

Driving drunk: It could prove deadly

Lyne Cohn is a North Farmington High School sophomore.
By Lyne Cohn
special writer

Project Graduation has become a very important project in the Farmington community. It involves parents, students, and the problem of drinking and driving.

Project Graduation is practiced

all throughout Farmington, Michigan and the United States. What is Project Graduation? Simply, it is a movement to help teens encounter, realize and, possibly, help the problem of drinking and driving. Unfortunately, this problem is massive in the United States. Project Graduation has many sub-projects that try to help solve this problem. One of these is entitled SADD — Stu-

dents Against Driving Drunk. SADD was developed at North Farmington High School in 1984. Francine Green, a 1986 NFHS graduate, was responsible. Says Francine, "Students that become involved with Project Graduation and SADD do it not for personal gains, they do it for others, to help, to feel good."

This is true. No student encounters

any personal gains from SADD; it is more or less a personal triumph from helping others. This feeling makes the students feel confident about their abilities to help others.

LAST SPRING, the four Farmington high schools — North Farmington, Harrison, Farmington and Mercy — started a new campaign against drunk driving. This program

was referred to as SAFE RIDES. SAFE RIDES was designed to offer any student a ride to their home, if they or the person they drove with had been drinking. Each Farmington high school took one weekend in a trial month to start SAFE RIDES. Students were encouraged to call the SAFE RIDES representatives at their headquarters from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Friday and Saturday.

Francine Green, as coordinator and president of SADD at NFHS 1985-1986, tried to help her recruits prepare to their best ability and need. Legally, any SAFE RIDES volunteer, nationwide, must attend a clinic given by the Boy Scouts of America offering instruction in first aid, CPR and dealing with drunk people. According to Francine, the first session was weak. In the beginning trial month of such a program, there is not expected to be much student response; if any, because they are afraid of being revealed. The volunteers must be prepared, however, as all North Farmington representatives were.

ALSO REQUIRED for a SAFE RIDES program are adults to supervise. The whole program is based on confidentiality and trust, therefore, the assisting parents must be sworn to secrecy. They are also not

able to gain knowledge of the students who call in for help. This way, there is no information passed from parent to parent, and the student in need of help can be assured that his parents will not know unless he tells them. The volunteers from NFHS were of all grade levels. "It is not necessary to be of driving age to assist with SAFE RIDES," says Francine. "Many underclassmen helped with phone calls and filing. We had one co-ed driving team."

Although SAFE RIDES was not successful last year in Farmington, it is expected to be this year. "Someone from the 'in' crowd needs to call for help and realize that everything is confidential and private. Then, if they announce it to their friends," says Francine, "they will realize they can help save lives and call. They also have to see that we are not against drinking; we are against mixing drinking with driving, though, and this must be public knowledge."

On that note, Project Graduation, SADD and SAFE RIDES should hopefully serve their purpose in the years to come at North Farmington High School, in Michigan, and throughout the United States. Remember — DON'T DRIVE DRUNK — IT COULD ONLY COST YOUR LIFE.

Schools hope to stem vandalism

By Mary Klemic
staff writer

Somebody's warped idea of fun is spoiling the real fun for children who play at Botsford Elementary School's playground at recess and in the afternoon and evening.

A spurt in vandalism at the school, 19513 Lathurs in Livonia, has led administrators to establish a reward program. They are offering a \$50 reward for information leading to the arrest or conviction of anyone who destroys property on school grounds.

Botsford School is in the Clarenceville School District, which includes parts of Livonia, Redford and Farmington Hills. Preliminary counts show this year's enrollment there to

be about the same as the 1985-86 total of 510.

"The kids are the ones that are suffering, because of older teens' and young adults', maybe, ideas of having a good time," Botsford principal Dan Cypher said.

Because of the damages, administrators are worried about installing \$1,800 worth of playground equipment donated by the Botsford PTO. "It would be a terrible shame after all the work by the PTO to have this new stuff torn up," Cypher said.

THE VANDALISM is an ongoing problem.

"We had a bad June," the principal said. "It seemed to clear up in July and early August."

"I don't know if somebody went on vacation or got all their anger vent-

ed," he said wryly.

In June, 20 windows were broken. A set of climbing bars, cemented in place, was pulled out of the ground and left on the site. Before it could be replaced, vandals made a second visit and bent the bars. Parking and one way signs were damaged. Names and profanities were scratched into walls.

Two large tractor tires on the playground were doused with flammable material and ignited, once during the week before Labor Day and again on the second Saturday in September.

"They were totally engulfed in flame," Cypher said.

LIVONIA POLICE conducted special surveillance in a nearby park

in the summer, and "their help there was very evident," Cypher said. But area residents don't have good visibility of the grounds.

"We haven't had much luck with anyone seeing anything going on," the principal said.

Cypher said he has sent notices home with students asking parents to be more watchful and "listen a little closer" to what their youngsters say. It's hoped that this will bring about a lead to the vandals.

Anyone with information about the vandalism is urged to call Cypher's office, the Clarenceville school superintendent's office, the Livonia Police Department or the Livonia Fire Department.

Future of school trips in limbo

By LeAnne Rogers
special writer

Action on a revised student trip policy, which could effectively prohibit programs such as the Back-to-Back foreign exchange program, was delayed until October by the Walled Lake Board of Education.

The proposed policy would require that trips be curriculum-related and that the students participating be enrolled in the curriculum. The policy would also prohibit the district from paying salaries to employee spouses, chaperones or substitutes. "I am concerned about having students out of the classroom for extended times like going to the foreign country," said board member Patricia Jackman.

"It concerns me that students will be placed in the position of enjoying

other students or feeling deprived because they can't afford these trips."

Another provision Jackman said was needed in the policy was to disclaim any responsibility for students and teachers who may socialize out side the school.

Hugh Davies, assistant superintendent for elementary education, asked for a clarification of a portion of the policy.

"PARENTS HAVE raised the funds for the salary but not for a teacher's whole salary," Davies said. "We have paid the salary of the teacher who has gone on the exchange program."

The Back-to-Back program, which sends exchange students to France, does not benefit all students, board Member Kenneth Tucker said. "This

is a very selective program. That is not what public education is all about. All students who want to go should be able to."

Former board member Bonnie Venze said the curriculum-related revision was made at the instigation of two board members and aimed at ending the French exchange program.

"There is no French instruction at the elementary school level," she said. "I would recommend you use the policy statement that says the trips will be related to sound educational objectives."

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