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MIAMI VALLEY SCHOOL'S FIRST COMMENCEMENT

Graduates to read Dylan lyrics

Miami Valley School in Washington Twp. will graduate its first senior class of 17 students Saturday at 7 p.m. in an outdoor ceremony on the school grounds at 5151 Denise Dr.

The independent school, which had its beginnings in 1964, has been adding a secondary school grade each year since 1970 in a college preparatory program.

Headmaster Robert Fatherley called plans for the commencement ceremony "appropriately unique." He said he gave the students the opportunity to design the entire proceedings.

GRADUATES will emerge from the woods on the campus during the processional and give a choral reading taken from the music of Bob Dylan and the Jefferson Airplane.

Mr. Fatherley said the students decided on traditional garb for graduation, though they chose their caps and gowns in three colors — dark blue, light blue and red.

"I Am the Crown of Creation" is the theme of the short program, and the usual valedictorian and salutatorian designations are missing. Mr. Fatherley said the school decided "not to go in that direction."

AFTER A brief greeting by Frank Zorniger, chairman of the school's board of trustees, the choral speaking with folk music will be followed by presentation of the class gift and a closing farewell by the headmaster. Presentation of diplomas will conclude the ceremony.

The Miami Valley School had its roots in the Marti School, which was established in 1957 by a Swiss couple who conducted classes in the building on Munger Rd., now occupied by the Church of the Green Pastures. Their school discontinued in 1963, and a committee reorganized and built a new school on land donated by the George Mead family.

From 1964-1968 the school operated as a kindergarten through eighth-grade program, and in 1968 the ninth grade was added. Mr. Fatherley said

the impetus for expanding into the high school level came from the financial problems and segregation issues which plagued the Dayton public schools.

THE INTEGRATED school now has an enrollment of about 300, and a sizable number of them attend on scholarships, Mr. Fatherley said. The school features a low student-teacher ratio and emphasizes "immersion" programs involving independent study and community involvement.

Mr. Fatherley said graduating seniors have been accepted into colleges including Earlham College, University of Michigan, Hiram College, College of Wooster, Pine Manor Junior College, Carnegie-Mellon University, Wright State University and the University of Cincinnati.

Receiving diplomas will be Jenny Batdorf, Andy Donenfeld, David Duncan, Phelps Gerould, Beth Goldman, Garry Greene, Tony Hill, Pat Jacobs, Pam Klein, Susie Marks, Mandy Mayerson, Dave Mazer, Susie Palmer, Chip Spayd, Tom Stein, Jim Thomsen and Felton White.