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State rules are awaited for sex ed.

By LYNN ORR

A Farmington School District student recently underwent her third abortion. Whether birth control knowledge would have prevented that unwanted pregnancy is difficult to determine; but Farmington students may be learning about birth control in class in the years ahead.

The state legislature recently lifted the ban on teaching birth control in public schools. Louisiana remains the only state to continue the ban.

However, Farmington officials are waiting for guidelines from the state department of education before updating the family life program to include birth control information.

"We do not teach birth control now," said Larry Freedman, assistant superintendent of education. Freedman coordinated the design of the current family life and human relationships program in 1971. The program was revised last fall.

UNTIL the guidelines are established, it would be "unwise" to move ahead, Freedman says.

"The state board of education has the mandate to approve as qualified those who will be supervising such programs and to certify those teachers who will be assigned to teach the courses," he explained.

Teachers of family planning, human sexuality, and emotional, physical, psychological, hygienic, economical and social aspects of family life will have to be "qualified," but officials are in the dark about what that means, Freedman adds.

When the guidelines are handed down, the school district will most likely appoint a citizen's advisory committee to oversee the curriculum program, he says. That's also in keeping with the state law.

"A school district shall not offer this instruction (birth control) unless an advisory board is established by the district board to periodically review the materials and methods of instruction used, and to make recommendations to the district regarding changes in the materials or methods," the law reads.

The advisory board shall consist of parents with children attending school in the district, students, educators and community health professionals.

While the law specifies how birth control can be taught, it doesn't mandate such teaching. The law prohibits any teaching about abortion as a birth control method.

Farmington will likely attempt to integrate birth control information in the overall program, Freedman says. "Parents have the right to withdraw or withhold their children from the program," he said, which gives those parents with objections an option. "But the number of children withheld now is very small," he adds. The current program is a kindergarten through grade 12 program, although senior high classes are elective.

Freedman was on the faculty of the Merrill Palmer Institute and Wayne State University in family life education, which is one reason why he was instrumental in developing Farmington's program. Other districts have used Farmington's programs as a model, he says.

The program's emphasis is on human relationships and supporting the self-worth of children. The curriculum includes objectives, concepts to be taught in the attainment of the objectives, and suggested activities to teach concepts.

Specific sex education instruction is taught by specially trained resource teachers. The emphasis on sex education is taught in seventh grade in a four-week unit.

Some of the objectives it is hoped students understand are that a productive growth in personality entails a realistic understanding of oneself and one's relationships with others; the family as a basic unit of society that changes as society changes; a healthy adjustment to the adolescent sex drive; correct and scientific language to describe human anatomy and functioning of the body.

Suggested activities to help meet those objectives include: discussing the value of friendship; inviting medical personnel into a class discussion; family role playing and various resource activities such as film strips.



Anticipation

Waiting for that big catch can be fun even when it's in the depth of winter. Here ice fishing becomes a family affair as the Orlandos, (from left) Scott, 6, Jason, 3, and father, Joe, seek out a cold fish to put into a warm frying pan. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

Gymnastics

Graceful sport wins converts

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

When Marina Davidovich stepped out onto the gym floor of Farmington Hills' Harrison High School recently, she brought to her display of rhythmic gymnastics a lifetime of training that began in her native Ukraine.

Now, she is hoping her sport which combines gymnastics with some ballet movements, will increase in popularity in her adopted country.

"In Europe, it is a very popular sport. It is doing well in Canada and more than 22 countries have this sport," said Mrs. Davidovich, who teaches at the Steve Whitlock School of Gymnastics, Bloomfield Hills.

She mourns the fact that American entries into the sport have placed behind other countries.

"An American took 46th place in the world championship. That sounds bad," she said.

"I'm positive it will become popular. When we went to the Southfield Christian School to perform, everyone was so excited. They surrounded us after the performance," remembered Mrs. Davidovich, 24.

"THEY LOVED it very much," she said.

Unlike other forms of the sport, rhythmic gymnastics incorporates such props as a ball, hoop, ribbons, scarves or a jump rope. Its movements blend gymnastics and choreography.

"It shows grace and self-expression," summed up Mrs. Davidovich.

The similarity of rhythmic gymnastics to dance is what initially attracted Mrs. Davidovich to the sport when she was a nine-year-old girl in the Ukraine.

"I always loved to dance, even in kindergarten," she said.

Eventually, the lessons expanded until she was studying gymnastics six times a week.

"Each move became more complicated, more difficult," she said. "It is an awful lot of work. When we were going into competition, we practiced two days, morning and evening."

With more and more of her time taken up studying gymnastics, she discovered she would have to give up piano lessons.

"IT WAS TOO much. I was in secondary school and it was too much work," she said.

"My mother gave me the choice of what I wanted to do, so I gave up piano," she said.

With four years of piano lessons to her credit, she enjoys plunking out tunes for herself.

When she finished secondary school, she went on to the Kiev State Institute of Physical Culture. As a member of her college gymnastics team, she had the opportunity to become active in the Ukrainian Gymnastics Team.

"Maybe it sounds big but it was not hard to be there. There were 22 girls in my class and seven girls were on the team," she said.

Although she loves gymnastics, her involvement with the Ukrainian team lasted a short time. When she was one month short of her 20th birthday, she married Felix Davidovich, the son of her first gymnastics coach. He also teaches gymnastics.

Although his mother was her coach, Mrs. Davidovich met her husband when they were in college.

After the birth of their first daughter, Marina, nicknamed Marsha, Mrs. Davidovich learned that her husband was seriously considering leaving Russia.

"It was a big shock," she said. "I was brought up to respect and love the country. Everything there was the best. My husband said to me, 'Open up your eyes and look around you.'"

