



Spring beckons student writers to reflect

By Victoria Day Najjar
special writer

SPRING. THE very mention of the word makes most people smile. The hearts of young and old alike are touched by the newly felt warmth of earth and its renewal. It is a joyful time and writers of all genres have written of its glory. If ever there was a time to put pen in hand, it is now.

Students at Farmington Hills Harrison High School, too, have been moved. Mary Brown's freshmen and Joyce Kaplan's and Laura Sparrow's seniors have written reflections on spring. Reflective writing is some-

what a mixture of the personal essay form and the personal journal entry. It is something most anyone will do well if there is quiet time to think and a desire to write. This, coupled with an awareness of what one is feeling, can really add up to some good writing.

There is no incorrect reflection. It simply mirrors one's thoughts. The process of reflecting helps one to realize the myriad of possibilities there are in life.

Conversational, reflections are also employed. If someone answers your question with, "I'd have to really think about that, that's an interesting question," then you will know

that you probably have asked a reflective question. That is, your question caused the person to stop, think, to meditate, rather than to answer a superficial question with a superficial answer.

A REFLECTION may be functional rather than lyrical. The form provides a relatively simple, unstructured, personal means of expression. Its form is timeless. One may ponder a spring scene — perhaps a butterfly alighting on a flower, or one may ponder a spring activity — like baseball. The symmetry between life and nature is also a popular topic.

Often, reflective writing is the springboard for a serious, lengthy examination of a topic upon which one has begun to meditate. The reflection then becomes a useful, natural introduction to a serious written work.

The author would reflect upon the thinking and events that led to the writing of the book. This would serve to tantalize the reader, to whet the reader's appetite for the book. This is good.

Victoria Day Najjar is a Farmington resident, an English teacher at Bloomfield Hills Andover High School and a nationally published poet.



artwork by MARVIN TEEPLES

Spring is not only a season of renewal and rebirth but also unlocks the door to many weathered but favorite memories.

Season evokes varied reflections

OUT OF SEASON

It was May and my favorite beach was deserted. I had gone to clear my mind, to relax and enjoy a beautiful spring day. The sun shone golden against the clear blue sky. A cool breeze gently stirred the water putting a slight chill in the air.

"So this is what it's like," I thought to myself as I sat down on the sand. "This is what it's like to be young and free."

Somewhere in the distance, though, there came the screaming sound of sirens. I was instantly reminded of all the unhappiness in the world. A shiver ran down my spine as I realized how very lucky I was indeed.

I looked out into the misty water and watched as it carried new particles ashore and old ones away. It was then that it occurred to me how much life is like an ocean. To some, it's beautiful and inviting, while to others, it's angry and threatening. The ocean, like life is simply what one makes of it.

As I stood up to leave, a group of seagulls, crying out in anguish, flew overhead. A few landed on the water to enjoy a ride on the cresting waves. The rest flew on by. What a waste.

— Lynn Brown, senior

WATCHING THE SUNRISE

I woke up at 6:18 this morning, wondering how on earth I could be up so early on a Saturday.

Usually, my mother would come in around noon and soothingly wake me with her soft words, "Princess, get your butt out of bed now! You've slept through half the day!"

Today, I was able to quietly reach back into the far corners of my mind to remember the days when my family lived in Chicago. My sister and I would get up before our parents, go out in the garden, and lie in the dewy grass to watch the morning glories open their eyes to the rising sun. But that time was long gone, a misty childhood memory.

Now, everything was different. My sister was away at college, while I was still home, trying to get through my last year of high school. A.P. exams, finals, and writing assignments kept me working like a dog. Extracurricular activities, work, household chores, errands and social functions took up whatever spare time I had left.

I realized that I had lost something in the growing process — the ability to be a child, carefree and uncommitted.

Being bogged down with too many obligations didn't make me an adult, understanding myself did. So outside I walked, to lie in the green grass and watch the sunrise.

— Michelle Grelt, senior

CHASING A DREAM

Baseball, football, basketball . . . Everybody

watches sports on the tube. These games would not be complete, however, without the men who call the homers, the crushing tackles and the slam dunks.

Weekends wouldn't be complete without sports and sports announcers, John Madden, Irv Cross, Brent Musberger, Dick Vitale, Al McGuire, Harry Carey, Joe Garagiola, Vin Scully, and Ernie Harwell . . . They make sports on TV what they are. Great.

Let's look at the baseball announcers. They have the toughest jobs on television. All the facts and tidbits help keep a long, sometimes boring, game going.

One of the best tandems in this wonderful sport has to be Vin Scully and Joe Garagiola. They really make the game interesting. The only problem is they never get to call any famous shots. Vin and Joe don't get the dramatic, "It could be, it might be, it is!" of my old favorite, Harry Carey, who needed to retire years ago.

I love sports. I love most announcers. They make it easy to keep TV on during those dumb instant replays.

One of my dreams is to become an announcer. I'll keep studying the techniques of the great ones and maybe I'll be the next nut on the weekend tube.

— Drew Rick, freshman

inkwell

Inkwell provides news and information about Farmington-area primary and secondary students. The column appears monthly throughout the year as part of the Observer's "School Page." Send news items to: The School Page, Farmington Observer, 32203 Grand River, Farmington 48034. Include a telephone number where a contact person can be reached during the day.

18TH PLACE

Cynthia Neun, a Farmington Hills resident and eighth grader at the Academy of the Sacred Heart in Bloomfield Hills, recently won first place in an essay contest.

She was one of three local winners named in the 19th Annual America & Me Essay Contest, sponsored by Farm Bureau Insurance Group. As the first-place winner, her name will be engraved on a plaque and displayed in the school.

