

Educator tells local group

Gifted kids are disadvantaged

By SANDI HORNE

The federal government does little to aid in the development of gifted children. Intellectually-gifted children in this country are lumped together with handicapped children. Until two years ago, there were no classes available for gifted children.

That was the word from Roger Taylor, an education consultant for gifted children, and a planner and implementer of gifted children's programs.

Taylor spoke at a workshop for parents recently at North Farmington High School.

Taylor said that there is a mythology surrounding gifted children. Parents,

teachers and principals don't have knowledge of gifted children, and don't want to label kids as gifted. He doesn't fault educators and parents for this lack of knowledge, because up until recently, there has been little said about these children.

He feels it is high time that something be said.

In a country where cures for diseases are elusive, and people drive over bridges constructed by mediocre engineers, the high school dropout rate is highest among the nation's most promising brightest students, Taylor said.

Nineteen percent of the high school dropouts last year were gifted.

According to Taylor, many kids can't dropout due to parental pressure, so they become chemical dropouts. Sixty percent of drug and alcohol problems are found among gifted children. The suicide rate in the U.S. among gifted children is very high. The third highest suicide rate in the U.S. is among gifted adolescent females.

INTELLECTUALLY-GIFTED children have a hard time fitting in with society and at school, according to Taylor.

"Parents want to call their children bright or quick, but they don't want to use the term 'gifted,'" he said. "The kids themselves don't want to be gifted,

they just want to be one of the gang." Taylor said there is a sort of stigma attached to academically gifted children.

"The physically gifted children are called jocks, and they're encouraged to develop to their fullest potential.

"But the intellectually gifted are called nerds, brains, mental or professors. They feel it's wrong to be productive, innovative, and creative, so they learn to play the game like everyone else. Everyone wants to be mediocre."

More time and resources are spent on programs for physically handicapped kids and there is more research done on them, Taylor said.

"I'm not knocking this at all," he said. "I think it's great, but the decision is based upon emotion. People feel sorry for a physically disadvantaged kid. Nobody feels sorry for a gifted kid."

GIFTED KIDS are educationally disadvantaged. So called "enrichment programs" give kids more and harder work to do in a shorter period of time, they don't meet the kids' needs.

According to Taylor, gifted kids need to spend time with other gifted kids, they need to be challenged, they need to spread their ideas and have time to grow and create. Above all, gifted kids need to gain a sense of themselves and they need to learn that it's okay to be gifted.

"Most students lose 85 percent of the material they learned in three months," said Taylor. "Most teachers spend time on defining and memorizing, and only a little time on observing and processing. More time should be spent on processing."

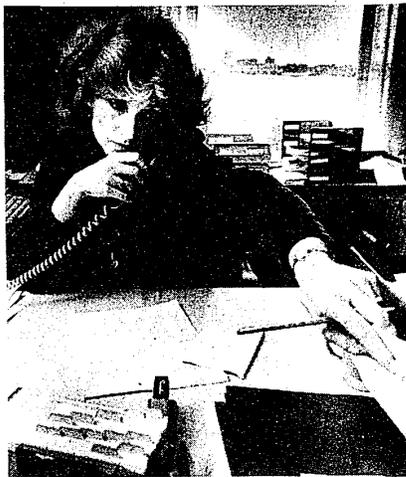
"Real creativity doesn't happen in a vacuum. Kids learn most of what they're going to learn by age five, on their own by observing and touching," said Taylor.

"Kids learn survival techniques by the third grade. They know if they finish early, they'll have to do more problems, so they don't try.

"Gifted kids shouldn't be punished by having to make up what they didn't miss."

The Farmington Association for Educational Enrichment, who sponsored Taylor's talk, will hold a meeting Tuesday, Feb. 5 at 7:30 p.m. at the Farmington Library on Twelve Mile Road for parents of junior high aged gifted children.

A film called "Children of Promise" will be shown.



Carol Gies coordinates the wining, dining and housing of the Republicans from her downtown Detroit office. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

She helps GOP feel at home

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to conduct their convention in New York. She would prefer Detroit host one group well than give a slipshod reception to two conventions.

