

# Regional Roundup

## SCHOOLS FACE AXE

Two Farmington School District elementary schools may be closed within the next two years. A task force studying declining enrollments, recommended the school shut-downs to the board of education. The trustees will take action next month.

## VANDALS STRIKE AGAIN

West Bloomfield Police now suspect local youths are responsible for a surge of graffiti vandalism which has left mailboxes destroyed, lawns torn up and tires slashed in numerous subdivisions throughout the township.

Following last Monday's and Tuesday's dogpile reports of property destruction, vandals hit two areas Saturday night slashing tires on vehicles parked in driveways.

Police say they have been given several names of suspects and hope to get some thing soon.

## HOUSECLEANING

Orchard Lake has a new city treasurer and acting clerk. Following council action Monday, the council which includes only one vet-

eran member, did not reappoint long-time city treasurer Kay Blatter, who has kept track of local finances since Orchard Lake became a city.

Also not reappointed was Clerk Yvonne Coates.

It is not known if other new appointments are in the offing.

## ARE BUSES SAFE?

The safety of school buses in the Troy School District stirred a debate last week between bus drivers and school administrators. Drivers claim that several older buses shouldn't be on the road because of repeated problems with emergency brakes, fumes and breakdowns.

Administrators on the other hand stress that the district wouldn't use a bus which poses a threat to the safety of students. It takes care of major repairs immediately and minor repairs as soon as possible, said Supt. Don Shader.

As the debate continued, both sides agreed on one thing—the safety of students is the major concern.

## PENNYWISE COMPUTER

Avenale may become the second school district in the state utilizing a computer to

manage gas and electricity use to help trim overall energy consumption.

Developers figure the district could save some \$12,000 yearly and reduce energy consumption at Avenale Senior High by 18 per cent. The system costs \$19,000 to install and is under consideration by the Avenale school board.

## SCHOOL VIOLENCE IS THE ISSUE

Disturbances during the school day have prompted the Southfield Board of Education to devote into the topics of violence, vandalism and general behavior problems at the district's secondary schools.

At a three-hour meeting Tuesday night, Southfield High School Principal Jon Reynolds asserted that his school was safe and free from excessive violence. However, he specifically warned that the influx of an additional 600 students next school year might create more problems at his school.

All six secondary principals described their problems and ways to handle them at

the meeting. Thirty residents also attended but were not allowed to comment.

## HOPE FOR LAND SWAP?

Negotiations for a land transfer between Birmingham and Troy may be revived if Birmingham is successful in obtaining a \$12,000 federal grant.

The two cities for years have discussed transferring land at Troy's western boundary into Birmingham to more easily supply city services to the area.

Last spring, annexation talks came to a standstill when the two communities could not agree on sharing maintenance and repair costs for the Adams and Derby streets bridges which are included in the transfer plan.

Birmingham has now applied for a \$12,000 federal public works grant to repair the Adams Street bridge. If the bridge can be repaired with the federal money, the city hopes that negotiations between the two cities for the land transfer can be re-opened.

## Regulation needed for DNA research

Broader governmental regulation may become a reality for scientists who now have the ability to directly alter the genes of living organisms, says Dr. William E. Cooper, chairman of the Michigan Environmental Review Board.

Cooper is a professor of zoology at Michigan State University. While he says he is not enthusiastic about legislative restriction of the traditional right of free scientific inquiry, he does believe that government has both the right and the responsibility to protect people and the environment.

The new genetic technology he is concerned with allows scientists to recombine or splice together DNA genetic material from different organisms to produce a new hybrid life form.

Currently, guidelines developed by the National Institutes of Health regulate recombinant DNA research at the University of Michigan, Wayne State University and other federally funded research units. Dr. Cooper believes that similar rules may eventually spread to other sectors of the research community.

THESE KINDS OF experiments could lead to organisms that can manufacture rare and valuable chemical compounds

such as insulin, growth hormones or clotting factor required by hemophiliacs," Cooper explained. New strains of grain that don't require fertilizer because they have acquired the ability to capture the nitrogen they need from the atmosphere could also develop from this work.

Critics have claimed that accidental release of the wrong hybrid organism could produce epidemics of new, dangerous diseases or spread of noxious pests, but Cooper points out that special techniques, procedures and even new organisms have been developed as safeguards.

Current federal guidelines cover the kinds of experiments that can be performed and the physical facilities where they are to be performed.

Cooper is satisfied with the guidelines, but noted they have limitations and said it is possible that other federal, state or local action may eventually become necessary.

Not all research institutions are required to follow the current guidelines, he points out. Only those units using federal funds are bound to them.

Private laboratories—and drug and chemical firms—are interested in recombinant DNA research—are not bound to the guidelines.

OTHER NATIONS ARE also engaged in recombinant DNA research and while some nations have adopted guidelines similar to ours, other countries are not adhering to any set of well-defined rules and procedures.



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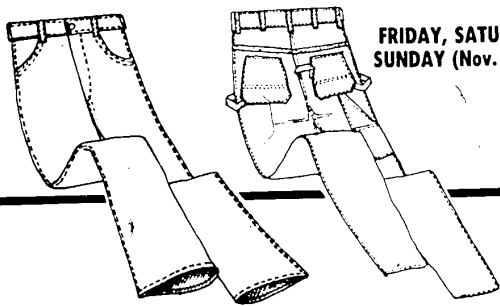
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