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Harrison water bottle notes all school accomplishments

BY SUE BUCK
 STAFF WRITER

Harrison High is more than a "football school." The students, parents and faculty all knew that, but some wondered whether outsiders saw only championship athletics as its label.

Now everyone can read another label, one that's on a 20-ounce water bottle sold at the concession stand.

Thanks to the efforts of Sam Richeson, president of the football backers, concessionaire Wallace Mumford and Principal Rande Horn, everyone can sing Harrison's academic praises with every sip.

When it came time to order water, Richeson, a Gordon Foods shopper, found the store offered a way to include a school name on the label.

"I thought, if we could put a name on it we can put lots of things on the label," Richeson said. "We really enjoy it. Kids are keeping the bottle, refilling it and reusing it so they stay hydrated."

They also turn them into shaker bottles, filling them with dried popcorn kernels and pennies which they can use as noise-makers at games, she said.

The bottles are slightly larger than the 16-ounce generic brand and costs \$1.50. "I see people walking and reading it," Horn said.

Academic highlights listed are: Nationally-ranked Robohawk Team; nationally-ranked varsity T.E.A.M.S.; consistently top 100 math; 2002 American



ELIZABETH CANNIGIE/OBSERVER

New water bottles tout all Harrison High accomplishments.

Math Invitational; Perfect SAT score — only student in nine years in the

Farmington Public School system: 2002 Physics Champions; six of 10 WDIY Farmington Teachers of the Year; five Michigan Teachers of the Year; Pioneered advanced placement classes in FPS, 1975; Science Olympiad Team Ranked Highest of FPS Schools; Piloted peer mediation and "Baby, Think It Over," in district; First Place Engineering Team.

Recent sports highlights include: 2001 State Champions Football (12 times overall — state record); 2002 and 2001 Boys Track State Champions; 2002 regional baseball champions; 2002 Boys Basketball City Champs; 2002 Senior Gymnast of the Year; Four Division One Football Scholarships 2002; Academic All-State Girls Basketball; Academic All-State Girls Tennis, and National Hall of Fame Coaches.

Among the school's arts and music highlights: Six state marching band championships; top 10 High School Dance Company; and top high school jazz band.

In addition to all this, the label also bears football coach John Herrington's coined school motto: "Where champions are made and success is traditional."

Herrington was named the National Coach of the Year July 20 at the National Federation of State High School Associations Convention in Montgomery, Ala.

This season begins his 41st year of coaching, 33 of which were at Harrison High and he recently notched his 300th career victory.

sbuck2@homecom.net | (248) 477-5450

Clarenceville reports mixed results with MEAP

BY JONI KUBRED
 STAFF WRITER

Clarenceville officials saw good news and bad news in the latest Michigan Education Assessment Program test scores.

While students scored better than the state average in many areas — and generally improved on last year's scores — areas of deep concern remain, including gender gaps in math and science. But officials aren't quite sure what the test results mean on a comparison level, because the test itself is different from last year's.

"How can we measure when the test changes from year to year?" asked board chair Matt Boettcher.

"We cannot," replied

Curriculum Director Barb Church.

Church reported the results compared with the state average. In the 4th grade mathematics test, for instance, Clarenceville students scored 3.2 points higher than those around the state. However, 8th grade math students scored 8.3 points below the state average. Even there, Church found good news.

"Last year, we were 14 points below," she said.

In the area of science, MEAP scores improved overall from last year. Church said at the 5th grade level, students scored 4.3 points better than the state average. The larger improvement was measured internally; in 2000 and 2001, scores were 9.1 and 8.7 points below the

state average, respectively.

Eighth graders, on average, did even better, 16.3 points above the state average.

"Our kids did wonderfully," Church said.

Overall, 82.9 percent met or exceeded state standards; only 5.7 percent scored "low."

"We've really been working a lot on science," Church said.

There remains, however, a fairly significant gender gap. While nearly 60 percent of 8th grade boys met or exceeded standards, only 35 percent of the girls scored as well.

"I'm inviting all teachers in grades 3 through 8 to a workshop in October," Church said. "I think we'll see a pattern. There must be something we're not covering appropriately." Church could find no correlation

between MEAP scores and how long students had attended school in the district. Only a handful of students identified themselves as belonging to an ethnic group. Of those 8th graders, 80 percent met or exceeded science standards and 36.4 percent met or exceeded math standards.

Other areas of concern included 6th grade social studies scores, which were seven points below state average (15.4) and 5th grade writing scores (42.4), 13 points below state average.

Seventh grade students who speak limited English did poorly in reading (72 percent met or exceeded) and social studies (8.3 percent met or exceeded); however, 72.7 percent met or exceeded writing standards.

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