

Class sparks teens' confidence

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

The hardest part is getting them there.

It's usually only after parents or other adults drag them in kicking and screaming do adolescents settle down to the idea of participating in a teen Dale Carnegie course, such as the one recently completed in Farmington Hills.

Once they buy into the idea, they quickly make changes to how they want to live their lives.

Building self-confidence and giving teenagers ammunition to fight against peer pressure are some of the benefits of taking the 12-week course, which was co-taught by Farmington Hills resident Kathy Tosoin and Sue Dahlmann.

"We saw some amazing differences," Tosoin said. "They come in with closed arms and a 'Why am I here?' attitude."

"Within three weeks we start to see changes and by session nine they're totally turned around in their attitude."

For example, Tosoin said some of the Carnegie kids were "going home and hugging their parents, showing appreciation, saying 'I am now aware of the sacrifices you made.'"

One of the 44 teens in the Farmington Hills course told Tosoin that he was



Made it: Carnegie teen course grads (from left) Julie Debolski, Ryan Jones and Brian Davies.

enrolled just to make friends. "He made so many friends."

Among graduates of the 12-week course were Brian Davies, Julie Debolski, Ryan Jones, Shantal Patel and Kelly Misch, all from the Farmington area.

Before taking the course, 14-year-old Ryan Jones was quiet, except around close friends. It didn't take long for her to improve her communication skills, one of the reasons her parents wanted her to take the course.

"I wasn't too shy, I could talk to certain people," said Ryan, a freshman at Harrison

High School. "But when I took the course it (communicating) became much easier."

The class was a pleasant surprise for the teen, who plans to use some of her new-found skills at Harrison. "It will help me participate, give presentations in front of the class."

According to Tosoin, a one-time school teacher whose 15-year-old daughter Jenny graduated from an earlier Carnegie course, instructing youngsters in the motivational program is as tough a teaching task as she's ever faced.

"It's a challenge just to get them to focus their attention and take the class seriously," Tosoin said. "Once they get into the meat of the course, the teasing of each other stopped."

Meanwhile, Dahlmann is getting ready to begin a teen-adult course in West Bloomfield, to begin Thursday at the West Acres Subdivision Clubhouse. On Sept. 29, a similar course will begin in Brighton, Tosoin said. (Call 248-366-9135; 248-220-5704 for information)

"I'd love to do another Farmington one," Tosoin said. She also wants to bring Carnegie sessions into the Farmington Public School District, both for students and teachers.

FOX Sports on deck for Time Warner Cable TV

Time Warner Cable is launching FOX Sports Detroit, FOX Sports Net's newest regional sports network on Wednesday, Sept. 17, on Channel 26.

"We are pleased to add FOX Sports Detroit and its strong lineup of sports programming to Time Warner Cable. We think viewers will really enjoy the selection of event coverage, news programs and magazine shows the network has to offer," said Tom Bjorklund, general manager and vice president of the firm, whose cable service area includes Farmington and Farmington Hills.

FOX Sports Detroit will present more than 200 Detroit-based professional sporting events annually. In total, the network delivers in excess of 600 live and exclusive events each year to viewers throughout Michigan and northern Ohio.

The network's staple programming consists of exclusive live coverage of the

Detroit Red Wings' NHL Hockey, Detroit Tigers' Major League Baseball, and Detroit Pistons' NBA Basketball, major college event coverage, plus the nightly FOX Sports News.

The network will also produce live coverage of Detroit Vipers' IHL Hockey, Detroit Rockers' NPSL Soccer, a CCHA Game of the Week and the Great Lakes invitational hockey tournament.

"We want our viewers to understand that we are absolutely committed to being the best sports viewing option for as many fans as possible in Michigan and Ohio, and we are delighted that Time Warner Cable has added our network to its programming lineup," said Tim Kraus, FOX Sports Net senior vice president of affiliate relations.

In addition to its core programming, FOX Sports Net airs college football games and live men's and women's college basketball games.

