

Suburban Life

Corinne Abatt editor/644-1100

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Back-to-Back

American students host French guests who will return the favor

By Loraine McEllish
staff writer

Richard Tinn, who is winding up undergraduate studies at Eastern Michigan University this spring, is getting acquainted with a class of French fourth graders who are here for a month-long visit.

And he will resume that friendship when he accompanies a group of 9-10 12-year-olds on a visit to their homes in France next month.

The exchange of visits are part of the Back-to-Back Program, a literal student exchange where the host in one country becomes the guest of the same student in another, sponsored by Campus International.

With two classes of students, counselors, teachers and chaperones, the group will number well over 60 to be ushered around on sight-seeing trips here, then again in France.

"It's not easy, but it can be done. It's tiring, but rewarding, and I know I'm up to it," Tinn said.

The Farmington Hills resident has spent several summers in camp counseling that have earned him well over 10 times the number of hours he needs in prestudent teaching necessary for

his degree in secondary education.

But it was his acumen as a bilingualist that led him to meet the Walled Lake youngsters who are hosting French students this month and will be traveling to France in April.

"I DIDN'T GO looking for them. They contacted EMU looking for someone who could speak French well enough and had the time to do this," Tinn said of the Walled Lake School District which is one of five in Michigan involved in the Back-to-Back Program.

With Suzanne Cowles, a teacher at Walled Lake's host school, Loon Lake Elementary, Tinn has been meeting twice a week with the exchange students since September for some lessons in French culture and what he called "survival French."

"And they are learning fast," Tinn said. "They are very receptive. No prejudices... Soaking up everything like a sponge. I have come to believe this age has got to be an ideal time for this kind of travel. And it is not surprising that all of them immediately recognized their guests as soon as they got off the plane."

"Letters and pictures have been ex-

changed since last fall. Our kids explained what Trick or Treat was to them. They exchanged Christmas gifts, and some of them even exchanged floor plans of their homes."

Tinn said he has enjoyed his class of exchange students, but did not expect his visit to a suburb northeast of Paris to be a fun trip. Cowles, who has already made two such trips, has made him well aware that he will be on call 24 hours a day.

"I will have no free time and will not be able to travel. I am charged first and foremost with the children's physical safety and mental well-being. It will be a lot different than being a tourist," he said.

THE FRENCH government chooses the classes of fourth graders who will be exchange students for the year and subsidizes their trips. The class chosen to visit Walled Lake last year comes from Henri Dunant Elementary School, located in Saint Germain en Laye.

The youngsters from Walled Lake come from the entire district.

"This year we have fourth, fifth and sixth graders who come from 11 different schools," Cowles said. "When we announce the program in September,

we take the first 25 who sign up, and it's getting to be so popular now parents are already asking about the trip for next year."

The American parents are responsible for paying their child's expenses, attending several select classes taught by Tinn and Cowles, and acting as the host parents for a French student during the stay here.

Because the students in France are all in one class and have one teacher, "Both the students and the teacher have a big jump on us. That teacher can work with his students in his classroom all year and they know a lot more English than our students know French," Cowles said.

During the French students' visit, Tinn will act as chaperone for sight-seeing trips the American host families have planned as a group — "for no other reason than that they're going to need all the help they can get," he said. "I will be useful because you can't have too many chaperones with that many kids."

Tinn grew up in Farmington Hills, graduated from Harrison High School and is majoring in advanced French composition and German literature at EMU.

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— Richard Tinn



Concert of winners

Concert-goers who attend North Farmington High School Vocal Department's spring performance, set for 8 p.m. Thursday in the school's Hunt Auditorium, will be hearing scholarship winning soloists, as well as soloists and groups who have hit superior, or better, ratings in school competitions.

Ninth-grader Jennifer Dautermann and senior Lee Ekstrom both walked away from an all-Oakland County vocal competition with \$300 scholarships. The competition was jointly sponsored by Maccabees and Madrigal Club of Southfield, and the scholarship will go towards their tuition at either Blue Lake or Interlochen summer music camps.

In the same contest, Linda Abar and Chris Rau were among the top 13 finalists.

"No other school had that many soloists selected as finalists or as many as two winners," said Joan MacKenzie, vocalist teacher at the school who directs The Northern Lites.

The same four singers received superior ratings when they competed in the Michigan School Vocal Association district solo and ensemble festival, along with Gretchen Kramp and Laurie McKinnon.

During that competition, Ekstrom and Dautermann teamed up for a duet and got a rating seldom used, an A-1+. Abar and Kramp received an A-1 for their duet, and all six soloists performed as members of either the Northern Lites or the Women's Ensemble, both of which also took superior ratings.

All six of the soloists will be competing on the state level Saturday, March 30, in University of Michigan-Film.

NORTH FARMINGTON High set a new record for number of entries in the Michigan School Vocal Association's competition and its Northern Chorale took a superior rating for the fourth consecutive year.

All of the winning soloists and groups will be heard on concert night with guest performer Dorothy Duensing, who won the title of Best High School Vocalist in Michigan in 1980 and has just graduated from Indiana University's School of Music.

Duensing is a Birmingham resident with a vast background in music, opera and drama. While at Interlochen she was awarded the Hazel Mueller Memorial Award for achievement in two fields, vocal performance and theatre drama. She has also won the Operetta Alumni Summer Scholarship.

She studies with Michigan soprano Carolyn Grimes working toward a career in opera.

Admission to the concert is by donation which will be put into a scholarship fund to further a vocal student's career.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Teacher Joan MacKenzie (at piano) rehearses with high ranking vocal students who will be singing solos or in groups for their spring concert Thursday. From left, Laurie McKinnon, Chris Rau,

Linda Abar, Lee Ekstrom, Jennifer Dautermann and Gretchen Kramp have earned scholarships and, or, superior ratings in recent vocal competitions.

Student home after study in Austria

Jane Ann Neuhauser, a junior at DePauw University from Farmington, has resumed classes on campus after spending the fall semester studying in the university's Eastern Europe program in Vienna, Austria.

During the first 2 1/2 months of the International program, Neuhauser and her 16 DePauw classmates took courses in cooperation with the Austrian Institute of East and South Eastern European Studies and the Austro-American Institute of Education. They studied with teachers, who are members of the Austrian educational community, in such courses as German, eastern European art, history, economics, music, politics and literature.

At the end of classes in Vienna the students went to Budapest, Hungary, for a four-week study period behind the Iron Curtain. They lived in the Palace Hotel there, participating in lectures and field trips in and around the Budapest area. Music students remained in Vienna for additional work.

Students had the option of living and eating with Austrian families or in boarding apartments in Vienna. Most students opt for living with host families because of greater opportunities to understand Austria's culture.

Students studying in Vienna were selected on the basis of prior academic performance and their promise for continued intellectual growth. In addition, two semesters of college-level German language study is required before participation in the program.

Participation in DePauw's international programs, including semesters in West Germany and Athens, Greece, are equivalent to a regular on-campus semester.

Neuhauser is a 1982 graduate of Farmington High School.



Dorothy Duensing



Lee Ekstrom and Jennifer Dautermann team up for a duet that earned them a rating so high it is seldom even used in school competition.



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