

# Now grownups proudly display tooth hardware

By Sharon Dargay staff writer

**Dear Ask-the-fictitious-dentist:**

I am a 30-year-old, high-powered executive who has everything — prestigious job, gorgeous looks, sparkling personality and a bank account that rivals Fort Knox. I'm almost perfect except my teeth look like pylons in a driving test track. My dentist suggests braces, but I'm afraid that my colleagues will secretly call me "glitter gums" and "metal molars." What should I do?

**Dear Xylophone Smile:**  
True, braces aren't as chic as Don Johnson stubble or permanent eyeliner. But thanks to new advances in orthodontics and a growing trend toward fitness, more adults are wearing braces with ease and self-confidence. Why not try them? They won't set off airline metal detectors, receive satellite signals or jeopardize your job, looks and personality. . . . but I might hold onto that bank account if I were you. They cost a few hundred bucks more than they do for children.

Tom Varner, 42, Rochester's mayor pro tem, felt "a little foolish" when he flashed his first brace-enhanced smile two years ago.

Diane Rinke, 24, an advertising saleswoman for the Eccentric newspapers in Birmingham, winced when friends observed that her braces chomped 10 years off of her appearance.

Cheryl Major, 31, a Grand Blanc mother of two, didn't mind wearing the silver-colored appliance — but her husband can't wait until it is removed.

Despite an initial bout of self-consciousness — which quickly diminished — Varner wore his braces for more than a year to enhance his appearance. Rinke and Major recently started their treatments and will continue to wear the corrective aides for another several months to a year. They're among the increasing number of adults who have outgrown their adolescent fear of braces and are undergoing treatment to correct cosmetic or orthodontic problems.

ALLEN ASH has seen the percentage of adult patients at his Farmington Hills orthodontics practice increase from some 5 percent to 15 percent over the past five years. He has changed his office hours to accommodate the increase in adult patients.

At David Edgar's Southfield orthodontic practice, adults comprise about 30 percent of his patients. He credits the increase to expanded dental insurance coverage for adult



brace-wearers and better orthodontic techniques that hasten adult treatment and make braces less visible.

"It used to be a small percentage — 1 to 3 percent — before 1975," added Larry Aagesen, a Rochester orthodontist. "Since that time there's been a great increase. In some practices it's as high as 24 percent."

"Can we relate it to the baby boomers? Maybe not. Most of those people had braces. The adults today are able to afford it and the social stigma of wearing braces isn't there."

AAGESEN ALSO sees a relationship between growing health and fitness trends and the increased number of adult orthodontic patients.

In general, people are more conscious of their appearance," Edgar

added. "Some individuals are looking for a change in their lives. And although they can change their physical appearance, they (straightened teeth) won't solve divorce or make someone who's 80 look 20."

Orthodontists say they'd prefer to treat the variety of dental problems that require braces — incorrect bite, crowded or crooked teeth, incorrect jaw alignment — before the patient becomes a teen-ager. Waiting until adulthood for treatment may weaken gums — risking periodontal disease — and aggravate tooth misalignment.

Adult teeth are forced into place more slowly than children's teeth, lengthening the treatment time by a few months to a year. According to Ash, adult treatment also costs any-

where from \$400 to \$900 more, averaging approximately \$2,500 for adults.

But adults often make better patients than children because they are more apt to practice proper dental hygiene. And, added Ash, "are so much more motivated, especially if they are paying the bills."

Better orthodontic materials have lightened the burden of wearing braces. Wires are more resilient and require fewer changes, hastening treatment time and lessening pain. Bonding materials have been improved and individual braces are smaller. And although most adults choose traditional metal appliances, plastic braces are available in colors that blend with the color of their teeth.

Some orthodontists are experimenting with "invisible" braces that are positioned on the inside of the teeth. But treatment and expense are more than doubled.

"There are a multitude of disadvantages," Ash added. "California, of course is where it started. The first time I heard about it was in 'People' magazine. Some scientific journal, huh?"

