

Graceful act: Placing flowers at the foot of a statue of Mary has been a tradition since the beginning of Mercy High School. Although at the old school in Detroit all the young women did it; now only class officers do.



Embrace: Gail Agacinski, Mercy High valedictorian, hugs Jennifer McDevitt after Jennifer's greeting to the crowd at Meadow Brook Music Theatre.

Down the line: Graduates take part in the professional during commencement



Cheers to the grads: At the end of the program, rain began to lightly spray the crowd and grads broke into a spontaneous chant. Middle is Jennifer Brown.

Mercy grads given spirited send-off

Heroes were everywhere on May 30. As the Class of '97 from Mercy High School celebrated its commencement at Meadow Brook Music Festival, the first hero was spiritual.

"We were very blessed by good weather. The Blessed Mother did that for us," said Sister Regina Doelker, Mercy principal.

Many more heroes were found in the relatively small class of 176 graduates, which compares to 270 freshmen this year. The senior class was huge in terms of awards and honors. Sister Regina said 22 students were valedictorian and salutatorian candidates.

Class valedictorian Gail Pauline Agacinski served as student council president and a nominee for area female athlete of the year, in addition to her academic honors — such as the president's education award from the

National Honor Society.

In her class farewell, Agacinski focused on the need for heroes in today's world:

"Heroes must be risk takers; this we have learned at Mercy. We've seen risk taking in every girl who ever got up in speech class, every girl who ran for office, tried out for the play, made a call to sell a calendar, asked a blind date to homecoming, or tried out for a sports team.

"Whether the result was successful or not, taking the chance is what matters. Amazing things will be done by those who take the risks and put themselves on the line."

This year's commencement address was presented by Donna Baranski-Walker, a graduate of the class of 1976. To some, she's been a champion of peace.

Her life after Mercy High School has

included starting the action of putting a candle in her home window as a gesture in the fall of 1991 to tell the people of Iraq that instead of war, we should be building peace between our nations.

She is also a businesswoman and director of "Project Dialogue," a pilot program to help educators in the Middle East to work together on an Internet project.

Baranski-Walker quoted an Old Testament reading on the destructive powers of nature, before urging students to find, and reach their dreams.

"The path of expectations before you will always be demanding, but trust yourself with dreams more powerful than wind and fire. And as you are ready, as you are able, as you are needed, share your talents, your insight, your time with the thirsty world," she said.

Family of 7 in dire need of new place to call home

By WILLIAM COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

A Farmington Hills family of seven is having a tough time finding a new home.

Darlene Matheson and her husband, Bob, have lived at the Farmington Mobil Manor for the past five years and in the area for the past nine years.

But the Mathesons and their five girls, ages 2 to 11, have been rejected several times over the past six months after learning that they would have to leave their current mobile home.

"The management wants to put in a new two-bedroom trailer," Darlene Matheson said. "We're living in a four-bedroom, which is actually two trailers put together. They say it would cost more than it's worth to fix it."

The mobile home has leaks and other problems that have forced the change, she said.

Although both she and her husband work, and they have had six months' notice, finding a house to rent has turned into a nightmare.

"I've got to believe that when they see that we have five kids, they just don't want to rent to



Duty calls: Farmington Hills community police Officer Stacy Suanderaki, pictured here with the Matheson children, has spent her own time trying to help find the family a new home.

us," Matheson said. "We've been looking for over six months. We've even hired a rental agency."

That and calls to HUD and other federal, state and county agencies haven't solved their dilemma, said Matheson, adding that the family must move by this Wednesday.

"I have people that are willing to pay the first month's rent and

the security deposit," she said. Matheson said she and her husband work in the area, and she grew up in the area.

"I would prefer to stay here," she said. "But we are willing to move somewhere else if we have to."

Matheson said anyone who could offer help should call her at home (478-7207) or work (477-1824).

RECREATION NEWS

SUMMER CAMPS

Summer is just around the corner — we hope. The Recreation Division has a wide variety of summer camp programs for children ages 3-14. Look on pages 10, 11 and 12 of the recently distributed summer brochure or contact 473-9570 for more information.

SPRING HAYRIDES

The Recreation Division has spring hayrides scheduled for Heritage Park. Next date is June 6. Rides are at 6:30 and 7:30 p.m. Pre-registration is required and the fee for residents is \$3/person. Contact 473-9570 for availability, as registration is limited.

RECREATION EQUIPMENT RENTALS

An assortment of recreation equipment is ready for your picnic, party or special event. Equipment is available May-September. A separate \$20 deposit is required. Equipment available for rental are picnic packs, volleyball sets, tug-of-war rope, parachute, baseball set and

dunk tank. Reservations must be made in advance by calling 473-9570.

OPEN GYM OFFERINGS

The William Cook Activities Center gym is open, with locker rooms and showers available. Please bring correct change and locks for lockers. Days and hours are:

■ Thursday - Adult Basketball - 7-9 p.m.

■ Sunday - Adult Basketball — 9-11 a.m.; Adult Volleyball — 11 a.m.-1 p.m.; and Teen Basketball - 1-3 p.m.

The fee for two-hour session rentals is \$2 for 17 and under and \$3 for 18 and over. Fee is \$2 more for non-residents.

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