

Community School graduates its class of '78

By LORAIN McCLISH

Forty-two graduates, ranging in age from 19-56, all of whom had their first attempts at high school interrupted, took diplomas this week at a celebration with dinner and a dance in Bonnie Brook Country Club.

The graduates, of Ten Mile Community School's Class of '78, were all part of Farmington Public Schools Community Education Program, which continues to lure the one-time drop-out back to the classroom.

For most, it was a day of seeing a longtime dream come true; a day of fruition won by swimming upstream while coping with a host of other day-to-day living obligations.

Illness kept some of them from graduating at 17 or 18 years old. For some, a matter of economics forced them out into the world a few years before their teenaged counterparts.

Teachers relate that some students traveled through several suburbs to



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—Claire Tremblay

attend class in Farmington because the acquaintances they have now don't know they are without a high school diploma.

SOME ANSWERED our questions but asked us not to mention their names.

One stunning woman, youthful in enthusiasm and appearance, dropped out of school to help her college-educated husband launch his career. Not until the family owned business was firmly established did she decide "to take time out for myself." Now, she says, "the decision has opened up a whole new world for me."

Her request for anonymity is not unusual.

But neither is Frank Lanzlotti, who shares his story with great pride.

Lanzlotti quit school 23 years ago. His four children now range in age from 16-21. He remembers always working two jobs. Three years ago, he decided to "become a little lazy." This amounted to dropping the moonlighting to work only at his full-time position as a parts supplier for experimental engines at GM Detroit Diesel.

Meanwhile, his wife had been urging him to return to school "for at least 17 years," he said. But the idea didn't fully take hold until he read a Farmington Observer story about new classes starting, at what for him was an opportune time.

It had been a long time since he had been in a classroom, but he enrolled in four evening classes.

TEACHERS at the school say this is unusual. There is a great deal of trepidation for the returner. The second-time-around student, for the most part, is worried that they just might not be able to hack it.

Generally, when students gather up the wherewithal to enroll, they take it slow, one class at a time, and build confidence from there.

Lanzlotti continued with a heavy schedule but gives the credit to the staff.

"The teachers go out of their way to do extra special things for you; like getting discount tickets to Hillberry Theatre and Cranbrook Institute for class field trips. They are beautiful. They go out of their way to learn about us."

His statement is in reference to a resume that many of the high school education completion teachers require from each student. The resume gives family and occupational history, which class members share with each other.

Lanzlotti's personal sense of achievement was transferred as an inspiration to his daughter who had dropped out of high school and then enrolled in the same evening program



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her father attended. She graduated last year.

About his influence on his daughter, Lanzlotti says, "It's up to the individual. You have to make up your own mind to go back to school."

NAOMI PORTER'S greatest asset in attaining her high school diploma is her children, ranging in age from 10-20 years, who helped run the house while she did her homework.

The children's pride in their mother's accomplishment is evident when they tell their friends that "she is getting excellent marks in all of her classes."

Ms. Porter returned to school after 20 years of being out of touch with a classroom. She voiced feelings of "being incomplete" and enrolled in school "just to see if I could do it."



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Her feelings of being incomplete may have stemmed from her childhood dream of becoming a nurse. As a teen, she belonged to Future Nurses of America. But her 11th grade education led only to employment as a waitress, and later as a nurse's aide.

Now, with diploma in hand, she enters the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) program at Oakland Community College. She states the exact date, Feb. 23, 1979, when she will get her license.

She will practice in a nursing home, rather than in a hospital, because she believes more good nurses are needed to care for the elderly.

Her teachers comment that "she will certainly be an asset to the profession."

Ms. Porter had more family and friends at the ceremony than any other graduate this year, and all came with congratulations and well wishes.

CLAIRE TREMBLAY dropped out in her junior year of high school, anxious to get a job and become independent. But her goal to become an airline hostess was cut short when it was found that she had no high school diploma. And that was only the beginning of many closed doors.

Ms. Tremblay had a host of clerical skills she could put to use but time and again she was told, "Come back when you get your diploma."

Many years ago, dropping out of school seemed like the right thing for her to do.

"When you drop out you can sleep in and party all night but that excitement doesn't last long," she said.

Eventually, she was faced with the

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reality of having to support herself. She found employment in a field which had minimal requirements, but also offered minimal advancement.

Five years later, Ms. Tremblay still was no closer to her goal of being an airline hostess, or for that matter, advancing herself in any employment field.

A BROCHURE, announcing the high school completion course in Farmington, brought her and several of her friends to enrollment.

Of that group, Ms. Tremblay is the only one to graduate. She gives credit, as does Lanzlotti, to the teachers.

She says of the teaching staff, "They treat you as an adult. They give you a chance to be yourself."

The faculty's response to this is "They are adults."

The faculty's comments on teaching the returned student is unanimous. The group have a no-nonsense class to work with because the student is there by choice. There are no extra-curricular activities to be bogged down with. There are no teenage problems to deal with. The student is there to accomplish an end by the quickest means possible.

Ms. Tremblay became alerted to the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) while taking classes at Ten Mile School, and was already enrolled in its clerk-typist training program before graduation day.

She dovetailed the two together and is now preparing for employment when she completes that 32-week program.

She calls 1978 "a real year of accomplishment."



"I enrolled in school just to see if I could do it."

—Naomi Porter

Photos by Allen Schlossberg

Month-long program aids mature women focus on the future

By LORAIN McCLISH

It's 1978, and sometime between now and Dec. 31 you may be celebrating your 55th year of existence and wondering, "Well, what now?"

