87-year-old C'ville 'senior' earns diploma

There she was, prim and proper, dressed in her white bonner, the beads and trim black suit. "Who is that woman?" Clarenceville that woman?" Clarenceville themselves recently during their rehearsal for June 10 graduation ceremonies.

themselves recently during their rehearsal for June 10 graduation cremonles.

Sitting among the graduates, Lila Armbruster, 87, stood out tike the first daffold in a spring carden. After all, autrounding her in the school graw new mostly 18-year-olds, all petting ready for the big moment of their high school years, that Friday's graduation from Claernoceville high.

On June 10, along with Claernoceville's 80 high school students, Armbruster received her high school diploma through the district's Continuing Education Program. Just like the seniors, we walked to the podium and received the treasured document.

Armbruster started her Journey toward a high school degree about 10 years ago, after her husband, Ray, died.

"I was living alone for the first

10 years ago, after her husband, Ray, died.
"I was living alone for the first time in my life," she said. "I had nothing to do and I was lonely. Rather than vegetate, I decided to take courses."



Young and old: Lila Armbruster, 87, chats with Clarencevoung and wat: Lad Armonster, 37, crists with Curence-ville High senior Kristina Radloff during graduation re-hearsal Wednesday. To her right is Kristen Przegendza. All three were among Clarenceville High's 86 graduates Friday, 80 from the high school and six from the continuing education.

It was a surprising decision because, as a published author, newspaper columnist and reporter, Armbruster had a lot of laurels to rest upon. Back in the 1950s, she worked as a columnist for the now-de-

or.

One of the biggest stories she covered involved hearings held in Mio over the PBB environmental disaster. Officials wanted to bury PBB-contaminated cows near Mic; local residents objected.

"I lived not far from the burial site," she said.

Through the years, she also kept a journal about her family, her life and living in Michigan. Eventually, she self-published her writings into a book, "Shipoke." Shipoke was a pet name her family had for her when she was young. The book is in Livonia's libraries.

Born in 1906 in Atlanta, Mich, she moved as a teen with her family, my folks needed help, she said in explaining why she never finished high school.

Eventually, her family moved to Detroit. She married Ray in the 1930s and had three children.

Her two sons and daughter attended the big graduation party held for her Saturday, June 11, attended the big graduation party held for her Saturday, June 11, attundis MeNamara Towers, where she lives.

"We thought about having it Pridsy, but a lot of my friends don't stay up that late," she said.



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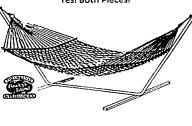
Proud moment: At 87, Lila Armbruster of Livonia was the oldest graduate in Clarenceville's Class of '94. She earned her diploma from the district's continuing education program.

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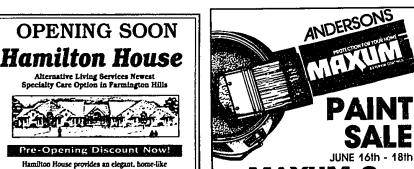
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