

Carrie adjusts to U.S.

Soccer rates first in new life

By Diane Gale
staff writer

Carrie Maler, a Colombian orphan who was adopted by a Farmington Hills couple four years ago, said she probably wouldn't be able to do the one thing she loves the most if she still lived in Colombia.

Carrie, 11, said her favorite sport, hobby and aspiration in life is playing soccer.

"I probably wouldn't be playing soccer if I didn't come here," she said. "It'd probably be a maid."

In fact, she began working as a maid at 5 years old when she was adopted by a Colombian family. She lived in the back of the family's store and worked all day.

When a social worker discovered her plight, Carrie was taken back to the orphanage. It was there that Maureen and Alan Maler, participants in an international foster parent program called World Vision International, found Carrie.

They flew to Bogota four years ago and brought Carrie back to their home on Montclair to live with them and their two children, Viki, now 16, and Ted, 13.

It took the Malers three years to wade through paper work before they could adopt Carrie through an Ann Arbor based agency, which acts as liaison with Social Services Inter Country Adoptions.

Alan and Maureen, who speak Spanish fluently, sponsor two other foster children in South America through World Vision International. Their most recent international goal is to send one of the foster children, Nancy, 16, to college. They're also working on bringing Nancy to their home for a visit during her school break in Colombia. A mound of paper work is their only roadblock.

"It will be interesting to see how Carrie responds to Nancy if we do bring her here," Maureen said.

CARRIE SPEAKS perfect English, without a trace of an accent, and said she doesn't remember her native tongue. The loss of memory may be attributed to the fact that she said she doesn't miss Colombia at all.

"She's no longer taking bilingual courses," Maureen said. "It got to the point where she resented it after awhile."

When the Malers brought Carrie back to their home they were unsure

what her birthdate was, so they gave her one — Nov. 18.

Carrie lives the typical suburban child's life. She seems totally acclimated to U.S. living, and a lot has happened to her since the Farmington Observer

reported that she became a citizen March 9, 1981.

Carrie's third-grade classmates at Lakeshire Elementary School attended the naturalization proceedings in downtown Detroit.

"She's always been just another kid in the class," Maureen said. "The only difference is Carrie is exceptional in athletics and excels beyond other chil-

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Carrie Maler took the oath of citizenship in March 1981.

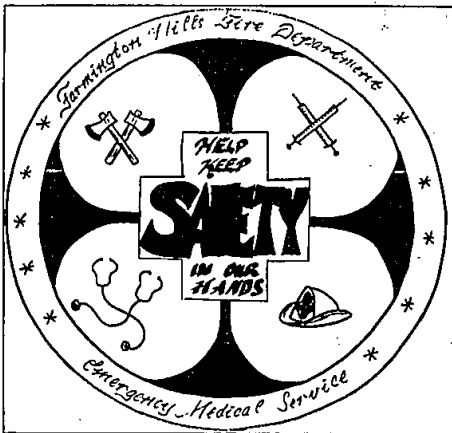
'Here I can do anything, and go to friend's houses, and there (in Colombia) I'd have to stay in and work as a maid.'

—Carrie Maler



Before practicing their soccer kicks, Carrie Maler warms up with her friend Jenny Misaros. This is a daily routine for both players, who are on an all-star soccer team.

Staff photos by Randy Borsl



This logo is the winning entry in the Farmington Hills Fire Department's contest held at local high schools. Tammy Parks of Harrison High School is the grand-prize-winning artist. There will be a slight change in the design when Parks delivers syringes and draws in a fire department emblem.

Student designs fire logo

A new logo, designed by a Farmington Hills student, will don the fire department's brochures and letterheads.

The winners of the department's design contest were chosen last week.

Commencement day was a double-header for Tammy Parks, who graduated last week from Harrison High School in Farmington Hills. Along with her diploma, Parks was told she won the grand prize in the competition.

"I didn't think I was going to win," said Parks, who doesn't have any definite plans for the future.

"If I go to school after this it will be for art," Parks said. "But I never thought I was good enough for anything in art before."

Approximately 50 students from Farmington, Harrison, North Farmington, Our Lady of Mercy and Lutheran High Northwest entered the competition.

The contest was part of the department's fire safety program, which is designed to educate the public in fire prevention.

"We've broken the population down in target groups and plan to go to each area," said firefighter Brad Christy, who is in charge of the program.

Parks, 18, entered the project as an assignment for her commercial design class.

She also had work displayed in the school's art show this year.

There were winners from all of the schools that entered the contest. The first runner-up was a group of three boys from North Farmington. They are Mike Adie, Andy Sirvio and Bill Kirk.

The second runner-up was Ken Schneider from Lutheran High, third runner-up was Mary Beth Kasprovic from Mercy, and fourth runner-up was Darlene McKibbin from Harrison.



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Tammy Parks