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School enrollment reaches a 24-year low

By Jean Adamczak
staff writer

For the first time in 24 years, enrollment for the Farmington School District is predicted to dip below 10,000 students for the 1985-86 school year.

"The decline is 'very normal,' according to district superintendent Lewis Schulman, and 'hasn't been quite as great as we anticipated.'

"The school enrollment has followed the state pattern of declining school enrollment," Schulman said in his annual year-end report to the Board of Education.

The last time enrollment dipped below the 10,000 mark was in 1961 when district enrollment was 9,795, according to Intermediate School District figures. Prior to and after 1961, enrollment steadily increased to a high of 16,784 for the 1971-72 school year, according to school district records.

Schulman projects an enrollment of 9,943 students for the 1985-86 school year, a reduction of approximately 335 students from the 1984-85 year.

ONE BRIGHT SPOT in the enrollment figures showed an increase of 68

elementary pupils for the 1984-85 school year. Enrollment in the elementary schools increased from 3,670 in 1983-84 to 3,738 last year, said Schulman.

Although enrollment is decreasing, the quality and quantity of education in the district will not be compromised, Schulman said.

Taking into account Michigan's high unemployment rate (10.3 percent), and the federal deficit, "the condition of our school district has never been better," Schulman said in the report.

"We (the school district), went

through some trying economic times where we had to cut back drastically on some things," Schulman said.

"The board (of education), never cut back on educational programs but on custodial and supportive programs like maintenance, repair and replacement of things."

The improvement of the general economy has enabled the school district to play "catch-up," said Schulman, allowing for improvements in the district's buildings and initiating new programs such as the computer program and the cable television program.

"Even the looks of our buildings have improved," the district superintendent said. "For example, over the past three years the elementary parking lots have been paved and improved."

"Our first requirement in the community is the instruction of our students — that's always number one, but you also need to have properly maintained buildings."

"We've become an attractive school district," he said, not only because of the physical upkeep of the buildings, but because of the district's educational goals.

"Our present educational goals, which are designed to give the students the best possible credentials in order to compete successfully in a very competitive society."

Although the enrollment figures are decreasing, Schulman said the district does not try to actively recruit students, but instead focuses on its goals.

"We've tried the hardest to improve the quality of instruction, he said.

"We like to think the attractive school district is attracting families with school-age children to the area."

Library names new director for system

By Julie Brown
staff writer

Beverly Papal has been appointed director of the Farmington Community Library.

Papal's appointment was made at the Thursday meeting of the Farmington Community Library Board of Trustees.

"It's our consensus that Mrs. Papal is extremely qualified for this position," library trustee Jonathan Grant told his fellow board members at the meeting. "We certainly feel her performance over the last 90 days certainly speaks to the value of her qualifications."

Papal was appointed as acting director in early May, when Library Director Gordon Lewis was suspended.

LEWIS WAS suspended without pay on May 2 and then resigned on May 15. His resignation followed an audit of the library system's financial records, which had revealed evidence of possible personal use of public money.

At Thursday's library board meeting, Grant said Papal's expertise would be

an asset to the library and would "make what could be a difficult management transition very smooth. She certainly fits all of the requirements."

Trustee Ernie Sauter echoed those thoughts.

"She holds up well under pressure, too, as I can attest."

Sauter, who serves as board president, said there was no reason to "go through the exercise of a nationwide search."

The library board's three-member personnel committee recommended Papal's appointment to the position. Members of the full library board then unanimously approved the appointment.

"We feel that she's extremely qualified," Grant said after the meeting. "She's been doing a fine job in this interim period. She has a great deal of credibility with the staff."

PAPAL'S FAMILIARITY with the library system's operations will be helpful, he said.

"She's already very well-versed in the attitude of the library board.



Beverly Papal is the new director of the Farmington Community Library.

"We were able to see her perform. She's gotten into a lot of different areas that's needed attention. She has just done an outstanding job in the last 90 days."

The three personnel committee members — Grant, Charlotte Yaverski and Al Lanigan — have not yet discussed filling the assistant director's

position, Grant said. Papal had held that position until she was appointed acting director.

