



Thursday, November 2, 1989 O&E

# Harrison students get taste of ancient cultures

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

THEY FEASTED on ancient Greek and Roman foods this week, warmed in modern-day kitchen appliances. That was just the point. Two sections of students at Harri-

son High School are studying how the ancient cultures affect them today, and why each aspect is important. The Ancient Feast, held in Harrison's media center at lunch time Tuesday, represents just one activity in an expanded and improved Humanities program in the Farmington Public Schools. It is taught at both Farmington

and Harrison high schools and plans call for offering it to North Farmington students next fall. A total of 110 juniors and seniors at the two schools are enrolled this year. Instead of studying cultures from the ancient to modern in 20 weeks, beginning this year teachers are taking a full school year to teach the subjects in greater depth. During the first semester, students study from ancient civilizations through the Renaissance period, then from the Renaissance to modern times during the second half of the year. "I like the changed emphasis," said Laura Sparrow, an English and humanities teacher at Harrison. "For the kids, and us equally, it offers a variety we wouldn't have otherwise. That's the whole new thrust of it."

"It makes it available to a wider group of kids."

Joyce Kaplan, has taught humanities for 18 years but said the new program allows her to teach the cultures more in-depth and leaves even more time for hands-on projects. It is hoped teachers from various persuasions can become involved in the program as it develops.

At Harrison this week, even media specialist Carla Barrett got into the act. She discovered the Frugal Gourmet cookbook, which offered recipes from three ancient cultures, and developed a lecture about foods for the two classes. The media center was also decorated with already-completed Humanities projects, including ancient soap sculptures.

At North Farmington, art teacher Lynn Olson is preparing for next fall, when the program will be offered at her school, thus available throughout the district. "It's a big void that needs to be addressed," she said.

She's looking forward to the synchronization of the humanities curriculum in the three high schools. The Teacher On TV concept, where students can monitor a class from a remote location, will probably be used in the classes, she added.

PAT TOMPKINS, an English and Latin teacher at Farmington High, is coordinating that school's two sections of the class. Both Tompkins and the Harrison teachers did demonstrations this fall using ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics.

The in-depth humanities program integrates a number of areas, including the visual arts, performing arts, functional arts, literary arts, history and philosophy. "The appreciation of creativity and its importance to the individual and society throughout history is also a major goal of the course," a course outline says.

"We wanted them to develop a questioning attitude — the reasons for successes and failures, the influence of personalities," said John Barrett, language arts coordinator for the district. "Students learn best when things are integrated. They can begin to see the big picture."

"We've totally revamped the class."

THE NEW program was developed by a committee of English, music, art and history professionals, who rewrote the curriculum last spring and summer. A new textbook was also purchased to coincide with the curriculum changes.

Other resources for the class include speakers, concerts, demonstrations, field trips, and other hands-on materials such as musical instruments and art supplies.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Joyce Kaplan, a humanities teacher at Harrison High, makes her way through the food line with juniors Pat Cullen and Ray Ankwa at Tuesday's Ancient Feast. Foods were all prepared from recipes from ancient times.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

A variety of food greeted 50 Harrison juniors and seniors Tuesday, as they participated in the first ever Ancient Feast — part of the revamped Humanities program in the Farmington Public Schools. Students and staff did the cooking, using ancient recipes.

## Inkwell

Inkwell provides news about Farmington-area primary and secondary students and education issues. The column appears monthly as part of the Observer's "School Pages." Send news items to The School Page, Farmington Observer, 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024. Include a telephone number where a contact person can be reached during the day. Items will not be taken over the phone.

### SOMETHING DIFFERENT

This year, parents and students at Forest Elementary School in Farmington Hills decided to do something different for Halloween.

They held a Pumpkin Fest Oct. 21, during which parents and students ate cider and doughnuts. There was face painting and a visit from McGruff the Crime Dog. Tom Plunkard entertained the children with a magic show.

The Pumpkin Fest was paid for by area homeowners' associations and organized by the Forest Parent/Teacher Organization. Burger King donated cups for the event.

### WALKING WELL

Flanders Elementary School is continuing the Walking Wellness program initiated at the Farmington elementary last spring.

In the interest of becoming physically fit, students with adult leaders are using the lunch recess to walk half a mile to 1½ miles each day.

### READING PROGRAM

Trustees soon consider a reading curriculum for Farmington Public Schools students in grades kindergarten through six.

The school board is expected to study the proposed changes and vote on the proposed change at the next regular meeting.

