

Meetings planned on redistricting options

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find a way to alleviate overcrowding in some Farmington schools.

THE PANEL was asked to make a recommendation to the school board by mid-January; trustees are expected to make a final decision on their recommendation by March.

The meetings are scheduled as follows:

- Monday, Nov. 16, 7 p.m. — High school issues (grades nine to 12) will be discussed at the Harrison High School Auditorium. Harrison is on 12 Mile, between Orchard Lake and Middlebelt roads. The meeting will be chaired by Harrison principal Clayton Graham.
- Wednesday, Nov. 18, 7 p.m. — Middle school issues (grades six to eight) will be discussed at East Middle School. East is on Middlebelt, between 10 and 11 Mile roads. The meeting will be chaired by Warner Middle School principal Walt Scoble.
- Thursday, Nov. 19, 7 p.m. — Elementary issues (grades K to five) will be discussed at Larkshire Elementary School. Larkshire is south of 10 Mile, between Orchard Lake and Middlebelt. Take Springbrook south from 10 Mile, or Lamar east from Orchard Lake to reach the school. The meeting will be chaired by Larkshire principal Al Lanigan.

Information from the town meetings will be used first by three committees, headed by each of the principals mentioned above. Community opinions will be funneled through these committees — which involve parents, school employees and residents — who are researching overcrowding issues at each level.

Compiled information, including residents' comments, will then be forwarded to the seven-member community boundary study panel that was appointed by the school board this month.

In addition to gathering information at town meetings, each of the three research groups will discuss issues relevant to their level of schooling, according to Nutter.

At the high school level, questions involving equal and fair educational opportunities, and how this could affect boundaries, will be discussed.

SCHOOL OFFICIALS have noted an imbalance of student numbers in the three high schools. In recent years, Harrison High has fewer students than either North Farmington or Farmington high schools, which

are both receiving new students from growth on the district's west side.

At the middle school level, balance of student populations, equal opportunities in the midst of crowded conditions, and short- and long-range population projections for the west side will be discussed.

The middle school group will also look at how each middle school feeds into the high schools. They will study whether students from one middle school should feed into the same high school, or whether numbers should be equalized in each high school freshman class.

Although school officials closely projected numbers of middle school students this year, an influx into the middle schools during the 1986-87 year sent administrators rushing to hire teachers and buy buses at the beginning of the school year. The group will also review student growth projections at the middle school level.

Residents with comments on any issues related to school boundaries, or use of buildings, can either attend a scheduled town meeting, or call or write the appropriate chairman with their comments, Nutter said.

Several elementary are operating at capacity, with some using portable classrooms. This year, kindergarten classes have reached their limit, Nutter said this fall, following the annual Fourth Friday count.

THE ELEMENTARY group will study: how to house increasing numbers of elementary students, the feasibility of building new schools on the growing west side, whether any district-owned property could be used for a new school, current and projected transportation costs, and current and long-range boundaries for all the elementary schools.

School officials have been juggling elementary boundaries for several years, as the building boom in western Farmington Hills continues to add more students.

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Support provided for war vets

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The veterans want follow-up, they said. They think a 24-hour emergency phone line would work. Mostly, they want people that care.

"It's hard for me to trust," said Dale Palmer, president of the VVA Oakland County Chapter. "We've been through so many problems. We need follow-up. So many want to just drink and go in a corner and hide." Johnson went through traditional therapy programs, which most of the Oakland County veterans said were ineffective in helping them. It's one of the reasons Johnson said he wants to help.

THE DUO is looking into private agency help, because they say many of the government-sponsored programs have not worked.

"I went through therapy myself. I know what you need," Johnson said. "There are too many surviving one day at a time, one hour at a time, like they did in Vietnam."

Documentation released in 1980 shows that of the 2.8 million who served in Southeast Asia from 1964-1973 — considered the Vietnam era — more than half a million are suffering from some type of "post-traumatic stress disorder." The disorder is a chronic lifestyle affecting not only the veterans, but their families and those close to them.

It can include depression, isolation, feelings of rage, avoidance of feelings, guilt at surviving the war,

and anxiety. The disorder can disturb sleep, cause intrusive thoughts and problems in coping with everyday life.

Recent movie releases such as "Platoon," television programs showing the realities of the Vietnam War, and media exposure about veteran disorders have added to the incentive to begin a structured outreach program. Added to this incentive are the many veterans who are deciding to help themselves.

"THERE ARE good vibes now," said Morgan. "There are good things going on for the Vietnam vets. They're beginning to trust again."

Susan Nicholas, a family therapist with the Remulus Health Center, spoke at the veterans meeting about the need to develop a program for the "dysfunctional" family of the veteran — one that experiences the same problems from living with a veteran.

"Families tend to track over generations," she said. "People's behavior tends to repeat, and happen over and over."

As an example, Morgan talked about today's youths who dress in fatigues and many who idolize the Vietnam veteran. "There are generations coming from the Vietnam conflict that will impact the next 100 years," he said. "It's almost like we've rebirthed Vietnam."

"We need to begin looking at the needs of Vietnam veterans being manifest, instead of, 'How I can look into your head?'"

Morgan and Johnson are working on their outreach program as a team — something they say is important to veterans. The teamwork concept worked overseas, and they believe it can work in helping overcome the problems the war caused.

"We were never alone (in Vietnam)," Morgan said. "Then one day, they took us all and put us back where we belonged. It took us a while to find each other again."

"You never fully get over Vietnam," Johnson added, "but you learn to cope."

Veterans interested in an outreach help program, or agencies interested in helping, can call the Oakland County Chapter of VVA at 388-5940.

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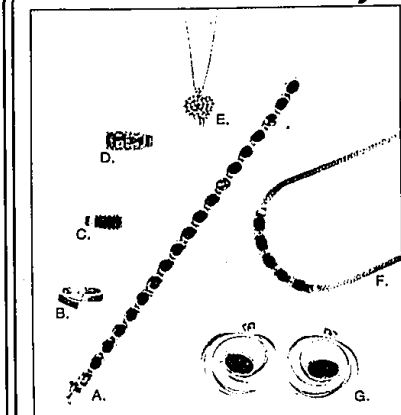
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