

# Breakfast gives kids and cops chance to bond

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Many people would say that mornings starting with pancakes, orange juice and coffee are pretty good. But Clarenceville Middle School students and members of Livonia's police department recently discovered the missing ingredient for a great breakfast — getting together around the table for chow and camaraderie.

About 70 middle school students came out for the 8 a.m. event on Saturday, Feb. 6, said principal Pamela Swert. But so did Livonia Mayor Jack Kirksey, Livonia police Chief Pete Kunst, Clarenceville schools Superintendent Thomas Tattan and several school board members.

"It was for the interpersonal relationship between the police department and youth today," Swert said. "... If kids get in trouble, or need a policeman, they won't be afraid to contact them."

Students and officers sat at round-tables in the middle school cafeteria, to discuss pertinent topics (such as drug awareness) and fill out questionnaires.

"They talked about things to be aware of," Swert explained. "to be concerned about. The effects that drugs can have on a person, for example."

There are about 415 children who attend Clarenceville Middle School, with approximately 30 percent of those living in the city of Farmington Hills. The district also includes portions of Livonia



Let's talk: Livonia Police Sgt. Paul Wood (left) and Police Chief Pete Kunst enjoy the company of Clarenceville Middle School students during the breakfast.

## CLARENCEVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL

and Redford Township.

"Seventy students attended and that's a pretty good draw for a Saturday morning," Swert said, adding that the breakfast "seemed like an extremely positive thing... We're hoping this will become an annual event."

A previous such event was held in 1995 at Corsi's Restaurant on Seven Mile Road in Livonia.

Helping prepare the pancake breakfast were Clarenceville

school board President John Kanyo, Vice President Ron Silve and Treasurer Gary Garrison, a 1974 Clarenceville High graduate.

Swert noted that the breakfast continues a growing connection between the middle school and Livonia police department.

Officer Tom Funke is in his first year as police liaison officer, "and that's been a positive experience," Swert said.



Good morning: Livonia Police Officer Ken Hitchcock (left) and Livonia Mayor Jack Kirksey participated in the breakfast, as did Clarenceville Middle School students Patricia Harting (background, left) Nicole Hurst and Amanda Killian.

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It's a start: Breakfast and school-police camaraderie were served Saturday, Feb. 6 at Clarenceville Middle School. Pictured (from left) are students Renea Bolender, Allison Holt, Robin Morgan, Bernadette Lokojarvi (standing), Livonia Police Sgt. Tim McGillivray, students Jeff Babcock of Farmington Hills, Jennifer Lampinen of Farmington Hills, Tracie Tuschereau and Ashley Isaacs.

## Farmington's assessment notices are coming in the mail

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With many Farmington senior citizens on fixed incomes, even a tiny assessment increase might signify worries and hand-wringing.

But there is an available prescription, said John Sailor, Farmington city assessor. People who don't like what their assessment notices say can file applications as financial hardship cases and try to get a little bit of help with the bill.

About 4,000 assessment notices will begin reaching Farmington mailboxes late this week.

"We do have more seniors," Sailor said. "And they probably have more of a need for some help ... We have maybe a greater potential source of hardship cases" than Farmington Hills or other nearby communities.

For those wanting to apply as hardship cases, or merely protest

their assessments, Farmington Board of Reviews are scheduled 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, March 8, and 2-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. Wednesday, March 10.

Sailor estimated that residential, commercial and industrial parcels will have average increases of 4.6, 2.5 and 4.0 percent, respectively.

Most homeowners, however, will have assessment increases of less than 1.6 percent, which is the rate of inflation. Under Proposal A, property assessments may increase only to a maximum 5 percent or the rate of inflation, whichever is least.

Parcels with assessments significantly above that figure, Sailor explained, probably had construction, renovation or were sold over the past year.

Every year, properties are reappraised, to determine State Equalized Values.

"People should be aware that the (Board of Review) is willing to consider hardship situations,

people who can't pay their taxes," Sailor said. "... If someone doesn't have the ability to pay, we'd adjust their assessment down."

Sailor said hardships are limited to 30 per year, and are kept confidential.

"When we can (help), we do," he added.

Some senior citizens apparently fail to take advantage of the option, either because they don't know they can or because they are "too proud," Sailor said. "I was talking to one (elderly) resident who hasn't paid last year's taxes yet. But he didn't file for a hardship ..."

"We certainly don't want anybody moving out of the city because they can't pay the property taxes."

For information about scheduling a Board of Review appointment, or for filing a hardship claim, call (248) 474-5500, Ext. 230.

## Effort afoot to rename part of M-5

Majority Floor Leader Andrew Raczkowski and state Sen. Bill Bullard Jr. have introduced legislation to designate a portion of M-5 as the Keith Deacon Memorial Highway in honor of the community leader's tireless efforts to improve the road.

"Keith Deacon's relentless pursuit of funding for the M-5 project will benefit residents for decades to come," said Raczkowski, R-Farmington Hills. "This would be a proper tribute to Keith's memory and to his long record of public service in the Farmington

area." Deacon, who died in February 1996, volunteered extensively in the area. He served as mayor of Farmington Hills and as a city council member. He also was a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals.

"The memory of Keith's faithful public service should remain as long as the M-5 freeway," Raczkowski said. "Naming a portion of the road after him will ensure the legacy."

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