

Beechview kids Adopt A Neighbor

By Casey Hans
staff writer

Some were shy. Others jumped right in.

Whatever the approach, Beechview Elementary students netted themselves a new learning experience, lots of new friends and a special relationship with the neighbors around their school and home.

Both staff and students are participating in the school's Adopt-A-Neighbor program — the school-wide project selected for this year by a staff committee. About 80 percent of Beechview students have adopted a person in their neighborhood who does not have children in school, and who might benefit as well.

"They develop a relationship," said fifth grade teacher Joyce Mecoli. "They (the students) know what's going on, and they're eager."

Each participating student prepares a monthly project for the special "neighbor," which could include a piece of artwork, a story, a poem or providing a service such as raking leaves.

SOME HAVE shared out-of-school activities with their friends. To introduce themselves, stu-

dents did a personal interview with their adopted neighbor. Some of the students were apprehensive; others asked additional questions.

"How to make a friend, how to meet people, is not an easy thing to do," explained Mecoli. "There are benefits and perks of developing friendships. It takes a long time to do."

Teacher Kelly Loniewski said she thinks the experience is also a confidence-builder and teaches students how to communicate. "They were surprised at some of the responses," she said. "When they write the poems and letters, it comes from the heart."

An unexpected experience happened when one of the adopted neighbors died this year, said principal Wally Prince. Although the student was upset, the widow of the friend was able to take his place as a new "adopted friend."

PRINCE SAID the Adopt-A-Neighbor project will include a grade-by-grade activity, in which the "neighbors" will be invited to visit the school and meet with their student friends.

Fourth grade teacher Jo Jarchow recently helped coordinate the fourth grade visit, in which students did a skit called "Only Love



HANDY DORST/staff photographer

Jool Burman (right), a fourth grader, explains the use of one of the computers in Beechview's media center to his adopted neighbor, Barbara Humphries, whose four children went through the school.

is Spoken Here," and took visitors on a tour of the school. Each "neighbor" will also receive a special award certificate for their participation.

Overall, students are expected to improve communication skills, learn good citizenship, enliven their neighborhoods, increase individual expression, enhance their self image and make a link be-

tween Beechview and the community.

Most of all, Mecoli said, she hopes the students will learn to reach out to others by the Adopt-A-Neighbor experience. "Hopefully the program will continue for more than one year," Loniewski added. "I think the families find it to be very positive."

on the agenda

Below are highlights from agendas of government meetings this week. All meetings, unless otherwise noted, are open to the public.

Downtown Development Authority
Farmington City Hall
City Council Meeting Room
23600 Liberty
8 a.m., Tuesday, March 14

Contract awards for Phase II of downtown streetscape improvements are expected to be considered by the board. Also on the agenda are presentations by two public relations firms, the 1989-90 proposed budget and other general business.

Farmington Board of Education
Schulman Administrative Center
2300 Shattuck
Tuesday, March 14
7 p.m. — Closed Meeting
7:30 p.m. — Regular Meeting

The board will meet in closed session at 7 p.m., as allowed under the state's Open Meetings Act, for purposes of discussing contract negotiations for the district.

First on the agenda during the regular meeting, bids will be opened for:

- six different portions of Phase II of the Farmington High media center project;
- for the North Farmington High School sound system; and
- for gymnasium lighting at East

Middle School.

Also on the agenda is consideration of a Highmeadow Common Campus sibling preference policy requested by parents, presentation of a schematic design for the new west-side elementary school, and consideration of a computing services contract with Oakland Schools.

General Membership Meeting
Council of Homeowner Associations of Farmington Hills
Farmington Community Library
Farmington Hills Branch
32737 12 Mile
7 p.m., Tuesday, March 14

This general membership meeting will feature a report on the Farmington Hills Year 2000 Plan and its current progress. Also on the agenda is a report by Farmington Hills councilman Ben Marks, who will present a brief program on the question of city autonomy as it relates to the home day care issue.

Joint Meeting
• Farmington City Council
• Farmington Hills City Council
• Community Library Board
Farmington Community Library
Farmington Hills Branch
32737 12 Mile
7:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 15

The two city councils will meet with library trustees to discuss expansion options for the library system.

Lid clamped on report

Continued from Page 1

Wittenberg had asked the district for the information verbally one week before filing the FOI request.

After filing, Anderson said they requested the information because several people had questioned the legitimacy of the district's claim about using operating money for building projects. According to the state Board of Education, voter-approved operating money can't be used to build a new school, but county-allocated operating millage could be used to pay off a construction loan.

WITTENBERG SAID last week they were planning to view the documents offered by the district, then decide how to proceed.

Under the act, the company may pursue a denial through the Oakland County Circuit Court.

The Freedom of Information Act was passed by the state Legislature in 1976 to regulate and set requirements of public records by all public bodies operating in the state. Local school boards are considered public bodies. The act took effect April 13, 1977.

police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police incidents, fire calls and court cases reported during the past week:

• BURGLAR APPEARS

A woman trying to sleep at the Farmington Cooperative, 22727 Longacre, heard her front door open and footsteps in the first-floor front room at 2:30 a.m. Thursday.

When officers arrived, they found the front door ajar and the frame damaged, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

• THEFTS REPORTED

A \$5,500-wait generator valued at \$2,795 was reported stolen from Pietila Brothers Pools, 30735 Grand River, March 8-9.

• DAMAGE REPORTED

Three incidents of large rocks being thrown through house windows were reported in the city of Farmington early last week, causing more than \$1,500 in damage.

According to public safety reports, two of the incidents occurred on Tall Pine, with the third occurring on Smithfield. The rocks recovered

were 8-12 inches in diameter. Residents were home when the incidents occurred.

• 4 TICKETED

Four young people were ticketed when beer or marijuana were found in three cars parked on Maywood Drive at Fairmont Park Apartments March 3.

Doctor pleads guilty

Continued from Page 1

resulting from a blood infection, with diabetes and heart and kidney failure as contributing factors.

After hospital officials talked with employees and Caraccio, they contacted authorities last May 20 with information about a wrongful patient death that may have occurred

— as required by state law. Cherry-Sapp's body was exhumed in June from a Southfield cemetery, by permission of Southfield District Judge Susan Molisee. An autopsy resulted in recertification of her death as homicide.

The Associated Press contributed to this story.

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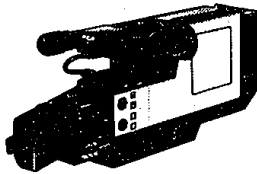
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