

# carrier of the month



**Jenni Talagrand**

November's carrier of the month is Jenni Talagrand, an eighth grader at O.E. Dunckel Middle School. She is the daughter of Paul and Barb Talagrand. She delivers the Observer in the 13 Mile-Drake Road area. Her favorite subjects in school are history, science and drama. Her hobbies are horseback riding, basketball, ice skating, roller-skating and volleyball.

If you want to be a Farmington Observer carrier, please call 591-0500

# How schools handle asbestos threat

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ganizations if a school contains friable asbestos materials.

The investigation and subsequent actions cost the district about \$5,000, according to Supt. Lewis Schulman — "Not a heck of a lot," in his words.

Many school districts have removed or contained the asbestos in their buildings and then sued the manufacturers of the product to recover the costs.

Three of Michigan's largest school districts — Detroit, Flint and Lansing — have joined together in a lawsuit

which seeks \$500 million from 35 asbestos firms. The suit was filed in October in Wayne County Circuit Court.

The suit may be granted class-action status, allowing many other public and private school districts to join in.

"What they're saying is that, since this is a class action suit, it includes all school districts," Schulman said. "And all school districts will be offered an opportunity to join the lawsuit."

Schulman added, however, that Farmington probably wouldn't become directly involved in the suit, even if the

opportunity comes up. The district may "opt out," he said.

"This protects us and gives us the right to sue later on if there should be the occasion," Schulman said. "It keeps the door open for us."

ASKED WHY the district probably wouldn't become involved, Schulman said, "The lawyers' fees alone will cost us more than the \$5,000 it cost to identify and correct the problem. Our costs just haven't been that great."

Schulman said he knew of a class-

action suit involving several Pennsylvania school districts and a group of asbestos manufacturers, including the bankrupt Johns Manville Corp.

Asbestos, a naturally occurring silicate used in thousands of products, has been prized for its resistance to fire, great strength and light weight. For more than 40 years, however, asbestos exposure has been linked to lung cancer and a lung disorder called asbestosis.

Mesothelioma, a rare but almost-al-

ways fatal cancer of the lining surrounding the lungs, is also caused by asbestos, medical researchers have found.

Asbestos is seldom used today, according to Lawing, who said that a fiberglass material with a plaster base is often substituted.

"In the future, with the advanced technology, we may find that some of these other products are just as bad for us," he said. "But, of course, we have to respond to what they know right now."

# Apartments are finally in on cable biz

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in addition to the rates they will pay for whatever tier of cable service they choose.

"If there is a charge to MetroVision,

we have a right to charge the equivalent to the customer," Bjorklund said.

But in the case of the Bernes apartments, "no extra amount will be charged to the customer," he added.

"There is no surcharge," Stobinsky said.

MetroVision in June appealed directly to the residents of Mulrwood apartments to get the ball rolling on cable-TV installation.

AFTER MONTHS of off-again, on-again negotiations with the Bernes Co., MetroVision officials sent about 600 letters to Mulrwood residents asking

them to fill out a form expressing interest in having cable TV installed.

In cases in which an agreement between MetroVision and an apartment complex owner cannot be reached, condemnation proceedings can be taken against the apartment complex, according to the cable TV franchise and cable ordinance. This would allow the

cable firm to receive its needed easements for cable installation and to provide residents with cable service.

Apartment complex owners have the choice of installing private cable. But the private system must meet the same requirements MetroVision met when first awarded the franchise.

# Secretary of State urges mid-week visits


Secretary of State Richard Austin encourages all motorists to transact business in branch offices as much as possible on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

According to Austin, more and more

motorists are buying plates and renewing licenses on Mondays and Fridays, leaving the three mid-week days relatively uncongested.

Austin says a steady work flow is the key to efficient, fast and cost-effective service in branch offices.

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