

Altamont

Enterprise

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Guilderland

Facing forward while looking back

By Melissa Hale-Spencer
ALBANY — Guilderland's graduation ceremony opened with a solemn moment — commemorating Christine Davies, who had died when she fell from a horse last year. The convention center at the Empire State Plaza was pin-drop quiet last Sunday morning as the more than 400 graduating seniors silently remembered their classmate.

The ceremony closed with a heartfelt speech delivered by a beloved teacher that brought the graduates — cheering and applauding — to their feet. The young men in robes of red, the young women in gowns of white clapped loud and long for English teacher Michael Pipa.

In between, they heard speeches both serious and hu-

morous and listened to the high school orchestra and chorus. At the end, as a beach ball was tossed sporadically among the seated seniors, they marched to the podium to receive their diplomas, watched projected pictures from their past, then retired to the embrace of family and friends.

The ceremony started with the familiar strains of "Pomp and Circumstance" as the seniors strode into the chattering crowd. Parents and teachers waved from the sidelines as video cameras recorded the event and still cameras flashed.

Brett Davis led the Pledge of Allegiance then Rae Jean Teeter directed the seniors in the chamber choir as they sang the national anthem. (page 4)

Berne-Knox-Westerlo

Grads told to chase clouds with sunshine

By Matt Cook
ALBANY — Jill Petrosillo introduced her new alma mater, Berne-Knox-Westerlo High School, as "the school that is known for its snow days."

Class President Petrosillo served as a sort of master-of-ceremonies at the BKW graduation, last Saturday morning, at The Egg, in Albany. She welcomed the audience to the ceremony and introduced the speakers.

She voiced what must have been going through the minds of many of her fellow graduates. One of the primary objectives of

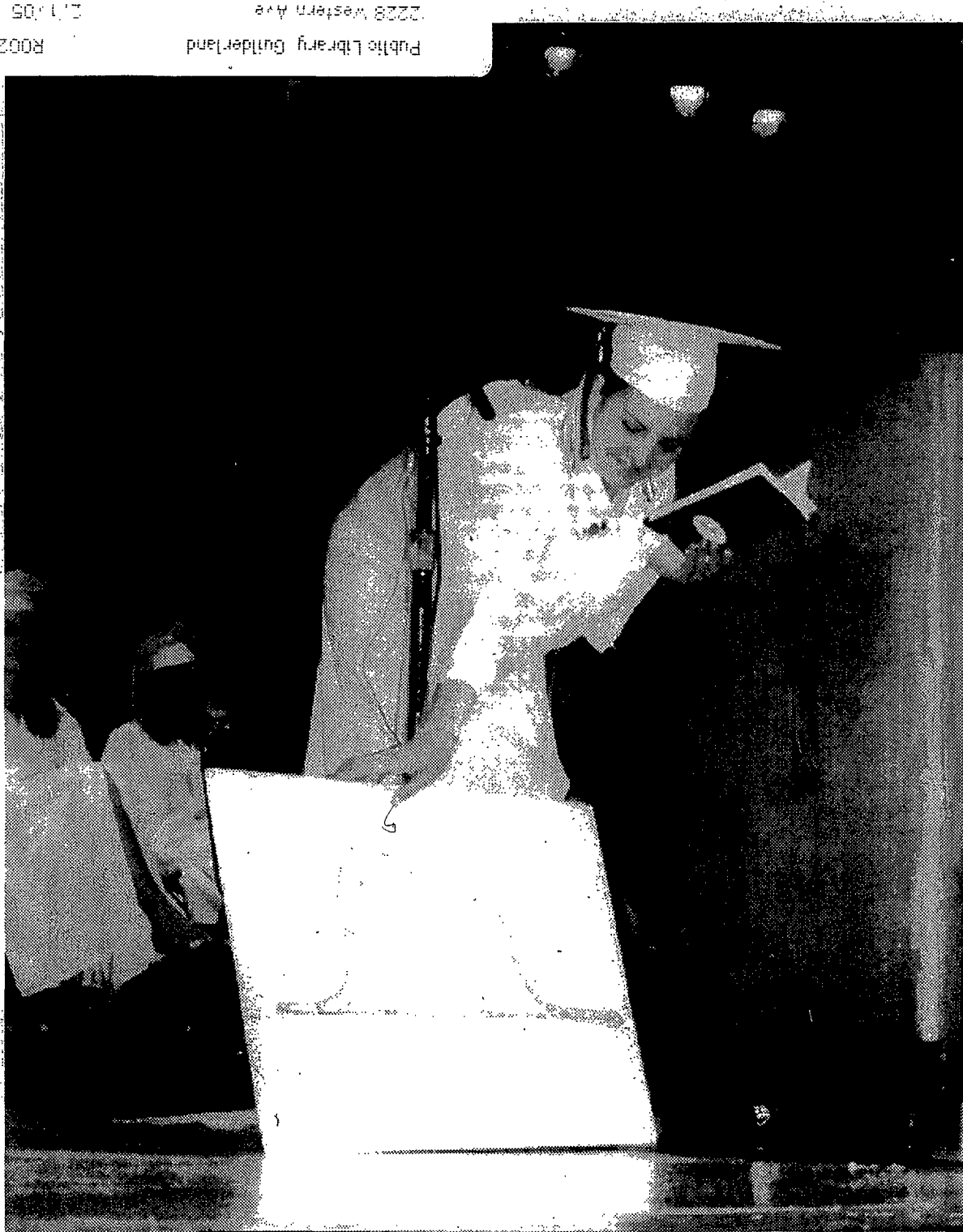
students, she said, is finding ways to waste time in class.

