



Student leaders from high schools talk unity

120 discuss rivalries, differences — and similarities

To meet another person is to meet yourself all over again... — motivational speaker Ted Hunt

By Casey Hana
Staff writer

STUDENT LEADERS from the three Farmington-area public high schools found out just how different — and alike — they really are last week.

The selected group of 120 from Farmington High, Harrison High and North Farmington High used their collective experience Wednesday to explore solutions to rivalries and

other problems between the three schools.

"When you come in your freshman year, you hear everyone stereotyping. So you just accept it," said Drew Rick, a Harrison student. "You don't get a chance to meet people from the other schools and find out yourself."

The first organized Student Leadership Conference was sponsored by the Student Round Table, a student advisory group that has representatives from each high school.

At Oakland Community College Orchard Ridge Campus, the conference included a group presentation from nationally known motivational speaker Ted Hunt and group discus-

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sions with 7-8 students.

STUDENTS SAID a tri-school dance last year, also sponsored by the Student Round Table, didn't work well so the group decided to try something new.

"It was not successful, from what I hear," said Round Table secretary Jennifer Kiel, a senior at Farmington High. "Hopefully, this (the conference) is the first stepping stone."

Student Round Table board members went through a three-hour training session so they could act as group leaders when students divided into groups to talk about their schools and developing better communication.

The students suggested a number of ideas, including a tri-school musical production and a newsletter or newspaper covering activities at all three schools.

They talked openly about the rivalry between the schools, which this year caused a scuffle at North Farmington High between students there and the visiting students from Farmington High after a basketball game between the two schools.

BUT STUDENT leaders called those incidents isolated, and said they involve only a small number of students. "There's a small group at each school that are hot-shots," North Farmington student Vikki Seamons said.

"I think it's the stupidest thing in the world," Farmington High student Katy Austin said about the rivalry and stereotyping. "All you can do is laugh at it — it's so stupid. 'Everyone thinks we're drug addicts.'"



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

North student Nicole Aratari (left) and Farmington High student Carrie Maier were among the program participants.

Farmington High student Carrie Maier said she believes a cohesive-ness between the schools will take time, and effort.

"It's welcoming people in," she said. "Don't wait for them to do it, take the first step."

Jeff Glenn, a Harrison student, said he enjoys activities between the three schools. "I like these things — the main problem is we don't have enough of them."

But students said that they don't attend some activities when too

many police officers and administrators are on the scene, having been alerted to possible problems. Several mentioned that as reason for the failure of last year's dance.

In selecting student leaders to attend Wednesday's conference, North Farmington principal Deborah Clarke said the Round Table tried for a good mix. Ten students from each class level at each school were selected: five from the general student body and five others from various clubs and student groups.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Harrison student Andy Fitzpatrick (left) listens to Farmington High student Katy Austin sug-

gest a stage production involving students from all three high schools.

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 Page." Send news items to The School Page, Farmington Observer, 21888 Farmington Road, Farmington 48024. Include a telephone number where a contact person can be reached during the day. Items will not be taken over the phone.

● **recycling project**
In keeping with Highmeadow Common Campus' yearlong citizenship theme, faculty and students are working on a recycling project. Since January, one Saturday each month has been set aside for a Highmeadow "recycling day."

In addition, the Ann Arbor Ecology Center presented an Earth Day assembly in April, after which students silk-screened T-shirts to tie into the recycling and Earth Day themes.

The recycling unit ends today at the school's Trash Bash, when the entire day will be devoted to recycling.

● **writing winner**
Three Power Middle School students won awards in the recent American Legion writing contest, with the theme "Showing Respect For My Flag."

Andrew Bouchard won a \$50 savings bond, Mario Walker a \$10 check and Sara Yagman a \$5 check.

● **young writers**
The National Council of Teachers of English has named its Promising Young Writers for this school year, and three Farmington-area eighth graders are finalists.