Two years after they decided to leave the Soviet Union, the arrangements were completed. The Davidovich family was on its way after a tearful farewell.

"It was awful," she said remembering her goodbyes to her mother. "I didn't know if we'd see each other again. And her granddaughter was 1½ years old—such a sweet, sweet age. You don't know if it will be good or bad here. But you will have a choice," was her impression of the venture.

Once the family moved to Hartford, Conn., they found friends who were willing to help them get around in their new home.

They moved to Michigan last month when they found the opportunity to teach gymnastics.

"I met so many good people there. My neighbors were wonderful. It was such a pain when I had to leave last month," she said.

During their two-year stay in Hartford, daughter Elizabeth was born. Both of the girls will be encouraged to become interested in gymnastics.

"Our older daughter does back bends and walk-overs. She is four years old and its cute to see her little legs when she does splits," Mrs. Davidovich said.

City halls closed

Both the City of Farmington and Farmington Hills city halls will be closed today for Washington's birthday. The City of Farmington City Council will meet Tuesday night. Farmington Hills City Council will meet tonight as scheduled.

Housing rift showdown set

Senior citizen housing, its merits and demerits, will be the main topic of discussion at Tuesday's Farmington Hills Council session.

The debate will revolve around the proposed construction of an elderly housing complex on Orchard Lake Road, south of Fourteen Mile.

Homeowner groups from throughout the city plan on protesting the rezoning of the 10-acre parcel which, if approved, would be changed from a business zoning designation to RCE-1.

The RCE-1 zoning designation, adopted late last year, has been one of the most controversial issues in the Hills. The zoning allows 60-foot structures to be constructed for use as elderly housing.

Many homeowners have protested the zoning, saying it will open the door for other developers to come in and demand high-rise buildings for other needs.

THE REZONING request is being made by the Multi-Rise Associates, of Southfield.

The complex would house senior citizens 62 years and older, according to Bud Cline, Multi-Rise representative.

If the rezoning is approved it would be the first land parcel to be developed under the new ordinance.

Michael Rolnick, a resident of Ramblewood Subdivision, exemplifies the sentiment of many residents who oppose the zoning. Ramblewood is located behind the site proposed for senior housing.

"We are very concerned that the character of this city will be changed," says Rolnick, who moved

from neighboring Southfield recently because of the many high-rises which have been built there.

He believes the voters should be able to make the decision on whether they want high-rise structures in the community.

The Council of Homeowners of Farmington Hills feel the same as Rolnick. The group has filed a lawsuit in Oakland County Circuit Court in an attempt to prevent the city from rezoning any land or issuing any building permits under the RCE and RCE-1 zoning classifications until after a charter revision is voted on in November.

The homeowners' group has filed a petition for the city charter amendment which calls for a referendum vote on increasing the height limitations for buildings within the city.

But city officials have countered the petition by seeking opinion from the state attorney general on the petition question's legality.

Because the petition addresses two issues, the city's legal office questions its legality.

The RCE zoning, also designated for senior housing, but with a 30-foot height limitation, also is on the petition.

Among those council members deciding the fate of the rezoning request will be Joe Alkateeb and Joanne Soronen. Both opposed the senior zoning designations before being elected to the council last November.

Much of their voter support came from residents who opposed the senior zoning. The two newcomers placed one-two in the election tally.

Meeting agendas set for cities, school

Farmington Hills
Council meeting
7:30 p.m., Feb. 20
31555 Eleven Mile

City of Farmington
Council meeting
8 p.m., Feb. 21
23600 Liberty

The second of two public hearings to consider proposed programs for community development funds will be tonight's meeting. The council also will consider whether to rezone property on Nine Mile west of Orchard Lake to a different multiple zoning classification.

The council will be considering the rezoning of property at 29430 Middlebelt from single family to office district use; the cost hearing for sewer improvement on Moran St.; rezoning of 30841 Northwestern from single family to office service district; rezoning of property at Eight Mile and Norden from single family to multiple zoning; rezoning of 30301 and 30275 Thirteen Mile from special purpose to office service; rezoning of the east side of Haggerty between Thirteen and Fourteen Mile from single family to planned residential; and consideration of an amendment to ordinance C-2M to add some regulations for single family zones.

Council also will be considering the rezoning of frontage on the west side of Orchard Lake between Thirteen and Fourteen Mile from business service to RCE-1, senior citizens housing. The Farmington Planning Commission voted 5-2 to recommend the approval of the rezoning.

Council is expected to make an appointment to the board of review as well.

The council will be considering a request from the Beautification Commission to support a resolution asking the Michigan Department of State Highways to maintain the Grand River and M-102 area. The Commission has requested similar support from the Farmington Hills City Council.

In addition to correspondence, the council will be considering 1978-79 grant applications for community development; payment on the Public Services Facility project; regulations for federal and state assistance for local snow disaster; and reports from agencies.

Farmington School Board
8 p.m., Feb. 21
Harrison High School,
29995 Twelve Mile

The Board of Education will hear a curriculum report on vocational education, after taking care of regular business items such as correspondence and approval of expenditures.

The board will consider the approval of high school graduation of adult education students and the purchase of a four-wheel drive pickup truck. Reports from board committees include the leasing of Bond School and the appointment of an architectural consultant from the Building and Site Committee.

Reports from board representatives and consideration of policies will close the meeting.

inside

Amusements	5, 6 B
Classifieds	Section C, D
Community Calendar	2B
Obituaries	4A
Obituaries	4A
Sports	Section C
Suburban Life	Section B

Female politicians wanted

Columnist Lynn Orr is on the stump again. This week she examines why women have a difficult time breaking in to the higher echelons of the political world. To see what she has to say, turn to page 4A.



Marina Davidovich, 24, shows off the expertise that won her a place on the Ukrainian Gymnastics team.