The reading curriculum proposal has been in the works for the past three years. It offers a new definition of reading with the goal of developing "strategic and motivated readers," according to a philosophy statement.

The new program is designed to encourage positive attitudes toward reading in all grades. Goals designed for each grade level are based on the Michigan Essential Objectives for Reading.

### FUN WITH ART

Students at Wooddale Elementary School in Farmington Hills learned about the abstract expressionist American painter Jackson Pollock this month by imitating his style in

the classroom.

Art consultant Arazey Barsamian said groups of three or four students in Retia London's first grade used bright, vivid paint colors as part of a half-day group project Oct. 27.

"I'm trying to bring out the American artist — we too often talk about the other," she said. "You've got to give them (students) things they can relate to."

### USABLE DISCARDS

East Middle School science teacher Carolyn McQuiggan is looking for businesses interested in encouraging the concept of recycling and willing to donate some materials they now discard.

As a class science project, students will be asked to research properties of this material and then to recycle it by creating something educational, useful or entertaining from it.

"Your trash could be our treasure," McQuiggan said in a recent flyer. She asks businesses to consider scraps of plastic, leather, paper, rubber or fabric, promotional leftovers, window display materials, plastic tubing, wire, wooden rods, tape, yarn, twine, packaging or shipping materials, and other disposable items.

Any items will be considered, McQuiggan said. She can be reached at the Farmington Hills school, 459-3501.

### GIFTED MEETINGS

Parents of Farmington Public Schools children interested in having a say about gifted education will have their chance in November, as a committee of parents and school employees gather information for a study on the issue.

Public meetings have been scheduled as follows:

- Elementary level meeting 7-9 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 7, at East Middle School.

- Secondary level meeting 7-9 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 9, at East Middle School.

- Joint meeting for all levels 1-3 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 28, at the Lewis Schulman Administrative Center.

### MERIT SEMIFINALISTS

Fourteen students at four Farmington-area schools have been named semifinalists in the 1990 competition for National Merit Scholarships.

They include:
 

- Farmington High School seniors: Atul Gupta, George Hixon, Darius Mehraban, Alexa Nichols and Christopher Shier.

- Harrison High School senior Paul Levine.

- Mercy High School senior Kathleen McDonald.

- North Farmington High seniors: Steven Blum, Kara Higley, Adrienne Moelle, Ryan Regan, Joshua Rintamaki, Daniel Serlin and Amy Thursam.

The group is among more than 15,000 named this fall in the competition. They are selected by taking the 1988 PSAT/NMSQT as juniors. More than 6,000 of the students will receive scholarships worth \$23 million.

### GOVERNMENT DAY

The Farmington Rotary Club is, once again, sponsoring student government day for students at Harrison and North Farmington high schools.

The Dec. 5 event will pair participating students with officials of the city of Farmington Hills for the day, giving them insight into the daily operations of a city.

A lunch will be at Mercy Center that day, where seniors from Harrison and North Farmington will be recognized.

A similar day for students at Farmington High School and the city of Farmington will be hosted later in the year.

### BOOK IT

Second graders at GHI Elementary School in Farmington Hills are participating in a home reading incentive program entitled "Book It!" sponsored by Pizza Hut and running from Oct. 6 through Feb. 28.

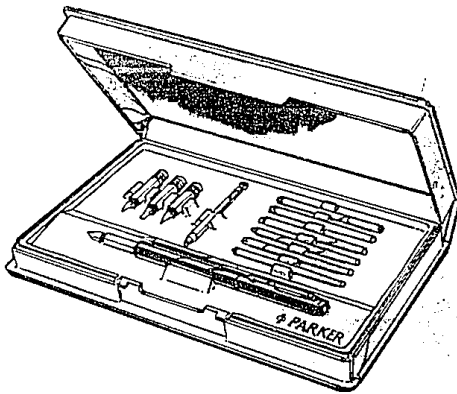
Students are encouraged to read at home for at least 15 minutes with a family member listening or to be read to for part of the time.

Students reading 20 days of every month will receive a coupon good for one individual pizza from Pizza Hut. Students reading 20 days a month for four to five months will receive an honor diploma from principal Michael Duff. If 100 percent of the students in the class meet their reading goals in any four of the program's five months, the class will earn a free pizza party.

### BAZAAR PLANNED

The annual holiday bazaar at GHI Elementary School in Farmington Hills is scheduled 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 2.

Handmade arts and crafts will be sold; last year, the bazaar featured 53 crafters. Also part of the event is the "Children's Room" where students can do their shopping without parents.



### HANDWRITING AS AN ART

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