

Back-to-school time

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"They came in really happy," said Maria Bonasso, a kindergarten teacher's aide. "Only one cried."

MOST PARENTS are pretty good about leaving their kids, Billing said, though some don't want to leave. Teachers reassure parents of crying children that everything will be fine in a few minutes — and it is.

"By the time they get to the first grade, they know the ropes," she said.

And indeed they seem to. Some kids ran around greeting teachers and old friends. Others pressed their faces against the glass doors, hoping for a glimpse of what goes on inside just before the doors open.

"I'm happy because I have this teacher that is really nice," said Molly Otsuji, 8, a third grader.

"I can play and see all my old friends," said Karinne Chatman, 8, also a third grader.

"It's clean inside," said Jason Smith, 8, another third grader.

Inside Bob McLean's fifth grade classroom, kids dressed in shorts and a few in blue jeans patiently waited while he took attendance.

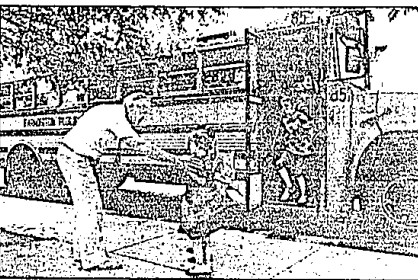
Signs up and down the hallway welcomed the students back.



Third grade teacher Linda Weh greets two of her former students, fourth graders Maureen Corbin (being hugged) and Linsey Fernholz, in the parking lot before the start of classes at Flanders.



Bob McLean takes attendance for his fifth grade class on the first day of school at Flanders.



Flanders principal Frank Dolowsky helps children find their way to the proper entrance of the school on the first day of class on Tuesday.



Fifth grader Teresa Wood (foreground) helps fourth grader Kristy David cross Flanders Street in front of Flanders Elementary Tuesday. This is Teresa's first year on the safety patrol.



Michael Butler (left), Laurie Butler and their daughter, Ashley, 4, a kindergartner at Flanders on Tuesday.

Compromise eyed to boost power capacity

By Amy Rauch
staff writer

So far, so good. Detroit Edison and Farmington Hills reached a compromise Monday on the installation of 80-foot utility poles that would bring a power boost to the city.

Now, both sides will cross their fingers and hope to get right-of-way permission for the installation. "It was a win-win position," said Benjamin Tallierico, Detroit Edison customer and marketing services director. "Our next big hurdle will be to get out there and get the right of way."

Detroit Edison was sent back to the drawing board in July after the city council rejected a proposal to install the utility poles along 12 Mile. Council members said the poles would take away from the appearance of a new boulevard planned for development along 12 Mile, west of Farmington Road.

Another option, going underground with the lines, proved too costly. Underground lines would exceed Edison's expected plan of \$20 million by an additional \$12 million. If the council had gone with the underground option, the city would have had to swallow the cost. Monday's proposal would place the utility poles along the south side of I-696, if Edison is granted the right-of-way by affected property owners.

'Everybody admits the need for power and no one's going to turn off their air conditioner.'

— Councilwoman Jean Fox

THE UTILITY poles would stretch along the freeway from Halsted to Inkster at no extra cost to the city, said Joe Ford, Detroit Edison municipal governmental affairs director.

They would carry a 120,000-volt line and boost power capacity by 70 percent for Farmington Hills residents by linking the power station at 12 Mile and Drake to one at 11 Mile and Inkster. Edison also proposes a new substation at Haggerty and I-696.

The extra power should put an end to power outages caused by overloaded circuits when the pull on electricity around the city is too great. Air conditioners, especially during last summer's heat, proved to be too great of a strain at times, said David Call, assistant city manager.

Edison may go underground with the lines for a quarter of a mile between Drake and Halsted, but that will be at no extra cost, Call said.

"I think the good news is that they've come up with an alternative route which is more acceptable to

the city council, and that's along I-696," he said. "The intent is to keep it off 12 Mile and away from residential areas."

BUT THE company will first have to get right-of-way permission from Mercy High School and Oakland Community College, as well as from residents of the newly developed Meadowridge Condominiums on Middlebelt, just north of 11 Mile, and possibly from residents of Kimberley and Camelot Court subdivisions, which border Middlebelt, said Jean Fox, city councilwoman.

"Everybody admits the need for power and no one's going to turn off their air conditioner," Fox said. "We're working with Edison to solve these power needs for the next 10 years in the west side of the city."

"If they (Detroit Edison) get in there and no one will give them an easement, then it's a different ballgame," Ford said. "We have to get right-of-way. If we don't get right-of-way, we can't build."

Drowning case trial delayed as suspect gets examination

By James Radabaugh
staff writer

Investigators at the Ypsilanti Regional Psychiatric Hospital are continuing an examination of suspected murderer Anthony Bonelli.

A trial date for the 17-year-old Farmington Hills resident is "not even close" to being scheduled, said Fred Miller, assistant Oakland County prosecutor.

Forensic examiners in July asked for a 30-day extension to complete psychiatric testing of Bonelli, who is charged in the March drowning of his 17-year-old former girl friend,

Kristina Marie Fracchia, also of Farmington Hills.

Miller said in July that a trial in Oakland County Circuit Court would likely start sometime in August.

Examiners, however, want more time to look into Bonelli's background and investigate his previous psychiatric treatment, Miller said Monday.

Bonelli was arrested March 17 by Orchard Lake police, following questioning about Fracchia's death.

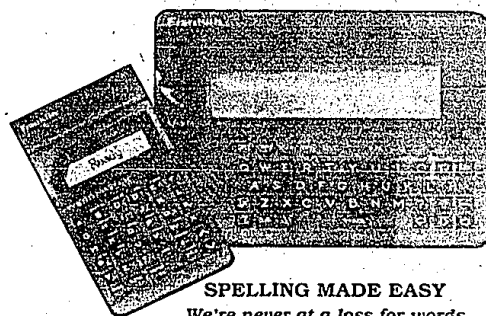
Fracchia's fully clothed body was found earlier that day floating in shallow water off the north shore of Orchard Lake. Fracchia, a student at

Mercy High School, had been missing for several days.

At the time, Bonelli was a student at the Farmington Training Center, a special educational center for students with emotional, physical or mental problems run by the Farmington school district.

Bonelli's defense is expected to be based on an insanity plea.

His attorney, James Andary, said at an April preliminary examination that Bonelli was being treated by a psychiatrist for "severe mental and psychological problems" prior to Fracchia's death.



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