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3 principals face the axe as district revenues dry up

By RON GARBINSKI

Six Farmington school administrators will be laid off at the end of this school year because of anticipated reductions in district revenues.

Three principals will be laid off in the personnel contracts approved by the school board Tuesday night.

They are Dr. Will Chasson, principal at Farmington Junior High School, Philip Townsend of Middlebelt Elementary, and Carolyn Plack of Highmeadow Elementary.

Robert Wilson, assistant principal at East Junior High, Richard Tyler of Farmington High and John Summerlee of Harrison High, both administrative assistants, also will have their contracts terminated at the end of the year.

"This is not an unusual procedure," said Farmington schools Supt. Martinus Van Ameyde. "The same thing was done last year and even in years of growth in our district."

"But because of expected reductions in revenues, we must lay off several administrators. We have a legal timetable to follow when it comes to laying off administrators and that is why we are notifying these administrators that their contracts will be terminated," he continued.

IN A 4-2 vote, the school board approved a recommendation by Van Ameyde to lay off the administrators. Trustees Michael Shepley and Emma Makinen opposed the motion.

Shepley voted against the motion because he felt it should contain the option to lay off more administrators in the future if lack of revenues demand more staff reductions.

"I can't know at this time if the lay offs will be permanent," continued Van Ameyde. "Until we get all our financial reports, we won't know for certain if they will be laid off for good."

"The reason we are laying them off now is that the school district anticipates revenue problems next year," he added. "We can't allow the legal contract deadlines to pass before we notify the administrators."

"If that deadline passes, then we can't lay off administrators," the superintendent said.

Union contracts have set a March 15 notification deadline to notify school administrators that they will be laid off for the following year.

According to district officials, these lay offs are on a temporary basis. All administrators will return to teacher status if considered for rehiring.

VAN AMEYDE said these lay offs and other possible staff reductions depend on several factors.

The passage of additional millage, the board's decision to close district schools due to lack of funds of declining enrollment, the results of the demographic study, future predictions, and revenues expected for the 1976-77 budget for programs offered next year were some of the factors school officials cited as being important when considering future reductions.

Just because we are laying off these administrators doesn't mean we are considering the closing of the schools offered, said Board President William Cortas.

"There are only reductions in personnel based on the severity scale and should be treated as such," he added.

While several board trustees felt the motion should include more names as a hedge against future revenue cuts, Van Ameyde wouldn't recommend that. The board add other names to the list.

"We have tried to make the number of lay offs as minimal as possible and still offer protection for the school district," the superintendent said. "I don't feel we should add any more names to the list."

District officials said they made the staff reductions at this time based on the projected loss of revenues and anticipated closing of schools.

Deadlines for notifying teachers of possible layoffs are later in the year, district administrators said. So consideration of teacher reductions won't be acted upon until the next regular board meeting.

Notification deadlines for other employees in the district are only two weeks prior to termination.

"When it comes to laying off administrators, we can't wait like we can with other employees," concluded Van Ameyde. "That is why we are considering these layoffs at this time. There is a probability of their return or reassignment next year if the district has the revenues to do it."



Stump carving is a profession for Phil Makdisi and his stepfather, Ken Bosher of Sterling Heights. The two carved a miniature man at Forest Elementary School Feb. 28. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

Enrollment plummets

Educators perplexed

By RON GARBINSKI

One of the benefits of declining enrollments in the Farmington School District is that students now can profit from better use of classrooms.

But one of the biggest problems is that Farmington administrators must plan operations around shrinking school populations. As school officials continually try to find new ways to cope with this problem, estimates for next year show that the district will experience a drop of approximately 500 students.

Declining enrollments are occurring all over the country and we aren't the exception," says district business manager William Frost.

"Our enrollment figures are puzzling just like everyone else's. These figures have been a puzzle for the past several years because we have been losing between 400 and 500 students per year," he continues.

"Our biggest problem is trying to plan operations based on an estimated drop of 500 students for the 1976-77 school year. At least that is the figure we are working with now."

BUT EVEN THOUGH enrollments are dropping, the district does benefit in some areas from the decline.

One example of this is the resource rooms at each elementary school for reference materials for both students and teachers.

Other schools now have separate music rooms, reading and learning disabilities centers. Several schools use the classrooms vacated by shrinking enrollments for special purpose rooms.

"These rooms were never planned for when the buildings were constructed," says Larry Freedman, assistant superintendent of elementary schools.

But declining enrollments have enabled us to convert certain classrooms into these special purpose rooms. Doing this we can provide better use of our classroom space.

In the past two years, we have had to add resource room in every elementary school in the district because of a new federal law," he continues.

That means we have had to set aside 17 rooms just for the resource rooms. If you add them up, the space utilized by this new program totals about the size of one whole school."

Freedman points out that if the district didn't have the declining enrollments, then it might have run into problems finding all that space in order to comply with the law.

Enrollment figures compiled over the past several years show that Farmington has another problem when attempting to plan efficient use of school buildings.

enrollments won't develop, the community must provide more moderate income housing to attract families with school aged children, too," he emphasizes.

While the district cannot find declining enrollment patterns when trying to predict figures for the following year, it hopes to rely on conclusions of a demographic study soon to be finalized by a private company.

We hope this study can provide us with facts we need in planning our operations for the coming years," says Frost.

