

Tune up: Harrison seniors prepare for graduation day



Getting ready: Members of Harrison High School's class of 2000 line up to pick up their caps and gowns during last Thursday's graduation rehearsal.

BY TIM SMITH
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For the second consecutive year, Harrison High School seniors got an early taste of what their graduation ceremony will be like — not to mention a tasty lunch served up by faculty members.

The 279 members of the class of 2000 participated Thursday in a rehearsal of graduation and then went to the football field for hot dogs, chips, pop and cake. Harrison's commencement is 1 p.m. Sunday at Compuware Sports Arena in Plymouth Township.

"The gym was set up as it would be at Compuware," said Mary Brown, Harrison assistant principal. "And then they went out and picked up their caps and gowns."

Serving soft drinks were members of the high school's SADD chapter, to also remind graduates of the dangers of drinking alcoholic beverages and driving.

"I thought that was a nice way to do it (remind them)," Brown said.

Harrison's commencement is



Good eats: Harrison High School staffer Cindy LaRose serves up hot dogs to seniors Mike Chism, Brian Nelson and Jim Kay.

the first of three to take place Sunday at Compuware. North and Farmington high schools will hold theirs at 4:30 p.m. and 8 p.m., respectively.

All-night parties, sponsored and organized by parent volunteers, will take place at all three

high schools, beginning at 10 or 10:30 p.m. Sunday.

(See Sunday's Farmington Observer for more details about the parties, designed to give grads a safe way to conclude their school careers with classmates.)

Students sail through this science lesson

Year-long studies about earth science came alive recently for Power Middle School students when they sailed aboard a floating classroom on Grand Traverse Bay.

Sixth graders of the "Millennium Bugs" team on May 10 participated in the Inland Seas Education Association Schoolship Program, aboard the tall ship Inland Seas.

Many of the somewhat abstract concepts learned in the classroom came alive for the Power students as they applied them to real-world experiences aboard the schooner.

The student-sailors conducted over a dozen tests on the conditions of the bay water, bottom sediments and animal life to determine the relative health of the Grand Traverse ecosystem. Several youngsters were thrilled with the educational junket.

"It (was) a great educational experience," said student Sarah Fletcher. "We learned how zebra mussels invaded the lake ecosystem."

Classmate Michael Bywalec thought it was noteworthy that he learned all about the history of the schooner.

And, according to student



Floating classroom: Power Middle School students traveled to Grand Traverse Bay.

Nina Iaderosa, valuable lessons included "how to raise the sails, catch fish with the trawl and ... (learn) about a sea shanty."

Weather and atmospheric conditions were also studied as they related to the proper sailing of the ship during the voyage.

Inland Seas Education Association was established in 1989 as a floating classroom to provide experiential environmental and heritage education for students of all ages.

Classes are conducted aboard the schooner Inland Seas and other sailing vessels by ISEA's professional staff, augmented by a force of trained volunteer instructors.

Language arts/science teacher Amy Blakeley said the field trip, Power Middle School's first overnighter, was unique

"because it matched perfectly the sixth grade curriculum of Earth Science. Indeed, it served as an excellent bridge to the seventh grade curriculum of Life Science."

Fifty nine of 82 members of the "Millennium Bugs" sixth grade team went on the field trip. They were accompanied by most of the team's faculty: Blakeley; language arts/social studies teacher Jan Griebel; and resource room instructor Janet Vogel.

Those who stayed at Power worked on Power Point presentations about the Titanic with language arts/math instructor Pam Brackrog and media specialist Theresa Schlatter, other faculty members who worked on the team.

Race fizzles; mentorship begins

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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An uncontested Clarenceville school board race has turned a would-be opponent into a mentor.

When Trustee Tom Aldrich decided not to seek re-election, a potential three-candidate race left only two hopefuls for two open seats and turned the district's June 12 election into a formality.

Incumbent Bryan Bentley and newcomer Jennifer Carboneau are running unopposed. Instead of stumping, Bentley is offering advice to Carboneau about how board business is conducted.

The Clarenceville district includes portions of Livonia, Farmington Hills and Redford. "He told me don't make any promises I cannot keep, which I would never do," said Carboneau, who has been an active parent at Botsford Elementary. "He's told me to listen, a lot, take notes and attend all the seminars."

While this board stuff is all new, Carboneau is no stranger to school operations. She has served as chairwoman for numerous school events. She has been to a couple of board meetings recently. But it's not the same as being at the

CLARENCEVILLE SCHOOL BOARD

table, Bentley said.

Bentley was elected in 1998 to fill a vacant term.

"I got elected on a Monday and my first board meeting was on Thursday," said Bentley, who is married to Marion. The couple have three children.

"I went to meetings before, but everything seems to speed up when you're actually on the board. It was trial by fire."

Two years ago, Bentley had competition. He's not upset there's no campaign this time around.

Bentley is a Clarenceville High graduate and resident for more than 30 years.

He works as an independent distributor for Little Debbie snack cakes.

Carboneau is a 1975 Churchill High graduate who has lived in the district for 12 years.

No controversy

Clarenceville is running fine, both candidates said.

They speculate harmony is the reason for the lack of interest in board seats.

"My sense of that is there are no controversial issues," Bentley said. "People, for the most part, are pleased with the job we're doing."

Like districts statewide, the biggest issue is vouchers. Bentley and Carboneau oppose them.

"It's not that I'm against competition. We do a great job in Clarenceville," Bentley said. "With vouchers, it's not a level playing field."

If parents are dissatisfied, the answer is not transferring to another district, Carboneau said.

"I think parents should get more involved ... and try to change what they have and make that better," Carboneau said.

Carboneau has been involved at Botsford Elementary. She serves on the Parent Teacher Organization and helps run the school's softball program.

She's also chaired Botsford's field day, Halloween party and Santa shop committee.

As a parent volunteer, she's also taken on city hall.

She initiated a sidewalk proposal for Botsford school and led a petition drive for a four-way stop near where children catch the bus.

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