

# Latchkey program keeps an eye on after-schoolers

By Patricia Bowling  
Novi-Walled Lake News

Twin Beach Elementary School was the first building to open its doors for returning students last week. And, throughout the year, it will be the last school to close its doors after students leave.

Twin Beach, which is on Oakley Park Road in West Bloomfield, is the first school in the Walled Lake School District to begin a "Latchkey" program for students with working parents. The school opens at 7:30 a.m., 1 1/2 hours before classes start, and closes at 5:30 p.m., two hours after school closes.

Currently, there are 21 "latchkey kids" enrolled in the new program. (They get their name from the house

keys they typically wear around their neck or pinned to their clothing. Their parents work, leaving them responsible for locking up the house when they come home for school. When they come home, the house is empty.)

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates approximately 2-million children ages 7-13 routinely are without adult supervision for some portion of the day. "Latchkey" programs were designed to give these children a place to play or study in the morning after their parents go to work and in the afternoon before their parents get home.

TWIN BEACH principal Janet Koepke first realized the need for a latchkey program last year when her staff conducted a survey of the sur-

rounding community to find out how the school might better serve the area. More than 300 residents responded.

"One thing that came through loud and clear was the real interest in having a latchkey program," Koepke said.

Koepke worked with two parent volunteers last year researching other latchkey programs in the area. So they were ready when a room at Twin Beach became available this year because of declining enrollment.

The volunteers, neighbors Barbara Leafe and Ellen Wicham, worked all summer signing up participants and planning the program.

"Last fall, I had three different parents call me and ask if I would take care of their kids after school," said Leafe, who had a latchkey child of her

own last year. "It's a problem for a lot of people to find a neighbor or someone to watch their kids (after school)."

AFTER BEGINNING to work part-time a year ago, Leafe found she occasionally needed to send her 9-year-old off to school with the house key.

"He did not like coming home by himself," she recalled. "A couple of times he lost his key. Once he left the front door open."

Leafe's son only was home by himself for one-half hour before his older sister got home, but he didn't like using the key and coming into an empty house. "He was really relieved when he found out he wouldn't have to do that this year," Leafe said. "It made him

feel better and me feel better, too."

Many Twin Beach parents will feel better this year, Leafe added. There are 16 children enrolled in the morning program and 17 in the afternoon program. Twenty-five percent of the children come from single-parent homes, she noted.

"I have no doubt in my mind that this is just a beginning," Koepke said of the enrollment. "We're going to surface many more once the program gets started."

PARENTS WILL pay \$1 an hour for their first child and 50 cents per hour for each additional child in the program. Koepke stressed that the children must be school age. "This is not to be confused with the preschool pro-

gram — which we will also have, but in the room next door."

Other elementary schools in the district are "highly interested" in a program of their own, Koepke added. "If they have room, there will be other schools to follow."

A bill pending in the U.S. Senate would provide \$16 million a year for three years to start latchkey programs in school facilities. Called the School Facilities Child Care Act, the measure already was passed by the House in a similar version which would provide \$30 million a year for three years. If the "latchkey bill" ever makes it through the Senate, it will go to a House-Senate subcommittee for changes and then face a final vote for approval.

## INSIDE ANGLES

Know someone doing something notable? Let us know. Write: Inside Angles, Farmington Observer, 23352 Farmington Road, Farmington 48024.

**MARYBETH KASPROWICZ**, daughter of Carol and Melvin Kasprowicz of Farmington Hills and a graduate of Our Lady of Mercy High School, received a Presidential Scholarship from Hillsdale College, where she will enroll as a freshman this fall. The Presidential Scholarship, which pays full tuition, is one of the highest academic awards bestowed by Hillsdale College. Part of a comprehensive scholarship program, the Presidential Scholarship is awarded without regard to financial need to outstanding high school seniors.

**MICHAEL HAPPOLD**, son of Manfred and Ursula Happold, has been named Academic All-American by the National Secondary Education Council. Michael, who attends Southfield Christian School, was nominated for this National Award by Robert Newman, Southfield Christian Varsity Soccer Coach. He will appear in the Academic All-American Scholar Directory, which is published nationally. The Council selects Academic All-American Scholars upon the exclusive recommendations of teachers, coaches, counselors, and other qualified sponsors. Once awarded, the students may be recognized by the NSEC for other honors.

