

Just one thoughtless moment...

DIANE ETUE nurses a cut cheek after being hit by a snowball thrown through a school bus window. The first child injured by the practice, she was sitting next to the window when the snowball came crashing through. Now she wonders whether the snowballers are thinking about kids like her when they pelt the buses after school. (Evert photo)



A kids 'game' hurts a child

By DAN McCOSH

No doubt the big yellow school buses look like handy, rolling targets for snowball-throwing youths.

But inside the buses are human beings.

This was brought home forcefully to Diane Etue, 12, who was sitting next to the window, riding home from East Junior High at Middle Belt and 11 Mile when an icy snowball crashed through the window Tuesday afternoon.

She spent an hour and a half at Botsford Hospital

while doctors picked glass out of her face and eye and X-rayed her cheek to see if it was broken.

She returned the next day to an eye specialist who cleaned more glass from the eye and assured her worried mother her sight would not be impaired.

Another student, sitting next to Diane, was cut superficially and had glass splinters washed from her eye the next day.

"I'm sure whoever it was didn't mean to hurt Diane," Mrs. Ages Etue of 23735 W.

Newell Circle, said after the incident. "They just want to hit the bus, and hear the kids scream and yell."

While Diane is the first child hurt by the snowball throwing, it was not an isolated incident.

School officials say at least five bus windows have been broken since the first snowfall in the area around East Junior High alone. The total for the whole district was not available.

"They stockpile the balls,

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School bus windows were older type

By DAN McCOSH

The Farmington school bus window shattered by a snowball on its route from East Junior High was one of several district buses without laminated "safety-sheet" glass in the side windows, the Enterprise & Observer has learned.

Pieces of flying glass from the window cut the face and damaged the eye of a 12-year-old student Tuesday.

While windows are frequently broken by snowballs and rocks on the bus routes, this is the first time School officials can recall a child being injured as a result.

The bus, one of the older models being used by the district, is equipped with "tempered" safety glass.

Most buses in the district are equipped with a double-layered glass with a plastic inner-core. This cushions the

impact of an object thrown against the window, and the plastic is designed to retain the glass splinters after the impact.

The "tempered" glass is treated to prevent large splinters from forming. It shatters into small glass chunks, which are supposed to be less dangerous than untreated glass.

The doctor who treated the student in the emergency room at Botsford General

Hospital said he removed several large chunks from the child's face, as well as many small splinters.

The girl was sitting in the seat next to the window when it was broken.

"They weren't large splinters, most broke into little cubes, but they had sharp edges," the doctor said.

An inspection of the school yard revealed a handful of buses with tempered glass side windows. The majority

of the district buses are equipped with "safety-sheet" type glass.

The bus in the accident was a "Thomas-Saf-T-Liner," one of about eight such models still in use, according to school officials.

"We began replacing all the buses with tempered glass as a matter of district policy four or five years ago, but we still have some left," William Prisk, business manager, said. "State law re-

quires only the tempered glass."

New buses have the "safety-sheet" glass, and all windows "broken in buses, including the "tempered" windows, are being replaced by the "safety-sheet."

Bus Number 57, which was involved in the accident, now has one "safety-sheet" side window, the one next to the seat where the girls was injured.

School camp purchase still being debated

By JAN WILLIAMS

The purchase of property by the Farmington school

district for an outdoor education center is still under consideration by the Board of Education.

The project involves the purchase of a 14-acre parcel of land adjacent to Proud Lake, in conjunction with the Novi, Clarenceville and Huron Valley school districts.

The site would be used by K-12 students from all four districts for camping, the study of nature, science and other related areas of study.

The outdoor education committee appointed from Farmington to study the project includes Supt. Marinus Van Ameyde, trustees Emma Makinen, Elizabeth Brennan and Gary Lichtman.

Mrs. Makinen asked the board at Tuesday's meeting to approve participation in the project and to appoint a representative to pursue the purchase of the property. Lichtman, however, said

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BETTY HEBEL'S quilting class is one of those starting Wednesday, Jan. 30, at the Farmington Community Center, Farmington Rd. and 10 Mile.