



Using a hydrocarbon analyzer, Bob Rebtzy (left) and William Gearhart of the Farmington Hills Fire Department investigate the building fire at Edgewood Elementary School shortly after it was discovered at 3:28 a.m. June 19. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

For Edgewood school fire

Arson reward offered

By MAURIE WALKER

Clarenceville schools are offering a \$20 reward for the arrest and conviction of the people responsible for an estimated \$15,000 in damage to Edgewood Elementary School in Farmington Hills.

The school board, at its regular meeting last week, unanimously approved the reward offer. This is in addition to the standing \$25 reward the school district offers for the arrest and conviction of anyone committing vandalism of school property.

Supt. David McDowell told the board insurance on the school has a \$1,000 deductible clause.

"We will be reimbursed for most of the cost of repairing the damage but the fire still means a \$1,000 loss to the district," he said.

David Kamish, Edgewood principal, said the fire was started at approximately 2:30 a.m. on June 19.

He said investigation shows the fire was purposely started by using a highly flammable substance to ignite the plateglass windows.

"The fire has done considerable damage to two classrooms at the south end of the building."

Eight windows in each of the two rooms must be replaced, he added.

Other damage included destruction of two student desks which were burned beyond repair, personal teaching aids, window shades, and light fixtures as well as portions of the ceilings.

Kamish said both rooms will have to be cleaned and painted.

"There is also damage to the outside structure of the building which will need repair," he said.

Work on the window frames and ceiling is already underway as is the cleaning of the furniture in the rooms.

Kamish praised the Farmington Hills fire department.

"They apparently did a very good job in containing the fire."

In an effort to reduce school property vandalism, which in May totaled \$308 for damage to four schools, the board established a curfew from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. for non-school activities on school property.

The district had posted no loitering and no alcoholic beverage signs on the school property but this is the first time it has set a curfew.

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Car dealers participate

Auto repair program aids students

"Earn as you learn" could be the theme of a new program offered to high school graduates interested in becoming auto mechanics.

An apprentice program for aspiring automotive technologists is designed to combine work experience with pay and classroom experience.

The three-year program is offered in conjunction with Schoolcraft College and area dealerships, explained Fernon Feenstra, assistant dean of applied sciences at the school.

A PERSON 18-30, with a high school degree or its equivalent, is hired as an apprentice by a dealership and works 40 hours per week. Feenstra explained.

At the dealership, the apprentice is taught by a supervisor and is given a variety of tasks on cars.

The person also takes Schoolcraft classes two nights a week on related automotive theory. Attendance in the evening classes is mandatory and paid for by the student for three semesters each of the three years of the program.

"When hired the student earns 52 per cent of a journeyman's pay and is guaranteed a four per cent raise every three months during the program," Feenstra explained.

"As he or she becomes more and more productive the student receives the pay increases."

Upon completion of the program, the student should be earning 95 per cent of a journeyman's pay. He or she is then encouraged to take an additional 12 credit hours of general education classes at SC, to earn an associate degree in automotive technology.

Classes are limited to 20 students and a summer program will begin Thursday, June 29.

To apply for the apprentice program, a high school graduate should contact the Michigan Employment Security Commission (MESCC) office at Eight Mile and Grand River, or the offices in Plymouth or Romulus.

The MESCC screens all applicants and will send qualified persons to participating auto dealers. Interested persons should not apply at the dealers themselves.

Apprentices are hired only by referral from MESCC.

After completing the apprenticeship, Feenstra added, students should be qualified to take eight tests required by the National Automotive Institute of Service Excellence (NAISE) and earn a master mechanic certificate to

receive a journeyman's card. The journeyman's card is honored nationwide.

"So far the program has been well received by students and auto dealers," Feenstra said. "The success of the courses we offer this summer will dictate whether a new program is started next fall."

Several local auto dealers are involved in the program.

Action Oldsmobile, Bill Brown Ford and Tennyson Chevrolet of Livonia are involved in the program.

Also taking part are Fiesta Motors of Plymouth, Red Holman Pontiac and Bob Owens Sales of Westland, Roger Peck Chevrolet of Farmington and Penske Chevrolet of Southfield.

Feenstra says the program is modeled after guidelines set up by the National Auto Dealers Association. It is the only one of its kind in the Detroit area.

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