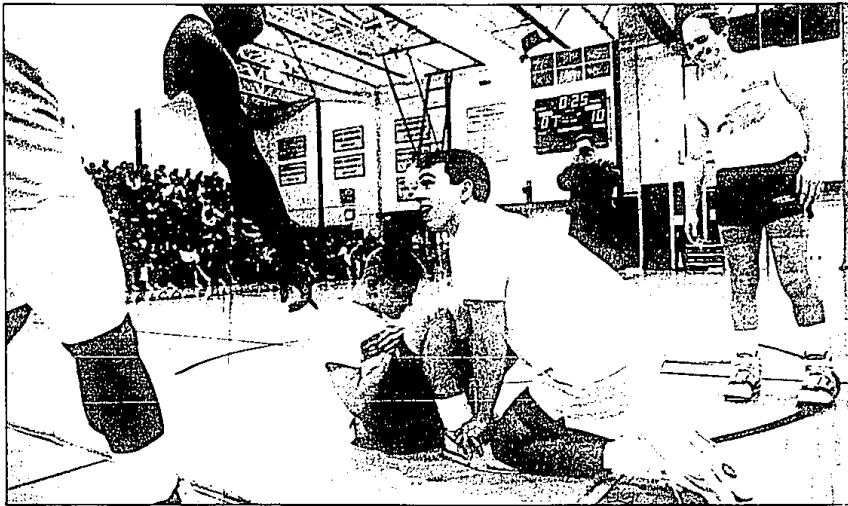




RANDY BORST/staff photographer

North Farmington student Hadley Thurmon competes in a relay race with Detroit Lions captain Jimmy Williams during a schoolwide assembly, which also stressed an anti-drug message.



John Low holds the feet of Jeff Head as the North Farmington students competed against the pros in a sit-up competition.

The student teams beat out the pros, who included Detroit Lions William White (left) and Dave Wilson.

Pro Challenge

NFHS event promotes anti-drug themes

By Noreen Flack
and Casey Hans
staff writers

In an effort to promote awareness of alcohol and drug abuse, North Farmington High School students accepted "the challenge from the professionals" Tuesday morning.

Pro Challenge, a group of professional athletes who campaign against substance abuse throughout the area, competed with North Farmington High students at an all-school assembly. They also offered messages of encouragement.

"I believe everyone in here has to make a choice for themselves," said William White, one of four members of the Detroit Lions who visited North. "I have a sister who chose to do drugs and alcohol. Two years ago, she was sentenced to go to jail."

"I had the same choice. But I didn't choose drugs. Now, I can go where I want to go and do what I want to do. We hope and we beg you all make the right choice."

IN ADDITION to White, other pro athletes attending the Super Star Competition included Lions Jimmy Williams, Dave Wilson and Benny Blades and Detroit Tigers pitcher Frank Tanana.

The ace hurler told students that happiness does not come from material possessions, but "is found in relationships. It's found in caring for one another."

The assembly involved about 40 high school athletes who were selected to compete in various events, including volleyball, basketball and three-on-three football games with the five professionals. The competi-

tion also included a sit-up contest and relay race.

Between competitions, athletes offered their personal experiences and anti-drug messages.

"EVEN THOUGH they don't talk about faith or religion, the professional athletes involved have strong Christian backgrounds and principals that they live by," explained Wendy Bernard, Pro Challenge program coordinator.

Professional athletes "have to be living the life that they are promoting to the kids," Bernard added. "They can't say one thing and do another. The message is so much stronger when it comes from someone the kids feel is important."

"So, when you read it in the papers it is one thing, but when you hear it from someone like Jimmy Williams, it is another."

Pro Challenge was organized in 1988 by Paul Hansen, youth minister at Ward Presbyterian Church in Livonia. All expenses for Pro Challenge are sponsored by Livonia-based Louis Rich Corp., a subsidiary of the Oscar Meyer Corp.

"THE RESPONSE has been tremendous and the message has been accepted well by the kids," Hansen said. "We have been working non-stop for the past year."

