

CHAT ROOM



ELLEN HERSCHER

High flying flag is glorious sight

The flag of the United States of America is truly a glorious sight, now more than ever since the attacks on our nation.

Even though the horrific tragedy of Sept. 11, 2001 left a deep scar in our country, it will not annihilate our spirit and fortitude. It has drawn people closer together, not only in America, but throughout the world.

Our flag hangs at an angle from a staff on the front of our home. It was a gift from my brother — a special one for it once flew eminently above the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. Because our house is red and white, it looks like it was painted purposely to co-exist with the flag. After displaying our flag, we noticed many others around the neighborhood; our houses look like they belong in a Wysocki painting. It is good to live in a country teeming with patriotism and pride.

Admittedly, before the attack, I took the flag for granted. Now, I look at it with renewed respect, understanding fully why our flag is referred to as "Old Glory." It was bequeathed that name in the 1800s, when it had just stars. I have done some research that I want to share. "Old Glory" is a flag that represents a living country and is itself a living thing. Rules of etiquette were established to show respect for our nation and the people who serve this country.

Displaying the flag

There are numerous ways to display the flag. Your library will have a complete list of flag laws and regulations for the flag, but I'll mention a few.

It must always flow freely from a staff or flagpole. It should be hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously.

Although the flag may be used to cover a casket, it should not be lowered into the grave nor touch the ground.

When hung from a staff in a church or public auditorium, the flag should hold position of superior prominence, in advance of the audience, and in the position of honor at the clergyman's or speaker's right as he faces the audience. Any other flag should be placed on the left of the clergyman or speaker or to the right of the audience.

No flag should be flown above the "Stars & Stripes" except in the following situations:

The church pennant during divine services conducted at sea by naval chaplains

The United Nations flag at the UN headquarters.

Folding the flag is done in a specific manner. Fold the flag in half widthwise twice. Fold up a triangle, starting at the striped end, repeating until only the end of the union is exposed. Then fold down the square into a triangle and tuck inside the folds.

When not displayed, the flag should be carefully folded and stored in a clean place so as not to be damaged. If the flag becomes soiled or in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, the flag should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.

The flag is to be flown in honor of holidays, birthdays of states, and state holidays. During school days, in or near every schoolhouse, the flag should be displayed. It should be exhibited daily on or near administration buildings of public institutions.

When a public-spirited effect is desired, the flag may be on hour display if properly illuminated during the dark of night. It should be heeded with utmost esteem.

Obtain a copy of the U.S. Flag Code by calling the U.S. Government Printing Office: (202) 512-1800, or write: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15260-7954

Standing proudly before our flag, we promise to be loyal and dutiful to the flag of our country and the constitutional government it represents. With hand over heart, we declare:

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Ellen Herscher is a resident of Farmington Hills

Sweet Dreamzzz ready for action

A Farmington Hills charity gets ready to host its annual Christmas party extravaganza for inner city Detroit kids.

BY MARY RODRIQUE
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Sweet Dreamzzz is looking for a few strong men. The nonprofit organization founded by a group of Farmington Hills moms is in high gear these few final days before it hosts Christmas parties for 3,500 low income children in seven southwest Detroit elementary schools.

On Tuesday, dozens of volunteers gathered in the J.H. Bennett warehouse in a Novi industrial park to pack overflowing gift sacks for each child. The sacks were then stacked in large cardboard boxes and marked according to schools.

Sweet Dreamzzz founder Kathleen Donnelly, dressed in a red holiday sweater and beaming amid happy chaos, made the pitch for strong males to help load a semi-truck Sunday afternoon.

"We're beginning at noon," said Donnelly.

Four years ago, Donnelly and a core of friends sat around her kitchen table planning Christmas parties for a few hundred Detroit school kids. The enterprise soon outgrew Donnelly's kitchen.

Earlier this year, the Mystic Medical Co. on Grand River donated office space for the group. Sweet Dreamzzz incorporated as a nonprofit and hosted an open house.

"I always knew people are really good," said Donnelly. "But I never anticipated... I never planned for this volume."

Each child will receive about \$100 worth of donated goods, she said. Parties will include live entertainment, a pizza lunch donated by Papa John's of Farmington, Wixom and Centerville, and of course, visits from Santa Claus.

Kmart donated 3,000 sleeping bags. In addition, each child will receive a hat, mittens, socks, Beanie babies, a water bottle, some food and candy, toothbrush and toothpaste.

To accommodate so many orders for pizza, 10 Sweet Dreamzzz husbands went to a Papa John's pizza making



Boxing it up: Kathleen Donnelly, founder of Sweet Dreamzzz, talks with volunteers Renee Ellison and Diane Martz. Below, Farmington Alternative Academy students Kirsten Vastrand and Ashley Hollweg box Beanie babies for Sweet Dreamzzz.

school last week to learn how to make the savory pies. Their pizza-making talents will be put into practice next week.

