

Farrah, Starsky, Ali top list of students' heroes

By LYNN ORR

Children's heroes of the past may have been Charles Lindbergh, John F. Kennedy, and Astronaut John Glenn, but today's children choose figures like Starsky and Hutch, Farrah Fawcett and Muhammad Ali, according to recent studies.

How teachers can make history come alive through the study of heroes was one of the topics of workshops offered last week as Farmington teachers found themselves on the learning end of the teaching process.

About 100 teachers listened to Flanders Elementary School Principal Weldon Petz's talk on "Heroes and Media," one of the workshops offered to district teachers.

"We've been putting down the roles of heroes in our classroom," Petz says. "The best teachers of history 'are the lives of great men, and children can relate to history when you tell them it's a bunch of lives put together."

"FROM 1950, history has changed to social rather than individual history," he says.

Classroom texts and teachers devote less attention to individuals, says Petz, and studies show that lack of attention influences children in their hero selection.

In a random sampling of Flanders third and sixth graders, Petz discovered television characters dominated on the children's lists of heroes, rather than historical, political and other figures.

"Children aren't relating to a real person, but a fictional person," he says. "Television is shaping everything in one child's hero worship."

Petz believes teachers need to be entertainers to compete with television for a child's attention, but he doesn't see that as a difficult task.

"Our first grade decided to study Lindbergh, and the whole thing took off like Lindy's plane," he explains. The children did library work, brought in old calendars of the famous flight, and learned an old song, a tape of which Petz played to the amusement of the teacher audience.

"The kids have related to Lindbergh and his era," they're learning history and loving it, he says.

MUSIC AND A TEACHER'S individual background also can be used to spice up social studies, he claims; his presentation of a slide show with music about Lincoln demonstrated his point.

Petz has been an avid Lincoln student all his life and he uses much of his Lincoln collection in the many speeches he gives.

To background music of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," Petz showed slides of Lincoln photographs and sketches, as well as other drawings of the Civil War and Lincoln memorabilia.

"You can interpret words through a very simple device: making slides and not just playing the music but actually interpreting the song with your slides," he says.

"Teddy Roosevelt decided to use

this rendition of Lincoln for the penny head," he told the teacher audience. "From that point you can get into the minting of coins and the money system."

"The penny becomes more meaningful to the kids," he says. He also uses a miniature carving of Lincoln done by a Union soldier at Andersonville to illustrate his talk.

"We don't learn about Lincoln by knowing he was born in 1809," Petz emphasizes.

Using yourself as a resource is another way to interest students in social studies, Petz claims.

"Everyone has some unique experience, whether it's military or something else, and there's no lack of sources in our district."

Petz uses his experiences as a trombone player during the Big Band era to illustrate a talk about music and the '40s. His elementary school teacher had encouraged his interest in Tommy Dorsey by asking him to find out all he could about the band leader.

"You could play some music from the '20s like Scott Joplin; children recognize his music from 'The Sting,' and then get into a discussion of minority understanding," he says.

After his workshop, one teacher told Petz that it hadn't occurred to her to incorporate her experiences of growing up on a farm to illustrate her teaching.

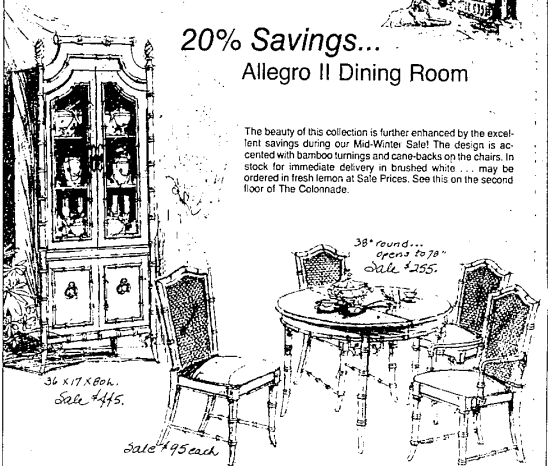
"Think of the possibilities of using yourself as a resource," Petz advises. "Teaching is about 70 per cent entertainment. Maybe we have to be the television during the day."

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Groups predict disaster in Northwestern dispute

By JUDITH BERNE

If Northwestern Highway isn't extended, West Bloomfield Supervisor John Doherty foresees mayhem along the township's main roads.

