



Women on the Go

Blind Student Blazes New Pathways

Laura Pappas, a Farmington freshman at Western Michigan University, recently took a bus from Kalamazoo to Temple Israel in Detroit where she talked to a group of people who had helped back in the days when she was a junior high student.

To express her appreciation, she entertained the group with several piano selections and told about her school experiences. Then she traveled alone by bus back to Kalamazoo, where she's majoring in music.

All of which wouldn't be at all remarkable, except for the fact that Laura has been blind since the day she was born 18 years ago.

THE GROUP she addressed was composed of members of the Tri-County Braille Volunteers, holding their semi-annual meeting, and Laura was glad to meet them because they were in large part responsible for transcribing into Braille the books she used while attending East Junior High School in Farmington.

But the pleasure of acquaintance was mutual. The volunteers who put long hours into getting books into a form the blind can "read" with their fingers were well aware they were meeting a young woman who never has permitted the handicap of blindness to deter her from the course she has set.

LAURA, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Pappas, first attended Braille classes in the Detroit public school system.

When her family moved to Farmington, she became the first blind student to attend East Junior High.

"The first half-year, everything had to be read to me," she remembers. Then the Braille volunteers began working for her, and she had textbooks in Braille the rest of the way.

When she started attending

LAURA TRANSFERRED to the Michigan School for the Blind in Lansing for high school, continuing her study of music.

She entered district and state solo and ensemble competition in her sophomore and junior years, earning ratings of 1 and 2 for piano and violin efforts, and she also played in the school orchestra which was given top ratings.

"In my senior year, the school didn't compete in solo and ensemble festivals," she said, "so instead I put on a piano recital." She was the first student in the history of the state school to do so, and by the end of the school year she had been awarded the Mu Phi Epsilon citation for outstanding achievement in music.

DURING one of her high school summers, Laura attended Youth Music School on the campus of Michigan State University, a four-week program for talented high school musicians. The rest were sighted.

She also had a summer at a Vermont camp where she met blind people from all over the country and one from France. Laura has been a Girl Scout since elementary school days in Detroit, and maintained her



LAURA PAPPAS

WNU. Laura used mostly textbooks that have been tape recorded. Her music books were in Braille, and she had a reader for a science course.



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Y Expands Programs

Programs for pre-schoolers between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. have been expanded at the Northwest Branch YWCA, 29940 Grand River, Detroit, to offer a greater variety of activities. The new classes are in pre-school art and mother-tot gym. Mother-tot swim classes will continue to top the list in popularity, with ballet running a close second. Enrollment for the winter term is now open at the YWCA

Bi-Centennial Is DAR Topic

A program on the approaching bi-centennial of the Declaration of Independence will be featured for the Jan. 13 meeting of the John Sackett chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

It will be held in the home of Mrs. Walter Nacker, 18604 Salem, Bedford Township, with luncheon served at 12 noon. Mrs. Harvey Detter, Mrs. Harry Paulger and Mrs. Harold Beam will be assisting hostesses.

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