

Teen's suicide puzzles school, neighbors

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

The Sept. 9 shooting death of a Farmington Hills teen has been ruled a suicide.

Washtenaw County medical examiner David Start said this week that Rusty Gutusky, 14, had killed himself with a .22 caliber rifle. The shooting took place at about 4 p.m. Friday, Sept. 9, at the boy's home on Lytle.

After his father Steve found

him, he was rushed to Botsford General Hospital in Farmington Hills and then flown by helicopter to the C.S. Mott Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor, where he died Saturday morning.

"He was a good student and a good influence in the building," said Laura Miner, Power Middle School principal.

Miner said school officials met Sunday to discuss preparing students and faculty for the news

and the emotional toll it would likely take.

"We have a crisis team," she said. "We have a couple of extra social workers on hand and we watch for students, and faculty, who are having trouble."

Gutusky had apparently pried open a gun cabinet to get the gun and found ammunition, which was not in the cabinet, and shot himself. The boy and his father

had only a short time before discussed the recent fatal accidental shooting by another Hills 14-year-old.

That incident, on Sept. 4, which also involved a self-inflicted gun shot, was ruled accidental. It was unclear whether the teens knew each other.

Gutusky had recently completed a hunter's safety course and appeared to be fine, according to family neighbor Doug Howard.

"He played baseball and football, and he liked to bowl," Howard said. "Everything seemed fine."

Howard, who had gone to visit the teen just before the shooting, had probably been the last person to see Gutusky alive.

Rusty Gutusky was born on April 15, 1981 in Southfield and died Sept. 10, 1994 at C.S. Mott Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor.

He is survived by his parents, Steven and Barbara; grandparents John and Augustine Ray, and Joseph and Virginia Gutusky; and great grandfather John Ray.

Services were Wednesday at St. Alden Church in Livonia with the Rev. Gerald K. Flannery officiating. Memorial contributions should be made to C.S. Mott Children's Hospital.

Program's goal is to keep WW II memories burning

BY LOCONNOR
STAFF WRITER

It's called "The Big One." A newly-formed Farmington-area group wants to make sure it still looms large on people's minds 50 years later.

Farmington-Farmington Hills

50th Anniversary of World War II Commemorative Community Program already has a few ideas to rekindle the fervor that marked the most famous war of this century.

One includes flying a large flag at various municipal outposts.

Another involves bringing interested veterans into classrooms to speak to children about World War II.

Already, the group has been inundated with requests from schools.

"The funny thing is my kids are not interested in World War II, but my grandkids are," said John "Uncle Jack" Curd, a World War II veteran and driving force behind the 14-member group.

Curd, who is a member of the Farmington Elks, was an active booster in the Farmington High band's effort to go to France to commemorate the 50th anniversary

of the Normandy invasion.

He's enlisted an array of community types to serve on the committee, including Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber director Jody Soronen, Farmington Councilwoman Mary Bush and Farmington librarian Marilyn Smith.

"The young kids want to know more about it. . . . It would be speculation on my part, but I think with the average World War II veteran being 74 years old their children were baby boomers."

"They probably didn't have the same hardships as we did. Then, of course, there was the Vietnam

War."

Time is ticking, though. The 50th anniversary of the end of World War II is November 1995.

First order of business is to contact living veterans or their surviving relatives, Curd said.

Names are being taken at the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce, Farmington Branch Library, Farmington Elks, VFW and Legion posts.

The purpose is to honor Farmington area people — living or deceased — who served in the war in a special ceremony during either Memorial Day or Veterans Day. Those interested in getting in-


volvement with ongoing commemorative projects can do so as well.

The Farmington group is in the process of being certified as a U.S. Department of Defense official commemorative community program.

Once certified, an official World War II commemorative flag will be given to the outfit. The banner will be flown at both city halls and libraries, as well as veteran halls.

Afterward, the flag will be turned over to the Farmington Public Library.

"The main purpose is to keep alive the era of World War II," Curd said.



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