

# Let's cybertalk

## On-line chat connects students with young Mexican friends

BY TIM SMITH  
STAFF WRITER  
tsmith@ee.homescomm.net

Thanks to the wonders of cyberspace, Farmington elementary school students hooked up Tuesday, Feb. 1 with fourth graders at Lincoln School in Guadalajara, Mexico, for some chat chat.

Most of their computer dialogue focused on kid stuff, including MTV, pop star Ricky Martin, sports and fashion. "How much do jeans cost?" read one question.

But for a little while, the subject turned to politics.

Mexican student: "Who is the U.S. President?" read the on-line question viewed in the Eagle Elementary School media center and computer lab.

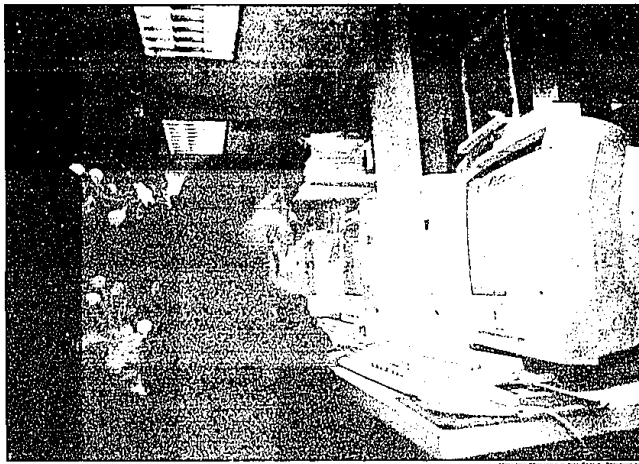
American student: "Bill Clinton, You Don't Want To Know Him."

Eagle students weren't the only ones in the Farmington district participating in the interactive hour-long program made possible by Farmington district resident and renowned chef Keith Farnie and coordinated by Curtis & Associates of Keego Harbor.

Beechview, Highmeadow, Lanigan, William Grace and Wooddale elementarys also joined in, although some had trouble getting on-line for a while. Meanwhile, youngsters in the Birmingham and Troy school districts also communicated with Sonora Champion's fourth-grade class in Mexico.

One problem was that American schools such as Eagle had multiple computers from which students could pound out their pressing question or response to something already posted on the screen.

But at the bilingual Mexican school, there was only one available computer. As a result, many more entries from American kids



**The question is:** During the recent cyberchat with children in a fourth-grade classroom in Guadalajara, Eagle Elementary School teacher Flora Chinchilla helps student Hannah Cohen phrase her question in Spanish, rather than English. Other schools in the Farmington district also participated.

made the screen than did those from their counterparts in Guadalajara.

"Once the kids figured it out, they got into it," said event spokeswoman Melinda Curtis of Curtis & Associates. "It's a different form of communication."

### No passport needed

Kathy Nyberg, World Language coordinator for Farmington Public Schools, said the interactive program makes learning about other cultures more real and applicable than

reading about it, for example.

"They see that yes, there are people out there who are from a different culture and ... they're kids," Nyberg said. "It's kids talking to kids. I think it's a win all the way around."

Nyberg listed the following Spanish teachers as being involved: Nancy Roma; Flora Chinchilla; Barrie Schoessel; and Jenny Seidel. At Eagle, Chinchilla helped prep youngsters for the over-the-Internet program by wearing an authentic Mexican outfit and

bringing her passport.

"I wanted this to be as real an experience as can be, to make them feel like they're taking a trip to Mexico" without boarding an airplane, Chinchilla explained. "... They can see that these kids (in Mexico) are just like them."

Farnie's "Mexican Adventure 2000" web site ([www.farnie.com](http://www.farnie.com)) helped the students prepare for the chat.

The site contains recipes, educational features, a fully interac-



**Interactive:** Eagle Elementary media center technician Ann Marie Smith and student Jenya Abramovich converse with elementary-school students in Mexico.

tive "Kid's Page" as well as the exploration of Mexican food, culture and traditions.

Carole Kersten, Eagle media

center specialist, said students were excited to be "able to participate in a cultural happening that's here and happening right now."

## CAMPUS PIPELINE

### STATE DEAN'S LIST

Jason Smith of Farmington Hills was named to the dean's list at Michigan State University following the fall semester.

### U OF M GRAD

Bryna Podwolski received her bachelor of science degree in industrial & operations engineering from the University of Michigan in December. She is a 1995 graduate of Harrison High School in Farmington Hills and is now employed with Johnson Controls in Plymouth.

### STUDYING ABROAD

Albion College's Rebecca Naglik is currently spending the semester studying at the University of Sussex in England as part of Albion College's off-campus programs. Naglik is a junior majoring in chemistry and the daughter of Raymond and Oene Naglik of Farmington Hills.

