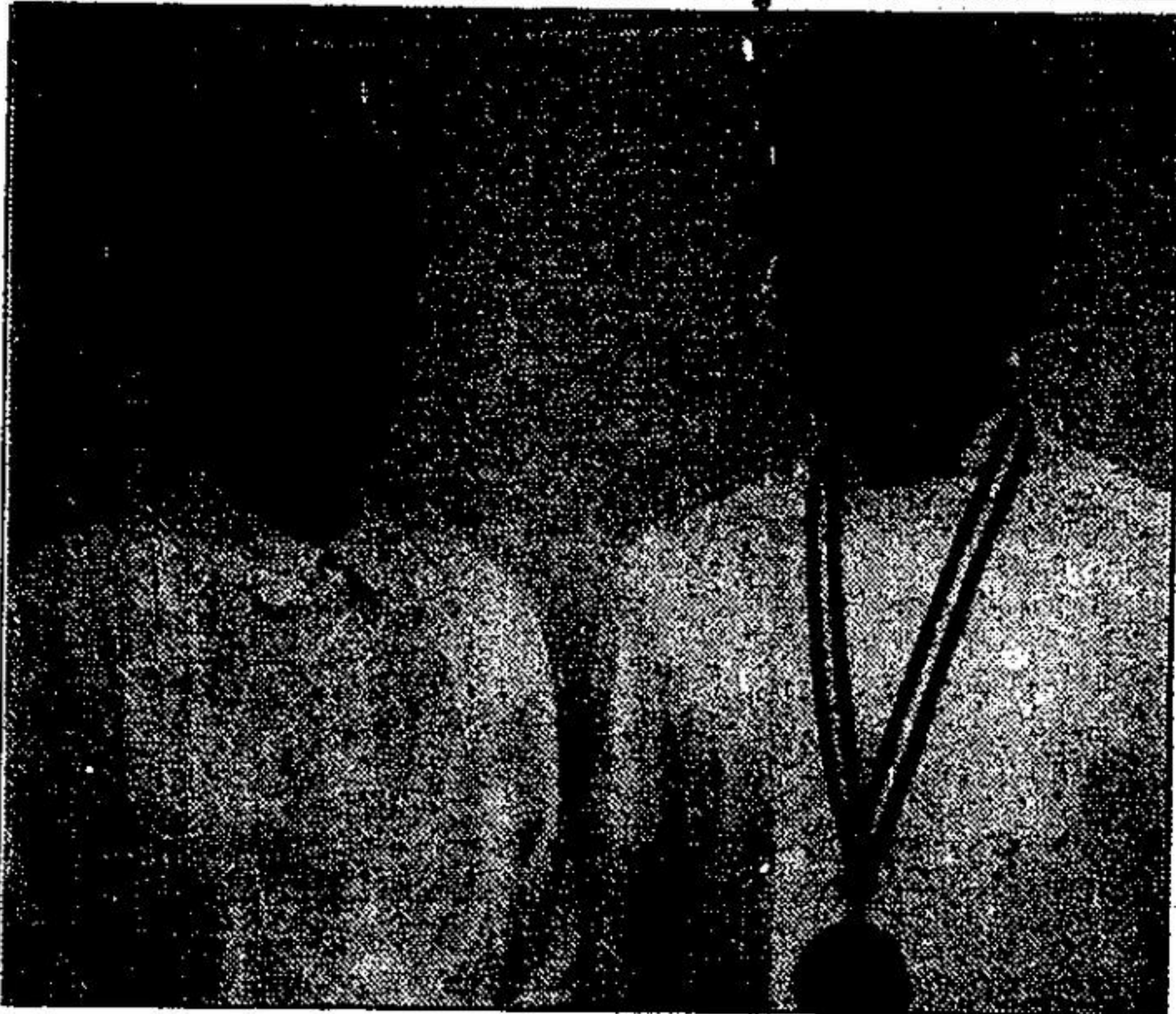


WINNERS



Margot Walker, (left), a teacher at E. C. Drury High School, coached graduate Marc Zechel, of Halton Hills, who went from Halton cooking contests to creating a gold medal dish at the nation-wide Vocational Industrial Clubs of America contest. (Herald Photo)

Halton Hills students win awards

By LISA RUTLEDGE
the Herald

If only Marc Zechel were American.