"I've hesitated using it because it is more difficult and will prolong treatment."

Orthodontists doubt whether braces will become fashion items — although one of Aagesen's patients enjoys her braces so much that she doesn't want to remove them. But they guarantee that for adults, they'll become as common as contact lenses.

## police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police and fire calls received during the past week:

**SUSPECTS NABBED**

Two 16-year-olds who allegedly stole one car, allegedly tried to steal a pickup truck and are suspected of stealing another car were released to their guardians' custody following their arrest late Wednesday in Farmington Hills.

The two Detroit teens were arrested about 1:30 p.m. at the Condo-miniums, 29670 12 Mile, after they allegedly stole a Chevrolet Blazer. They arrived there in a 1979 Cadillac, suspected of being stolen recently in Detroit, Farmington Hills Police Sgt. Charles Nebus said.

Farmington Hills surveillance officers — in the area because of an increase in both car thefts and thefts from cars — watched as the teens drove the Blazer several blocks from the complex along 12 Mile, west of Middlebelt, before stopping at the Iverary Condominiums, Nebus said.

Once there, the teens stopped near a 1985 pickup truck. But when they couldn't break out the driver's-side window with a large two by four, they turned their attention to the \$12,000 Blazer, Nebus said.

In an attempt to flee, one of the teens drove the Blazer into the other following in the Cadillac. To prevent a high-speed chase, officers blocked the exit to the condominium complex, Nebus said.

The teen in the Cadillac — apparently in an effort to avert the roadblock — drove into the back of the Blazer, causing grille damage to the Cadillac and minor damage to the rear of the Blazer. The driver of the Cadillac then tried to flee on foot, but was apprehended soon after, Nebus said.

The Blazer's driver-side window and steering column were damaged. The steering column on the Cadillac also was damaged, he said.

Police will file petitions with the Oakland County Probate Court Juvenile Division, charging the teens with unlawfully driving away an automobile and attempting to unlawfully drive away an automobile. If the Cadillac proves to be stolen, they also could face additional charges of possession of a stolen automobile, Nebus said.

**TEEN DETAINED**

A 16-year-old Northville teen was detained Dec. 11 while allegedly trespassing in the Farmington High

School parking lot. He also was allegedly in possession of suspected marijuana, according to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report.

The teen was discovered in the back seat of a car in the school's east parking lot about mid-morning. Conspicuous were five grams of suspected marijuana and a cigarette pack containing suspected marijuana paraphernalia, public safety officers said.

Oakland County Probate Court Juvenile Division will be petitioned to review both charges, officers said.

**GIFTS RECOVERED**

More than half of about 50 gifts stolen Dec. 9 from under a Christmas tree at the Knights of Columbus St. Francis Council Lodge, 21900 Middlebelt, were recovered the next day, Farmington Hills Police said.

Twenty-six gifts were found on a trail southeast of the K&C Hall. Sgt. Charles Nebus said Farmington Hills Police were alerted to their location by a Neighborhood Watch captain riding his bicycle in the area about 8:45 a.m. Dec. 10.

**WINDOW SMASHED**

Seven windows at Lutheran High School West, 30175 Highmeadow, were damaged sometime Dec. 6-12. Six of the windows were damaged by BBs, a seventh by a beer bottle. Several floodlights also were shot out. Damage was estimated at \$300, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

A driver's-vent window on a passenger car was damaged Thursday afternoon by a beer bottle. Several floodlights also were shot out. Damage was estimated at \$70, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

**THEFTS REPORTED**

Several thefts were reported to local police agencies.

A radar detector valued at \$150 was reported stolen from a car parked outside a house on Greenhill Dec. 5. A microwave oven valued at \$300 was reported stolen from Spectrum Center, 32000 Northwestern Highway, Dec. 6.

Thirty-two boxes of ceiling tile were reported stolen from the Pepper Square shopping center construction site Dec. 3-10.

