



North Farmington High School sophomores Christy Hicks (foreground) and Jesse Heindl watch a fellow student perform.



AT LEFT: North Farmington High School junior Jennifer Smith provided drama during her reading of "Selling Flies and Killing Men" by Elizabeth Walters. The story is about a soldier who commits suicide while serving in Vietnam. It is told from the point of view of the soldier's wife.

## Listen up

### Forensic clubs enhance speaking skills



North Farmington High School senior Michele Luford lends a round of applause after hearing a skit written by Woody Allen.

By Casey Hane  
Staff writer

**C**OMPETITION IS an inner voice that motivates some special Farmington high school students this time of year.

It reaches a crescendo each spring as the individuals work to perfect skills in forensics — a little-known type of public forum speaking.

Forensic competition helps students overcome what one teacher called "the number-one phobia in the U.S. — getting up and speaking in front of people."

Each of the three Farmington high schools — Farmington, Harrison and North Farmington — have some type of forensics activity, either in a formal class, a club, a team or a combination of these.

The three local groups are ending

*"Emotionally, it's a real bloodbath. The students are remarkably poised. They learn to cope on very short notice. Grace under pressure is something they teach each other."*

— Laura Sperry  
Harrison forensics coach

their seasons proudly, with representatives from each school attending state forensics competition this Saturday in Ann Arbor — the grand finale of most local forensics seasons.

IN ADDITION, Harrison's group has a student bound for national competition this spring.

"Anyone can use this type of training," North Farmington coach and Redford resident Ken Swiantek explains. "In the long run, it's going to give you more confidence."

Unlike the other coaches who are full-time teachers, Swiantek spends free time from his job as waiter

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North Farmington High School students Jack-Lo Ache (left), a senior, and Bill Neuschaefer, a junior, rehearse their performance of "The Bicycle Rider" by Ann Marie Barlow.

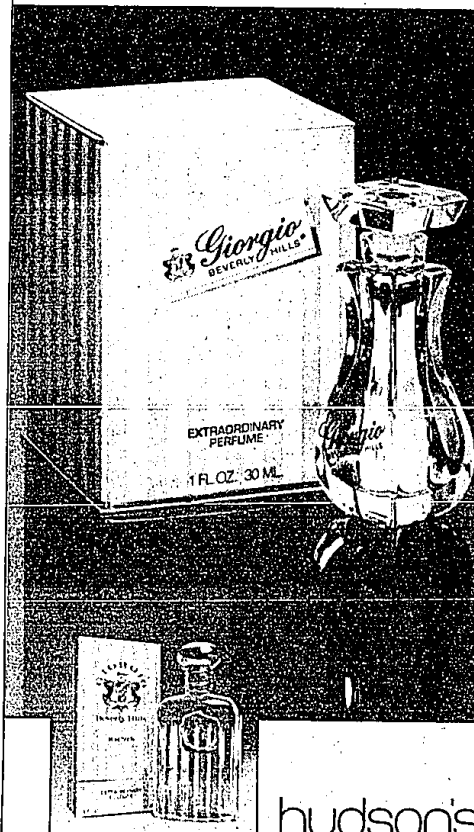
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