



SHARON LEMIEUX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



Gavel man: Josh Herman, Harrison High student, (above) cracks a big smile as he plays Farmington Hills mayor. At right, Harrison Junior Patti Dizon and North Farmington senior Steven Gill lobby for funds for their departments.

City Hall invasion

High school students thrive in government takeover

BY JILL HOCKMAN

About 40 students from Harrison and North Farmington high schools witnessed local government in action last week when they spent a day at Farmington Hills City Hall — and the experience helped at least one high school senior realize that he doesn't want to be mayor.

"Too much work," said senior Josh Herman, a Harrison student who played the mayor's role Tuesday during the annual event sponsored by the city and the Farmington Rotary Club.

The students' visit to city hall is set

up to give them a taste of what it's like to run a city.

"It's not as glamorous as I expected," said Herman, who thought he might enjoy the job because his mother's uncle once served as mayor of Oak Park. But Herman pointed out that mayors have a huge number of names to remember and meetings to attend.

But he still enjoyed the day at city hall. Among the perks: his classmates called him "Mr. Mayor" and opened doors for him, he said.

"I thought government day was fantastic," he said. "I learned a lot more

than just sitting down and reading a textbook and listening to a lecture."

Students were paired with locally elected and appointed officials, and spent the morning watching what happens in city offices, the police station, public works facilities and the library.

Some students rode in a fire truck. Others learned about the system city workers use to clear snow. Still others watched the city planner review drawings.

After a luncheon at the Farmington Hills Activity Center, students conduct-

ed a mock city council meeting, and found a way to cut \$22,992 out of the city budget.

"I learned a lot about our city that I never knew existed," said Judy Grabinski, a senior at Harrison. "I think I saw more of Farmington Hills in one day than I had seen living here for 17 years . . . You never know your city works like that."

Matt Shultz, another Harrison senior, added, "The best thing was probably learning about how everything works. And it all works together to do a lot of different things. It made me more aware

of everything that was going on.

"It inspires you to want to be involved in it. It's something that anyone can do, really."

Harrison government teacher Bernie Goldstein said his students' enthusiasm about the experience is exciting to see.

"The kids really are amazed at the size of city government," he said. "They get to do things that I couldn't do in a classroom. They loved it."

The day is also a boost for city workers, said Assistant City Manager Steve Brock.

OLHSA files application at OU for charter schools

BY PAT MURPHY

As part of the Regional Trade Academy Coalition, according to Robert L. Conaway, executive director of the agency.

The agency envisions a series of schools — with at least one opening this fall — to offer courses in the automotive and construction trades to low-income youngsters, including high school drop-outs.

"The academy will give OLHSA an opportunity to increase its capacity to assist low-income residents to self-sufficiency," Conaway said Wednesday.

OLHSA filed its application with OU last month, thus becoming the first agency to approach OU with a concrete proposal. The

application is scheduled to be reviewed Monday by OU's Charter School Commission, formed specifically to explore the possibility of the university sponsoring one or more charter schools.

"I think this concept has tremendous potential," said Mary L. Otto, of the OU School of Education and Human Services and chair of the commission. "I'm probably the only one who has seen the entire application, so I don't think we (the council) will make a decision Monday."

The council will undoubtedly seek additional information about the proposed academy, Otto said. "We will require financial and business plans as well as information about how they (OLHSA) will comply with state law on building standards."

Although some details are yet to be worked out, OLHSA is ready to provide whatever information is required, said Gregory C. Piazza, development manager for the agency and interim project direc-

tor for the school.

Organizers are, for example, searching the Pontiac area for an appropriate building.

"We hope to open our doors with about 100 students this fall," he said, "and we expect to have 200 to 300 students within a few years."

The academies will prepare students for the workplace with course work, hands-on training and field trips, said Piazza. At some point, students will be required to hold part-time jobs in their chosen trade areas, he said.

Working with OLHSA to sponsor the academies will be the MoTech Education Center in Livonia, the Association of Builders and Contractors and the Automotive Service Association.

"There is a critical shortage of skilled entry-level technicians," said Tyla Wells, executive director of MoTech. "This training gives the noncollege-bound student the chance for a future with financial stability."

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Couple to re-tell their story of Holocaust at JCC event

"Michigan Jews Remember World War II," a month-long photo exhibition presented by the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan, will feature Emmy Award-winning Gerda and Kurt Klein at its grand opening at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 9, at the Jewish Community Center, Maple and Drake, West Bloomfield.

The Kleins retell their own remarkable story of Gerda's liberation from a Nazi death march by Kurt, the American GI who eventually married her. Authors and speakers on the international circuit, they bring an unforgettable message of hope triumphing over despair. This week, the Kleins were awarded the Cable Ace Award for their documentary. Their Oakland County appearance is their first since winning that Cable Ace award.

"GI's Remember: Liberating the Concentration Camps" and "Salute to Jewish Military Chaplains," two exhibits on tour from the National Museum of American Jewish Military History, will be on display that evening in the Jewish Community Center lobby and remain there until Jan. 5, 1996.

In addition, photo exhibits by local temples and synagogues honoring their World War II servicemen and a Jewish War Veterans photo exhibit of Michigan Jewish GI's who gave their lives in the service of their country will be featured.

"Michigan Jews Remember" is presented in tribute to the 50th anniversary of victory in World War II and the 100th anniversary of the Jewish War Veterans.

The charge for the grand open-

ing event is \$12.50 per person with special seating for patron contributors of \$50 and up. Seating is limited. Tickets will be available at the door. Call the Jewish Historical Society, (810) 661-7706 for advance reservations or for further information.

Michigan Jewish GI's can still send copies of their own service photos with identification to their own temples or synagogues for use in this display.

Following the exhibit of the local servicemen, the photos will be included in a World War II collection at the Jewish Community Archives at the Reuther Library at Wayne State University. The Department of Defense has named the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan as a World War II Commemorative Group.