

Teacher's frustration leads to new textbook

By Ted Schneider
staff writer

AFTER EIGHT frustrating years, John Hird decided he just wasn't going to find the right textbook on the Civil War for his students.

So the Garden City High School history teacher sat down and wrote one himself.

The result — "A Storm Over Our Land: The American Civil War" — has received rave reviews from students and colleagues and, Hird said, finally given him the teaching tool he needed.

"The books that are available on the Civil War are generally either so scholarly that they take three volumes just to cover one campaign, or so superficial that they provide only the barest facts concerning the entire conflict," the Farmington Hills resident said.

Hird said the 188-page book, which was published by Vantage Press last fall, offers a fairly comprehensive, chronological history of the war that should interest general readers as well as high school students.

The project took about two years. Hird said he hopes to market the book in local bookstores as well as in area school districts.

HIRD SAID he has had preliminary talks with schools in East Detroit and Farmington. "And, of course, I'd like to see Garden City Public Schools adopt it as a textbook too," he said.

"A Storm Over Our Land" uses the same breezy, anecdote-filled style Hird favors in the classroom.

In addition to the basic overview of key battles, personalities and political issues that contributed to the war, readers will learn about the strange relationship between Abra-

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ham Lincoln and Union Gen. George McClellan.

Hird writes that McClellan, who was constantly at odds with his boss, "wrote Lincoln a long, flowery letter of condolence following the death of Lincoln's son."

And despite the bitter feelings between the two men, McClellan's letter was one of the few dealing with the tragedy that the president kept, according to Hird.

ANOTHER HIRD anecdote concerns the derivation of "hooker" as a slang term for "prostitute."

The term comes from Union Gen. Joseph Hooker's penchant for having prostitutes handy for his troops.

"They became known as 'Hooker's Girls,' which was eventually shortened to just plain 'hookers,'" Hird explained.

Hird, who has been with Garden City Public Schools for 23 years, said using the anecdotal approach is a good way to teach history, especially at the high school level.

"These kids don't think of history as an exciting subject, so it's a way to liven it up for them," he said. "I

think by using this technique, every pupil will learn something about the war — whether they want to or not."

Hird also teaches psychology and has been an assistant principal at the high school as well.

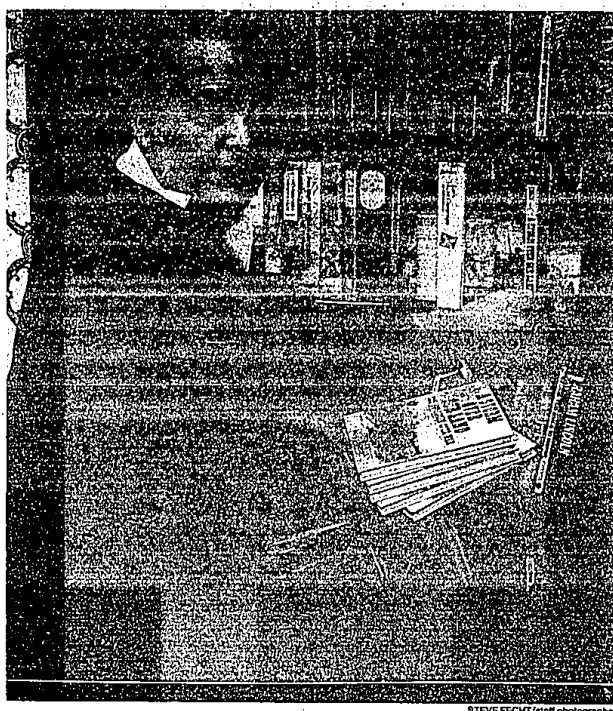
HIRD SAID that although teaching is sometimes a frustrating career, it still excites him enough to "make me look forward to coming to school each day."

Hird and his wife, Marie, have two children, a son, 17, and a daughter, 19.

The history teacher-Civil War buff likes to travel in his spare time and, not surprisingly, has visited almost every Civil War battle site in the country. The Hirds have also been to Europe and Hawaii.

Although Hird said he doesn't plan a career switch at this point in his life, he won't rule out future writing projects either.

In fact, the teacher is currently working on a workbook companion for schools that decide to use "Storm" as a textbook.