"Now, we see that time flies by without trying to waste it," she said.

Where everybody knows your name

The morning started off with an informal multimedia presentation, produced by two BKW students. It was a slide show of the graduates throughout their BKW careers, from their first days of kindergarten through their graduation rehearsal only a few days earlier.

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The Enterprise — Melissa Hale-Spencer

See clearly: Lidiya Yankovskaya displays a drawing from Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince*, which reveals that what grown-ups think is a hat is really a boa constrictor digesting an elephant. Yankovskaya told her Guilderland classmates of the need to maintain childhood purity.



The Enterprise — Nicole Fay Barr

Looking to the future in paper glasses, which spell 2004, Voorheesville seniors are about to graduate.

Voorheesville

All joking aside, students commence lives

By Nicole Fay Barr
VOORHEESVILLE — Humor was the theme of Clayton A. Bouton High School's graduating class. Several times during their commencement ceremony on June 25, members of the class had the audience in stitches.

The laughter began with Matthew Robinson and Tyler Nichols. As Nichols played the banjo, Robinson changed the words to The Manfred Mann Earth Band song "Blinded by the Light."

He sang about going "up the hill to Rensselaerville" and about a class trip to Lake George where a teacher fell in the water. Classmates, many wearing paper 2004 glasses with the 00 cut out for the eyes, roared with laughter.

The graduates proudly wore purple gowns and caps with yellow tassels, representing their school colors. They sat on either side of a purple and yellow platform decorated with white flowers and ribbons, and topped with an American flag. Beyond the platform were

hundreds of parents and family members and to the left was the school wind ensemble, all seated within a giant tent. Outside gray skies threatened and a few raindrops fell, but that did not deter the dozens of parents who pushed to the sides of the tent. Some held cameras and camcorders over their heads to film their students inside.

Selected speakers

Several graduates spoke at the commencement ceremony and, between jokes, most told of their gratitude to have received an education from Voorheesville. They also advised each other to keep sight of their dreams and to not value material possessions over happiness and friends.

Valedictorian Anne Liu told the crowd that she met "some of the hardest-working, generous, and intelligent people" in high school.

"Live life to the fullest," she advised her fellow classmates. Liu then pointed to a Chinese proverb. If one has two coins, she said, he should buy a loaf of bread with one and a lily with the other. (Continued on page 8)