THE STUDY will give the district some

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Saturday was a perfect day for sitting in the sun and watching the outdoor wood carvers at work. Phil Makdisi puts the feathering touches on a turtle. Makdisi and his stepfather, Ken



Bosher, did the carvings as a PTO sponsored bi-centennial tribute for Forest Elementary School.

Cops bust Hills man in drug raid

By CARL STORDARD

State and federal narcotics officers raided two methuane manufacturing laboratories in the metropolitan area this week and arrested 16 persons, including persons from Southfield, Farmington Hills, Westland and Bloomfield Township.

The raids were launched against sus-

pected laboratories in a Bloomfield Township home and a house in northwest Detroit.

At each location, chemicals, laboratory equipment, semi-automatic machine guns and a quantity of methuane were seized.

The home in Bloomfield Township at 2716 Colonial Way was raided Sunday

Feb. 28. Theodore Vermer, regional director of the Drug Enforcement Administration, said about six pounds of finished methuane were found in the Bloomfield Township home. In addition, 10 pounds of unprocessed methuane also were seized.

DEA officials estimated the laboratory was capable of producing approximately six pounds of the drug a day. Generally, one pound of methuane will produce 6,000 capsules.

"THESE PARTICULAR laboratory operations, however, were only producing approximately 1,000 capsules per pound," Vermer said.

The strength of each capsule may well lead to overdoses and drug related injuries.

On Saturday, Feb. 28, agents raided the Detroit home at 19611 Throok. Vermer said about two pounds of methuane were found along with an additional four to six pounds of the drug in an unprocessed stage. In all, he said, sufficient methuane were available at the scene to produce an additional 36 pounds of methuane.

The overall production at the Detroit home was estimated to be about 12 pounds a day.

Methuane is a sedative and hypnotic agent commonly used as a depressant. Lo-

cally, a small capsule of the drug sells for \$1 to \$1.50, he said.

The raid and arrests were the culmination of a 16-month investigation by members of the Michigan State Police, the DEA and the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulation. Also involved were members of the Narcotics Enforcement Team from the Michigan Intelligence Network and personnel of the Division of Investigation, Unit of the Department of Licensing and Regulation.

Vermer said the arrests may help restrict the flow of methuane in the Detroit area. Nationally, only two other methuane laboratories have been seized, he said.

IN MORT KASIN, enforcement officials are able to apprehend distributors of the drugs, Vermer said, but it takes a lot of hard work to get in the laboratories. Announcement of the raids and arrests were made during a press conference Tuesday in Detroit. During the conference, display tables were set up showing the equipment used in the two laboratories. Also displayed were two 45 caliber semi-automatic machine guns. Vermer said a gun was found at each location. The laboratories were set up in the basements of the residential homes, Vermer said.

Arrested at the Detroit location were

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Juvenile diabetes is program topic

A special program on juvenile diabetes will be given at Bedford General Hospital, at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, March 9.

There is no charge for the hour-long class which will cover diet problems, controlling parents and child, snack foods, packing a lunch, summer camp food and other problems.

This is the fourth topic in a series on nutrition and diet therapy which have been held at the hospital under the direction of the hospital's staff of five registered dietitians.

The diabetes class will be held in Classroom 100 and 104. Directions will be available at the registration desk in the lobby.

Those interested may call the hospital, 476-7600, extensions 337 or 338 between 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday, March 8.

Other programs in the series are: April 13, low cholesterol diets; May 11, low sodium diets; and June 8, fat diets.

OCC expands film festival

The theater department of the Oakland Community College Orchard Ridge campus in Farmington Hills has added more categories to its annual film competition.

For the first time videotape will be accepted. Entrants may submit 16 mm or 8 mm film and either 1/2 inch reel-to-reel videotape or 1/4 inch videotape cassette.

In both categories, silent or sound, film in color or black and white will be accepted. Super, standard or regular 8 mm or 16 mm will be acceptable.

The winning films in each of the nine categories will receive a \$10 prize composed of cash, books and film equipment donated

by federal co-sponsors.

The deadline for submission of films and videotapes is Friday, May 7, at the campus Twelve Mile and Orchard Lake. Farmington Hills. The campus, at the intersection of 12 Mile and Orchard Lake, is open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday and until 5 p.m. on Fridays. Mail entries must be postmarked May 7 or earlier.

There is a \$5 entry fee which is waived for Oakland Community College students.

"We are pleased at the tremendous community response in support of the festival," says Don Greenberg, film festival coordinator. "Last year, individuals from the metropolitan film and broadcasting community gave generously of their time as judges and Belcrest Camera supplied some of the prizes."

Greenberg says prizes for this year have been donated by Bobbi-Merrill, Prostate-Hill and Holt Rinehart publishing houses as well as the Southeast Michigan Photo Dealers Association.

The contest categories are best film of short, color, black and white, comedy/drama, documentary videotape, Abel Low Memorial prize for best short film, and best junior film maker.

The junior film maker is a new category open to anyone 17 years old or younger. It is designed to encourage and reward interest and talent among young film makers here and on other Jan. 1, 1980.

All films submitted will be returned. Winning films will be screened at a public showing Friday, June 11 at 8 p.m.

Contest rules and entry blanks are available through the Orchard Ridge theater department, OS-400, ext. 304 or by writing to Film Contest, Orchard Ridge Campus, 2266 Orchard Lake Rd., Farmington Hills 48031.

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