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2 killed in buggy accident

By Julie Brown
staff writer

Two elderly Farmington residents died from injuries suffered when they were thrown from a horse-drawn carriage at about 8:20 p.m. Thursday evening.

Edward R. Galli, 74, died at approximately 9:10 p.m. Thursday at Eastern General Hospital in Farmington Hills.

Wilma D. Turner, 66, of Farmington died at 1:20 p.m. Friday at Botsford.

Galli and Turner were passengers in a carriage being driven by Douglas M. Bates, 25, of South Lyon.

THE CARRIAGE was being driven on Old Homestead in the area near Old Homestead Court, which is north of 11 Mile Road and west of Drake Road. A teen-age boy passed the carriage on a skateboard, coming from the opposite direction.

"The young 15-year-old on the skateboard was coming in a southerly direction. Apparently, the horse became frightened and reared up," said Farmington Hills Police Chief William Dwyer.

The carriage apparently struck a small berm, causing Bates to be thrown out, the police chief said. It continued on Old Homestead, passing between a traffic sign and a telephone pole on the southeast corner of the property at 26557 Old Homestead.

The carriage struck a tree, Dwyer said, causing the passengers to be thrown out. The carriage rolled over, with the horse becoming disconnected from the carriage.

THE HORSE ran away and fell down a ravine, causing serious injury to its back and its rear leg.

A veterinarian gave the injured animal a fatal injection at the scene, Dwyer said. Arrangements were made to have the horse removed from the property.

Bates, the carriage driver, is married to Turner's granddaughter, the police chief said.

The young man had been providing carriage rides for family members since late afternoon without mishap, Dwyer said.

"It is a continuing investigation. We are conducting a thorough investigation," the carriage was impounded, he said.

"We placed a hold on it, pending further investigation." It appears there were no violations involved, the police chief said.

Pageant winner silent on second run

By Jean Adamczak
staff writer

For the first time in the Miss Farmington Scholarship Pageant, a previous year's winner will compete again.

The 1981 Festival queen Kelly Garver will be one of six competitors in this year's field.

"It's kind of a touchy situation. We

want to keep everything on the up and up," was all Garver would say about her second try for the title. She refused to comment further on the situation, deferring all questions to Patricia Fallan, executive director of the pageant.

When contacted by telephone, Fallan referred to the rules of the Miss America Pageant. They state that competitors must have a chaperone present

when speaking to the media prior to the contest. Because the Miss Farmington pageant is affiliated with the Miss America organization, Fallan says they must comply with its rules.

"We want to be extremely fair with all of the contestants," Fallan explained.

"Unless you want to interview all of the contestants, I cannot allow you to

talk to just one of them," she said.

Garver's plans to vie for the title again threw another wrench in the pageant's plans — that of finding unbiased judges.

GARVER IS well-known throughout the Farmington area as a talented violinist. She also competed in the Miss Michigan pageant after winning the Farmington pageant in 1981. Because of this, pageant officials went to "extra lengths" to obtain objective judges, says Susan Miramonti, producer of the competition.

Organizers of the pageant are "bending over backwards" in order to be fair to all the contestants, according to Miramonti.

Four judges were procured from Ohio, and one judge, unfamiliar with Garver's talents, will be from Michigan, she says.

"We had to make some long distance phone calls, but it's always difficult to get judges for the Miss Farmington pageant because it is held on a Wednesday and the judges have to be here (Farmington) by noon that day," Miramonti says.

Pageant officials also will have their hands full this year running two pageants simultaneously.

Due to a lack of contestants and for financial reasons, the Miss Farmington Scholarship Pageant is being combined with the Miss Oakland County Scholarship Pageant, according to Fallan, executive director for both pageants.

The pageants will be run under their separate names and each will have its own queen and runners-up, says Miramonti.

THIS WILL be the second year for the Miss Oakland County contest, which is also affiliated with the Miss America Pageant and subject to its rules.

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Kelly Garver



On the road

Officer Don Fradette of the Farmington Hills Police Department takes to the road on a new Harley-Davidson motorcycle. The purchase of the

two replacement motorcycles for the police department was approved at the July 8 Farmington Hills City Council meeting.

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