

# Schools await rules on new accreditation

By Casey Hans staff writer

Farmington and other districts throughout the state are still awaiting rules for accrediting their elementary and middle schools.

State officials say the rules could be completed as early as this summer.

Accreditation of each public school is part of Public Act 25 of 1990, which also requires school districts to do annual reports, begin school improvement plans and be sure a core curriculum is in place. High schools already go through an accreditation process, which involves a visitation and extensive survey of school programs and operations.

"I think accreditation is important for several reasons," said Linda Forward, supervisor of the Michigan Accreditation Program for the state Department of Education. "It assures the public that some type of standards are being met."

"And schools are forced on a regular basis to look at how business is being done and whether anything needs to be changed."

FARMINGTON Superintendent Michael Flanagan said his district "has an idea" for how it would handle the accreditation process, doing several schools per year over a six-year period. But the district cannot begin until the state approves its rules. "You just can't tickle more than three or four (schools) a year," he added.

Forward said the state Board of Education will review a preliminary draft of accreditation rules next

week and, if approved, 11 public hearings will be held across the state in March and April. A final draft must then be approved by the state board and education committees of the state Legislature, which is expected to review the rules in early June.

The draft will recommend districts phase in accreditation for all schools within a six-year period. A pilot would begin in 1992-93 and all districts would be ready to begin in 1993-94.

Some school officials close to the process believe the rules may be altered before they are adopted. Helen Prutow, a member of the Farmington school board, the Oakland Intermediate school board and the board of directors for the Michigan Association of School Boards, said she believes the timeline may change and that the proposed rules are still being debated.

"They are realizing they probably can't even do it in 10 years," she added.

Forward said although she is comfortable with the preliminary draft of rules, she added that "the final decision is clearly theirs (the state board)."

The issue of accrediting schools has been raised in recent years in the Farmington school district during school board campaigns.

SCHOOL BOARD watcher, parent, and former board candidate Robert Ranney remains concerned about the issue and is pleased something is being done.

"A lot of people assume that we already are" accredited, he said. "They're surprised to find out that

**"It (accreditation) assures the public that some type of standards are being met. And schools are forced... to look at how business is being done and whether anything needs to be changed."**

— Linda Forward  
Michigan Accreditation Program

we aren't." Ranney said he believes the accreditation process will help schools set goals and track progress in various areas.

He cautioned that parents and the community will have to be patient and understanding as the district begins the process and weaknesses are pointed out. "I think there's going to have to be a lot of understanding," he said. "There needs to be an attitude of forgiveness — that's how everyone should approach it initially."

Prutow and Flanagan said another concern involves the expense to local districts, which must use substitute teachers while the permanent staff works on the accreditation process. One elementary school in the district, Larkshire Elementary in Farmington Hills, has already voluntarily received its accreditation through North Central, an accreditation company which also works with the district's three high schools.

## police/fire calls

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Consumers Power Co. also arrived at the scene to secure a gas meter and turn off the gas supply. The electric meter also was removed because the electrical panel box was burned in the fire. Detroit Edison also was requested to turn off the electrical supply.

Smoke detectors were not present in the house. No one was injured in the fire.

**TICKETS ISSUED**  
Tickets were issued in two separate alcohol incidents on the Shawwassee sludding hill over the weekend. Both occurred on Saturday night.

In the first, a 22-year-old Redford Township man was cited for sitting at the top of the hill drinking beer. In the second, a 17-year-old Farmington Hills man and a 17-year-old Livonia woman were ticketed for having an open bottle of whiskey in their car.

Both incidents were discovered while police were patrolling the area.

**APARTMENT FIRE**  
A Mulwood Apartments tenant put out a fire with tap water early Sunday in a laundry room where clothes had been placed too close to a forced air furnace, according to a Farmington Hills fire report.

Damage was estimated at \$350. Clothing as well as luggage stored inside the room as well as fixtures for the hot water heater and furnace were damaged.

**CAR FIRE**  
A motorist extinguished a fire in her car with snow Tuesday as it was parked on Collingham, according to a Farmington Hills fire report.

Damage was estimated at \$100. The car owner told fire officials that she had jammed the muffler back earlier in the day. Fire damage was limited to the exhaust hanger and undercoating on the bottom of the car.

**CAR FIRE**  
Damage was estimated at \$250 after a car parked on Belmont caught fire Jan. 17, according to a

Farmington Hills fire report. When firefighters arrived they found a fully involved fire. The owner told fire officials that he had inserted a paperclip in place of a fuse for the heater. The heaviest burning was found in the area immediately adjacent to the fusebox.

**THEFTS REPORTED**  
A total of \$980 in items were stolen from a garage on Warner in Farmington Jan. 19. Taken were two 10-speed bicycles, an air compressor and a snow blower.

A 1990 Pontiac valued at \$15,000 was reported stolen from the Twelfth Estate Condominiums on 12 Mile, Jan. 19-20.

Eleven 10-pound fire extinguishers valued at \$418 were reported stolen from an office on 12 Mile, Jan. 14-15.

A 1990 Chevrolet, valued at \$18,000 was reported stolen from Halsted Place on Halsted Road, Jan. 20.

An AM/FM cassette radio valued at \$500 was reported stolen from a 1990 Chevrolet at Botsford Hospital, 28050 Grand River, Jan. 20.

## Democrat club meets tonight at Botsford Inn

What's in store for Farmington and Farmington Hills residents in 1992 is the topic of discussion at the Farmington Democratic Club's 7:30 p.m. meeting tonight, Jan. 23.

The meeting at the Botsford Inn, 28000 Grand River at Eight Mile, will feature presentations by Farmington Hills Mayor Jonathan Grant and Farmington Mayor William Hartsock. A question period will follow each presentation.

Democrats also will discuss the upcoming presidential primary election. The club will sponsor a meeting in February at which the representatives of the various presidential candidates will speak and answer questions, according to chairman Michael Breshgold.

Memberships in the Democratic Club are being accepted at this time. Dues are \$8 regular and \$3 for senior citizens or students. Mail dues to the Farmington Democratic Club, 26193 Kiltartan, Farmington Hills 48334. The Jan. 23 meeting, as well as all club meetings, is open to the public.

# Hills vet dies suddenly, called a 'true caregiver'

By Casey Hans staff writer

Dr. Ann Holling Barrie and John Harris had been married for only two years, when the Farmington Hills veterinarian died suddenly last week of a suspected heart attack.

Known to friends and family as Holly, the 42-year-old Plymouth resident was a veterinarian with the Country Ridge Animal Hospital at Haggerty and 14 Mile Road.

She died Jan. 16 while at home on her day off from the clinic.

"They were so caring of each other. She was a lovely person," said District Judge Margaret Schaeffer, her aunt by marriage. "I can say she was a true caregiver for both people and animals, and I was very happy to have her part of our family."

"It was really very hard. They had been very happy."

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