The convention business in the area must dispel a reputation for having little to offer visitors.

"I've seen them (conventioners) come in with low expectations," she said.

Then the visitors discover the city is underrated, she said.

"We have the best facilities in the country. Detroit is hospitable. Detroit is friendly. Our return rate is 75 percent within a seven-year cycle."

obituaries

GEORGE BRUCE WALKER

Mr. Walker, 55, of Farmington Hills, died Jan. 22 in Cambridge Nursing Home South, Beverly Hills, Mich.

He was a Farmington Hills resident for the past five years. He lived in Birmingham for 20 years. Mr. Walker was retired from his position as vice president of Goss Mechanical Contracting Co. of Detroit.

He was a member of Detroit Gun Club, the Mechanical Contractors Association of Detroit, Haron River Hunting & Fishing Club, Friendship Lodge 417, F & AM Moslem Shrine, Domasus Comandry 42 Knights Templar and Palestine Chapter 159 Royal Arch Masons. He was a former member of the Plum Hollow Golf Club. Mr. Walker was born Aug. 21, 1924.

Survivors include wife Hilda G.; son, Bruce G. of West Bloomfield; daughter, Mrs. Cynthia Joy of Littleton, Colo.; parents, Bruce G. and Iva Walker of Lathrup Village; brother, Derwin of Bloomfield Village and five grandchildren.

Services were Jan. 26 at Vasu, Rodgers & Connell Funeral Home, Birmingham. The Rev. Charles A. Sommers officiated. Burial was in Acacia Park.

Memorial tributes may be made to the Michigan Cancer Foundation.

WILLIAM N. FRY

Mr. Fry, 65, of Dearborn Heights, died Jan. 23 in Oakwood Hospital.

He was born Aug. 1, 1894. Mr. Fry came to Detroit in 1956 and moved to Dearborn Heights the same year. He was a retired hardware merchant.

Survivors include: sons, Donald of Dearborn, William Jr. of Ortonville, Edward of Waterford, and Douglas of Livonia; daughters, Marian McNeese of Livonia and Dorothy Bailey of Farmington Hills; 28 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

Services were Jan. 26 in Harry J. Will Funeral Home, Redford and St. Michael Church, Livonia. The Rev. J. Fred J. Forish officiated. Burial was in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery.

HAROLD C. LeDOUX

Mr. LeDoux, 79, of Farmington, died Jan. 26 in St. Mary's Hospital, Livonia.

He was born Oct. 12, 1900. Mr. LeDoux was retired from Western Electric. He was a member of Lodge 151 F & AM.

Survivors include: wife, Helen M.; daughter, Mrs. Dorothy-Jean Tungal of

Farmington; son, Donald H. of Redford; sisters, Mrs. Evelyn Woy of Roseville, Mrs. Clara Janusch of Florida, and Mrs. Marjorie Gendle of Roseville; eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Services were Jan. 31 at Thayer-Rock Funeral Home, Farmington with Rev. J. K. Hoffmaster officiating. Burial was in Oakland Hills Memorial Gardens.

The family suggests memorial contributions be made to the Michigan Cancer Society.

DAVID D. HOCHSTADT

Mr. Hochstadt, 25, of Westland, died Jan. 27 in Boisford Hospital, Farmington Hills.

He was born Dec. 18, 1954 in Detroit. Mr. Hochstadt was a lifelong resident of Westland. He was a laborer in the manufacturing industry. He graduated from Livonia Franklin High School in 1973. While in school in was on the varsity football and hockey teams.

Survivors include: parents, Donald and Joyce Hochstadt of Westland; brother, John of Farmington Hills, and grandfather, Toivo Hackman of Ypsilanti.

Services were Jan. 31 in Schrader Funeral Home in Plymouth with Rev. Robert Grigereit officiating. Burial was in Glen Eden Cemetery.

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All Saints (Simon & Schuster, \$14.95) explores a unique but little known cross-racial society and its implications in a race conscious nineteenth century America. By the author of the popularly acclaimed *Interview With a Vampire*, this book is an unexpected and exciting experience.

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