Kirsten Vastrand, 16, and Ashley Hollweg, 17, both students at Farmington Alternative Academy, were among the volunteers packing sacks on Tuesday morning.

"This wasn't spur of the moment. Our psychology teacher put this together," said Kirsten. "We've been collecting teddy bears for a few weeks, making posters."

Added Ashley: "It's been a fun experience. It makes us feel good to help."

Cash donations are still being accepted to help with expenses associated with the parties. The address is Sweet Dreamzzz, P.O. Box 608, Farmington, MI 48332. Phone (248) 478-3242.



Ex-Marine finds success as coach, author

BY MARY RODRIQUE
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On and off the football field, Harrison High assistant coach Ron Brown is used to victory.

Author, retired teacher, military veteran, Brown's latest book, *A Few Good Men: The Fighting Fifth Marines, A History of the USMC's Most Decorated Regiment* (Novato, CA: Presidio, 2001), sold out of its first printing and will be reissued. It was a military book-of-the-month club selection for winter 2001.

It is just the latest in a string of books written by the former marine, who served in Vietnam, the Persian Gulf War and on special operations overseas. He is a retired lieutenant colonel.

Proud Marine

He's proud to be one of a dozen contributing authors to the best-selling *The Marines* (Southport, Ct: Hugh Lauter Levin Associates, 1998). His contributing chapter deals with marine aviation, "Corairs, Cobras and Phantoms."

"That book sold over 500,000 copies. It sells every Christmas," he said.

A metro Detroit native, Brown graduated from Redford High in 1962. He is a 1967 honors graduate of Western Michigan University, where he earned a degree in history. He taught school briefly, until he decided to enter the military.

"All of my friends were in the service. I was just ahead of the hippie generation. Virtually everyone supported the war when I left (for Vietnam)," he recalled. "By the time I got back, everyone was against it."

Brown attended officers training school in Quantico, Va. He left for Vietnam in summer, 1969. A 13-month tour of duty was interrupted after 271 days. Wounded and suffering from malaria, Brown spent the rest of his tour in Okinawa. He returned to the U.S. in November 1970.

He has a scar on his leg from a bullet wound, a souvenir he got from his tour of duty with the Fifth Marines, which he called the most heavily engaged regiment in Vietnam.

Despite the tales he could tell,

Brown's latest book is a history of the regiment, not his autobiography.

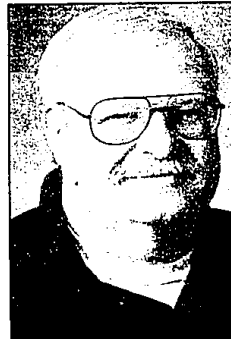
"I kept myself out of it as much as possible," he said.

Most decorated regiment

His unit is the most decorated regiment in American history, he added. "It mirrors the Twentieth Century, with involvement in World War I, the banana wars in the Caribbean, World War II and major landings," he said. "They occupied China, were the first unit in Korea. They were in Vietnam for six years, defending DaNang and Hue City, a major battle during the Tet offensive that lasted 36 days. (The book) also chronicles the Fifth through the Persian Gulf War."

A decade ago Brown was activated and sent to the Persian Gulf, literally snatched up almost overnight. He was at inactive reserves, teaching history at Southfield Lathrup High School on a Thursday morning. The following Sunday he was deployed to the Middle East, and involved with Desert Storm.

After Desert Storm, he became a



Author: Ron Brown, a retired Marine, helps coach the Harrison football team.

Please See MARINE, C7

Wish list

Making Christmas merry for center's kids

Angela and Melanie Anderson-Cobb were residents of Louise Hall at the St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center during the Christmas season in 1983.

"Thanks to the generosity of many people, we didn't want for anything," Angela recalled recently.

For Christmas, they attended a performance of *The Nutcracker* at Ford Auditorium and were "adopted" by a family who provided many beautiful gifts.

"The most important of these was the knowledge that someone cared," said Angela. "That meant more than any material thing to a young woman unsure about what the future would hold. Those acts of kindness will be remembered always."

Back in the early 1960s, Laura Hurst spent three years at the center with

her brothers. "We were lonely and scared and because of limited contact with our father, we had no idea of what would be happening on Christmas Day," she said.

But the siblings were treated to a special morning that included Mass and a big breakfast with the priest, nuns and other children who had not gone home. Then they returned to their cottages where each had presents under a tree.

"The rest of the day was spent playing with our toys, singing Christmas carols and sledding on the big hill. That evening, my father came to visit. While it wasn't the perfect Christmas, my memories are good ones and I know that everything was done to make us happy on this special day."

The St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center is able to make memorable holi-

■ 'The most important was the knowledge that someone cared. Those acts of kindness will be remembered always.'

Angela Anderson-Cobb
—former resident

days for the residents in its care through the annual Stocking Fund, which is now underway.

More than 1,000 children and families annually are served by the Farmington Hills center, which relies on donations.

Send donations to the 2001 Stocking Fund, St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center, 27400 W. 12 Mile, Farmington Hills, 48334.

