

## POLICE CALLS

## ASSAULT WITH UTENSILS

A 17-year-old Farmington Hills youth was taken into custody Wednesday after he threatened employees at the Kerby's Coney Island at 28990 Orchard Lake Road. According to witnesses, the boy got into an argument with people at his table around 10 p.m. and started lighting napkins on fire. When asked to leave by management, he started yelling obscenities and grabbed two forks and two knives and threatened the staff. Police had to use force after the boy resisted. He was charged with assault and battery, disorderly conduct and obstructing an officer.

## STOLEN GAS

At the Mobil gas station at 12 Mile and Middlebelt around 12:45 p.m. Thursday, an attendant told police a woman driving a black SUV pumped \$11.78 worth of gas in the vehicle and left without paying.

## JEWELRY TAKEN

A resident in the 31000 block of Lake-side told police on Dec. 6 someone stole a \$5,000 ring and a \$17,000 necklace from her dresser in her apartment. She told police she sometimes leaves her door unlocked.

## CAR DAMAGE

A woman told police she found her 1998 Jaguar suffered damage to the driver's side while parked at the Kroger store at 12 Mile and Halsted on Thursday.

## HOME INVASION

In an apartment in the 39000 block of Polo Club Drive, a man said he was dozing on his couch when he awoke around 1:40 a.m. Friday to discover someone was inside his front glass doorway. The resident yelled and the suspect fled. The resident, who was not wearing his glasses, could not give a description of the suspect.

## TV STOLEN

A resident in the 24000 block of Roosevelt Ct. told police she suspects a friend of her son's took a 13-inch television from the residence on Tuesday. The TV was valued at \$70.

## BIKE TAKEN

A 12-year-old student at Dunckel Middle School reported her unlocked mountain bike was stolen at the school on Tuesday.

## LEFT WITHOUT PAYING

A woman with a small child left the Ruby Tuesday's restaurant on Wednesday without paying her check of \$31.96. A license plate check of the suspect's vehicle didn't match its make and model.

## STOLEN LUMBER

A company working on a home under construction in the 29900 block of Gladstone reported \$1,000 in lumber was stolen from the site between Dec. 8-12.

—by Paul R. Pace

## C'ville closer to block schedule

BY JONI HUBBARD  
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It's been almost 10 years in the making, but Clarenceville High School staff, parents and students are finally starting to take a close look at block scheduling.

The general concept involves longer class periods and fewer classes each semester; however, Clarenceville High most likely would adopt a hybrid of several types of block scheduling.

"We committed to do not what's easiest, but what's best," said teacher Troy Nelson, who is among the staff members most closely involved with the project.

Principal David Simowski told school board members Thursday he'd first gotten excited about the concept in 1991, after attending a Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals conference.

"From 1991 until about the middle of the 1998-2000 school year, I planted seeds," he said.

Last year, school staff members and parents visited other schools where block scheduling is already in place. In addition, representatives from other districts came to Clarenceville and spoke to teachers.

In April, Simowski took a "confidence vote," asking teachers whether they could support implementation of block scheduling.

"This has to be owned by staff," he explained. "If they don't own it, it doesn't work." For that reason, the bar for staff approval was set at 80 percent. "The vote was above 80 percent," Simowski said.

Social studies teacher Cindy Raby, who has taught at Clarenceville since 1987, found some parallels between the scheduling change and the way a caterpillar struggles to become a butterfly, as portrayed in a student essay she read to board members Thursday evening.

"It's change, and change is a struggle," she said, adding, "We are very much dedicated to making this work for our children. We're dedicated to coming up with a structure that will work best for our students."

Teacher Josh Green, who has been in charge of communications for the project, recited a number of benefits to block scheduling:

- Students have more time on task
- Teachers can vary instruction styles
- Students have the opportunity to take more electives
- Teachers encounter fewer students each day, and can get closer to the ones with whom they work

Green said because students would have fewer classes, there would be less transition and a more relaxed environment. "I can't emphasize that enough. Every teacher I talked to said that."

School officials appeared to like what they heard, but wanted more information. Gary Garrison wondered about the effects on credits; Simowski explained those would be gradually adjusted, with the first year's seniors unaffected.

Sharon Simpson said she hadn't bought into block scheduling when Simowski first started talking about it, "but the more I read about it, the more I liked it."

When she talked about it with her son, Simpson said, he wasn't in favor of sitting for 90 minutes listening to a teacher talk. With block, she said, "the kids are not just going to sit and have a teacher talk to them. They can incorporate all those different kinds of learning styles."

"We've had teachers tell us you need to change teaching styles five times in a block," Simowski said.

Consultant Mary Brown, who retired from Farmington Public Schools after 28 years in the classroom and as an assistant principal, has been working with the committee. She said block scheduling is not a "panacea" or solution to all problems.

"It is a way to get people thinking freshly about their teaching practice, about assessment, about curriculum, about learning style," Brown said.

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