A month-long program, Focus on the Future, may have the answer to that query. Sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, it is for women who are retired or who are thinking of retiring. It is for those 55 and older, only.

Focus is for women who are looking for a second, or maybe a third career. The purpose is to provide a taste of something new in the way of finding or stimulating interest in a new field or hobby, in a relaxed situation without the homework, credits or grades, and with a host of built-in options.

Jean Feterl, program planner at Mercy Conference Center, said, "The program was devised by the Sisters because it is typical that they don't want to retire themselves. Because of their dedication and life style, most just continue working for as long as they can."

"It is not unusual to come across a nun in her 80s who never contemplated the idea of retiring."

THE SUMMER forum will run from July 1-30 in Farmington's Mercy Center on Eleven Mile and Middlebelt, when participants will have the option of living-in, or commuting, and choosing from 15 different courses, a variety of field trips, and a host of activities offered during the month.

Room and board is \$92 a week for a private bedroom. Various courses run from \$10 for folk dancing, for example, to \$25 for a course on ministering to the sick, aging and dying.

"Most of our guests think of it as a vacation," Ms. Feterl said. "They come for a week or a month and take as many or as few of the courses they wish. They can go to a symphony or a picnic or not. We always schedule a shopping trip, but shopping is fun for some and a strain for others. For the most part, they enjoy the social aspect of it with the other women who are there."

Ms. Feterl is working with a staff of four that is planning the month of offerings that run the gamut from sewing to a class on Biblical themes.

Focus on the Future once was lim-

ited to the Sisters of Mercy. But as the program continued, the sponsors found, during one summer's session, they had nuns coming from 16 different religious orders.

"For the past three summers it has been opened to lay persons."

"WHAT WE were doing we found was beneficial to all women over the age of 55," Ms. Feterl said. "We have about 120 bedrooms and can accommodate any number of commuters. Some come for just the driver's ed or a class on tutoring or the end of the month retreat."

Some courses, such as one in hair care, runs daily. Others, such as guitar lessons or swimming lessons run twice a week. Some of the guests come for one week; most stay the month.

Other courses on the agenda are



JEAN FETERL

macrame, metrics, prayer with visuals and scriptural prayer.

Registrations are being taken now by Ms. Feterl, who also will take inquiries, or send a brochure on request. Her number at the center is 476-8010.

The great garage sale is becoming a tradition

The Great Garage Sale, a cooperative effort by members of Lincolnshire East subdivision in Farmington Hills, spearheaded by Anne Okonski, is set this year for June 17-18.

The springtime event is marked with balloons and banners and arrows for the shoppers when several dozen of the residents open their garage doors displaying their white elephants for sale.

The subdivision entrance is on Eleven Mile, a few blocks east of Middlebelt. Hours for the sale are from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and from noon to 5 p.m. Sunday.

A few neighbors who got together for a joint rummage sale in 1976 had a fair amount of success with their venture. Judy Brooks, one of the chairmen for this year's sale, said the effort didn't take hold until it "got itself organized."

Last summer's sale "was super," she said. "It was so successful we know it will go over big this year too."

The subdivision's cohesiveness stemmed from Ray Okonski, who took over the presidency of the association and used the same businessman's

approach to the needs of a neighborhood that he uses in his work at Computer Systems Management Company.

HE LIKENS a subdivision to a "mini-city, and set out dividing the neighborhood into sections, to make it easier for residents to settle nearby problems such as noise, dogs or children-related problems.

At the same time, all of the subdivision residents were brought into closer contact via a local newsletter. Items in this month's issue gives a follow-up on several social activities planned by the association, and lists a June agenda for future activities.

One column is devoted to complaints. Another item asks parents to send in end-of-the-year achievements their children have amassed in school.

Another story gives an update on a vandalism problem.

The lead story invites all residents "to the great garage showing and sell-off."

The group has planned a "Decorated Bike Parade" for July 4 and is offering a tour package to Toronto in August.

Jones wins contest, but loses war with raccoon

Micky Jones' attitude about the running confrontation he's had with a raccoon since last fall is "win some, lose some."

Jones won a photo contest with a picture he took of the critter he has come to call Snoopy. But he thinks he has lost the battle of trying to get Snoopy to move out of his attic. At last report, Snoopy was still making his residence in the Jones' home in Old Farm Colony Subdivision.

Photographic awards are not new to the Ford Motor Co. engineer who took

home three prizes from the National Industrial Recreation Association's photo competition this spring.

"Snoopy" took a second place in the black and white prints of the nature division.

His photo called "St. Gregory" took two prizes. The picture of the statue in a monastery in western Michigan, captured fourth place in the color print division. But because Jones thought the background was a little dull, he

fall at the liberal arts college.

After graduation from St. Andrew's High School, Dobosz attended the University of Detroit for two years before transferring to St. Mary's last fall. She is a religious education major.

used a diazochrome method which added yellow and purple to the sky to make it appear as an abstract painting.

This entry won him first place in the open category.

JONES EARNED his living as a news photographer working for the Vancouver Sun while he was studying to become an engineer, but he thinks of his work with a camera as a hobby. He is a former president of the Ford Camera Club, a section of Ford Employee's Recreation Association.

A total of 45 companies in the U.S., which maintain recreation associations for their employees, submitted entries from more than 250 persons for the recent nationwide competition.

All of the winning entries, judged by a panel of four experts, will be exhibited in Dallas.

Dobosz heads student Praesidium

The first woman president of the Student Praesidium at St. Mary's College, Orchard Lake, has been recently elected by the student body.

Michelle Dobosz, 21, the newly elected president, will be a senior next