

French visitors eye food as the big difference

By Diane Gale
staff writer

Live the difference.

Many of the 28 French students involved in a Catholic Central foreign exchange program said they are amazed at the fast-paced and independent lives of the people they're meeting in the United States.

"The big difference is the way of

life," said Thibault Delorme, who is living in Redford with Jim Reilly and his family. "It goes faster, and you do different things always."

The students, who are ages 16 to 18 from the Ardeche region of France, are living with area families, mostly in Redford, Livonia, Plymouth, Farmington and Farmington Hills.

The French visitors agree that the custom they are having the most trou-

ble adjusting to during their visit, which began July 1, is Americans' eating habits.

"I miss the French food," said Alain Jacquelin, who is residing in Redford with Andy Sumina's family until July 28. "In France there are fixed hours to eat. There you eat with family, and here everybody eats with themselves."

Learning to understand the different habits and lifestyles between France

and the United States were the goals Fr. John Wheeler, a Basilian father and Detroit Catholic Central teacher, had in mind when he began the French Summer Exchange Program in 1979.

BUT THE CULTURAL experience isn't limited to the students.

"It's been real rewarding for us, and I'd do it again," said Jim's mother, Fran Reilly. "I was apprehensive at

first, because I don't speak a word of French, but they're great kids."

A wrapping system keeps the cost of the trip down because the families that invite a student to live with them usually send a family member across the seas. Last year the total cost of visiting France through the program was \$700, according to Wheeler.

In odd-numbered years, French students are hosted by Catholic Central families, and in even-numbered years Catholic Central students live in French homes. More than 100 students have been involved in the program.

Describing the differences between the countries, Jacquelin said, "There are big cars here, and the towns are all new, and nothing is old."

Livonia Mayor Edward McNamara spoke to the students and distributed shamrocks engraved with his name when the students met in Livonia City Hall Wednesday.

"I don't expect to carry France."

"We avoid bringing them all together too often, because they tend to speak only French, and that wasn't the purpose of the program," Wheeler said.

"But trying to communicate in a foreign language is often like walking around with a weight on, and they're relieved when they can speak French."

Piero Filion, who is living with Tom Scallan of Plymouth, said he likes the United States so much he hopes to live here someday.

"Since a child I wanted to see the U.S. one time in life," Filion, 16, said. "I want to be a pilot and want to live here all my life."

Albane Delorme, Thibault's sister, is living with Kevin Jakubowicz's family in Farmington.

Albane waves her hand and speaks in excited spurts when she describes the independence American teen-agers enjoy compared to the restrictions placed on the French youngsters.

"THE FAMILIES ARE more independent than in France," Albane said.

Nelda DiBlasi, music enthusiast, dies

Services were held today in St. Aidan Catholic Church for Nelda DiBlasi, who was known throughout southeast Michigan as the heart and driving force of the Oakway Symphony.

Mrs. DiBlasi, wife of Frank DiBlasi, music director and conductor of the Oakway Symphony, died Friday at the Southeast Michigan Hospice in Southfield. Burial was in Port Huron.

Mrs. DiBlasi, who retired 10 years ago as a music teacher in the Detroit public schools, served as the orchestra's manager.

"She was the heart of the organization — she got everything done that had to be done," said Richard Thomp-

son, Oakway past president. "But more than that, she was the symphony's enthusiasm and spirit. Her absence was, and is, a stunning blow. None of us can imagine life in the symphony without her."

Nelda and Frank DiBlasi founded the Oakway Symphony 11 years ago.

Mrs. DiBlasi was born in the Upper Peninsula. She lived in Livonia for the last 23 years. She earned a bachelor's degree at Marygrove College and a master's at the University of Michigan.

An accomplished violinist, she also taught music in the Detroit public schools and Madonna College.

One of her favorite pupils in Detroit was an elementary school youngster whom Mrs. DiBlasi called "little Joey Silverstein." Today Joseph Silverstein is the concertmaster of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Mrs. DiBlasi was a member of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra Women's Association, Detroit Grand Opera Association, Michigan Opera Theatre, Mar-

grove Alumni Association, Farmington Musicale and AMIT, an Italian-American organization.

"She was an active lady with great credentials," said her niece, Beth Lobb. Survivors include her husband, Frank; sons, James and John Klote and Paul DiBlasi; daughters, Christine Moore and Francine DiBlasi; sisters, Marie Peters, Gertrude Heinz and Lucille Pierce; brother Maurice Clausen; and five grandchildren.

Funeral arrangements were by Manns-Ferguson.

obituaries

NICK R. ANGELO

Mr. Angelo, 64, of Southfield died July 2 in William Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak.

Born in Pennsylvania, Mr. Angelo was self-employed.

Survivors include his wife, Mary; son, Danny; daughters, Sandra Higgin, Phyllis and Marianne; two grandchildren.

Services were July 5 at the Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home, Farmington, Mass. with the Rev. Joseph A. Drogowski officiating. Burial was in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Southfield.

MABEL A. HEDLEY

Mrs. Hedley, 83, of Atlanta, Ga., formerly of Farmington, died July 7.

Born in Stayner, Ontario, Canada, Mrs. Hedley was a homemaker.

Survivors include her husband, Allan; daughters, Kathryn Ellis, Patricia Elsenlord and Margaret Schlack; nine grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

Services were July 9 at the Thayer-Rock Funeral Home, Farmington, with the Rev. Charles Beynon officiating. Burial was in Glen Eden Cemetery, Livonia.

Kalt graduates

Brown University, the nation's seventh oldest college, awarded bachelor's degrees to nearly 1,400 graduating seniors at its 215th Commencement on June 6.

Howard R. Swearer, the University's 15th president, awarded the degrees during a ceremony on the College Green.

Jeffrey C. Kalt, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harold B. Kalt of Farmington Hills, received a bachelor of arts degree in history.

Kalt is one of 88 members of the class of 1983 to be elected to membership in the Rhode Island Alpha of Phi Beta Kappa.

He graduated magna cum laude.

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