



Photo by Edward Brown

Leon Quan of El Mirage, Ariz., has found meaning as a result of a tragic event in his life. Now, Quan is a motivational speaker on violence prevention. He recently presented his nationally known talk at Woodhaven High School and Brownstown Middle School in front of students and parents. Many listeners said it was the best talk they ever heard and asked when he would be back.

Talking truth

Teens hear story of 2 brothers' life, death choices

By LENA KHZOUZ

HERITAGE NEWSPAPERS

BROWNSTOWN TWP. — Leon Quan told a true tale of two brothers April 5 during presentations to Brownstown Middle School pupils, Woodhaven High School students and parents.

One brother in the story slowly takes the wrong path in life.

First, he won't listen to anyone. Then he becomes interested in gangs. Then he smokes "just a cigarette." And then he drinks "just a beer." And then he smokes "just marijuana."

And then he buys a gun.

One day, the brother and a friend steal a car, and in a road rage-related fight, he pulls out the gun, shoots at the other car and hits a pregnant woman.

The woman and the baby die, and the brother is now spending life in prison.

The shooter's brother has to watch their father suffer through the experience, watch-

ing news about the "highway shooter" on television and seeing his son's picture on the screen.

The shooter's brother, on the other hand, took a different path, made the right decisions and was standing before the students.

"You could have heard a pin drop while he was speaking, it was that quiet," said Brownstown Police Officer Paul Kolonich, who works in crime prevention/community relations and is an instructor for the national Gang Resistance Education and Training program.

A nationally recognized motivational speaker, Quan, of El Mirage, Ariz., talked about issues related to violence prevention in two different presentations to students and one in the evening for parents.

It sent a good message for adults and children about choices and consequences, Kolonich said.

Kolonich met Quan at a GREAT conference,

and the district's Parent-Teacher Organization sponsored the talk. The talk made students cry and put tears in teachers' eyes, Kolonich said.

"I speak to young people because today's headlines seem to remind us that death is an ever-present reality," Quan said. "I want youth to know that life is an ever-present reality — jump into the adventure."

"The world has never been changed by the mildly interested. History is created everyday. I want to empower teens to create a history that deserves repeating."

Kolonich said the talk was good for parents to hear in order to reinforce them, to inform them and to make sure that they are sitting down and talking with their children.

Unfortunately, he said, only about 30 parents came, although the parents who were there were just as moved as their children.

"I'm hoping next time they'll spread the word and we'll get the parents out," Kolonich said.