SOS students suggest help for high school transitions

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER

What can be done to make the transition from middle to high school a little easier?

Farmington Public School Superintendent Bob Maxfield urged students to "power think" suggestions at the Students Operating Schools Day March 7 at the Farmington Training Center. Andy MacMillan, Student Round Table president and Maxfield led the discussion.

They were assisted by Barrett, Pete Lamerato, a social studies teacher at Harrison High, Judy Miller, a career center technician, Nolan Yaldo, a North Farmington High junior, and Kim Heath, PTA Council president.

The forum was part of Students Operating Schools Day, under the theme "Middle to High School Transition: Students Share Keys to Success."

Yaldo discussed a potential program at North Farmington High School, which he worked on with NFHS teacher Alyssa Joslin. In a three-page report, he suggested taking middle school students to high school to get a taste of what's to come.

"The best way for eighth grade students to address issues is talk to other students," he said.

The plan would have four or five high school seniors talking to all the eighth-graders at middle schools. The district could provide a fact versus myth sheet of information and offer tutoring or mentoring for students who are struggling academically.

Yaldo said 25 middle school students could be brought to North Farmington and paired with a high school student to spend the day, eat lunch and talk.

He suggested enlisting high school department heads to help middle school students determine whether they want to take regular or honors classes at North Farmington.

MOVING UP

One transition program already exists. Some time ago, Farmington High School Principal John Barrett initiated Moving Up Day, a time when middle school students can visit the high school ahead a time, get acquainted and obtain information.

"There's a fear factor, different expectations and more freedoms," said Barrett.

In keeping with the theme, four students from each middle school were also asked to participate at the annual SOS day. They joined 15 students from each high school, members of the Student Roundtable, in the discussion.

A building representative from each secondary school and some Central Office staff also attended. School board members in attendance were Cathy Webb, Linda Enberg, Gary Sharp, Pam Christian and Frank Reid.

"As a parent who went through this with my daughter at Farmington High School, I'd say we do a lot of things right," said PTA Council President Heath.

She was involved with Moving Up Day and freshman orientation.

"Your kind of overwhelmed and scared at first," said Heath.

Her daughter told her the story of a FHS student whose locker didn't work.

"She didn't tell anybody her locker didn't work so she carried her books around with her all day," Heath said.

Sharp, the father of a freshman, said schools teach academics but not social interaction.

"More involved parents are more concerned about day to day academics in high school," Sharp said. "Middle school is brutal socially. I was more concerned about how my kid would do on a social level because I was sure he would do fine in academics. One of the more difficult things is how to teach your kid how not to be a social moron, to be involved socially."

Though she didn't think so as a freshman, Caitlin Tierney, a Farmington High School student, later realized that it is cool to be friends with teachers and administrators.

"It really helps to benefit you," Tierney said.

Rania Awad, also from Farmington High School pointed out just as the freshman high school year calls for adjustment, so will the college freshman year.

Students suggested that a list of extracurricular activities be available to freshman. Information and e-mail addresses need to be current.

"Sign up for stuff and meet new people," Awad advised.

sbuck@oe.homecomm.net | (248) 477-5450

Thieves take $1 million in equipment from local studio

At the Grace & Wild Studios on Industrial Park, someone cut a hole through an inside wall to gain entry and stole an estimated $1 million in video and computer equipment.

A small motorcycle on display and the company van was also stolen during Sunday night. Police declined to elaborate on the case while it is being investigated.

POLICE CALLS

Armed robbery

At Max Productions on Orchard Lake, two men were unloading equipment at the facility after returning from a wedding around 2:11 a.m. Monday when they were approached by two men.

Both suspects had their faces covered; one pointed a revolver and demanded money and jewelry. One victim said one of the suspects appeared to be a teenager. No one was injured.

Open house party

Police responded to an open house party complaint in the 38100 block of Lantern Court during Saturday night.

The owner was issued a ticket for having an open house party where teens where spotted drinking alcohol.

Drunken driving

Police pulled over a vehicle along Grand River and Collingham around 12:23 a.m. Sunday for weaving. The driver, a 45-year-old Livonia man, had a .35 blood/alcohol level.

Retail fraud

At the Home Depot on Northwestern Highway, a man was spotted running out of the store carrying a duffel bag full of merchandise around 11:25 a.m. Sunday. He fled in a car that was parked near the exit doors.

Tires stolen

In the 30000 block of Beacontree, between Feb. 28-March 9, a resident said someone took four tires and rims worth $11,500 from his garage. There was no sign of forced entry.

Speakers stolen

In the 28600 block of Nine Mile, the owner of a Jeep said someone managed to unlock the vehicle during the night of March 6 and stole amplifiers and a radar detector. Loss was $600.

Fail to pay

A man pumped $23 in gasoline into a Geo vehicle around 1:15 p.m. Saturday at the Citgo on Grand River and left without paying.

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

OBITUARIES

Mary J. LaBarre

Services for Mary Julia LaBarre, 88, of Farmington Hills will be held at 10:30 a.m. today, March 13, at Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home in Farmington with the Rev. Ronald Browne officiating. Burial will follow at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Southfield.

Mrs. LaBarre was born Nov. 23, 1914, in Louisville, Ky., and died March 6, 2003, at Hospice Home in Farmington Hills.

She is survived by her nephew, Norman Wimp. She is preceded in death by her husband, Jack.

