



PHOTO BY MERO NAGANO
Ski Pole: Kerri Finlayson is in training for a trip to the North Pole.

FHS grad plans North Pole trip

BY RALPH R. ECHTNAW
STAFF WRITER
rechtinaw@ec.homescomm.net

Farmington High School graduate Kerri Finlayson is going to the North Pole in April with a group of 12 women as part of an educational/publicity event.

Members of the group, ages 27 to 52, will embark from a floating ice station in Russia in early April. They'll be transported by helicopter to the 89th degree of latitude and travel 150 miles on skis to the North Pole, which they hope to reach in May. A helicopter will then bring them out.

Finlayson, 27, is an anthropologist and educator with degrees from the University of Michigan and the University of Illinois. A resident of Petoskey, she teaches at North Central Michigan College. Her cold-weather experience extends to mountain climbing in the Chilean Andes and the North American Rockies.

Finlayson expects the trip to take at least 15 days. The women will wear backpacks of 25-35 pounds and pull sleds weighing 40-60 pounds.

"We are basically the dogs," Finlayson said.

At night they'll sleep in two ripstop nylon tents with six women per tent.

Data gathering

Trek members will gather data relating to ice and meteorological conditions. They also expect to record information relating to the ozone layer over the polar cap.

Schools in the U.S. and Canada will receive satellite transmissions on the team's progress. These transmissions will operate in conjunction with a curriculum distributed to teachers in selected schools prior to the expedition's departure.

This includes students in three eighth-grade classes at Power Middle School. The students will monitor the team's progress and conduct appropriate experiments along the way.

Documenting the trip

WomenQuest hopes to produce a CD-ROM detailing the expedition, aimed at pre-teen and teenage girls, and a documentary that will be filmed during the trip.

The TV program, already entitled *Women at the Top*, will document training and shake-down preparations leading to the ice crossing and the arrival at the North Pole in May.

The cost of the trip comes to \$11,000 per person, Finlayson said, and she has found two sponsors in Farmington (Benchmark and Tom Holzer Ford) and one in Northville (REI).

Finlayson's parents, Bruce and Susan, still reside in Farmington.

"I'm excited for her, but I feel apprehensive," said Susan Finlayson. "I know she's capable of doing it."

Finlayson was always an adventurous child, her mother said, remembering a time when the 10-year-old Kerri led a neighborhood archaeological expedition into a nearby field.

Mrs. Finlayson believes Kerri got her adventurous streak from her grandfather on her father's side. Arthur Finlayson evidently spent a good deal of time riding the rails as a hobo in the 1930s before serving in the Army during World War II.

Finlayson realizes that she's making her mother worry.

"I don't want to give her any more gray hair than she has, but I probably will," she said.

NAACP to meet

The Southern Oakland County NAACP will meet at 3:30 p.m. Sunday, March 25, at the Southfield Centre for the Arts, 24350 Southfield Road.

Guest speaker will be Rick Wallace, spokesperson for the Human Rights Ordinance initiative being considered in several Oakland County communities.

For more information call (248) 354-2383.

OBITUARIES

FRANCES W. CHAMPION

A memorial service for Frances W. Champion, 97, of Farmington Hills will begin at 11 a.m. Saturday, April 7, at Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home in Farmington with the Rev. Kathleen Groff officiating.

Mrs. Champion was born Oct. 10, 1903, in Jackson and died March 21, 2001, at Botsford General Hospital in Farmington Hills.

She is survived by nephews William Champion and David Sneyry. She was preceded in

death by her husband, Cecil.

Memorial contributions may be made to Nardin Park United Methodist Church in Farmington Hills.

WALTER E. FRISCH

Services for Walter E. Frisch, 82, of Farmington Hills were held March 24 at Lynch & Sons Funeral Home in Clawson with burial at Acacia Park Cemetery in Beverly Hills.

Mr. Frisch was born May 22, 1918, in Detroit and died March 20, 2001, in Farmington Hills. He lived in Farmington Hills for

42 years and was the owner of Totompole Restaurant.

He is survived by wife, Mary; children, Walt Frisch, Joan (Bill) Askew, Bob (Barb) Frisch and George (Annie) Frisch; sister, Geraldine Beyer; and grandchildren, David, Tim, Nick and Alexis.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Henry Ford Hospice, 15101 Ford, Dearborn, MI 48126.

MARTHA J. PLANCK

Services for Martha June Planck, 77, of Farmington Hills

were held March 21 at McCabe Funeral Home in Farmington Hills.

Mrs. Planck was born in Columbus, Ohio, and died March 17, 2001 at Botsford Hospital. She worked as a caregiver for Seniors for Seniors and enjoyed cooking, reading and modeling in fashion shows.

She is survived by children, Cheryl Arney, Carla Chute, Sheila Pellerin, Cary Planck and Donna Day; and nine grandchildren. She is preceded in death by her husband, Donald.

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