

Tragedy from page A1

"should be remembered as a very bright, determined, quiet young man. He had straight A's and was extremely bright."

Daniel also was well thought of by his cross country teammates.

"Cross country is a very difficult sport," Reed said. "But he kept plugging along. He was very gritty. He made an impact on the kids because he was always there. He was a presence and he modeled determination and hard work."

Reed said Daniel was quiet, but "a good quiet, the kind of kid anybody would be proud to have as a son."

The coach added that the tragedy would send a message to other students not to take each other for granted.

"There are so many nice kids like this and too many of them don't get noticed," Reed continued. "... The lesson is we should reach out to each other, because you never know."

The tragedy was being quickly dealt with by school teachers, administrators and counselors, with a crisis management team in place both Friday and Saturday to help students with their grief. Counselors at East were also available to talk to students there.

District administrators were also at Harrison to help out wherever they could. Jim Myers, executive director of K-12 school and student services, was at the high school around 2

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p.m. Friday. But earlier, he visited the Lee family at Botsford.

"It's a tight-knit family," said Myers, adding that a fourth sibling, Michigan State University student Diane, made it to Botsford within an hour or two after being notified about the accident.

Meanwhile, Horn, who at 12:30 p.m. made an announcement about David's death, sent out a letter to parents, calling for their support during a difficult time for the Harrison community.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the Lee family," the letter stated. "By working together, we can support our school community during this most difficult time."

Also working Friday with the crisis management team was Estralee Michelson, director of Safe & Drug Free Schools for the district. "The mood is very somber."

A mistake

A preliminary investigation by Hills police indicates David Lee had been headed west on 12 Mile and stopped at the green light, waiting to turn onto school property. He apparently misjudged the speed of oncoming traffic.

"He made a mistake by making a left turn too quickly in front of traffic," said Hills Police Chief Bill Dwyer. "There is a signal light there, and it was green. The Jeep Cherokee had the right of way."

The impact crushed the passenger side of the car. Dwyer said Hills Fire Department crews used the "jaws of life" to extricate both Daniel and Debra, who was in the back seat.

Hills Emergency Medical Services personnel also responded to the scene. Two of the victims were transported to Botsford by Community Emergency Medical Services, with the third victim transported by Hills paramedics.

"This is really sad. Our heart goes out to the family of the victim and the students in the school," Dwyer said.

Alcohol was not believed to be a factor in the accident.

Crash sparks parents' concerns

BY TIM SMITH
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Friday morning's fatal traffic crash on 12 Mile Road outside Harrison High School is sparking interest among the school's parents to push for a second traffic signal in front of the campus — or for a left-hand-turn signal to be added to the existing signal.

According to Harrison parent Beth Grossman, the congestion near the high school in the morning rush hour has long been a major concern.

"A lot of us parents were just waiting for an accident to happen because the congestion is horrendous," said Grossman, who is helping reorganize the high school's Parent Forum so that parents can stay abreast of important topics.

April 11 forum meeting

Parents of Harrison students are invited to attend the initial meeting of the reorganized forum, scheduled from 7-8 p.m. Tuesday, April 11, in the media center's mediated classroom. One of the first topics likely to be discussed at the forum, Grossman said, has to do with the need for a new traffic signal on 12 Mile Road, to help students turn left from westbound 12 Mile into the student parking lot.

In a letter mailed to parents, the forum is described as a "parent-directed organization that will work to help Harrison parents have a voice in the education of their children. In cooperation with the administration, the new Parent Forum will allow parents to work together to discuss and solve school-related issues."

Currently, there is a signal, but that is at the driveway located at the west end of the school property. Grossman said parents would like there to be a signal at the east end of the property, near the student lot — or, in the very least, consideration for a left-turn arrow to be added to the existing signal.

The road is under the jurisdiction of the Oakland County Road Commission.

At the April 11 Parent Forum, representatives from similar organizations in place at North Farmington and Farmington high schools will share insight into how their parent forums are working.