They include: Amir Baghdadi of Power Middle School, Stacey Lichterman of Warner Middle School and Robert Planek, Jr. of Duncklee Middle School.

Gifted coordinator Barbara Rebbeck is the statewide coordinator for this project.

● **Grandparents' day**
Kenbrook Elementary is busy gearing up for its annual Grandparents' Day May 14. It has become such a popular event that two sessions are scheduled: one from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. and the other from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Grandparents are being asked to write down favorite memories for their grandchildren and send them to school for display. Guests will receive corsages made by students,

then attend a brief program in the school's media center. They then are escorted to various classrooms by their grandchildren.

● **Warner readers**
Read a good book lately? Students at Warner Middle School have. In a project sponsored by reading specialist Hope Aiken, 484 students read a total of 310,000 pages. Each book read was reported on colorful paper T-shirts that were displayed throughout the halls.

Top readers included: Taal Ashman, Mike Koffron, Jamie Berlock, Shelly Ballotti, Stacey Lichterman, Rediata Lessanewok, Jessica Light, Jennifer Lossa, Selam Lessanewok and Ann Ma.

● **new awareness**
A videotape program was developed by special education staff in the Farmington Public Schools to promote heightened awareness regarding children with handicaps. "Kids R Kids" features three special education and three 5-year-old general education students, focusing on creative arts.

The program has received two grants and has been presented at two national conferences. Music therapist Pat Morris Weaver, teacher Sandy Elling and occupational therapist Anne Hill designed the program to promote the integration of special education and general education students.

The Ferndale school district invited the group to participate in Disabilities Awareness Week along with Kids on the Block and Gov. James Blanchard on April 27 at Roosevelt Elementary in Ferndale.

● **Quiz bowl**
Ten students from North Farmington High will match wits in the third annual McDonald's State Championship High School Quiz Bowl May 4-5 at St. Clair Community College in Port Huron.

Representing North Farmington will be Ryan Regan, Doug Dillaman, Kelvin Chou, Jennifer Shubow, Jeff Sung, Brian Leder, Sanju Baluja, Josh Rintamaki, Bill Trenkle, and Jason Lowe. Ray Voss and Elizabeth Shubow will coach and advise the students.

league Quiz Bowl tournament at the local level.

● **Space tomatoes**
Budding student scientists in the fifth grade at Eagle Elementary School are planting gardens to experiment with tomato seeds from space.

During the spring semester, the Farmington elementary students will grow and monitor space-exposed seeds and Earth-based seeds, searching for differences caused by long-term exposure to cosmic radiation. Results gathered by the students will be forwarded to the National Aeronautic Space Administration by June 15 for a final report.

The Space Exposed Experiment Developed for Students, or SEEDS, was one of 57 experiments housed on a recently recovered 11-ton satellite. After a nearly six-year voyage in space, the 12.5-million tomato seeds were rescued by the crew of the space shuttle Columbia on Jan. 12, 1990.

A joint project between NASA and the Park Seed Co. of South Carolina, it has the potential of involving 4 million students and 40,000 educators.

● **hands-on experience**
Fifth graders at Wooddale Elementary recently explored the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum.

They were able to experience a wide range of activities including: experimenting with the light spectrum, simple machines with gears, bubbles, computers, and observing bees in their hive.

● **ancient Egypt**
Children at Farmington Community School finished studying ancient Egypt.

Activities included making mummies and pyramids, writing in hieroglyphics and making scrolls. The culminating activity was an Egyptian Banquet with the children in costume tasting exotic fruits and other Mediterranean foods.

● **talent show**
Students at Thomas Beahan Junior High in Farmington were treated to a talent show by 36 of their fellow students. Most gave direct performances, while others assisted behind the scenes.

Mary Jo McNamara and Barbara Whitlow organized the show, which included gymnastics, piano, jazz, tap, ballet and solo performances. One student, Ernest Nolan, wrote and played his own composition.

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