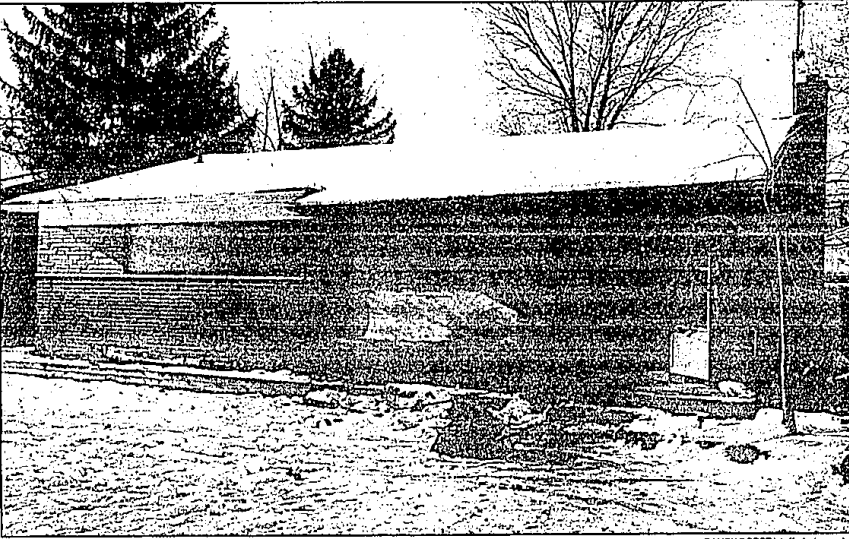


4 Farmington teens flee burning house

Probe is continuing



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

A fire of undetermined origin broke out in this house on Hayden early Monday.

An 18-year-old Farmington resident awakened his brother and two sisters after the family house on Hayden caught on fire early Monday. All fled the burning house to safety.

Damage to the one-story house, home to the Piggins family, was estimated at \$75,000, Commander Michael Wiggins of the Farmington Department of Public Safety said.

About half of that was structural damage with the other half involving contents damaged by smoke, flames and water. Damage was heaviest in the finished basement, living room and kitchen. The fire started in the basement, according to a public safety report.

Investigators called the fire accidental, but the cause remains undetermined.

Family members were lifting through belongings Tuesday as the post-fire process of insurance reporting continued.

When firefighters arrived shortly after 4:30 a.m. Monday, heavy smoke was coming from the open front door. A wall between the kitchen and living room was in flames, Wiggins said.

ACCORDING TO the public safety report:

Lawrence Piggins, 18, was asleep in a basement bedroom when he heard a crackling noise and smelled smoke. He ran through the house, waking up his brother Brian, 14, and two sisters, Catherine, 19, and Christine, 16, who were sleeping upstairs. All ran onto the front yard for safety.

The most severely burned area of the house appeared to be under a workbench in the basement, where the wooden floor braces were completely burned. That is the area of the house where officials believe the fire started.

Family members told officers there had been a problem with the clothes dryer, and that the house's electrical wiring had recently been checked by Detroit Edison, Wiggins said.

Lawrence Piggins had gone to bed shortly before he was awakened by the fire. His brother, Brian, who had been playing with his computer in the living room until about 4 a.m., also fell asleep before the fire occurred. Both sisters were asleep in a bedroom.

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