

Community Corner

This week's question:
In light of recent fights at high school basketball games, what can the Farmington school district do to ensure that fights don't happen again?

We asked this question on Tuesday at Farmington High



"By all means, there should be police. They should be ordered to be at games, like they are at dances. It's the same amount of kids."
— Lauren Weary, senior



"I think they should have more police officers there. They should know there's a cross-town rivalry."
— Amy Trunk, senior



"I think there should be more administrative help. Principals and assistant principals should be there, especially when there's a cross-town rivalry."
— Mott Giose, senior



"They can't stop it in school, once they get out of school. They need more security (both school administrators and police)."
— Earl Fisher, sophomore



"A lot of people don't get along with each other. Maybe they could set a curfew at night, at 12 o'clock or something."
— Sonia Aboona, senior



"Competition should stop inside at the game. It should end there. It's just a matter of attitude."
— Christine Oates, sophomore

Healing process begins after school fights

By Casey Hans, staff writer

A healing process began this week to mend rifts between area high schools, after fighting broke out at Friday-night basketball games this month.

Meanwhile, school officials say they are tightening up administrative and police security, especially at weekend events.

Superintendent Michael Flanagan said he was "never more proud" after meeting Monday with some of the students involved with the fighting. "I saw genuine remorse and apologies," he said. "It started out tense, but was better by the end."

"These kids got involved in a situation they shouldn't have gotten involved in."

About a dozen students from North Farmington and Farmington high schools met Monday morning with administrators to air their concerns about recent fighting and inter-district school relationships. One of the first items on the agenda was a letter of apology from North students to Farmington students.

"As the host for the basketball game, we take full responsibility," the letter said. "Everyone involved wished the whole thing would never have happened. It was an embarrassing event we would like to put behind us."

"This letter won't do anything for the young men suffering injuries, but, hopefully, it will be a start. We hope you can accept our apology so we can go on with the relationship our two city high schools should have."

TWO FARMINGTON high students were treated for bruises and cuts on a Friday, Jan. 12 brawl that occurred after a North vs. Farmington game hosted at North. Other unrelated incidents occurred the same night at Harrison High between students and alumni both during a game and a post-game dance.

Another incident was reported last Friday, Jan. 19, at Farmington High

in which a student, reportedly from Harrison, was taken to an area hospital after consuming too much liquor. Farmington public safety Commander Chuck Lee said the incident was labeled a medical run; there was no fighting, he said.

Don Cowan, director of building and student services, said he was pleased with Monday's meeting, which involved students and administrators from both high schools. About 80 or 90 percent of the students involved in the North/Farmington incident came to the meeting, and discussed ways the schools could compete in a "hospitable way."

"Let's face it, we all know these things do take place," Cowan said.

"It just doesn't take place in Farmington very often. That doesn't mean we can let our guard down."

COWAN and Flanagan vowed that the district will increase administrative supervision at all away games, with a strategic plan for where administrators will be located both in and out of the building.

Cowan said additional police protection would also be requested, especially for Friday night games. Police from both Farmington and Farmington Hills already attend post-game dances at all three high schools. Where and when police are requested will be left to the discretion of each high school principal, Flanagan said.

Meanwhile, students and administrators are seeking ways to draw the schools together. In light of an upcoming basketball game Feb. 2, at which Farmington will host North Farmington, a hospitality area for students is being considered.

"There's a lot of things we're looking at," Cowan added.

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Bouchard decides against Senate bid

By Darrell Pressley, staff writer

Michael Bouchard, Beverly Hills Village Council president and a potential Republican candidate for the state Senate, announced he won't run for that office.

Bouchard, who considered opposing state Sen. Jack Faxon, D-Farmington Hills, said his decision was due to his responsibility to his family and newly formed companies.

"After a great deal of deliberation about running for the Michigan Senate in the 15th District, I have come to the tough conclusion that I will not seek this office," said Bouchard in a news statement.

"In November I was exploring the possibility. At this point I have a clearer picture of what is involved," Bouchard said.

Though he is not running for the Senate, Bouchard said he still wants to continue his role on the Beverly Hills council.

"I would say at this point I would love the opportunity to serve the village. The community is a lot of fun and the people are great."

THE AMOUNT of time that would be required was a key factor in his decision to withdraw from contention for the Senate, he said.

"I looked at the probability that if I got into the race the substantial

time needed from now until December," Bouchard said.

To run for the Senate position in the 15th District, Bouchard, who lives in the 17th District, would have had to move his family to a new area.

The 15th District covers Southfield, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Berkley or Novi areas.

"That was an added burden my family would have to take."

The recent birth of his daughter Mikayla was one of the main reasons he is not running, Bouchard said.

"I felt the needs of my family and the needs of my companies take precedent over my dreams and aspirations," he said.

"THEY SAY timing is everything, and that is certainly the case in this instance."

Bouchard said though he has no one candidate in mind, there are several candidates in the Farmington, Novi and surrounding areas who he thinks will fill the role of trying to unseat Faxon.

"I believe he is out of step with his constituents," he said.

"While it is still my dream to serve the community in a full-time capacity, at this time my energies are focused on my new baby daughter Mikayla and infant companies."

"Within a year or two, I will pursue my dream to go on the Senate."

clarification

Farmington Hills Police Chief William Dwyer was wrongly identified as Farmington police chief in a story Monday about the pending guilty plea by the man accused of being the Oakland County serial rapist.

Frank Lauboff is Farmington police chief.

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