

Ubly cheerleader tells how it is

Cheerleaders train for tourney glory

Don't try to tell Michelle Fligger that cheerleaders aren't athletes.

She has the muscles to prove they are.

Not only that, cheerleaders these days compete against other cheerleaders and win and lose like in more conventional sporting events.

The May graduate of Ubly High School spent the summer as a staff member at U.S. Cheerleading Association (USCA) clinics in six states, teaching younger cheerleaders to improve their techniques.

The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Fligger of N. Ubly Road, Ubly, began her

career as a cheerleader for the seventh grade basketball team.

In high school, she was a member of the junior varsity squad two years and the varsity squad two, which in her senior year finished fifth in the state in Class C competition and 21st nationally.

Getting a job with the USCA isn't easy. Pauline Hess, an instructor at Michigan State University who started the organization 25 years ago, conducts 15 or 16 tryouts across the country.

Michelle's tryout came April 20 in Lansing, where she had to perform various cheers, tumblers, dance routine and other talents. Of the 600 who tried out nationally, only 60 were hired.

Those selected were split into 10 separate staffs, with a director for each, with each group assigned to a different part of the country.

Michelle found herself assigned to staff 9 and by the time summer was over, she was in Cincinnati, Alliance and Columbus, Ohio; Valparaiso and Muncie, Ind.; Danville, Owensboro, Lexington, Louisville, Ky.; Huntington, W. Va., and Spring Arbor, Mount Pleasant and Lansing, Mich.

She left home June 6 for a

one-week orientation at Hartland, and didn't return until Aug. 23.

The 18 clinics she helped conduct, each 3½ days long, were held on college campuses, with the participants staying and eating in the dormitories.

The cheerleaders who attended, an average of about 130 per clinic, ranged from elementary school age through college, though Miss Fligger didn't teach any of the latter. She worked a lot with the elementary youngsters.

THE EMPHASIS WAS ON cheers and techniques for use at games, but not all the squads came to the clinics for that purpose.

Competition is held the final two nights of each clinic and for those squads who chose to compete, the big prize was an invitation to the USCA Grand Nationals, held in Lansing Aug. 21-23. At least one team from each clinic was selected and as many as the judges thought were deserving could go.

In Michigan, where competitive cheerleading is more developed, more squads came for the opportunity to qualify for the nationals than to learn. "Michigan is bad competition," Michelle explained.

"They're out to kill."

Competition routines can run 1½ minutes, tell a story (going on a "shopping spree and went to buy a victory," being one example) and can be "as good as Broadway plays even."

As for the idea of cheerleaders cheering on the guys to victory, forget it.

The top rated team at the nationals was from Lakeview High School in St. Clair Shores, which practiced eight hours a day, seven days a week, all summer prior to the big event. "You can't say they got out there and did it for the guys," Michelle commented.

MOST OF THE CHEERLEADERS she encountered weren't out to win and she found her job was a strenuous one.

Sessions ran from 9 a.m. to lunch time, 2 p.m. until supper and 7 p.m. until late as 12:30 a.m. on the final night of each clinic.

Jumping around for two hours, she said, "that's a

workout."

At night, the staff members were still on duty, keeping order in the dorms. Clinics ended in the morning and if the next one was on the same campus, it started in the afternoon. If the staff had to travel to another place, the most time they had was a day to get there.

"It's a lot of hard work," she said, as she flexed one arm. "I feel like a Russian weight lifter." (She does not look like a Russian weight lifter, however.)

THE WORST PART OF her experience, other than the packing and unpacking, was being on the go constantly. "The hardest part was to be peppy when you wanted to sleep, because you don't get much sleep on this job."

"You actually feel guilty if you're sitting down."

She admitted there were times when she said to herself, "Shut up, you little brats."

Michelle departed Labor Day for Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo where she plans to major in dance with the aim of eventually teaching "little kids how to dance." She doesn't think she will try out for the WMU cheerleading squad her freshman year.

Despite the trials and tribulations and low pay (\$500 for the summer, plus room and board), the Ubly graduate hopes to be an instructor at the cheerleading clinics again next summer.

"I loved it because the kids made it worthwhile."



