

Singer Robbo to perform at JCC

Singer-songwriter Robbo will perform in two concerts - one for kids and one for adults - on Sunday, Jan. 19 at the Jewish Community Center in West Bloomfield.

Robbo will sing his greatest children's hits, including *Giant in the Closet*, *Don't Share My Toys* and *Blow My Nose*. His adult concert, at 7 p.m., will include Yiddish classic songs. A former school teacher,

Robbo has been teaching music at schools and camps since he was a youngster. Tickets are \$5 for JCC members for each concert and \$8 for non-members. For more information call (248) 432-5577.

CLARIFICATION

A story in Sunday's paper about Roy Scout Ryan Killing should have stated he has not yet

received his Eagle badge, but did complete his Eagle badge project.

Oakland schools target of criticism

The Oakland County Intermediate School District continued to endure a firestorm of criticism Tuesday, even as it released the findings of an internal investigation that found no evidence to support charges of criminal wrongdoing.

At a special public meeting, Oakland Schools officials presented copies of a several-hundred-page report compiled by the Whall Group, an Auburn Hills-based accounting firm hired in June after several schools employees accused the district of using money from a 2001 special education millage to pay for a new \$29 million administration building. The Whall Group also investigated the relationship Superintendent James Redmond and Assistant Superintendent Jan Van Den Hul have with The MINDS Institute, a nonprofit technology firm, and several companies connected with it. Redmond is also the chairman of MINDS.

Though the Whall Group found no evidence of wrongdoing or any conflicts of interest, president Chris Whall made several recommendations to the Oakland Schools Board of Education, including hiring an independent auditor to go over the district's

books and seeking counsel from the Michigan Department of Education. Whall also told board members they should review several business procedures, including how the district awards contracts. Board President Helen Prutow said the board will definitely act on Whall's recommendations, some as early as the next regular board meeting, scheduled for Jan. 14.

Redmond, who said he has "felt a great deal of pain" throughout the investigation, was not surprised by the findings of the report. He defended both the district's relationship with MINDS and the need for a new building.

"I believe, as I always have, that our actions were always in the best interest of the children," he said. The Whall Report did nothing to calm some of the district's harshest critics, many of whom showed up at the special meeting, where many requested both Redmond and board members to submit resignations. Bill McMaster, state chairman of Taxpayers United, said the voters of Oakland County were "defrauded" by the special education millage, because the district wasn't using the money as advertised.

"I'm having difficulty understanding who has supervision over this board. This board is

another unnecessary layer of bureaucracy," he said. He wasn't the only one criticizing the five-member board. Also on Tuesday, Oakland County Republicans proposed board members be elected, rather than appointed as they are now. A move they believe would force more accountability. The party would like to see a nine-member board, with five being elected and the remaining four appointed as they are now. The investigation may also prove to be a distraction for some of the county's 28 school districts, to which Oakland Schools provides support.

"It's too early to tell," said Farmington Public Schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield.

Board member Frank Reid and Maxfield attended Tuesday's meeting. Maxfield said he was glad the allegations of criminal wrongdoing were found to be groundless, but said he wasn't willing to pass judgment on the ethical issues involved. He agreed with other Oakland County school officials that Oakland Schools needs to get on with the recommendations, as well as improving management and communications. Maxfield expressed continued support for Redmond and feels he's done a lot of good for Oakland Schools. Staff writer Sue Buck contributed to this story.

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Owner ticketed after unleashed dog bites woman

A 26-year-old woman walking a dog in the Gateway apartments reported being bit on the hand by another dog that was unleashed in the neighborhood around 11:40 a.m. Saturday. The dog's owner was ticketed for having a loose dog and for having it bite another person.

Drunk driving
Police pulled over a vehicle along I-696 and Orchard Lake around 2:48 a.m. Saturday for running a red light. The driver, a 32-year-old Howell man, refused a breath test and was arrested. Police pulled over a vehicle along Grand River and Eight Mile around 10:15 a.m. Saturday for weaving. The driver, a 66-year-old Detroit man, had an open pint of vodka in the vehicle. He registered a .24

POLICE CALLS

blood/alcohol level.

Break-ins

In the 21000 block of Indian Creek in the Indian Creek Apartments, someone kicked in a door to an apartment between Dec. 31 and Saturday. The renter was away. Jewelry inside was taken. Police responded to a break-in alarm around 10 p.m. Saturday at RHP Properties on Northwestern. Someone broke a window to gain entry and computer equipment was stolen. In the 21800 block of Lundy Drive, a \$475 snow blower was taken from an unsecured garage on Saturday. At Uncle Ed's Oil Change at 30740 12 Mile, police responded to a break-in alarm

around 3:15 a.m. Sunday. A door was broken to gain entry. Cash inside was taken. A former employee is a suspect.

Drug possession

Police pulled over a vehicle along I-696 and Farmington around 12:05 p.m. Sunday for having front end damage that was obscuring the driver's vision. The driver, a 37-year-old Lincoln Park man, had crack cocaine in his possession.

Police pulled over a vehicle along M-5 and Haggerty for weaving around 5 p.m. Monday. The passenger, a 42-year-old Pontiac man, had heroin in his possession.

Compiled by staff writer Paul R. Packer from reports on file at the Farmington Hills Police Department.

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