

ND senior speaks out to save environment

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

ELMIRA — Julie Berliner fits right in at a school where the team nickname is "Crusaders."

Berliner, a senior at Elmira Notre Dame High School, displays a maturity far beyond her 17 years when it comes to environmental issues. Much of her time is devoted to imploring her community to take steps toward saving the environment.

"I can't handle Styrofoam; I can't even look at it," Berliner remarked. "Styrofoam should be outlawed because it's one of the things that's killing the environment (since it's not biodegradable). It blows my mind that they're still making it."

Berliner gets a chance to express her views in *Maryleaf*, the school newspaper, in which she writes a regular column on environmental issues.

She also spreads her message to younger children. Through a program sponsored by the Cooperative Extension at Cornell University, she discusses the environment monthly with third- and fourth-graders in the Elmira and Corning area.

Berliner doesn't stop at noting what's wrong with the environment. She also offers practical solutions.

"I hardly ever drive to school. A bus can get me there just as easily, and you save fuel energy that way," said Berliner, who lives in nearby Horseheads. "I try to tell people the most efficient ways to recycle and ways you can save water."

"A lot of people don't realize what they're doing. If they'd only just take a minute to think of things they could start to do that would help."

Berliner stays involved in many other activities as well. She is an ac-

complished artist, having competed in the Scholastic Art Award contest the past two years at Arnot Art Museum.

In addition to being a National Honor Society member at Notre Dame — she ranks fifth in her class of 60 — she serves as vice-president of the school's Art Club, is active with the PAL (Pupil Assistance Learning) program, and has been listed for the last four years in *Who's Who Among American High School Students*.

Julie is the most recent Berliner to excel at Notre Dame. Her brother, V. Richard, a 1991 graduate, and sister, Elizabeth, a 1987 graduate, were both class valedictorians. The youngest Berliner, Katie, is an ND sophomore; and their mother, Elizabeth, serves as assistant principal at Holy Family Junior High School in Elmira.

In her home parish, Church of St. Mary Our Mother in Horseheads, Berliner teaches Sunday school and is a member of that church's youth group.

Her volunteer work recently earned her first runner-up status in a local Rotary Youth Salute youth leadership contest.

Berliner, who expects to attend the State University of New York College at Geneseo this fall, plans to major in — no surprise here — either environmental science or art.

In the meantime, she'll continue along with her environmental crusade.

"I've been thinking about writing different companies and asking if they might find better ways of making their products so they'll save the environment," she said.

Yet she acknowledges that the older her audience, the harder it is to get her message across.

"Kids are better than adults," she said. "They pick up on things easier because they're more willing to listen."



Babette G. Augustin/Photo editor
Elmira Notre Dame senior Julie Berliner works on the warp strings of a floor loom at school Feb. 19. She began weaving last fall.

Kearney takes second in One-Act play fest

BRIGHTON — Bishop Kearney High School placed second behind Fairport in the best production division during the One-Act Play Festival at Our Lady of Mercy High School on Feb. 7-8.

The Kearney troupe finished runner-up with its performance of "Dolls," while Fairport's cast won first place for "Shiver Me Timbers."

Several Catholic high school students were among the top finishers in individual acting awards. Bishop Kearney's Norma Holland and Kelly

Lang of Mercy finished in a tie for first place in the best actress category.

McQuaid Jesuit's Christian Zwahlen was named best actor, while Bishop Kearney's Christopher Regan came in second.

Best supporting actress was Aquinas Institute's Natalie Palermo; Mercy's Erin Madden finished second.

Best supporting actor was Aquinas' David Soles; second place went to Fairport's James Styles.

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