If the extension is built, area environmentalists depict energy-wasting urban sprawl through the West Bloomfield countryside where six of the nine proposed miles of freeway would go.

Both sides were presented to the state highway commission at last week's hearing in Lansing. More of the same awaits the commission's April 27 meeting, to be held at an Oakland County site still to be announced.

FOURTEEN REPRESENTATIVES of local organizations actively working against Northwestern's extension journeyed to Lansing for the hearing. As Doherty pleaded for construction, based on the stance that Northwestern has been part of township planning for 40 years, they urged repeal.

Concerned Citizens of West Bloomfield representative Sheila Outley called for improvement of local roads as "a wise solution to local traffic problems."

She detailed that "some six miles of the new Northwestern right-of-way lie within West Bloomfield, an environmentally unique township, 14 per cent covered by lakes and heavily wooded in many areas."

She said, "Northwestern would destroy many wetland and woodland areas in this township," which are in the process of being protected through ordinances.

Mrs. Outley commended the commission on its recent decision to cancel plans for the northern section of M-275, which would have run through the western lakes area of Oakland County from I-96 to Novi to I-75 in Springfield Township.

Northwestern, which now deadends at Orchard Lake Road, would have connected with M-275.

In the wake of public uproar, the

commission will consider alternatives to M-275 at the April meeting. Mrs. Outley suggested that the same reasoning used for M-275 should govern a decision on Northwestern. She told the highway commission, "Your vote suggested that the energy-wasting urban sprawl, which accompanies new freeway development, makes such a freeway an ill-conceived and inappropriate solution to local transportation needs."

ANN BEUERLE, representing the West Bloomfield Farmington Area League of Women Voters, also said a decision on Northwestern should follow the M-275 precedents.

She called for improving the present Northwestern including its terminus at Orchard Lake Road along with upgrading arterial and local roads.

Mrs. Beuerle claimed that modern traffic problems will not necessarily be solved by "a freeway extension through the countryside of West Bloomfield, any more than it will be solved by a slick, high-cost, rapid transit system in the metropolitan area."

"It will be solved," she said, "when highway commissions and highway departments work willingly and enthusiastically with county road commissions and regional transportation authorities and when, in turn, work with county and local governmental officials and with the public in a spirit of true cooperation and service."

IF THESE GROUPS win and Northwestern is canceled, Doherty fears for the impact on township roads. "He sees endless lines of cars inching their way down Orchard Lake and Middlebelt roads as well as the waste of public and private money used for right-of-ways based on the eventual extension of the Northwestern extension. He says present building setbacks, sewer plans, water lines and utility locations would be useless because they were done on the premise that Northwestern would be the major route through the township.

"Without Northwestern, the dis-

ciplined development that has taken place would be inadequate and misplaced," Doherty said.

Doherty said he will immediately muster as much evidence as possible to present to the highway commission at the April meeting.

No doubt Northwestern's opponents will do the same.

"I think there are township people on both sides of the question," Doherty said late last week.

"If we can confine the arguments to the pros and cons and not to how many people can pack a meeting room, that's all I ask."

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Musicians set for festival

Eighteen North Farmington High School musicians won first division events at the annual District Four Solo and Ensemble Festival held recently.

First division winners who qualified for the State Solo and Ensemble Festival scheduled for March 16 are Karen Hildebrand, violin solo; William Salisbury, piano solo; Sheldon McDaniel, trumpet solo; Douglas Schultz, trumpet solo; Leonard Atkins, baritone solo; Phyllis Bieri, oboe solo; and Judith Hammar, violin solo.

First division group winners are: Ann Wilson and Lou Anne Szweczyk, flute duet; Douglas Schultz and Sheldon McDaniel, trumpet duet; and Lawrence Bertuch, Charles Avery, Steven Carp, Barbara Wallace, Christine Szweczyk, Robert Tacy, and Curtis Christie, percussion septet.

Students winning second division ratings were Linda Lawson, violin solo; Susan Riedel, piano solo and flute duet; Jeanette Hood, flute solo and flute duet; Andrew Loberger, piano solo and cello solo; Robert Tacy, ma-

rimba solo; Marianne Conn, clarinet solo; David Demko, trombone solo; Lou Anne Szweczyk, flute solo; and Kristin Gunderson, violin solo.

Also participating in the festival were Michelle Johnson, piano solo; and Mary Pryor, bassoon solo.

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