A snowblower valued at \$375 was reported stolen from a house on Plumbrook Dec. 10.

A radar detector valued at \$280 was

reported stolen from a car parked outside Stroth's Ice Cream Parlor, 35522 Grand River, Dec. 10.

A radar detector valued at \$315 was reported stolen from a car parked outside the Rupp & Bowman Co., 24505 In-doplex Circle, Dec. 10.

A radar detector valued at \$285 was reported stolen from a car parked outside Controlled Precision Machining, 37560 Enterprise Ct., Dec. 11.

A radar detector valued at \$350 was reported stolen from a car parked outside the Restaurant Inn, 35300 Grand River, Dec. 10-11.

More than \$2,000 worth of personal property was reported stolen from a house on Stonewood Court, Dec. 11. Taken were satellite hookup equipment, a videocassette recorder, a stereo unit, a color television and a camera.

A gas-powered cement mixer valued at \$1,800 was reported stolen from a construction site on Commerce sometime Dec. 4-9.

A citizens' band radio was reported stolen from a car parked at the Red Roof Inn, 2400 Sinclair Court, sometime Dec. 12-13.

## on the agenda

Farmington Hills City Council 31525 11 Mile, Farmington Hills 7:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 16

Farmington Hills City Council will consider approval of the preliminary draft of the 12 Mile Road master traffic plan. Council is expected to establish a Tax Increment Finance Authority (TIFA) and district in which tax increment revenue will be used to pay for capital improvements. Council's mayor and mayor pro-tem are to be elected. To be considered is the city's attorney's contract and purchase of a new firing range system for the new Farmington Hills police building. Public hearings are scheduled to consider zoning requests. Council will also consider a planned residential development plan for cluster and multiple housing on 71 acres on the south side of Nine Mile, between Gill Road and Green Hill Commons subdivision. Also to be considered is the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) project plan and bonds for the proposed Little Caesars International at 12 Mile and Drake.

Farmington Public Schools Administrative Offices 325000 Shawwassee, Farmington 8 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 17

Information on the district's search for a superintendent will be discussed, as two guest speakers join the trustees. In a related matter, a salary for Interim Superintendent Graham Lewis between June 1-June 30 will also be considered. Lewis will replace retiring Superintendent Lewis Schulman.

Deed approval for property at 12

Mile and Drake sold to Little Caesars will be discussed by the trustees. Also discussed will be acceptance of a gift to Woodcreek Elementary School.

Farmington City Council Council Chambers 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington 8 p.m., Monday, Dec. 16

The proposed creation of a park foundation for the Spicer property in Farmington Hills will be considered by the council, with cost to be approved by Farmington Hills council last week, and would stimulate community support and funding for the improvement of the property. School officials have shown an interest in developing an educational program around the farm located on the property.

A public hearing to discuss proposed uses for federal Community Development Block Grant money is first on the agenda, followed by a hearing on the county Commercial Assistance Program.

A computer system upgrade for the 47th District Court will be discussed by the council, with cost to be shared by Farmington and Farmington Hills.

Application for a GSD license, permitting sale of alcoholic liquor other than beer and wine, has been filed with the Michigan Department of Commerce. The council will consider the application Monday and give input to the state agency.

Requests for approval for a law enforcement vehicle payment to the city park contractor, and appointments to the Board of Review and Board of Cancellations will be considered.



## POLO FOR MEN

Now he can enjoy the comfort it used to take years of wearing to achieve. Polo makes it possible with this weathered mesh knit shirt. The sporty look is just what he wants in casual wear. Garment-washed for better fit now and less shrinkage later. Bright green, blue, orange, racing yellow, pink, turquoise, purple, jade, white, navy, smoke or teal. Sizes S-M-L-XL, \$39.

## Jacobson's

CONVENIENT HOLIDAY HOURS:  
MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY UNTIL 9.  
Shop Saturday until 8.