

Spots: Immunizations prevent dot-to-dots but parents must take the first step

By PATRICIA LACROIX

The Oakland County Health Department has a problem: convincing parents with school-aged children that immunizations against diseases such as measles are necessary.

"We're worried about getting young adults to immunize their children," said Adelaide Westman of the county's health education department. "People in this age bracket don't remember the devastation of an outbreak of one of these diseases, and their parents grew up in an era when these diseases were thought to be inevitable and not very serious."

But while most children get through the diseases with few or no problems, Ms. Westman said it should not be for-

gotten that there is a chance of encephalitis or permanent deafness from measles.

"It's hard to imagine that any parent would risk their child becoming permanently damaged when it is 'so totally unnecessary,'" Ms. Westman said.

Michigan law requires that each child show proof of immunization before he is admitted to any level in school. But even this does not guarantee 100 per cent immunization protection in each school district, since school administrators are sometimes willing to bend the law so children are not held back in their schooling, she said.

THIS TYPE of leniency has in the

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—Adelaide Westman

past resulted in dangerously low immunization rates, especially in major cities, sometimes falling below 50 per cent for some diseases. Because of these low percentages in many of the major cities, Michigan is among the states named by the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, Ga. as likely to experience an outbreak of

measles this coming school year.

Outbreaks in schools are of particular concern to health officials because it is easy for the disease to spread rapidly in the concentrated population area.

In order to help combat outbreaks, the federal government this year has asked for a significant increase in the

amount of money spent on immunization programs.

"So, evidently, the government doesn't think things will change if they don't get involved," Ms. Westman said.

Many cities, however, have stepped up efforts to get children immunized before this. For the past two years, Detroit has "had a big push," which Ms. Westman said has helped a lot in getting increasing numbers of children immunized.

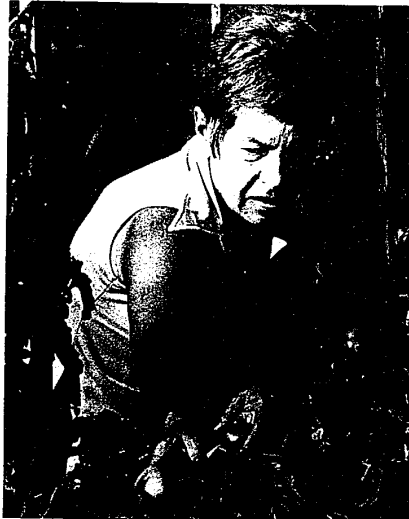
With the stepped-up programs, the national average for immunization rates is approaching the recommended level of 80 per cent.

Farmington, Farmington Hills and Southfield are all well within this recommended level. A full 95 per cent of all school-aged children in Farmington

and Farmington Hills are immunized, up from 88 per cent last year. In Southfield, 87 per cent of the children are immunized.

Generally, parents are advised to have their children receive the DPT shot series at about two months old to protect them from diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus. At 18 months, children should receive their first measles shots, along with shots for polio and mumps.

Shots are free at the Oakland County Health Department, 2725 Greenfield, any weekday 8:30 a.m. and 1-4 p.m. An outreach clinic is located in the First Methodist Church in Farmington, where shots are administered 9 a.m. to noon on the second Thursday of each month.



Ann Rodewig plucks some of her homegrown tomatoes from the vine. Mrs. Rodewig is one of the 19 gardeners who have cultivated a small garden on school district property this summer. (Photo by Allen Schlossberg)

Parsley, sage, rosemary and grime How do their gardens grow?

Hoe, hoe, hoe.
That's the sound of 19 gardeners tilling the soil.

As part of the Farmington School District's garden program, the gardeners took shovel and hoe to their rented plots on Twelve Mile and Drake. In the process, they discovered the taste of fresh vegetables still warm from the noon sun.

Staking the fresh vegetable, the group learned that a good crop depends on more than the high hopes inspired by a Burpee seed catalogue. Patience and vigilance are required to fight drought, bugs and floods.

And this year, the group faced all three blights. Even longtime gardeners paused at the effects of a dry summer.

"This is the first time in seven years that I hauled water into a garden in gallon jugs," said Ann Hiner of Farmington.

While Mrs. Hiner vigilantly hauled water to her crops, fellow gardener Ann Rodewig lapsed a bit.

The results can be seen at a glance. "My flowers didn't sprout," lamented Mrs. Rodewig of Farmington Hills. "And I can't grow them at home because there's too much shade around my house."

TOMATOES shed their rosy red image to turn black at the ends after

putting up with waterless summer days.

The drought was preceded by an overabundance of rain. Early Michigan spring saw the gardeners sloshing through their plots trying to rescue beans that slid to the bottom of the garden.

"It's been a rough year," one gardener admitted.

In spite of the hardships, the gardens yielded a good crop, according to the group.

"It's been a good year. We've been eating like mad," said Mrs. Hiner, whose family of four likes vegetables.

Her neighbors benefit, too. The extra crops go to anyone who wants them.

"Last year, we were eating our own vegetables until well into February," said Mrs. Hiner.

Each gardener approached planting in a slightly different way.

In the early morning or evening, they could be seen behind a screen of shrubbery slowly grooming their small plots. One gardener, a psychiatrist, drove up to his small plot in a car bearing license plates SHRINK.

Another gardener who refused to reveal her identity, preferred working in the morning. After painstaking research, she plotted out her garden, using theories she read about during the previous winter.

Some of them worked, some of them

failed and she's sure the authors didn't try a few of their pet theories.

ONE AUTHORITY advocated planting climbing beans next to the corn. The theory behind this move is that beans put nitrogen into the soil and corn takes it up.

In practice, the beans overshadowed the corn. So, while the beans flourished, the corn failed to achieve its full height.

"I did a lot of reading but I didn't know what was going to take place," the experimental gardener explained.

One of her experiments did succeed, in a way. She planted squash around the corn to keep the raccoons away. But although raccoons are a common sight around Mrs. Farmington Hills home, they avoid frequenting the school district's garden.

The squash was the subject of an experiment in this garden. Horse manure was buried in pits around the squash patch but away from the plant's roots. Direct contact causes the roots to overheat and burn. That experiment, turned out fine, according to the experimenter. The squash crop was brightly colored and large.

Corn carefully was planted in rows of three to allow the tassels to fertilize the silks. The results are larger kernels on the stalks.

While most of her gardening theories

stem from books, her father was a farmer when she was a child. Later, he kept a garden in the city.

THOSE MEMORIES prompted her to start a garden of her own.

"I spend hours here. I enjoy it," she said.

Creating childhood memories is one of the reasons Mrs. Hiner encourages her 13-year-old son and 12-year-old daughter to help her in the garden. In the spring, her son helped operate the roto-tiller.

She brings an enjoyment of gardening to her summer project.

"I do it for the sheer fun of it," she said. "I love to watch things grow."

Although she usually rented a garden from Oakland Community College, this year Mrs. Hiner settled on a plot from the school district.

One of the reasons for her decision is the district's policy on chemical bug spray. Unlike OCC, the district allows its gardeners to use the chemical sprays.

"You watched the bugs eat your garden," she remembered of her OCC project.

Mrs. Rodewig, who studied the master gardeners course with the Michigan State University Extension agency, explained that the chemicals were allowed because the community garden set-up didn't allow for crop rotation.

THE INSIDE * ANGLE

DUCK FANCIERS APPLAUD.

Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Department in cooperation with the Michigan Duck Hunters Association will sponsor a "Duck Identification" clinic from 7:30-10 p.m. on Wednesdays, beginning Sept. 5. The three-session class will include training in the point value of ducks, bone structure, habitat and identification. Fee is \$2 payable at the first session. For more information, call the recreation department at 474-6115.

ARCHER BOB HOWLETT

of Farmington Hills shot his arrows into the air in Lansing recently, when he participated in the State 4-H Shooting Sports tournament. Bob, how'd you do?

COMMERCE HIGH SCHOOL

is looking for graduates—from the Classes of 1927, 28 and 29, that is. A 50th anniversary reunion is planned for Sept. 29 for the pre-depression grads. Larry Ziff is the guy to contact for information at 523-6999.