Neun's essay won advances to state competition, from which the top 10 essays in Michigan will be selected.

STATE WINNERS

Three Farmington Public Schools students were state winners in the annual PTA Reflections Contest; two will go on to national competition this month.

Inge Lise Baessler, a third grader from Flanders Elementary, won first place in photography; Erin Kenney, a fifth grader from Longacre Elementary, won first place in the visual arts; and Sarah Wayne, a fourth grader from Longacre won third place in literature.

Both Baessler and Kenney will compete with other students nationally.

SISTERS TRAVEL

Two Farmington sisters, both Farmington High School students, are part of a 210-member group that will travel to Europe this summer as part of a music education exchange program.

Karl Urevig, a junior, and Kristin Urevig, a freshman, will leave June 18 for Frankfurt for the start of a monthlong tour of Denmark, Norway, Sweden and West Germany.

The trip is sponsored by the Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp International Exchange Program.

2 HONORED

Two Farmington-area students were mentioned recently at the 1988 Project Graduation rally held in Detroit. The students were praised for their efforts at combatting teen drinking and driving.

The students, Kalle Kretzer of Farmington High School and Meg Pinkerton of Farmington Hills Mercy High School, were nominated by their schools and received on-stage recognition at the rally for advancing the Project Graduation message to their peers.

Project Graduation is a yearlong campaign that discourages teen drinking and driving.

SPACE CAMP

Holly and Hope Hoffman joined fellow Farmington Hills resident Joshua Lindsey in experiencing astronaut training activities at the U.S. Space Camp in Huntsville, Ala.

Open to youngsters in grades four to seven, Space Camp introduces children to the history of space exploration during tours of the Space and Rocket Center and NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center.

The programs are designed to encourage the study of math, science and technology with hands-on projects.

LONG-DISTANCE LETTER

A fourth-grade class at Wood Creek Elementary in Farmington Hills received a reply to a letter sent to Valerie and Varlen Kruger, the couple making a two-continent canoe expedition.

"We got interested in this journey because we love canoeing and wanted to visit our neighbors in South America," the couple's letter said. "We are reaching out for our dream."

The couple is visiting both North and South America on their 21,000-mile, 180-day journey. They started at the northwest corner of Canada's Northwest Territory and will finish in February at Cape Horn at the tip of South America.

They told the students about their camping, eating freeze-dried food and their love of canoeing.

STUDENTS CITED

Two Farmington-area residents and students at Detroit Country Day School in Beverly Hills received music honors recently.

Both sounded the winning notes to score awards at the State Solo and Ensemble Festival held by the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association.

Freshman pianist Jonathan Hommes of Farmington Hills was a first-division winner and sophomore flutist Jean Kim of Farmington received second-division honors.

AWARD GIVEN

Farmington resident Jerry Stutzman, a student at Southfield Christian High School, accepted the Student Life Scholarship from Oakland University, Rochester Hills.

The \$1,000-per-year scholarship is awarded to entering fall freshmen or fall transfer students cited for academic achievement and community activities.

TEACHERS LAUDED

Two retiring Giff Elementary teachers were honored this week for their years of service to the Farmington school district.

Virginia Webber, who has taught kindergartners for nearly 29 years, 24 in Farmington, and speech pathologist John Schmidt were honored at a Wednesday party held in their honor. Schmidt also teaches at Shiawassee Center, Harrison High and Power Middle School.

WIN AWARDS

Three Farmington-area middle school students at Detroit Country Day School in Beverly Hills recently won first place awards at the 1988 Science and Engineering Fair of Metropolitan Detroit.

Eighth-grader Glen Schwartz of Farmington and seventh-graders Fred Toettcher and Giancarlo Zullani of Farmington Hills all won awards.

The fair is the largest of its kind in the nation and featured projects by 2,700 students from 150 schools.

INSERVICE DAY

Farmington school employees focused on change during their districtwide inservice training day May 6.

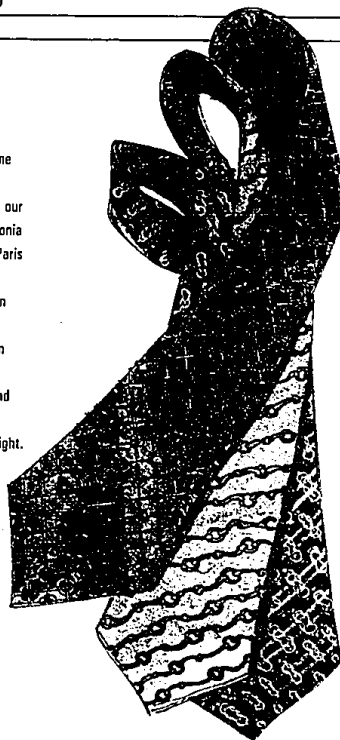
There were a variety of workshop topics, including: stress management, the impact of drugs and alcohol in schools, school finance, self protection, child abuse, AIDS, a variety of teaching methods, the effects of single-parent families and divorce in the classroom, and many others.

The inservice was held at the Orchard Ridge Campus of Oakland Community College in Farmington Hills.

IE ONE ON DAD

ON JUNE 19

Give him a handsome necktie from the Hermès Boutique in our Birmingham and Livonia stores. Created in Paris from silk twill; patented wool/cotton blend interlining. Each colorful pattern is hand-screened by master craftsmen and protected from duplication by copyright. Hand-finished, \$75.



Jacobson's

Shop until 8 p.m. on Thursday and Friday
Until 6 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday