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IN THE PAPER TODAY

Problem program?: A Farmington Hills rehabilitation grant program has a bigger budget and critics. /4A

They called and called: A Farmington Observer telephone survey drew many readers who told the paper what they thought of that new sign by the Masonic Temple. /8A

Narcotics charge: A Farmington High student has been charged with drug possession with intent to deliver after a principal found two rocks of crack cocaine. /10A

TASTE



Tasty pursuit: Meet Wayne Hu, a finalist in the Pillsbury Bake-off Contest. / 1B

Wine column: Discover bargain-priced Bordeaux wines. / 1E

MALLS & MAINSTREETS

Furniture follies: Farmington's Ray Interiors and another independent furniture store are in the middle of liquidation sales. /4B

Super sellers: Meet Evelyn Schneider of the Rand McNally store with customer service that is More Than You Bargained For. /4B

SPORTS

Hawk outlook: The Harrison girls soccer team has plenty of defenders but is short of proven scorers. /1C

Defending champ: Mercy will try to win its fifth consecutive Catholic League title in girls track.

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Survey: Teens say yes to drugs



A survey prepared recently by the Farmington Schools and Farmington Families in Action presents some alarming news about drug and alcohol use by area high school students.

By LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Kids might be saying no, but for how long? Tobacco, alcohol and marijuana — so-called gateway drugs — are being used by a substantial number of kids, according to a recent survey prepared by Farmington Schools and Farming-

ton Families in Action.

In fact, smoking and drinking among Farmington-area high school seniors is slightly higher than the national level. Inhalants are also being used at an alarming rate, according to those involved in the survey. Less than 10 percent said they had tried illicit drugs other than mariju-

na — including cocaine and crack — in the last month. There are statistical variations in the survey, but officials say the report is designed to spark discussion among students and parents. "Forget the numbers," health curriculum coordinator Estraleo Michaelson said. "Kids are using." Teens who use gateway drugs are at risk to try serious narcotics later on, experts say. That, along with predictions of gangs infiltrating the suburbs and heroin trafficking increasing, has officials concerned about what the future holds.

"The pendulum is definitely swinging back," said Building and Student Services director Lon Cowan. Eighth-, 10th- and 12th-graders were surveyed in March last year as part of the Drug Free Schools grant program. Parents had to OK their kids' participation.

Data is compared with national statistics taken in 1992 on alcohol and drug use in schools. One revealing statistic was the use of inhalants. Four percent of high school seniors questioned said they

See DRUGS, 10A

Hit/run victim turns page

By BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

It was an early fall evening in 1991 and Chuck Firment was doing something he loved — riding his bike — when a car swerved onto the shoulder of the road and hit him head on.

Two-and-a-half years and 13 operations later, the Kendallwood subdivision resident has learned to cope with the prospect that he may lose his right leg.

He's retained his sense of humor over a difficult road, and he's successfully battled a drug problem and attends Oakland Community College.

"The car didn't have its headlights on and it was dark (8:30 p.m.)," he said. "I was just coming out of Little Bambinos (on 12 Mile between Orchard Lake and Middlebelt). I didn't see the car until it was 3 feet from me."

At that point the then Farmington High School student thought he would be killed.

"I remember thinking right then, after all of the stupid things I've done, this is the thing that's gonna kill me," he said. "The last thing I remember about the impact was my ankle hitting the back of my head and thinking that somehow that wasn't right."

He remembers being conscious enough to hear the car drive off and he remembers being able to grab one of his tires with his left hand to throw into the street to attract the attention of a passing motorist. His right arm and right leg were broken.

"Several cars just went by," he recalls. His mother Marty was alarmed when she was told that he had been the victim of a hit-and-run, driver, but once she'd heard he had a broken leg, she was relieved.

"I thought it's just a broken leg," she said. "Then the doctor came up to me and said, 'we'll try to save this leg.' I remember how I couldn't stand to see Chuck go through so much pain."

The jury's still out on the right leg broken on that evening of Oct. 1, 1991. The bone had been infected

See TURNS, 5A



A left-footer: Chuck Firment doesn't let his medical problems stop him from enjoying a game of Hacky Sack in the OCC Student Commons area.

D-day today: Students band together for France

By LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

D-Day has arrived for the Farmington High marching band. They're departing.

Today, the band is leaving on its long-awaited trip to France to commemorate the 50th anniversary of D-Day. Some 85 students and 31 par-

ents are set to fly, leaving Metropolitan Airport on separate United Airlines flights.

The band will perform at both Utah and Omaha Beach memorials as well as other events commemorating the liberation of France from Germany in World War II. They will return April 12.

Band members, though, couldn't leave without saying a hearty thank you to a fellow who helped make their journey possible.

Farmington resident Jack Curd received a beret and a T-shirt in a special pep assembly Thursday at the school.

"They tore me up this morning,"

said Curd, sitting in the doorway as the band rehearsed Thursday afternoon. "They let me speechless."

Which is perhaps the first time he's been speechless since October. Curd has been trumpeting the band to area businesses and organizations, trying

See BAND, 3A

Channelling the blame

Don Cowan, president of the Farmington Area Optimists, was introducing the guests at a recent club breakfast at the Clarion Hotel. That morning the guests included Paul Gross, TV meteorologist for Channel 4.

"Now we know who to blame for the lousy weather this morning," kidded Cowan, director of building and student services for the Farmington Schools.

Quipped Gross, "That's right . . . just blame Channel 7."

'Hi, Hi Bobby'

Robert Maxfield, recently installed as superintendent of the Farmington School District, was given a going-away bash March 28 by his former employer, the Berkley Dis-

FARMINGTON FOCUS

The affair, which had a song-and-dance motif, featured a little song about Maxfield. It's called "Bye, Bye Bobby" and can be sung to the tune of "Bye, Bye Blackbird." The song goes:

Back up all your cars and wares
Off you go to Farmington so . . .

Bye Bye Bobby

Farmington parents wait to see
If you can raise scores on the MEAP

Bye Bye Bobby

Berkley Schools know and understand you
Oh, what hard-luck budgets we did hand you . . .
Farewell Bob, you did us right
We took the best years of your life . . .
Bobby, bye, bye.

Memory Lane

From the April 8, 1964, edition of the Farmington Enterprise:
Mr. and Mrs. John H. Maas celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary with about 180 friends and relatives at an open house at their Drake Road home.
A Red Cross official said Farmington-area nurses would be needed to help test the new polio vaccine.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21898 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, faxed to 477-9722 or dropped off at the newspaper office.