

Teen among youngest delegates

BY JONI HUBBED
STAFF WRITER

Natalie Gordanier may be young, but already she's a political activist.

A delegate to this year's Oakland County Republican convention, the 18-year-old Farmington Hills woman has spent the past two years working on local campaigns.

That involvement probably played a big role in her being selected to represent her community at the county level.

"Delegates are selected based on their commitment to local campaigns and issues," Natalie said. Her first exposure to politics came early in life.

"My family, particularly my dad, has always been involved in one way or another," she said. "When I was 11, we went to the State Capitol to see Newt Gingrich."

Natalie's father, Mark, is an active member of the Farmington Area Republican Club and has been a vocal critic of Farmington Hills police and fire departments, as well as city government.

Her first exposure to politics came early in life.

"My dad's a typical Republican," his 16-year-old daughter said. "On the other hand, he's the most principled person I know. He's also emerging as an advocate for minority issues, police reforms and DNA testing for prisoners on death row."

The younger Gordanier is an avid supporter of Attorney General candidate Mike Cox, after meeting him at a Republican Club event. She now works for his campaign.

"He would be the first Republican Attorney General in 48 years," Gordanier said, and I just decided to help."

That on top of a schedule that includes running Orchard Lake Pet Resort, the family's business, and taking business management and computer classes at Oakland Community College.

"Right now, it's only two nights a week," she says of her

campaign work. "Closer to the election, it will be more time."

Will she ever be a political candidate in her own right? "Right now I'm struggling with a general disrespect of local government officials," she said. "I can't see myself as being a part of an imperial establishment. I am definitely a business person. I love owning a family business. I love serving customers to the best of my ability."

Still, she said, politics will always be part of her life. She enjoyed attending the Republican convention and was encouraged by the number of young people (19-22 year olds) who attended.

"I liked hearing what the candidates had to say first hand," Gordanier said. "Our marching orders from them were to go back to our neighborhoods and spread the word."

She'd encourage other young people to get just as deeply involved, to learn about the issues and the candidates.

"You meet people, you get to know them more than just as a name on a ballot," she said. "It felt good to be informed. You felt like you actually knew what was going on. It's good to start young," she added. "If you ever want to run for mayor or city council someday, it's good to have experience."

YMCA

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make a positive way to recreate," said Duffell. As part of the Farmington Hills After School program, the YMCA serves as one of the three areas children and teens can hang out at after school until their parents can pick them up.

The teens also get to use the Y's facilities, such as the basketball court, racquetball rooms, swimming pools and exercise rooms. There's even the study area in the hallway devoted to those who want to do their homework after school.

Patrick Burton is the teen coordinator at the Farmington Area YMCA.

He said the room was designed specifically by the teens. It includes tables where they can sit and talk and drink from ever-present pop bottles or play cards or board games, a large screen TV hooked up with the latest video game systems and game cartridges, a foosball table, a pool table and a computer.

Burton said 50-60 kids use the Y's after-school program on weekdays and more than 100 typically attend the Y's Friday night dances and programs.

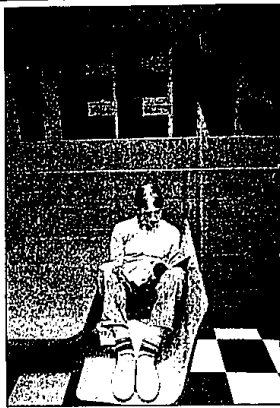
"Here you can be loud if you want," Burton said.

The programs at the Y give the teens a place to have fun and not have to worry their parents about where they are after school.

"We give them a safe, positive environment to be in," Burton said.

The kids help make programs they set up themselves, Burton said. And there are plans to broaden the program to bring in counselors and even offer training classes for such things as baby-sitting, said Burton.

Mike Gordanier, 12, is a seventh-grader at Dunckel Middle School, said he likes the after-school program at the Y because he can play basketball and be with his friends.



DELL BRESELER/OBSERVER

Jill Schroeder finds a quiet corner for reading.

Jill Schroeder, 13, an eighth-grader at Dunckel, likes going to the Y after school to do her homework, be with friends and play the X-Box video games. Lindsey Cross, also 13 and an eighth-grader at Dunckel, said she's glad the teen center is there and the after school program is available at the Y.

"You can play games, do your homework and talk with your friends," she said. ppage2@homecomm.net | (248) 477-5450

OBITUARIES

Eugene Smith
Services for Eugene "Gene" Smith, 76, of Farmington Hills, were held Oct. 5 at Thayer-Rock Funeral Home in Farmington with the Rev. Jim Britt officiating. Burial took place at Mt. Hope Cemetery in Livonia. Mr. Smith was born Jan. 13, 1926 in Canada and died Sept. 30, 2002 at Botsford Hospital in

Farmington Hills. He was a maintenance worker for Farmington Public Schools and also worked as a meat cutter for J&P Grocery Store. He was a member of the Pigeon Flying Club. He is survived by his son, David; daughter, Erin Rutherford-Jackson (Michael); brother, Douglas; sisters, Yvonne Santo and Dee Cooper; and five

grandchildren. He is preceded in death by his wife, Emily. Memorial contributions may be made to the Make-A-Wish Foundation, 1669 Hamilton Road, Suite 210, Okemos, MI 48864-1809.

Michael J. Pingley
Michael James Pingley, 52, of Farmington Hills, died Oct. 1, 2002.

He was a member of the Livonia Elks and the Livonia

Moose.

He is survived by his wife, Joanna; step-children, Stacey (Mark) Warren and Lianne Nilsson; father, James (Vera); sister, Sandy (Greg) Cowan; two step-grandsons; and one nephew.

He is preceded in death by his mother Mary.

For memorial service information call Michigan Memorial Funeral Home in Huron Township at (734) 783-2646.

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A number of places about the knee may become swollen. If you develop pain and swelling around the knee, it is not a foregone conclusion that you have fluid in the knee. Several areas, called bursae, exist in the knee area and can become inflamed.
The one most likely to look and act like knee arthritis is the prepatellar bursa. This bursa sits in front of the knee and usually holds a few drops of fluid. When the bursa is normal, you can hardly tell it from other tissue and skin that surrounds the knee.
In the 18th and 19th Century, inflammation of this bursa was called housemaid's knee. This designation followed the observation that women who spent hours at a time on their knees scrubbing floors were susceptible to this condition.
Few women are subject to such labor today, but often, women or men are on their knees in mowing, building, or repairing floors or driveways, or are involved in prolonged kneeling in tasks such as grooming dogs. Such stress can bring on prepatellar bursitis. Sometimes a blow to the knee as in field hockey, soccer, or basketball can do the same damage.
Physicians can distinguish fluid in the knee from fluid in the prepatellar bursa by careful examination. Also, the enlarged bursa being close to the surface of the knee gives the joint a red color and a warm feeling on palpation.
Treatment is straightforward. It consists of removal of the excess fluid from the bursa, and for a week to ten days, foregoing activity that involves kneeling.
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