Picnic unites pen pals from 2 schools

Throughout the 1937-98 school year, students in Wood Creek Elementary School fourth-grade teacher Rosheen Kilano's class were pen pals with a first-grade class from Dolsen Elementary School in South Lyon.

Pupils sent pictures, letters and even videos back and forth between the schools. But they wanted to meet each other. The big moment finally came May 21, when 'Pen Pal Picnic Day' was hosted at Wood Creek. Dolsen teacher Cindy Shuster brought her class to the Farmington district school for a day of full-fledged fun in the sun.

Among highlights was a "colebrity reading" by School-rant College English Professor Gordon Wilson. He read "Somewhere in the World Right Now." a book dealing with time zones and how people from around the world are doing different things at the same time.

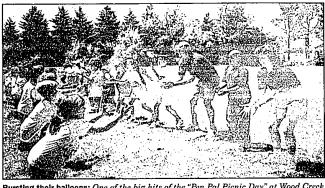
Students also made a sundial in the grass, played in a golf bar accommendate on the pizza for lunch and consumed cookies baked by parents for the event.

Scott Saxton, owner of Fresh

event.

Scott Saxton, owner of Fresh Approach Market in Farmington, donated four large watermelons to the picnic and provided each child with a goodie bag from the store. Saxton was on

Plenic fun: Dolsen student Steven Feamster (left) and Wood Creek student Tetsuya Toyokuni pose dur-ing lunch.



Bursting their balloons: One of the big hits of the "Pen Pal Pienic Day" at Wood Creek Elementary School was the water balloon toss, as demonstrated by fleft row, foreground) Dolsen Elementary School students Jessica Thompson and Trevor Moore and (right row, foreground) Dolsen Elementary School teacher Cindy Shuster, Wood Creek student T.J. Wright, local store owner Scott Saxton and Wood Creek student Trisuwa Tropkini.

The idea for a pen pal program grew out of Kilano and Shuster's desire for their students to

hand for the picnic and had a blast himself.
The idea for a pen pal program grew out of Kilano and Shuster's Kilano's classroom alone, studesire for their students to

man backgrounds, with eight of 20 students speaking more than



Pen pals: (from left) Dolsen students Alicia Schwerin and Stefani Blain, Wood Creek student Stephanie Sinuk, Dolsen student Sarah Williamson, and Wood Creek students Karen Liebowitz and Andreea Pop

Budget balancing act: WL relies on savings

If not for savings, Walled Lake schools would have a deficit in their 1998-99 budget. The school district is growing by an average of 600 students annually, but state per pupil funding only covers a percentage of those students. "We have been growing very

age of those students.
"We have been growing very rapidly the past few years," said Sandra Motz, district director of business services. However, "The increase for the state is coming in less than inflation and this year we have

state is coming in less than inflation and this year we have a zero increase."

The per pupil grant in 1998-99 will be \$7,399, the same as the 1997-98 school year.

And while growth will increase the state foundation grant, it still won't cover the cost of all the new students, Motz said.

Walled Lake schools expelled.

Walled Lake schools enroll-ment was 13,150 in February and in estimated to increase to 13,600 in September. But since 13,600 in September. But since the state per pupil funding is based on 40 percent of the February 1998 count and 60 percent of the September 1998 count, the district will have to cover the costs of 200 students, Motz said.

"It seems that every year, it's smaller and smaller," she said of increases in the state foun-

of increases in the state foundation grant.

State funding makes up \$80.5 million or 72 percent of the district's \$111.6 million proposed budget. Local revenues are estimated at \$22.6 million and \$2.6 million is expected in federal dollars.

This year, district expenditures are higher than estimated revenues at \$118.5 million. Eighty percent of exponditures are due to salaries and benefits. And staffing in the district will increase by the equivalent of 94 full-time

employees in 1998-99 to handle growth including two new mid-dle schools opening in August. Since the district is required by state law to submit a bal-anced budget, Motz said the nearly \$6.9 million shortfall will be occurred by a present will be covered by a projected savings of \$1.5 million in unused funds, \$3.9 million in equity from unused retirement funding, and another \$1.5 million in leftover deficit funding.

While the board approved

the proposed budget unani-mously, board vice president Thomas McConnell said the

Thomas McConnell said the district is very fortunate it has savings to use.
"If we didn't have a savings, like many districts don't, we'd have to cut programs," McConnell said.

However, Superintendent James Geisler said, "We are concerned how we use the sav-ings. We don't know how long

ings. We don't know how long it's going to last."

Another major district expenditures include the 11.12 percent the district pays in state retirement funding for state retirement tunning for their school employees - the same rate as the 1997-98 school year. But taxpayers will save a lit-tle money this year as well. While the 1998-99 millage

While the 1998-99 millage rate is 18 mills for non-home-stead or business properties, the same as in 1997-98, the mestead millage is dropping to 3.30 mills from the current 3.339 mills. And the districts debt millage is 4.8 mills, a reduction of .30 mills. The reduction in rates will save the homeowner of a \$100,000 house \$33.25 annually.

No Bones About It. Totally Free 🤋

The Home Loan with no up-front costs, from the bank that brought you Totally Free checking.



No points

No application fees

No title costs

No appraisal costs

No up-front costs at all

And with only 15% down (vs. 20% from other lenders), you avoid paying private mortgage insurance. Available up to \$500,000 Lower down payments at great rates. Available in fixed or adjustable terms.

Telephone Loan Center 1 • 800 • DIAL • FFM (1 • 800 • 342 • 5336)



FDIC

Loan offices throughout metropolitan Detroit, Ann Ar Lansing, Kalamazoo, Owosso and Grand Rapids

owner-occupied homes only with \$500,000 maximum loan amore flate (APR) example based on \$50,000 loan at stated confract amortization; monthly peryments of interest and principal of \$44 asyment charge. Final loan approval subject to our apprelate and which are available on request. Properly insurance required. All

WE'LL PUT MORE MONEY IN YOUR POCKET.



Special Fixed Introductor Rate through July 1999



Current Rate Based on "Prime" + O without Special Introductor

HOW YOU SPEND IT IS UP TO YOU.

With a "Prime for Life" Home Equity Credit Line, you can turn your house into the home you've always wanted. Now you can borrow \$10,000 at a special fixed introductory rate of 7.45% APR through July 1999, and pay as little as \$62 a month. Of course, you can always pay more if you want. It's A MONTH casy to apply, and there are no closing costs. Just visit any banking office or call 1-800-628-7074 today. But hurry, this offer is only good through July 31, 1998.



Take control of your money.

www.Huntington.com