MICHELLE FLIGGER

Area to feel budget cuts

Continued from page one

pointed out, is "the bottom of the barrel," being the catch-all program for those who don't qualify for other welfare programs.

If the general assistance cutback is approved, those affected will hopefully find jobs or live off family or friends.

Meanwhile, the caseload at the Caro office is skyrocketing. Since October, 1979, the Aid to Dependent Children caseload has increased 29 percent (to 1,097 cases); general assistance, up 28 percent (to 154), and food stamps, up 38 percent (to 1,543 recipients).

Although Mrs. Detweiler didn't have any statistics available, she said, "more and more" welfare recipients are laid off workers who have exhausted their unemployment benefits.

DSS employees are paid by the state and one result of the state's financial crunch is she can't hire as many workers as needed to handle the burgeoning caseload.

On a recent day, she said, 25 persons seeking to apply for benefits were told to come back another day because the staff didn't have enough time to take care of them.

Another result of the staff shortage, she admitted, is that some otherwise mandatory home checks to verify what the welfare recipients say regarding their eligibility aren't being done.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT

State revenues, such as from income tax, intangibles tax and sales tax, make up a substantial portion of the Tuscola county budget.

In 1979, state revenues totaled \$568,930, out of total revenues to the county of \$2.7 million. (Property taxes make up about half of the total.)

So far in 1980, according to Ken Kennedy, chairman of the finance committee of the county Board of Commis-

sioners, state revenues have held up fairly well, but that could change with receipt of the revenue report for the third quarter of the fiscal year.

The county board recently had to authorize expenditure of about \$15,000 for an audit of 1979 county revenues and expenses, to be performed by a certified public accounting firm.

That is a function that according to the state constitution is supposed to be done by the state for all counties, but the state doesn't have the money.

In addition to it being good financial practice, an audit is necessary in order to continue receiving federal revenue sharing funds, which amounted to \$320,000.

Of the county community mental health services budget of \$572,000 for the present fiscal year, Director Dennis Johnson said, \$38,000 comes from the county, with the rest coming from the state.

The county's share is supposed to increase by a half of a percent in 1980-81, but how much money the state will provide is still up to the legislature.

The county program had to refund \$10,000 to Lansing during the present fiscal year because of a budget cutback.

Johnson added that as more persons are unemployed, the number of persons in need of mental health counseling has increased.

Lansing pays 20 percent of the county health department budget, which by law was supposed to be increased to 30 percent in 1981. The state has now announced that because of lack of money, its share will remain at 20 percent next year.

County commissioners will approve the 1981 budget in November, but with the state cutbacks and department county heads and judges up for pay raises, Kennedy predicted, "I look for quite a struggle."

Area workers to receive aid

Continued from page one

Whether the present "strong surge" remains depends on how well the new cars sell. "We're just hoping it stays there," he commented.

Employees at Kingston Krome built and polish parts made at the other Trim Trends plants.

Although 10 or 11 are employed there, Driver said, more than that may be eligible for the TRA benefits since more than that may have worked there during the eligibility period.

Those eligible who have or yet applied should do so through their local Michigan Employment Security Commission office.

Driver said it is his understanding the MESC sends out the TRA benefit check in one lump sum. The Kingston Krome workers should have their checks by the end of the month.

The executive didn't know the total amount they will be receiving.

Once the company applied for the TRA benefits in behalf of its employees, he explained, it was about a six month process before approval was granted.

The U.S. Labor Department examines the finances and operation of the plant to determine whether its operations were severely affected by foreign competition.

Once that determination is made, the government examines each employee's records to determine the amount of benefits to which he or she is entitled.

The eligibility period for Kingston Krome dates back to Sept. 7, 1979, the date established by the Labor Department as to when the company first began to be affected by imports. In essence, Driver said, that means the date when the first layoffs began.

There were some periods of 2-3 weeks, according to the executive, when the entire plant was closed.

Coming Auction

Saturday, Sept. 27 - Walter Van Turner will sell personal property including some antiques at the place located three miles north of Kingston and one and a half miles east on Bevans Rd. Lorn Hillaker, auctioneer.

SPEED LIMIT

When folks decide to pay is they go, it's wise to remind them to take it nice and slow.



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