising natatorium lighting at North Farmington. Dimensions of the new pool call for depths ranging from 4 feet to 12 feet, 3 inches for diving.

The pool includes a learn-to-swim area, which will allow for teaching and a place to cool down.

Trustee R. Jack Inch in his recommendation said the pool will also allow proper teaching of water safety.

"Because many pools in the '70s were built shallow, one aspect of water safety training is recovery of a swimming victim in underwater situations," Inch said. "You need a little depth in order to do that. Twelve feet is an adequate depth to do that. . . . It

provides a chance for more realistic training."

Swim coaches were most pleased with the outcome.

"We're all excited about the prospect of a new pool to swim in," Duthie said. "This has been four full years (without a viable pool.)"

With both boys and girls swim teams from the three high schools using it, though, scheduling could become a concern. Director of Athletics Ron Holland is not worried.

"I don't see a problem with it," Holland said. "I think we'll work cooperatively to make sure it works."

Top Botsford trustee says industry reform's healthy

By BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

While some in the health care industry shudder at the prospect of reform, Edward N. Hodges III, Botsford General Hospital board chairman, embraces it.

His work on behalf of the Farmington Hills hospital and his enthusiasm for a future that seems to offer the health-care industry its biggest challenge have drawn praise and recognition from his peers.

Hodges was named National Trustee of the Year at the annual awards banquet of the American Osteopathic Healthcare Association recently.

"It's an honor to know that many other trustees who do the kind of thing Ed Hodges does have chosen me (as trustee of the year)," Hodges said.

Accomplishments which Hodges can take pride in over the past three years include: the expansion of Botsford's ambulatory and endoscopy capability, the building of two new wings and a second professional office building, the implementation of the cardiac catheterization lab, and the opening of the hospital's Total Rehabilitation and Athletic Conditioning Center (TRACC).

Although Hodges is reluctant to take credit, others are not so bashful about his service to the hospital and community.

"With sometimes only an hour's notice, Ed has traveled to Detroit, Lansing, and Washington, D.C., to advocate quality in general osteopathic medicine in general and in Botsford in particular," said Botsford president and CEO Gerson Cooper.

And in his travels, Hodges has gained a good deal of insight into how his fellow trustees view new health-care reform proposals.

"I think the major idea that will come out of this is the need for more collaboration rather than competition," he said, adding that



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universal coverage.

"That's absolutely necessary," he said. "When a patient is brought to Botsford General, we take care of them, regardless. But then we are not necessarily reimbursed."

The one area on health care where Botsford has been "on the cutting edge," and where most reforms recommend improvements is in prevention, or wellness programs.

"It was in our (Botsford's) first class on quitting smoking 12 years ago," he said. "We have weight reduction classes, and we're working to get employers to have their own wellness programs."

The Detroit resident has served on Botsford's board of directors for 20 years and has been chairman for the past 10. He also served as member and chairman of the Michigan Hospital Association's Hospital Governance Council. In 1989, he received the NHA's Hospital Governance Award, which honors the Michigan Hospital trustee of the year.


Hodges received his law degree from Wayne State university. Prior to his retirement from Michigan Bell in 1983, he held various executive positions with the company and served as general counsel to New Detroit Inc.

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