STEVE FECHT/staff photographer

John Hird makes room on his bookshelf for his own just-published book on the Civil War.

campus pipeline

If you have news from a college, university or other campus of higher education — and there's a Farmington-area connection — we'd like to hear from you. So please share your news item with other Farmington Observer readers. Send items to: Campus Pipeline, Farmington Observer, 32303 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

• THEY'RE ACHIEVERS

Farmington-area residents Gloria Boyd, Jeni Cuduhovsky and Nancy Delonis received the High Achievement Award from Madonna College, Livonia.

To qualify, students must complete a minimum of 30 semester hours at Madonna with an accumulative grade point average of at least 3.5.

The awards were presented at the honors convocation, which recognizes outstanding accomplishments of students in the Division of Business and Computer Systems.

• HONOR SOCIETY

Eric Kerastas of Farmington Hills was elected to membership in Beta Gamma Sigma, a national business honor society.

He attends Indiana University, Bloomington.

• NEW GRADUATES

Three Farmington Hills residents earned degrees at Mercy College of Detroit's winter commencement.

John Church was awarded a bachelor of science degree in biology. Elaine Clair received a bachelor of science degree in business administration and Mary Deslippe earned a bachelor of science degree in nursing.

• SCHOLARLY EFFORT

Nancy Delonis of Farmington Hills received the Meta and Bernard Landuyt Award for high achievement at Madonna College, Livonia.

She also received a \$250 scholarship for the next two semesters at Madonna.

To qualify for the award, Delonis, a business administration accounting major, had to complete a minimum of 30 semester hours at Madonna and 25 semester hours within the Division of Business and Computer Systems with an accumulative grade point average of at least 3.7.

Award recipients must exhibit scholarly inquiry, critical thinking, professional growth, leadership qualities, participation in college or community activities, and evidence of integrity, responsibility and strength of character.

Bernard Landuyt presented the award to Delonis at the second annual honors convocation, which recognizes outstanding accomplishments of the students in the Division of Business and Computer Systems.

Delonis also received a High Achievement Award and was elected as a charter member of Delta Mu Delta for 1985.

• SORORITY PREXY

Michele Puzar of Farmington Hills, a 1984 North Farmington High School graduate, was elected president of Chi Omega Sorority at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Chi Omega is the largest sorority on campus with 120 members. Puzar is a junior majoring in industrial/organizational psychology and human resources management.

• DEAN'S LIST

The following Farmington-area students were named to the dean's list at Lawrence Institute of Technology, Southfield: Mark Bailey, Susan Bailey, Randall Beard, Richard Dele, Gil Haddad, Brian McDonald, Robert Morrison, Nanette Sommers, Nikola Tomkov, Michael Weingarten, Tracy Williamson, Laura Won-

troski and Mary Marcum.

Vicky Cherry of Farmington Hills was named to the dean's list at Michigan Technological University, Houghton. She is a senior majoring in mathematics.

Gordon Richel of Farmington Hills was named to the dean's list at Michigan Technological University, Houghton. He is a freshman majoring in mechanical engineering.

EYE CARE

Gordon R.A. Fishman, MD
Diplomat of the American Board of Ophthalmology

GLAUCOMA

Historic records show that even the ancient Greeks were affected by glaucoma. Actually, the name comes from a Greek word meaning "hard eye." The Greeks only knew that patients with glaucoma had a hard, painful eye. They did not know the hardness and pain came from increased pressure within the eye. In glaucoma, the trabeculum becomes blocked, and the watery aqueous produced in the eye fails to drain out of the eye. As the volume of aqueous increases, so does the pressure within the eye. To relieve the condition, you must either decrease the amount of watery aqueous, or create an opening that will drain the fluid out of the eye.

The most common form of glaucoma is usually treated with drops. Those drops may either open the spongy trabeculum to increase the drainage or they may decrease the production of aqueous inside the eye. Either way, the pressure is lowered and the glaucoma is controlled.

Recently, doctors have been able to treat glaucoma with lasers by burning tiny holes in the spongy trabeculum. If drops and laser treatment fail to lower the pressure, a permanent hole can be made with surgery.

Glaucoma is hereditary and an eye examination is necessary to detect its presence. Unfortunately, there are few symptoms to warn you if glaucoma is present. Intermittent eye aches, eye pain and halos around lights at night may be early signs. There are special tests which may detect glaucoma even before a rise in pressure is noticed. Ask your eye doctor to perform these tests, especially if there is glaucoma in your family.

For a FREE brochure of Dr. Fishman's "EYE CARE" Call or Write to: 1777 Axtell Rd., Troy, MI 48064 • 646-3335 or 27276 Orchard Lake Rd., Farmington Hills, MI 48024 • 476-0571

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