Herbert E. Long

Services for Herbert Elwood Long, 84, of Farmington Hills will be held at a later date.

Mr. Long was born Aug. 9, 1918, in Monroe and died March 7, 2003, at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak. He worked for Mercy Hospital in Coconut Grove, Fla.

He is survived by his wife, Betty Ann; son, Matt; daughters, Pam (C.J.) Montana and Linda (Ron) Holden; grandchildren, Kelly, Katie, Chad, Seth and Cameron; and great-grandchildren, Ben and Jack.

Memorial contributions may be made to the American Heart Association.

Arrangements made by Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home in Farmington.

Ada D. Goers

Services for Ada D. Goers, 98, of Farmington were held March 11 at Salem United Church of Christ in Farmington with the Rev. John Maki officiating. Burial followed at Grand Lawn Cemetery in Detroit.

Mrs. Goers was born March 24, 1904, in Dearborn and died March 5, 2003, at Botsford Continuing Health Center in Farmington Hills. She was a life member of the Order of the Eastern Star – Farmington and an active member of Salem United Methodist Church and the American Legion Auxiliary – Farmington Post #346.

She is survived by her daughters, Dorothy Schwochow, Lois (Donald) Lamont, Velma (Jack) Clark and Marilyn (Dan) Ahrens; sisters, Margaret Abney and Pearl Abney; nine grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren. She is preceded in death by her husband Carl.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Salem Church Endowment Fund, 33424 Oakland, Farmington, MI 48335.

Arrangements made by Thayer-Rock Funeral Home in Farmington.

Peter P. MacDonald

Services for Peter Paul MacDonald, 71, of Farmington Hills, were held March 11 at Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home in Farmington with the Deacon Daniel Darga officiating.

Mr. MacDonald was born Jan. 15, 1932, in Chicago, Ill., and died March 7, 2003.

He is survived by his wife, Charlene MacDonald; sons, David (Caryn), Edwin (Gina), Michael (Karen) and Glenn (Julie); and nine grandchildren.

Mildred A. Pearson

Mildred Alma Pearson, 86, of Farmington Hills, died March 6, 2003 at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit.

Mrs. Pearson was born Nov. 26, 1916 in Petoskey. She worked for a manufacturing firm.

She is survived by her son, Gerald Maxey.

Arrangements made by Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home in Farmington.

Bernice G. Neubert

Services for Bernice Gertrude Neubert, 85, of Farmington, will be held at 10:30 a.m. Friday, March 14, at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church in Farmington with the Rev. Ronald Browne officiating. Burial will follow at Glen Eden Mausoleum in Livonia.

Mrs. Neubert was born May 6, 1917, in Detroit and died March 10, 2003, at Georgian East – Heartland in St. Clair Shores. She worked for Detroit Bank & Trust.

She is survived by her sister, Catherine Baldwin; nephew, Edward Baldwin; and several other nieces and nephews. She is preceded in death by her husband Frederick.

Memorial contributions may be made to Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church.

Arrangements made by Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home in Farmington.

Sarah Horton

Services for Sarah Horton, 70, of Farmington Hills, will be held at 11 a.m. today, March 13, at Shepherd King Lutheran Church in West Bloomfield with the Rev. Dennis Fitzpatrick officiating. Burial will follow at White Chapel Cemetery in Troy.

Mrs. Horton was born May 25, 1932, in Detroit and died March 9, 2003, in Farmington Hills. She worked as a clerk for the National Bank of Detroit and was a member of Shepherd King Lutheran Church in West Bloomfield. She enjoyed quilting, sewing, gardening and made banners for the church.

She is survived by her husband, James; sons, Adrian (Luana), Brian and James; sisters, Margaret (William) Allen; and granddaughters, Megan and Erica. She is preceded in death by her brother, Andrew.

Arrangements made by Thayer-Rock Funeral Home in Farmington.

Audree M. Simmers

A memorial service for Audree M. Simmers, 80, of Livonia will be 11 a.m. Friday, March 14, in Schrader-Howell Funeral Home, 280 S. Main St., Plymouth. Visitation will be 10 a.m. until the service.

Mrs. Simmers was born Feb. 21, 1923, in Detroit, and died March 10, 2003, in Westland. She was a resident of Livonia for 47 years. She was a member of Rosedale Gardens Presbyterian Church in Livonia.

She is survived by her children, Robert Simmers III, Michelle (Rob) Benedict and Kimberly (Thomas) Mankvitz; sister, Dolores Eastscott; and grandchildren, Robert Simmers IV, Danielle and Kristi Benedict, and John and Sara Mankvitz.

Memorial tributes may be made to American Diabetes Association, 30600 Telegraph Road, Suite 2255, Bingham Farms, MI 48025 or Rosedale Gardens Presbyterian Church, 9601 Hubbard, Livonia, MI 48150.

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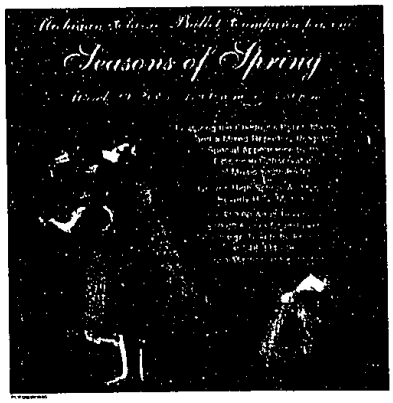

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