

Teacher-plus

Hills resident also sees role as student confidant, mentor

By Casey Hens
staff writer

During these warm, summer months, you may find Elaine Shapiro sailing across Kent Lake in her free time.

But teaching, her chosen profession, is never far from her mind.

Recently selected as the Troy School District's "High School Teacher of the Year," Shapiro spent the past several weeks wrapping up her 16th year of teaching journalism, English and television production classes at Troy High School.

She is also a senior class advisor, so for the past 10 years has helped with traditional senior activities and sending graduates into the world.

"You become a confidant, sometimes a mentor," said the Farmington Hills resident. "You leave a mark here and there. It's like you live a piece of everyone else's life. Teaching is important."

GETTING HER first teaching job in Troy in 1972 was a stroke of luck for the Oak Park native. In dropping off a resume, she discovered the school's new journalism teacher had quit only three days into the new year.

They offered her the position. She never looked back. "I've created a program there that's been very successful," she said.

Shapiro is not only adviser for Northend, the school's award-winning newsmagazine, which averages some 30 pages per issue, but also teaches two levels of journalism, ninth grade English literature, and television production in the spring.

"I find that journalism gives kids a chance to see how practical writing can be," she added.

She is also active in coordinating workshops for her peers around the state.

people

AN INTEREST in psychology, her original college major, may give Shapiro an edge in working with teenagers. She encourages "open-mindedness" and is "not as much of a disciplinarian as some might like me to be."

"I think I've gotten more kids to talk to me about their problems," she said. "It's my interest in kids — I care about them."

"I don't want to be a censor for them, and I won't be," she added, talking about teaching journalism skills. "I want to teach them the right to be responsible."

Shapiro believes people need a "teaching personality" to be successful in her type of career. "Somebody who can be in front of kids and make the subject interesting," she explained. "It takes an enormous amount of energy. It's like you're on stage five hours a day."

SHE ALSO has an interest in education in Farmington.

Shapiro is married to Marty Shapiro, a microbiologist, and they have two children Dana, 12, and Michael, 7. Michael will attend the new Highmeadow Elementary School common campus program this fall. Dana attends Piquette Middle School.

Although she enjoys other interests, such as sailing in the summertime and photography year-round, Shapiro takes her teaching seriously.

"We're being entrusted with their most important resources — their children," she said. "It isn't an easy job, but it is a rewarding job."



DUANE BURLISON/staff photographer

Teacher Elaine Shapiro (left) of Farmington Hills works with Troy High's Tom Bowman and Gary Dykstra during a newspaper class June 8.

Antique machines capture pharmacist's fancy

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And there's respect for the skill needed to play some of the games. Yagoda squeezes the trigger on "Over the Top" and just manages to bounce the token to the second lowest platform. "I'm not very good at these games," he admits.

Part of his enjoyment comes from nostalgia. Adults come to gawk and end up recapturing a part of their own youth. Recently, Yagoda saw a middle-aged woman working the

stamper machines, which imprint a coin with the message of the operator's choosing.

"It was her 30th anniversary and she wanted to give her husband a token like the one they had made when they were first married. You know, 'Janie loves Johnny.' That's what I like about my place," he said.

AN AVID collector since he left U-M, Yagoda once returned to an old college hangout, the Canoe Livery, to

buy some of the place's aging arcade machines. He was too late; the owner sold his machines to Disneyland.

One can almost believe that Yagoda is still chagrined about being too late for those machines. Antique hunting, like fishing, is a sport that perpetuates the memory of the big catch that slipped away. "You always remember what you should have bought," he said.

Once he lands a new acquisition, he likes to share it. "I used to own a

couple of trolley cars," he said. Now, the public rides them in downtown Detroit.

Along with partners Mike Kratchman and Howard Weissman of Southfield, and with the support of Detroit city planner Alex Pollack, Yagoda is attempting to run a ferry on the Detroit River.

He plans to fill the waiting area of the 150-foot-long by 30-foot-wide barge with some of his antique games. Because the ferry will be moored next to the floating Lans-

downe restaurant near the site of an old Vernor's plant, he's looking for old Vernor's memorabilia.

"The river's very exciting," said Yagoda. "It's filled with international intrigue."

THAT KIND of intrigue remains on hold as he goes about gaining approval from two governments for the project. In the meantime, he continues to consider his next purchase. "The chase," he said, "is the fun of getting an antique."

He already owns a 1937 pinball machine with a license signed by then Detroit Mayor Hazen Pingree. Then there's the one from wartime London that doesn't offer a prize, just a mechanized vignette of a miser being faced with the devil.

Still the hunt beckons. There's another elusive machine to be found. It's a Hawkins Magic Fingers. A machine, four feet in diameter, that he's only seen in England.

Someday, somewhere, somehow, it'll be his.



staff photo by BOB SKLAR

JJ and the Morning Crew hosts Jim Johnson (right) and George Baier pose with the Pistons Suckmobile Thursday before driving it to Los Angeles to pay off a bet on the Pistons-Lakers championship series.

Angelo to pay off a bet on the Pistons-Lakers championship series.

JJ and the Morning Crew head to LA after losing bet

"It's a bet. We lost. And we'll pay up," said radio personality Jim Johnson, shortly before he and sidekick George Baier pulled out of the WLLZ parking lot in Farmington Hills Thursday en route to Los Angeles, 2,300 miles away.

Better known as JJ and the Morning Crew, the two bet fellow morning drivetime hosts Poor Man and Richard of KROQ-FM in Los Angeles on the outcome of the Lakers-Pistons National Basketball Association championship series.

As losers, Johnson and Baier had to drive a car sporting derogatory statements against the Pistons to KROQ and give Poor Man and Richard title to it. They also had to appear on KROQ's morning drivetime show Monday before flying home. KROQ will give the car to a listener.

Why bet a car? "Why not," said Johnson, a Bloomfield Hills resident. "We're the city of wheels."

"Wheels" also is WLLZ's nickname.

JOHNSON AND Baier left Hunters Square Office

Plaza, 31555 14 Mile, with a champagne sendoff at 10:25 a.m. Thursday in a 1980 Chevy Impala with 139,000 miles. The station bought the car, dubbed the Pistons Suckmobile, for \$650 from promotional director Mike Isabella.

During their Thursday show, the DJs enlisted listeners to help them paint and decorate the car. Spray-painted on the passenger side was, "LA Lakers Chumps." The driver side read, "Detroit Pistons Chumps."

The scores of the seven championship games were spray-painted across the hood. Ornaments, trophies and trinkets donated by listeners adorned the trunk lid and the dashboard. A piston was bolted to the side of car. A punctured basketball, with the final score of the deciding game, hung from the rear of the car.

JJ and the Morning Crew will do radio spots from the road. Friday morning, they called in from Nebraska. They were scheduled to call in this morning from Los Angeles.



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