**VOLUNTEERS** are needed immediately to benefit Oakland County children. This plan for adults comes from the Oakland County Youth Assistance Program. The youngsters, ages 6 to 16 years old, come from throughout Oakland County and are from a cross section of socio-economic conditions. Although an adult volunteer is asked to make a commitment of one year to the program,

many matches continue over several years. Volunteers must be 18 years or older, have transportation, be in good general health and authorize a confidential police records check. They are required to attend two training sessions of two hours each provided by the Volunteer Program Staff. To volunteer, call the Youth Assistance office at 659-0041 or 659-0099 Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**HARPER HOSPITAL** in the Detroit Medical Center has a free new publication for dietitians. It tells how to cut calories and change your eating habits, offers tips on eating out and cooking with spices instead of salt. For a free copy, send a stamped self-addressed envelope to the Public Relations Department of Harper-Grace Hospital, 3900 John R Street, Detroit 48201. Ask for the weight control guide.

**DR. PAUL W. SKOGLUND** has been appointed clinical assistant professor of dentistry at the University of Detroit School of Dentistry. Dr. Skoglund is also engaged in the private practice of general dentistry in Pontiac.

**DAWN BURCZYCKI**, Kimberly Cardocci, Lisa Hencel, Gregory Laidlaw, E. Raykinshayn and Robert Sunawave have been accepted into the freshman class at Oakland University for the fall term.

**TINA M. BIN**, daughter of Edwin and Lucille Bin and a 1982 graduate of Harrison High School, has graduated from the U.S. Air Force administrative specialist course at Keeler Air Force Base, Miss. She is scheduled to serve with the 1st Combat Support Group at Langley Air Force Base, Va.

**FIREWORKS**, puppet performances and en-

tertainment are all part of the festivities at the Camper-Rama Travel Trailer Show set for Sept. 21-23 at Groveland Oaks County Park near Holly. Show hours are 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. Park visitors and campers will be able to view 1975 models of trailers, motor homes and recreation vehicles at the three-day event. There will also be gifts and prizes throughout the weekend. Cost is the park entrance fee of \$2.50 per vehicle for Oakland County residents, \$4 for non-residents. For more information, phone Howard Benson at 477-9558 or Groveland Oaks at 654-9811.

**ARE YOU UNSURE** how to add insulation or how to locate hard-to-find air leaks in your home? Are you considering new energy efficiency housing designs or new energy products that help save money? The Energy Administration Clearinghouse has new video cassettes available for free loan which address many of these energy questions facing Michigan homeowners today. A House For All Seasons is a series of 13 video cassettes which explains various ways to maximize energy efficiency in the home and describes new energy saving products and technologies. For information, call Energy Hotline at 1-800-392-4704 to borrow the cassettes. Call between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

**JOSEPH BROWN**, John Chuba and James Clarke graduates from Grand Valley State College.

## Road projects readied

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

At no cost to the city, portions of Orchard Lake and Farmington roads in Farmington Hills will be resurfaced before the end of the year.

The two construction projects will be paid for totally with federal and county money, said David Call, Farmington Hills engineer.

Farmington Road will be resurfaced between I-495 and 13 Mile. Orchard Lake Road will be resurfaced from Folsom Road to Grand River. Both thoroughfares are under the jurisdiction of the Oakland County Road Commission.

The Farmington Road project will cost approximately \$358,000, Call said. The Orchard Lake Road project will cost \$107,000, he added.

The city is not required to participate financially because improvements to both roads have qualified under the Federal Aid Urban Systems (FAUS) program, Call said.

Under the FAUS program, the feder-

al government pays 75 percent of the project's costs and the remaining 25 percent is picked up by the county road commission.

**ROAD IMPROVEMENT** projects are listed on a priority basis. Work is completed as funding becomes available.

The Farmington Road project includes resurfacing with three inches of asphalt and the construction of three-foot wide paved shoulders on both sides of the road, Call said. The project also includes some widening at the intersection of Farmington and 13 Mile roads.

Improvements on Orchard Lake Road include resurfacing, paved shoulders and widening and curbing at the intersection of Freedom and Orchard Lake, Call said. The Grand River and Orchard Lake intersection also will be widened for "better turn movements," he added.

Residents who have any problems with the construction should call the Oakland County Road Commission's Office of Public Assistance at 659-4804.

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