For more information about the forum, contact Beth Grossman (248) 592-0242 or Janet Schrock (248) 471-3688.

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do to improve that intersection," she said. "I think when they cut down that hill, they thought they were improving safety, but we can always take another look."

The section of 12 Mile between Orchard Lake and Middlebelt is under Oakland County's jurisdiction, and the county would make the final decision about any safety measures.

Craig Bryson, spokesperson for the Oakland County Road Commission, said local officials can request a closer look at the inter-

section. However, increased traffic on 12 Mile is not much different from congestion on roads throughout the county.

"There are no plans to do anything different at the high school," he said late Friday afternoon. "There has not, to this point, been enough left turn traffic there to warrant a left turn signal. Unless we get a formal request, there are no plans to do anything at the moment."

If local officials ask, the county would do a study. However, he

added, "Unfortunately, if the turn signal was not a cause of the accident, it won't have an impact."

While increased traffic on 12 Mile is a concern for local officials, Bryson said the same problem is happening everywhere. He also pointed out 12 Mile was widened not long ago.

"It's in an area that's growing," he said. "Unfortunately, that's true of many roads through all of Oakland County. We just don't have enough money to widen them all."

Catholic Central officials say relocating school is a possibility

BY LAURIE HUMPHREY
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Catholic Central administrators are not vacating their Redford site, at least not yet.

Ed Turek, director of marketing and public relations for the high school, said "nothing has been decided," but admits relocating is a possibility. The decision to relocate or renovate the current building at 14200 Breakfast Drive will be made within one year based on the results of a study, now in progress. It is the first study of its kind for CC in 20 years.

"We are in the final stage of a feasibility study," said the CC administrator and 1985 graduate. "As part of that study, we are looking at different aspects including financial, student body, the condition of the building and the cost of land."

Any decision is at least six months away.

"Obviously, we want the study to be completed as soon as possible," said Turek, "but it could be six months to a year."

If relocation is the answer, students and staff would not be moved for another five years or so. Then they would move into a

newly-constructed facility. The potential city or township is unknown at this point.

If you pay attention to word-of-mouth, however, the new site would be northwest of Redford, possibly in Novi or Howell.

"We got asked about that rumor all the time," Turek joked. "But the city that we are supposedly moving to is different all the time."

Turek has already spoken to many parents who inquired about a move from the building. Catholic Central students have used since 1979.

"I've been telling parents the

same thing I told you," said Turek. "If we do move, it wouldn't be for five years. We're not just going to pack up and move in a week."

There are a number of issues which would need to be dealt with prior to any potential move — housing for the priests who teach, potential uses for the 18 acres of property currently used by CC, transportation and more.

"This would be a huge development for Catholic Central," said Turek, suggesting it's not something administrators would do without considering the whole community.

Today, the majority of CC students travel from Livonia, but a number of other communities are also represented.

"We have students from Plymouth, Canton, Northville, Novi, Westland, Dearborn, Dearborn Heights, Detroit, Farmington and more. Our kids come from all over," Turek said.

Just over 1,046 young men between grades nine and 12 are educated at the private college preparatory school, established in 1928 by the Basilian Fathers. The staff consists of eight Basilian Fathers and 59 lay faculty. Admission is competitive,

based on testing (High School Placement Test), a personal interview, prior academic record and references.

Tuition for one child during the 2000-01 academic year is \$5,300. The cost for two children is \$9,275.

According to Turek, whether CC administrators decide to renovate or relocate, their goal remains constant.

"We need to provide our students with the best educational opportunities possible," he said. "The only question is where those educational opportunities will occur."

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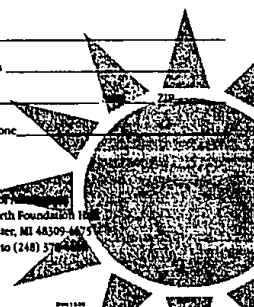
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