

# Camera work

## Charm school

Girls gain good social graces at Assisi Heights class

Photos and text by Elizabeth Nida Obert / jolson@postbulletin.com



Lola Cravath, of Rochester, presents Sister Elizabeth Gillis with a party invitation. "Did you see these cards? They are beautiful," said Gillis (of the invitations).

The preparation was underway. Now, it was time to get acquainted.

Lola Cravath, of Rochester, sat side-by-side with Sister Elizabeth Gillis and presented her a hand-crafted and colorful party invitation before asking her a series of thoughtful questions about herself.

"Did you see these cards?" exclaimed Gillis. "They are beautiful."

A group of 23 young ladies,

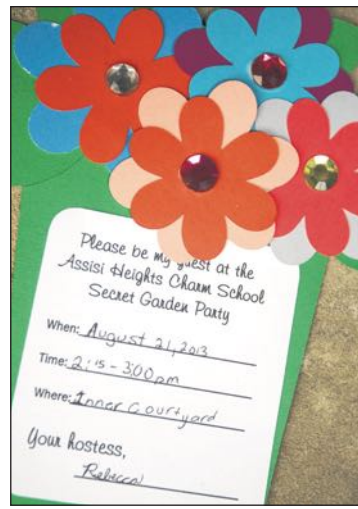
ages 9 to 12, attended The Secret Garden: An Afternoon Garden Party at Assisi Heights Charm School for two days in August. It was there they learned about proper etiquette and manners while planning a garden party. And how to become the "hostess with the mostest."

Students were reunited with their new friends the following afternoon and escorted them — some arm in arm — to the Inner Courtyard. Cranberry chicken salad croissants, fruit kabobs and blackberry shortcake parfaits awaited. Laughter and chit-chat ensued.

"Oh, yes. We're good little friends," said Sister Virgeen Ernster the following day during their luncheon together.

Dressed in their favorite party outfits, it was time for the young ladies to wrap up with a song before clean-up. And some hugs goodbye.

"Our plans is to do this again next year," said Assisi Heights Event Coordinator Angie Grimm, who had two daughters participate this year. "I just think that there is such a wealth of knowledge and positive role-modeling (at Assisi) that our young girls should be exposed to."



Assisi Heights Charm School participants make their own colorful invitations.



Kathleen Swetz, of Rochester, escorts Sister Mary Lonan to a garden party held at Assisi Heights. Girls ages 9 to 12 learned about proper etiquette and good manners at Assisi Heights Charm School while planning the event.



Sister Yvonne Elskamp and Hope Rizzo, of Oronoco, giggle over their Blackberry Shortcake Parfaits.



Exterior columns of the Assisi Heights Inner Courtyard frame the students and sisters during the lunch.



Charm school students entertained the sisters with a song during lunch.

[PostBulletin.com](#)  
To view a gallery of images from the garden party



### About Elizabeth Nida Obert / enida@postbulletin.com

My favorite part of this assignment was observing the immediate connection between one particular sister, Virgeen Ernster, and her young host, Lauren Grimm. Side by side, they sat on a couch as Grimm presented the lunch invitation. The pair smiled ear to ear and the giggles soon followed. "Oh, yes. We're good little friends," said Ernster the following day during their lovely luncheon together.

**Photographer's tip:** Sometimes the most challenging, but arguably the most important, part of making good images is editing and knowing how to do it well. I shot more than 100 pictures at this assignment, for example, and had to pare it down to a small handful of the very best for publication. This can be hard, even painful. But as the old saying goes, you're only as strong as your weakest image.

### About this page

Camera Work is a weekly page of great photography, most often by Post-Bulletin photojournalists. Each week we pick a fresh theme, and once a month we feature outstanding work submitted by readers.

Coming up from Post-Bulletin photographers:

**Oct. 5:** Instagram fun

### Send us your photos

For the monthly pages of reader-contributed photos we are planning these themes:

**Oct. 26:** Fall: Due Oct. 18

**Nov. 16:** Halloween costumes and fun: Due Nov. 8

**Dec. 28:** First snows: Due Dec. 20 (provided we have snow by then)

Send high-resolution photos by email to [images@postbulletin.com](mailto:images@postbulletin.com). Must include caption information, including names and hometowns, plus your name and contact information.

For more details, call Photo/Multimedia Editor Germaine Langer Neumann at 285-7708 or send an email to [gneumann@postbulletin.com](mailto:gneumann@postbulletin.com).