Even though the recent E.C. Drury High School graduate received the highest score in the culinary arts portion at an American vocational competition, he didn't receive a scholarship to one of the finest cooking schools in North America.

Mr. Zechel, a Halton Hills resident, just recently won a gold medal for his top score in the Oklahoma Vocational Industrial Clubs of America contest.

However, an American competitor, who placed second, also received a gold medal and a scholarship to the Culinary Institute of America as well.

Arrangements made between VICA organizers and Skills Canada stipulated that a Canadian couldn't take a gold medal or a scholarship away from an American competitor. Since Mr. Zechel's score was higher than the closest American's score, both he and the American competitor received gold medals. The Halton Hills resident is planning to save up to attend the top American school in the near future.

Mr. Zechel's coach, Margot Walker, also head of the school food department, said his organizational style and his flair for creating a piece of art on every plate were among his winning skills. Mrs. Walker has been teaching Mr. Zechel Nouvelle Cuisine, which was not well-practised by American competitors. Most of the American dishes were based on southern style cooking which is not concerned with the overall presentation or balance of food and color, Mrs. Walker explained.

"I never thought about how enormous the whole thing was," said Mr. Zechel. "I think I would have lost it altogether," he added.

To prepare Mr. Zechel for the competition Mrs. Walker said she emphasized preparation, organization and time management skills and even the importance of per-

sonal hygiene. A teacher from Humber College also spent several days with Mr. Zechel giving him valuable tips for the competition.

After Mr. Zechel completes his apprenticeship at the Harbour-Castle West by the Toronto lakeshore, and a few years at a culinary arts school, he plans to open his own fine dining restaurant.

Mrs. Walker believes Mr. Zechel is a perfect example to prove that one does not have to be a doctor or a lawyer to be successful. Some chefs are highly recognized individuals in society, she said. "To become a good chef you have to be brilliant." A chef has to be a good communicator, good in mathematics and in English, she said.

Students like Mr. Zechel do not get the recognition they deserve, Mrs. Walker said. She argued the school raised the money to go to the American competition by doing everything from holding bake sales to holding special dinners. She said they received no financial assistance from the region. "They would have been on my doorstep if Marc had have won a law or a physics test."

Seventeen-year-old Priscilla Foster of Acton was one of the youngest competitors in the VICA architectural drafting contest and placed 15 out of 50.

Miss Foster went to the American vocational competition after placing first in Halton region and provincial contests with only a semester of architectural drafting for experience.

A four-hour limit was placed on the competition which involved renovating a garage by utilizing partitions to create a concession.

The unusual assignment caught Miss Foster off guard, however, she completed the drawing even though she has much less experience than many of her competitors. "We had to be quick and draw non-stop," she said.

Miss Foster is not disappointed at the result of her placement because the experience was worth the effort, she said. "I didn't know what to expect this year," she said adding that next year she will be even better prepared.

She credits her drafting teacher and coach for her success. Norbert Axmann, who teaches her Grade 11 architecture drafting course at Acton District High School, taught her the basic steps involved in drawing a home. Learning these steps so quickly gave her the skills to compete after only one semester.

Always attracted to painting and drawing, Miss Foster decided to follow up on an interest in the history of architecture. Using her artistic skills she is now drawing extension plans for a neighbour's home.

Although Miss Foster has not yet seen any of her plans go into construction, she said she can't wait to see one of her drawings come to life. She plans to enroll in architecture at the University of Waterloo.

Tips for outdoor party success

Summertime is outdoor entertainment time. Whether you're hosting the class reunion, weekend guests or your daughter's wedding reception, making your outdoor party room special is easy to do with a few quick tricks.

Look at the view your guests will have when they first arrive. Is your home easily identified? Welcoming signs in keeping with your party's theme, windsocks or bunches of balloons offer a cheery welcome to guests and make it easy to spot which house is yours.

If your party is at night, this may be the time to install outdoor lighting to enhance your landscaping and light the way. If possible, illuminate your

home's house numbers to make them easy to read.

Plan well in advance for parking needs if you're expecting a crowd. Asking neighbors to cooperate is much easier with advance notice and makes for harmonious relationships. You may even want to hire responsible teenagers to help direct and park cars.

Try some instant landscaping to add eye appeal. Container plants can work wonders and are exceptionally versatile. A single dramatic plant by an entry way can reveal much of the personality of the home's occupants. Move indoor plants outdoors to give them an airing while they visually fill in sparse areas.

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