

Raphael's serves kids slice of French cuisine

By Julie Brown
staff writer

French Club members at Farmington High School didn't make it to Paris Monday night. They still got to sample French cuisine, however.

The students, ninth through 12th graders, met Monday at Raphael's at the Sheraton-Oaks in Novi, where chef

Keith Famie and his staff prepared a meal for them. "They really got into helping these kids understand French cooking," teacher Karen Gearhart said of the restaurant's staff. "I think they'll learn a lot tonight."

Gearhart and fellow teacher Mary Wildt serve as advisers to the school's French Club. They accompanied the

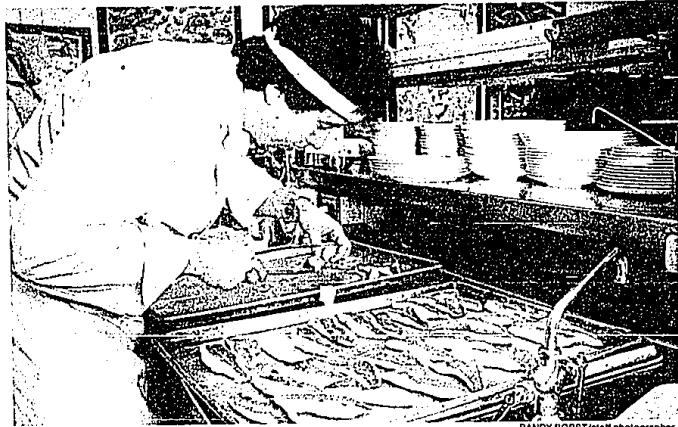
students to Raphael's Monday. "These are the members of the French Club who are here tonight," Gearhart said. "Its purpose is to have fun with French. We teach French food as part of our French lessons."

THE STUDENTS HELPED to offset the dinner's \$25 cost by selling candy. "I think practically everyone here tonight sold candy," Gearhart said. A total of 38 students attended, "because of the seating, it only seats 42."

The students go to at least one French restaurant each year. This was their first year at Raphael's. Gearhart knows Famie, the chef, who is a 1978 graduate of Farmington High School.

"They thought it would be kind of neat to give a dinner for the kids at cost," she said.

"We find that French restaurants are rather pricey. They know that ahead of time, so they were working for this. They're all very excited about it." The tax and tip were paid out of



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Chef Keith Famie concentrates on providing a perfect meal for Farmington High School students. The students, members of the school's French Club, ate dinner Monday at Raphael's at the Sheraton-Oaks in Novi.

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Patricia Arbour balances a tray full of dinner plates, while en route to the tables at Raphael's at the Sheraton-Oaks in Novi. Students from Farmington High School sampled the restaurant's cuisine Monday night.



Patricia Arbour serves roast chicken with mushrooms, Monday's entree, to Alexis Willingham, Alexis, Irene Vlahakis and Arlene Glyason were among the Farmington High School students who sampled the cuisine Monday at Raphael's.

First Lady works to revive state pride

By Susan Roelak
staff writer

Michiganians have a lot to be proud of and pointing out these sources of pride is one of the pleasant tasks that Paula Blanchard, wife of Michigan Gov. James Blanchard, has adopted.

Blanchard, who serves in an unpaid position as adviser to the director of the state department of commerce, believes that revitalizing state pride is one of the keys to marketing Michigan.

That's the message she delivered last week to more than 160 people attending a program sponsored by the Plymouth and Livonia chambers of commerce. The program was highlighted by a luncheon in Plymouth's Mayflower Meeting House which featured Michigan-made products.

"THE PROMOTION of pride is one of the most important elements and one of the most difficult tasks," said Blanchard who spends about 30 to 40 hours a week promoting Michigan. In addition, she is working on a master's degree in telecommunications at Michigan State University.

"It's difficult to market pride because it's so intangible. But you know when it's there or when it's missing.

"Sharing a positive image is a key to influencing behavior and motivating consumers to purchase Michigan products," she said.

Blanchard explained that advertising campaigns deal with perceptions and that can pose a considerable challenge. For example, she pointed out some of the common perceptions about Michigan — high welfare benefits, high state taxes, high business taxes, high workers compensation rates.

"Each of these are incorrect and inaccurate. . . Our concern is that perception becomes reality," she said, adding that "changes in perception lag behind changes in reality and part of her marketing strategy is to update people's perception of the state.

SHE POINTED out that the Blanchard administration's marketing of Michigan's economic/business climate is a multifaceted approach. This includes:

- Redefining the state's role as a catalyst.
- Getting government out of the way of job creation.
- Helping business help itself.
- Renewing the state's commitment to higher education thereby preparing the workforce for the jobs of the future.
- Expanding job training.

Blanchard's marketing of Michigan includes promoting tourism, and Michigan-made products and special events, such as Michigan Week and the Michigan Thanksgiving Day Parade.

"Tourism is a strong and important segment of the Michigan economy — it's number two or three depending on who you talk to," Blanchard said.

She noted that consumers spent \$11.4 billion in direct and indirect dollars here in 1984 and the outlook for 1985, 1986 and 1987 is even better.

She said Michigan is a pioneer in travel and tourism promotion and that neighboring states that have seen how lucrative tourism is are "nipping at our heels."

"STATES AS FAR away as Massachusetts are coming into this market area. We are going head to head against \$76 million in 'unfriendly' tourism promotion dollars."

She added, however, that Michigan intends to stay ahead.

In addition to increasing the travel bureau budget, Blanchard said the department's spending habits are changing.

"We're developing cooperative spending habits and doing more research on the impact of advertising," she said.

Blanchard saluted the Plymouth and Livonia areas for their contributions toward increasing in-state tourism. Among them she included Plymouth's Ice Sculpture Spectacular and Canadian pair \$1 million into the local economy.

Others include the Plymouth Spring Art Festival, Livonia's Spree, Plymouth's Old Village and Livonia's Greenmead.

"Not only have they drawn tourists but they assist in nurturing pride," she said.

Blanchard, who created the Office of Michigan Products Promotion, said the marketing of Michigan products has received tremendous support for the state community.

She said that although it's important to ensure that the automobile industry remains strong, "Michigan is more than autos." Her work on behalf of Michigan products is an effort to increase identification of these products among consumers.

As part of this effort the state lists some 6,000 state companies in a computer data base. A listing is free to companies who grow or manufacture products here.

Other efforts include a federal procurement program and international promotion which is targeting the Japanese and Chinese markets.

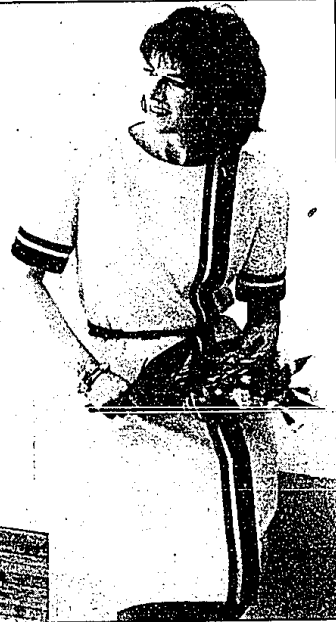
Blanchard noted that one of the most important ways to promote Michigan is word-of-mouth.

She urged others "to tell the secrets of Michigan. . . I hope I can count on your ears," she said.

WOMEN'S WORLD

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