



They do swear: Cycler the Robot makes the youngsters take an oath that they will reduce, reuse and recycle.

## Talkin' Trash

### Recycling robot raps to kids

BY BILL COULTAN  
STAFF WRITER

Students at Wood Creek Elementary School in northern Farmington Hills had a strange visitor who combined rap music with a message — recycling.

The students were entertained by "Cycler," a robot with a message: the City of Farmington Hills hopes they get and pass on to their parents:

"Cycler's my name, recycling's my game," came the metallic words from the 4-foot robot as he danced stage right, then stage left at an assembly Dec. 13.

Recycling Education Coordinator Carey Wehmler of

Waste Management, Inc., introduced the entertaining answer to Star Wars R2D2. The robot, who is partly composed of empty plastic bottles, pie tins and other material he's encouraging people to recycle, went through his musical routine without a hitch, just as he had at Alameda, Gill, Wooddale, Eagle, Flanders, Larkshire, Forest, Fairview, Kenbrook, William Grace and Beechview elementary schools.

"This is the first time we've done this in four years," said Farmington Hills Recycling Coordinator Karen Birkholz. "We want to make sure kids who hadn't seen him before

could. Plus, we have some new information."

In his entertaining way, the robot has some points to make to his impressionable audience. He "raps" off facts including that recycling preserves valuable landfill space. And he even gives pointers on how to recycle.

■ **'It's the first time these children have seen (the robot). They were thoroughly entertained.'**

Karen Obeniuk  
Principal



Coming closer: Wood Creek third graders (from left) Sarra Damman, Sara Spalter and Ananda Zipsper react as the robot comes close.

Cycler encourages kids to clean out used cans, bottles and other items, letting out a squeal of discontent at the thought of dealing with sticky or dirty recyclables.

"I liked it," said fourth grader Nicki Collette of Farmington Hills. "He had a lot of neat things to say."

And just to make sure the kids catch on, Wehmler makes sure to quit them at the end of the presentation, with coloring books going to the kids that encourage them to "reduce, reuse and recycle."

"It's the first time these children have seen it," said Principal Karen Obeniuk. "They were thoroughly entertained."

# Insiders will have first crack at OCC chief post

BY TIM RICHARD  
STAFF WRITER

Inside candidates will get first crack at applying for chief executive before Oakland Community College trustees start an expensive national search.

"I'd like to promote from within," trustee Pamela Davis, Madison Heights, said at Monday's special meeting. Davis was in the majority group that fired Chancellor Patsy Calkins in September.

"I'd like to see an external search," said trustee Janice Simmons of Pontiac. She was a Calkins loyalist.

"Why not do both?" said trustee Carol Crow of Waterford.

The search committee will be chaired by interim Chancellor Anthony Jaron and will include the presidents of the Highland Lakes and Royal Oak-Southfield campuses.

Missing will be Richard T. Thompson, acting president of the Auburn Hills Campus; George Keith, president of the Orchard Ridge Campus; and James L. Warner, vice chancellor for academic and students affairs.

It was a clue that Jaron expects them to be candidates for chief executive. Thompson was interim chancellor in 1993-94 for nine months prior to Dr. Calkins' hiring, and some trustees wanted him to take the job permanently. Warner was acting interim chancellor for a month after Calkins'

departure.

Jaron said that a person interested in applying would be expected to withdraw from the search committee.

The board approved 4-2 a motion to post the chief executive job internally for two weeks, allowing OCC to advertise nationally by the end of January if suitable applicants failed to surface. Simmons and Crow voted no.

Besides Jaron and the two campus presidents, the 21-member search committee will have representatives of the faculty union, alumni association, the student body, administrative staff, management staff, campus senate representatives, treasurer, vice chancellor for human resources, deans, classified employees, operating engineers, public safety and maintenance employees.

Simmons, who was ousted as board chair when Calkins was fired, asked to be on the search committee, but the board rebuffed her. No trustees will serve.

Explained Jaron: "We did not include the board on the search committee. Should the board make recommendations to itself? My recommendation is it may not be necessary."

Trustees added some new qualifications to the chief executive's profile, which otherwise was the same as in past searches: ability to work with "an elected" board of trustees and "commitment and

ability to advocate the multiple needs of all employees through a collaborative leadership style."

It was a clue to the 5-2 board majority's thinking when it fired Calkins without explanation: Calkins didn't satisfy the trustees, and she got bad marks from some of the non-faculty unions for job reassignments.

OCC is a rarity in Michigan — five campuses and a Pontiac Center. The board is looking for someone with experience as a president or senior administrator in "a multi-campus district or other complex organizational situation." Finding someone to fit that description will require an internal candidate or someone from outside Michigan.

Much will depend on the board's own judgment. As trustee Sandra Ritter remarked, "This is my fourth search. It's like a blind date: You don't know how they're going to work out until you've danced with them."

After the screening process, trustees are expected to interview finalists in an open session, as required by the state Open Meetings Act.

"The board has always interviewed the last six or eight candidates," said Jaron.

Jaron urged promptness so that if a national search is necessary, it can be completed before the start of the new fiscal year July 1. Calkins was paid \$120,000 a year and benefits.

## Ballet looking for performers

The Michigan Classic Ballet Company will hold auditions for "Peter And The Wolf," "Carnival of the Animals," a spring performance, and for Regional Dance America Mid-States Festival on Saturday, Jan. 13, at Oak-

land Community College's Smith Theatre on the Orchard Ridge Campus, Orchard Lake Road and I-696.

Audition times are 1-1:30 p.m. for ages 7 and 8; 1:30-3 p.m. for

ages 9 and older. If dancing on point, point shoes are requested. There is an audition fee of \$12.

Further information may be obtained by calling The Michigan Classic Ballet Company at 661-4349.

## Police officer speeds through traffic school with flying colors

Farmington Hills police Lt. Patrick Browne recently graduated from the Northwestern University Traffic Institute's School of Police Staff and Command.

The 10-week school is designed to prepare top and middle-level law enforcement managers and supervisors for senior agency positions.

Lt. Browne, an 18-year veteran of the Hills department, attended the school at Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti. The session ran one week per month, from February to November of 1995.

The program covers four broad areas of study: management and its environment, organizational theory and behavior, human resource administration, and skills for planning and analysis.

Lt. Browne completed the graduate level courses with a straight "A" average. More than 3,000 officers from state, county and municipal agencies have attended the program since the first session in 1983.

■ **The 10-week school is designed to prepare top and middle-level law enforcement managers and supervisors for senior agency positions.**

The Traffic Institute was established at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill. in 1936 for the purpose of expanding the scope of university-level education in traffic safety. Since that time, the institute has broadened its original objective to include training in police operations and management.

Other Hills officers who have attended Northwestern are Inspector Martin Bledsoe, Lt. Charles Nebus, Lt. Gary Hawald, Inspector Richard Murphy, Sgt. Dennis Green and Lt. Jim Whitcomb.



Lt. Patrick Browne

persons who suffer from mental disorders.

Registration is not required. For information call 691-2944.

## Support is available for families

St. Mary Hospital offers a free Mental Health Family Support Group which meets 2-3 p.m. every Wednesday on the fifth floor of the main hospital near the Five

Mile entrance.

The weekly meeting provides education and support services to friends and family members of



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