DDA talk Thursday eyes changing look, focus of downtown

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Residents who want to have input into future improvements to Farmington's central business district are encouraged to attend a public information meeting scheduled for 7 p.m. Thursday at the city hall council chambers.

The Farmington Downtown Development Authority will host the session about long-range improvements to the business area.

"We'll be open to any suggestions, ideas and critiques," said DDA President Judy Downey. "That's the point of it."

Discussion will hinge on six potential improvements as suggested by landscape architect Grissim/Metz Associates, Inc. of Farmington Hills.

Those improvements would attempt to "create focal points and other site amenities to improve the appearance and promote pedestrian activity," according to John Grissim, president of the architectural firm, in a recent letter to Downey.

"We'll take ideas from the meeting and go back to the (DDA) board in October and prioritize" potential projects, determining whether they fit into plans for the 1998-99 fiscal year, Downey explained. "A lot of it might sound wonderful, but do we have the money?"

Following are the suggestions from Grissim/Metz:

■ City Hall Site: Create a focal point, inward oriented for activities and a "people place."

■ Corner of Grand River and Farmington: Revise design to have a destination and focal point for pedestrians, while retaining attractiveness.

■ Downtown Center: Revise parking and roadway system, retaining parking lot numbered spaces, while creating pedestrian walkways, additional landscaping and a more attractive shopping area.

■ Orchard Street Area: Revise roadways and parking lot to accommodate more green, a farmers market or band shell, and provide a pedestrian link from Farmington Road to development and connection to Grand River.

■ Grand River Gazebo: Redesign immediate area to a common space and screen view of parking lot. Create a quiet, inward oriented Mini Park.

■ Intersection of Warner and School streets with Thomas Street: Create roundabouts at intersections, screen out parking lots and provide a unified streetscape.

Farmington City Hall is located at 23600 Liberty Street, near Grand River-Farmington Road.

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school year concluded. The school decided to honor the class at the start of the current year, even though some of the students moved on to middle school.

"It was really great, really fun," said current Hillside fifth grader Christopher Terterian, after getting his T-shirt, certificate and pin for his efforts. "We got to make morphs of ourselves."

Morphing entails creating drawings on the software, taking a digital photograph, and letting one blend into the other. When one visits the Bits of Art Web page, and clicks onto one of 20 squares depicting a student's self-portrait, the sketch becomes a photo in seconds - and reverts back again.

There is a second available link for each student, detailing personal interests. For example, Emily Erickson likes dancing and swimming. Visitors can also learn about the Bits of Art class and how to send feedback.

The experience wasn't limited to students. Six moms also took part, drawing some praise during the assembly from Hillside Principal Jan Colliton.

"The moms did a great job," Colliton said. "Almost as good as their children."

By visiting the Web site (<http://www.farmington.k12.mi.us/FPS/school/hillside/bits/pages/index.html>), one can also see old childhood photographs of the moms magically morph into what they look like today.

Janet Terterian, did not participate in the class, she was on hand at last week's assembly, watching the "Dream Team" get its due.

"I think it's very educational," she said. "The computer is something we're all going to be needing."

Calvin Clark, president of Farmington Hills-based Frostbyte Communications, Inc., also attended the assembly. Clark worked with Warner and her class to design the pages.

Clark called the exercise something that gave the children a glimpse of a "real world project. They weren't just creating a drawing of themselves, but a drawing with purpose. In business, if you teach a child to do a drawing that can be used on a Web page, you've taught them that there's purpose for art beyond putting it into a picture frame."

Besides Emily Erickson and Christopher Terterian, the "Dream Team" included the following students (several who have since gone on to middle school): Madelyn Beniatto, Greg Fraser, Stephanie Lee, Samantha Lehto, Brittany Luse, Curtis Patton, Andrew Starkey, Rebecca Wendling, Molly Cotter (and her mom), Brittany Farmer, Matthew Leach (and his mom), Keaton Mette, David Morreale, Johannah Scarlet (and his mom), Laura Skimin (and her mom), Adrienne Sundquist (and her mom), Brian and Eric Yetter (and their mom).

Although Christopher's mom,