EXPECTANT PARENTS, TAKE

NOTE: The Oakland County Health Division is offering three series of classes this fall. Participants will meet once a week from 7:30-9:30 p.m. for eight weeks at the Southfield office, 2725 Greenfield, Sept. 5, 6, and 11 are beginning dates for the series. Films are used to illustrate what's ahead, and a tour of a local hospital is included. The classes are free, but pre-registration is required. Call 424-7058 before Sept. 24 for your slot.

LABOR DAY MEANS

holiday schedules at the Farmington Post Office. Forget the residential and business mail delivery and lobby window service on Sept. 4. Special delivery service however will be available. Holiday collection schedules will be provided as late in the day as possible to meet first-class mail service standards, according to postmaster Kenneth Harris.

SKIP THE POTATOES

but bring out the ham to auditions at the Wayne-Westland Civic Theatre at 7:30 p.m., Sept. 7 and 8 at St. John Episcopal Church on 555 S. Wayne Road. The theater is looking for area actors and actresses for their production of "Zookeeper." Call Lois Tobin at 336-4079 for more information.

IF YOU WANT TO MEET

State Supreme Court Justice G. Mennen Williams and his wife Nancy, get out to the annual fund-raiser dinner sponsored by the Labor Zionist Alliance. The event is scheduled for 6 p.m., Sept. 10 at the Labor Zionist Institute, 2855 Middlebelt in Farmington Hills. Charge is \$6.50 per person. Call Frieda Faigin at 356-7119 or Marilyn Matenky at 547-0568 for reservations.

IT'S BACK TO THE BASICS

Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge

Campus this fall. A special studies program designed to assist OCC students in the development of basic skills with an emphasis on reading, writing, and personal motivation is on tap. Small classes, closer faculty contact, special tutoring services and special counseling services will be included. Contact Sarah Keidon at the Farmington Hills campus at 476-9400 for more information.

OCC REGISTRATION

begins Wednesday, according to alphabetical order, while classes will begin Sept. 5 for all those students out there. Interested applicants should contact the campuses of their choice.

ELDERLY TENNIS BUFFS,

get set for a challenge. On Sept. 17, the Detroit Tennis and Squash Club will honor one of its own as Harry Roberts, "everyone's coach," celebrates his 60th birthday by taking on all comers who match him age-wise. Roberts will do what he does every day—play tennis. Anyone 60 or older is challenged to an exhibition match. Call the club at 661-2300 for information.

IF YOU NEED TO TRANSACT

business at a Secretary of State's office on a Saturday, try the Livonia office at 33250 W. Six Mile. That office is one of 10 in the state that will have weekend hours beginning Sept. 9 as part of a year-long pilot study to determine whether Saturday service is needed. Hours for the Saturday times are 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

THE DDT SCARE

revealed that killing pests with insecticides may be more dangerous than cowering with the bugs themselves. But the National Wildlife Federation has a new publication detailing a safe, natural way to control insects. "Fighting Pests with Pests" is available free through the federation at Dept. P.W. 1412 18th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036. The new method of pest management involves the three P's—insect predators, parasites, and pathogens. A chart lists 34 common insect pests and natural ways to control them.

FARMINGTON NURSING HOME'S

picnic last weekend brought in about 350 persons, including residents and their families, much to the home's delight. Bands, clowns, and prizes were part of the action on the lawn for the annual event. From what we hear, a good time was had by all.

DEADLINE

Material submitted for The Inside Angle (22170 W. Nine Mile Road, Southfield 48034) should include the name and phone number of the sender and should be typewritten if possible. Items should be received at least one week before publication, and photographs cannot be used. All materials become the property of the Farmington Observer, but all laughs will be open to the community.

Surefire investments? My vested pinstripe by Hart, Schaffner & Marx with Today's Dacron® is a classic example. Moods change and markets fluctuate, but my corporate leadership look in Dacron® polyester/wool remains constant. With a two-button, center vented coat, \$295 in Men's Clothing, all stores.

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