



Fun times: Seventh-grade science teacher Fred Ribits, part of the three man Science Explosion group along with David Bydlowski and Charles Kline, walks through the aisle as teachers blow bubbles at the Civic Theater.

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teachers to celebrate past accomplishments and prepare for new and exciting challenges.

"When they go back now (in the fall), they'll be running their own workshops," White said. "Teachers will be sharing with each other."

Another positive byproduct of "Celebrating the Journey," White continued, was how it enabled staffers to become more involved with the community. All three morning sessions took place at the Civic, following

■ **'When they go back now (in the fall), they'll be running their own workshops. Teachers will be sharing with each other.'**

Judy White

—Assistant superintendent for instruction

breakfast at the Grand Cafe.

The training sessions were the first major non-entertainment uses of the theater since it was purchased by the city of Farm-

ington.

City officials are actively promoting such use of the facility by corporations, hotels and other community groups.

Teachers challenged to make learning interesting for students

BY TIM SMITH
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Bill Page called his teacher training talk "Ya Got What Ya Got," and that is exactly the point he drove home during his two-hour presentation, Wednesday, June 14, at the Civic Theater in Farmington.

"He (a student) has the life he has, he is what he is," Page said. "Our job is to take the kid and say, 'Today is the first day of the rest of his life. What can we do to begin to make a difference?'"

"We care about every one of them and our job is to teach every one of them. That's our goal."

Page's inspirational, humor-laden talk also challenged teachers to "think in terms of making our classes interesting, making our classes exciting, getting our kids involved."

That means doing a spelling test differently: sitting down for the vowels, standing up for consonants. Teachers in the Civic auditorium subsequently bounced up and down while spelling "Michigan."

Page urged teachers to "quit complaining, start teaching," and to realize that they have the power to decide to do things differently, with every single student in mind.

Following the talk, Eagle Elementary School media specialist Carole Kersten said she agreed "wholeheartedly" with Page's message.

"You can't change anybody," Kersten said. "Anybody would resist change if you're trying to make it happen." But if teachers accept students the way they are, there is a better chance of connecting with them.



Learning experience: Sue Zurvalec, assistant superintendent, staff and community services, laughs during the music and magic of Science Explosion at the Civic Theater.

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Carole Kersten

—Eagle Elementary School media specialist

Deborah Wilson, a teacher at Wooddale Elementary School, said Page's talk reiterated the notion that "your beliefs, what you believe, will influence how you behave."

For example, struggling students might start to turn things around because a teacher sees potential in them where others hadn't before.

Teachers help students learn

to believe in themselves, in other words.

Kersten and Wilson also said "Celebrating the Journey" will pay dividends for teachers because it helps staffers from far-flung buildings meet, talk and network.

"We need to find out where every student is and honor that," said Kersten, about Page's comments that kids are not about to change. Instead, they are who they are, when they are.

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