

# Summer parents find exchange student a challenge

How do you entertain a 15-year-old exchange student for the month of July when you don't have any teenagers of your own?

This has been the creative challenge

facing Paul and Mary Rocha of West Bloomfield, and their 7-year-old daughter Mary Esther.

The Rochas responded to an article in the Eccentric asking for "summer parents" for students from the North Atlantic Cultural Exchange League.

After the initial excitement, the Rochas worked on getting to know Eric. They discovered that he is well traveled. In addition to Switzerland, he has lived in Nicaragua and Istanbul, and spent last summer on the same exchange program in Connecticut. He has also visited San Francisco, Boston and New York with his own parents.

So at Eric's request, the Rochas tried to show him only the unique sights of Detroit that he wanted to see, such as Greenfield Village and the Cranbrook Planetarium. He asked to spend the rest of his time on his special interests.

They hope to host other exchange league students in upcoming summers, and fully intend to sign up their own daughter for the program when she is

older. "Summer should be a time of growth, exploration and continued development for children," Mrs. Rocha says.

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"We pulled a fast one on Eric," Mrs. Rocha laughed. "Not knowing until the last minute that we would be receiving anyone, we had already made plans to go to Meadowbrook. As soon as Eric stepped off the plane, even before he could set his bags down in our house, we whisked him away to a concert."

The Rochas were particularly interested in attending the concert because the concert pianist of the evening, Flavio Varani, was a friend who would be dining at their house two days later.

Varani, Brazilian by birth, spent his teenage years in France studying music. He and Eric were able to converse in French, although to include the Rochas, "They mostly spoke in English, as Eric's is excellent," Rocha said.

The whole group delighted in hearing first-hand about the offer. Items for Varani which he premiered at the concert, as well as his travels to Russia as a young music student.

They found he likes building stereo components, recording radio music and playing tennis. He is also interested in weather forecasting. Eric to the Radio Shack and the Metro Weather station were the result. Eric also signed up for a tennis class at the YMCA twice a week.

Although the Rochas were anxious for Eric and their daughter to be friends, they pursued gatherings with other teenagers. They had recently met Flavio and Maldey Pandolfi, a Brazilian couple with two teenagers, who are here for a short stay with General Mo-

tors. They got together for swimming and later a trip to a cherry orchard.

It was because of Eric that a West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation trip for teens to Cedar Point went off as scheduled.

Mrs. Rocha called to sign Eric up for the trip to the Ohio amusement park, only to be told that unless 15 more teens signed up by 3 p.m. that day, the trip would have to be cancelled.

After checking with the local exchange league sponsor, Evelyn Prince, Mrs. Rocha called the 25 area families wishing exchange students to see if they wanted to go. She soon had the necessary 15 and the trip was on — both for local and visiting teens.

THE ROCHAS SAY that traveling a lot has made Eric very self-sufficient, easy to get along with and eager to learn all the English he can. He gave the Rochas the impression he would be happy watching TV movies all day, but they have tried to plan something special each day that he really wants to do, as well as entertain their own daughter.

## Coins object of break-ins

A flurry of home break-ins hit Farmington last week and currency seemed to be the target.

Thieves entered a home on Farmington Road through a bedroom window in the rear of the house.

Bedrooms and closets were ransacked but jewelry, a camera and a gun were left untouched. Some currency was taken.

The break-in was almost a repeat of one that occurred Tuesday at a Valley View residence. More than \$300 in silver coins was taken from a can on a living room shelf in that home. Other valuables were left untouched.

A home on Power was also hit Tuesday and coins were taken.

Police questioned five juvenile suspects Thursday but released them because there wasn't enough evidence for prosecution.

The five were picked up by police af-

## Cyclist hit

A 17-year-old Novi youth sustained minor injuries when he was hit by a car while riding his bicycle on Freedom Road 200 feet southwest of Grand River Wednesday evening.

Harold E. Bledsoe was treated and released from St. Mary Hospital in Livonia following the accident at 6:30 p.m.

The driver of the car, Peter Strong, 18, of Livonia, told police he was looking at a parking lot rather than the roadway in front of him and didn't see Bledsoe.

Farmington Hills police issued Strong a ticket at the scene.

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