### HILSDALE DEAN'S LIST

Andrea Delle-Monache and Jessica Jorissen were named to the dean's list at Hillsdale College. Delle-Monache is the daughter of John and Patricia Delle-Monache of Farmington Hills and Jorissen is the daughter of Jeff and Joanne Jorissen of Farmington Hills.

### ALMA DEAN'S LIST

Farmington Hills residents Daniel and Tressa Parrolly were named to the dean's list at Alma College following the fall semester.

### DOWN UNDER STUDY

Sarah Escott, a junior at Hope College, is studying in Sydney, Australia. Students in Sydney study at the University of New South Wales. Escott is the daughter of John and Elaine Escott of Farmington Hills.

### JAW DEAN'S LIST

The following Farmington/Farmington Hills residents were named to the dean's list at Johnson & Wales University following the fall semester:

Nicole Sempowski, Allison Barney and Joseph Barney.

### BALDWIN DEAN'S LIST

Benjamin Kimball of Farmington Hills was named to the dean's list at Baldwin Wallace College following the fall semester.

### ALBION PLAYER

Albion College student Elizabeth Graham has been selected by audition to play in the College Symphony Orchestra. Graham is a senior majoring in economics and management and is a member of the Gerstacker Liberal Arts Institute in Professional Management. She is the daughter of Douglas and Jeanine Graham of Farmington Hills and a graduate of Harrison High School.

### U OF M DEAN'S LIST

The following Farmington/Farmington Hills residents were

named to the dean's list following the fall semester at the University of Michigan-Dearborn College of Engineering and Computer Science:

Scott Reje, Dmitry Bekkerman, Brian Coonka, Mounir Kanfarani, Nicholas Mjneran, Matthew Ostrander and Evan Hillawi.

### ADRIAN THEATRE

Todd Buckwalter will portray the Mad Hatter and the Mockturtle in the Adrian College Theatre production of "Alice in Wonderland." The play will run through Feb. 19. Buckwalter is the son of Dennis and Ruth Buckwalter of Farmington Hills.

### NIAGRA DEAN'S LIST

Patricia Traczyk of Farmington Hills was named to the dean's list at Niagara University following the fall semester.

### ALBION INTERN

Albion College student Kristin Wild is spending the semester interning with PricewaterhouseCoopers. Wild is a sophomore at Albion College and is a member of the Gerstacker Liberal Arts Institute in Professional Management. She is the daughter of Edward and Claudia Wild of Farmington and a graduate of Farmington High School.

### DCS DEAN'S LIST

Justin Lawler of Farmington was named to the dean's list at Detroit College of Business following the fall semester.

## These feathers belong together.

Striking style by Tempesta makes it happen.

Sleeveless sweater with ribbon trim.

Black cotton/polyester. Imported.

Sizes P, S, M, L. \$100.

Stretch pants with feather print.

Red cotton/Elastin. Made in the USA.

Sizes 2-12. \$160.

Red handbag with feather print. \$120.

In Advanced Sportswear.



# Jacobson's

Birmingham • (205) 844-0000 Livonia • (734) 591-7886 Rochester • (248) 851-0000  
SHOPPING HOURS • MON-SAT 10-9 • OPEN SUN AT NOON  
[www.jacobsons.com](http://www.jacobsons.com)

## His Charity Motors helps charities

BY KEN VAN STEENKISTE  
STAFF WRITER

John Kruse was in a rut. A lifelong resident of Farmington Hills, Kruse worked as a sales agent for an electrical support company. But he just wasn't satisfied with his job. He felt like there was something more to life, something he was missing.

Then, about two years ago, Kruse got an opportunity. A friend of his whom he met through his church, Oakland Christian in Oakland Township, told him about a new organization called Charity Motors.

The organization aims to raise money for nonprofit groups by fixing up and selling used cars. About 70 percent of the cash

from the sale goes to whatever charity the donor designates.

The donor of the car also benefits by receiving a tax credit for the value of the car.

"It's what we call a win, win, win situation," Kruse said.

He jumped at the chance to start a new career and help others at the same time. Kruse put his 20 years of sales experience to work for Charity Motors as one of their Detroit lots.

"I was looking for a change. I went from the for-profit world to the nonprofit world. It was totally different, really fulfilling," Kruse said.

In its fifth year of operation, Charity Motors has raised more than \$5 million for other nonprofit groups, while providing

low-cost transportation to about 10,000 people.

The group, which usually sells its cars for no more than one-half of their "blue book" value, is actually the largest used car dealer in Michigan.

Kruse isn't sure how many of those 10,000 cars were sold by him personally, but he is glad to be a part of what he describes as a "hands-on" organization. On some days, he may find himself tinkering under the hood of one of the older vehicles Charity Motors has accepted.

"We all do a little bit of everything, whatever we have to," he said.

For more information about Charity Motors, please call (313) 285-1000.