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Activity Leads to a Full Life

BY JOAN M. SMITH

Trips most people win are usually to some exotic place away from their hometown but not in Theresa DeConinck's case. As a 4H Club blue ribbon winner in the 1976 New York State Fair's horticulture contest, her prize was a trip this past July to, of all places, Rochester. She laughed when she explained that the winning contestants were from all over the state and Rochester was designated as the prize.

Theresa, a Nazareth Academy senior, is an easy going, happy and energetic person who has been a member of the 4H Club for nine years. The last few years she has been an independent member, learning and completing projects such as sewing, cooking, refinishing furniture and interior decorating on her own rather than belonging to a particular club.

Theresa describes her years in 4H as "The biggest part of the fun in my life," and stated that the greatest benefit, "is the getting up in front of people and talking." This opportunity is offered through the yearly demonstrations required by 4H. Over the years, Theresa's demos have covered a wide variety of subjects: pressure cooking, making Syrian bread and creating terrariums Asked if she were requested to give a lecture about her recent trip to the 4H National Center in Washington, D. C. she said she could do it without difficulty.

The trip, she explained, involved citizenship courses which taught 4H members to be better citizens and it underlined Theresa's own philosophy of being an actively involved person. If she were to address this year's incoming freshman class she would advise, "This is the time to get involved. It's going to help you the rest of your life."

Theresa emphasized the fact that it's her age group who will be in the mainstream of society in another 10 years and whatever experiences can be gained now, during the high school years, will be of great help when that time comes.

Theresa's experiences both in 4H and in school have broadened her horizons not only in personal development but in achievements. Through 4H competition she has been a blue ribbon winner in both county and state fairs; this year winning no less than 12 blues at the Monroe County Fair — three in sewing, one in furniture refinishing, one for a macrame hanger, three in vegetable and four in the flower categories.

Also at this year's fair she was an assistant judge in the vegetable category, a category she is well acquainted with because it is the family business. They own a vegetable and flower farm in Greece and there are days when Theresa spends from 8 to 5 p.m. weeding and thinning the produce. In her off hours she enjoys preparing seven course dinners for friends and is currently involved in making a long gown for a friend's wedding.

When does she relax? Theresa does remember a time, just after school closed in June, when she had a few days to sit and relax but she's not complaining because she enjoys all her projects. Escpecially her affiliation with 4H which came about because her older brother belonged and the fact, "I wanted to learn to cook and sew."

But the organization is not Theresa's only sphere of activity. She loves music, has taken five years of piano, is now in her fourth year of learning classical organ at Nazareth where she also plays percussion in the orchestra . Besides her musical interests she is co-editor of Spectrum, the school's literary magazine.

After graduation next June she is planning to take the Transportation, Travel and Tourism program offered at Niagara University. "I've always loved airports," she said, "I like the atmosphere." Also, since going to Spain last April the entire field of travel intrigues her.

Photo by Susan McKinney

Theresa is not the only member of her family to be involved in 4H. Her older brother and sister were once members and her younger brother Dan, a sophomore at Cardinal Mooney, participates in the program.

BK Club To Meet

The Bishop Kearney High School Parents' Club will hold their annual Orientation Night at 8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 9 in the school auditorium. The new officers and the moderators of the club will be presented.

Freshmen and upperclassmen parents will have the opportunity to meet socially and become acquainted with the many activities planned for the 1977-78 school year. Booths depicting all planned events will be manned by the chairpersons for each event. Refreshments will be served in the cafeteria following the formal meeting.

Chairpersons for the event are Agnes and Bernard Hasenauer. Committee members include: Al and Dorothy Bleier; Bob and Jeanne Brescia; Ann Cassano; Jim and Dolores Devine; Jim and Rosalie Iannuzo; Jim and Maryann Kraus.

Final Year

Seniors at St. Agnes High School are anxiously waiting to begin their final year of high school. During the last two weeks of summer vacation, ambitious girls have scrubbed, painted and decorated their senior lounge. Being privileged, the seniors take pride in the lounge and have been making final preparations and touchups to the white candle symbolizing the class theme of light, the American graffiti wall with each senior's personal message and the nature mural.

The year holds many exciting events for the class of 1978: parade and bonfire, banquet, senior ball and finally graduation. But realizing this is their last year before entering another part of life they have advice for the underclassman; make the most of the four short years of high school.

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Merola to Coach at Fairport

By JOHN DOSER

Tony Merola has severed his ties after 14 years with Cardinal Mooney High School — he's now a bonafide member of the Fairport High School physical education department — blessed with the approval last week of the Fairport Central School District Board of Education.

Merola formerly taught and coached varsity football at Mooney for 14 seasons before he was fired by Cardinal Mooney principal Brother Aubert Harrigan — or was he?

There are too many unanswered questions remaining and nobody, including Merola, wants to talk about it.

The only person talking at all is Fairport High Athletic Director Dave Martens who says Merola was one of many applicants for the vacant phys ed job at Fairport. Martens also implies that Merola didn't lose a dime's worth of salary in exchange for swapping school addresses.

Merola is one of six phys ed teachers at Fairport High, three men and three women; he'll be an assistant football coach assigned to the Red Raider varsity team under head coach Don Santini and he'll also coach JV track in the spring.

Track isn't new to Merola; he coached JV track at Mooney for eight years according to Martens.

Martens dilutes the importance of Merola's entry upon the Fairport scene, explaining he has a lot of "well-known" coaches on his athletic staff.

Indeed he does — besides Santini, a local Fairport High All-County gridder who graduated from Brockport State and eventually returned to coach his Alma Mater, there are also Pete Logan (ex-football and present wrestling coach); Jeff Fitch (his basketball teams are annual Section 5, Class AAA finalists); Dave Lanning (his baseball teams own two successive Section 5, Class AAA titles); Paul Jacoby (gymnastics sectional champions); and others.

"Tony will fit in very well; he's got a great deal of experience and should be an asset to our program. We hired him as a teacher first and he does the two coaching assignments in addition to that," Martens says.

Martens, who consistently has opposed Catholic and private school participation in public school sectional tournaments because of alleged and/or potential Catholic school recruitment of athletes, says he did not "recruit" Merola.

"He apparently heard or read of the job and made an application. Did I go out to recruit him? No. We had a number of applicants for the job from inside and outside the county. We had calls from throughout the state; from Albany, Long Island and Buffalo," Martens says.

Martens' opinions on Catholic school participation in sectional tournaments have no bearing on Merola's appointment, he says.

"Tony has been hired for himself, as an individual, because of his teaching and coaching talents. The situation that relates to the private and parochial schools has no bearing on it.

"I like to think I'm a professional in my business and this is not a personal type of thing," Martens adds. "He's certainly well qualified for the position."

Tony's wife Josie feels good about the new Fairport situation.

The Mooney situation has been tough on the family according to Mrs. Merola.

"I would never want to go through another summer like this one," she says.

But all hands aboard, including some of Merola's coaching peers, believe the move may well turn out to be the best move of his career.

Martens believes that too.

Aquinas Adds Coach

David Whitcomb, a graduate of McQuaid Jesuit High School and a former coach at Gates-Chili High School, will join coach Nick Teta and Ronald Chaifery in coaching the 1977 Aquinas varsity football team.

Aquinas games include Auburn Sept. 16; Bishop Kearney, Sept. 23; Madison, Oct. 1; Southside, Elmira on Oct. 8; McQuaid, Oct. 16; Franklin, Oct. 22; Cardinal Mooney, Oct. 30; Elmira Free Academy, Nov. 5; Rush-Henrietta, Oct. 12.

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