Last year, 16 schools — including Harrison High, Farmington High, East Middle School, Livonia Stevenson and Churchill high schools and Garden City High — participated in Pro Challenge assemblies.



Detroit Tiger pitcher Frank Tanana (left) talks to students. North Farmington principal Debra Clarke (right) goes to bat against Tanana during a staff portion of the Pro Challenge.



Detroit Lions team captain Jimmy Williams took time out to tell students about the dangers of using drugs during an all-school Pro

Challenge assembly at North Farmington last week. "We want the best for you, and we want the best from you," he said.

Flying in B-52 was Hills man's ride of a lifetime

Continued from Page 1

altitude, stressful environment," Vinikour, 45, said. "Little is left unchecked, including a thorough dental check. At high altitudes, during pressurization loss, fillings and crowns have been known to liberate themselves from the mouths of unwary victims."

The 5,000-mile round trip, which lasted 11 hours, began at Wurtsmith AFB in Oscoda and went as far south as New Mexico.

"It's an uncomfortable, big, tight beast, but you fall for this airplane very rapidly. When you're over a target there is no air conditioning because everything is directed toward the radar."

"You've got your parachute on, your helmet flight suit, combat boots, long underwear, gloves at certain times."

"That's part of the reason why the Air Force is losing these guys, because they sit there for five, six, seven hours and get battered around. At the end of that time, these guys are really wrung out. These are kids doing a man's job, and they are doing it well."

On Vinikour's flight, the navigator, the oldest crew member, was 30.

Vinikour sat in the inspector pilot's seat behind the pilot and co-pilot. He got sick three times while aboard.

THE B-52 dropped bombs over a range in Utah. "You can't feel the vibration. We were one mile and one minute behind and 500 feet above our target."

Ironically, for as much defense writing work as Vinikour does now, he was never in the military. During the Vietnam War, he was classified 1A for seven years, took two physicals but never got called.

He had applied in Miami, and many Cuban refugees there enlisted become instant citizens, he said.

Vinikour believes there is a misconception that if a per-

people

son can't make it in the outside world, he goes into the military.

"Some of the most professional people I have ever seen are in the military."

VINIKOUR IS a former president of Derus Media Service Inc. in Chicago, one of the oldest filler companies in the country.

Currently, Vinikour delivers news features to suburban and rural newspapers across the United States. He is affiliated with North American Precis Syndicate in New York. He deals primarily with aerospace, automotive and defense industries.

Vinikour grew up in Valparaiso, Ind., where his family owned junkyards. He became interested in aviation by living across the street from a small airport.

For the April conference, Vinikour is arranging four separate panels. He has lined up U.S. Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and Tom Clancy, author of the "The Hunt for Red October."

Vinikour has done press work for airlines all over the world, primarily for Pan Am.

He is a contributing editor for Airport Journal and is a former aviation editor for the Chicago Daily News.

"I haven't had a boss for 25 years," said the self-employed Vinikour.

Vinikour is married to Donna, who works in the public affairs division of Ford Motor Co. in Dearborn, where she is a secretary for stockholder relations.

Vinikour has two children by a previous marriage, Michael, 20, and Diane, 16.

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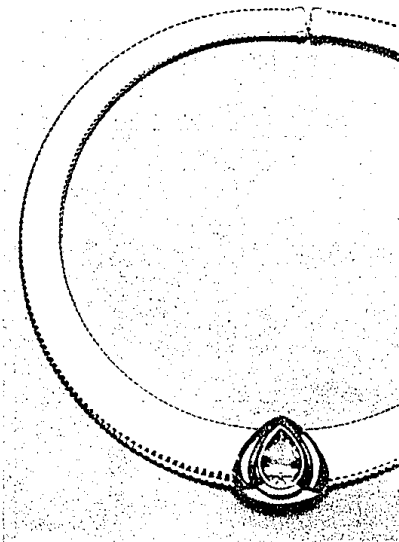
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