

Empty bowls

Proceeds from art fight hunger



Create: Art students produced bowls for sale.

BY TIM SMITH
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Each of the carefully made bowls featured different shapes and designs. But for the Farmington High School Art Club students who crafted them for the "Empty Bowls" project, their mission was one and the same.

Students worked more than eager to dish out more than hot soup during last Wednesday's "Empty Bowls" meal in the cafeteria at Farmington High School.

Virtually all of the 100 ceramic bowls they created were bought for \$10 each, with customers also getting quite a bonus. For their money, they also enjoyed hot soup, added into Styrofoam bowls, by the way, as well as fresh bread.

"I just hope it will help feed more people and make Farmington Hills (and Farmington) a better community," said freshman Melody Dye, who made a round bowl featuring the sun and stars.

The bowls are symbolic, a poignant reminder that there always someone in the world who does not have enough to eat.

Freshman Michelle Graham said her bowl included an angel. "And I said this is one more blessing to count."

Junior Heather Friedli, president of the FHS Art Club, used her students' managed academic resource time to shape a mound of clay into her pink bowl. She adorned it with circular swirling patterns. But for Friedli, who

hands and they're giving to their community. It's brilliant. Each one of these young people has so much energy, so much to give and so much potential. I hope they do it again."

Proceeds earmarked for the Salvation Army will help pay for food, clothing, rental assistance and utility bills, Tatum said.

Also in the cafeteria was a booth, set up by the Farmington Neighborhood House. Among informational materials available at the booth was a fact sheet, citing some of the following: In 1998, in Farmington and Farmington Hills combined, there were 2,342 poverty-level households with children; more than 2,000 families were headed by a single parent; 728 senior citizens fell below the poverty level; and there was a 130 percent increase in applications for the National School Lunch and Child and Adult Care Food programs, according to the Farmington Public Schools Nutrition Services Department.

Donating soup for the program was Gordon Foods, with Panera Bread on Grand River supplying the bread.

"Hopefully, every time you look at it (a student-made bowl) you'll remember there are empty bowls throughout our community that need to be filled," Devine said.

John Barrett, principal at the high school, congratulated the students and FHS art teachers for their efforts. The FHS Art Club is sponsored by teachers Gail Piepenburg and Nina Weis.

"It's a wonderful idea by our wonderful art department," Barrett said. "They're always going the extra mile, not only for the arts but to do something of community service."

After guests finished their meal, they enjoyed a concert in the auditorium, featuring the high school's various bands and orchestra. And, displayed in the hallway between the cafeteria and auditorium were student entries to a recent art contest.



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FARMINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

was enthusiastic from the start about the "Empty Bowls" project, the actual design was of secondary importance.

"Being that we're artists, I know artists are a lot more humanitarian than some other groups," Friedli said. "I know it (the project) would be a hit. I'm real happy how it turned out."

Julie Devine, FHS parent volunteer, said the high school's first such foray into the international hunger-fighting program went as well as could be expected. She estimated that the sale of the bowls generated \$1,000 in

revenue, to be divided between The Farmington/Farmington Hills Neighborhood House and Farmington Hills Salvation Army Community Center.

Great job

Taking notice of the students' generous efforts was Pat Tatum, representing the Salvation Army. Her office serves the needy in Farmington, Farmington Hills, Livonia, Redford Township and Novi.

"This is wonderful, what they've done," Tatum said. "They made these bowls with their

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