

Fun fest for Franco fares

Wheeler students raise funds for trip

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WHEELER — There was a lot of hot air around Wheeler High School on Saturday as the French Club held its Inflatables Event in the fieldhouse.

That was a good thing as youngsters got to do things that they couldn't do at home: jump and bounce on things, run obstacle courses or hit others with boxing gloves and sticks.

Mark and Danielle Popovich of PoPo's provided the inflatables for the fund-raiser designed to get upperclass club members to France this summer.

For tickets or a \$10 two-hour pass, visitors got to try a traditional bouncy house, an obstacle course, a slide, a Velcro wall to jump against, big-gloved boxing in an inflatable ring, a bungee run, padded sumo wrestling suits and padded quarterstaff jousting.

"We're more than happy to do this — gives us some exposure, gives them some money and gives the kids some fun," said Mark Popovich, whose junior son, Nick, and freshman daughter, Chrissy, are in French classes.

The club hopes to offset the \$2,500 to \$3,000 per person that the tour will cost for about 10 people, said Michelle Ault, sponsor of the French and German clubs.

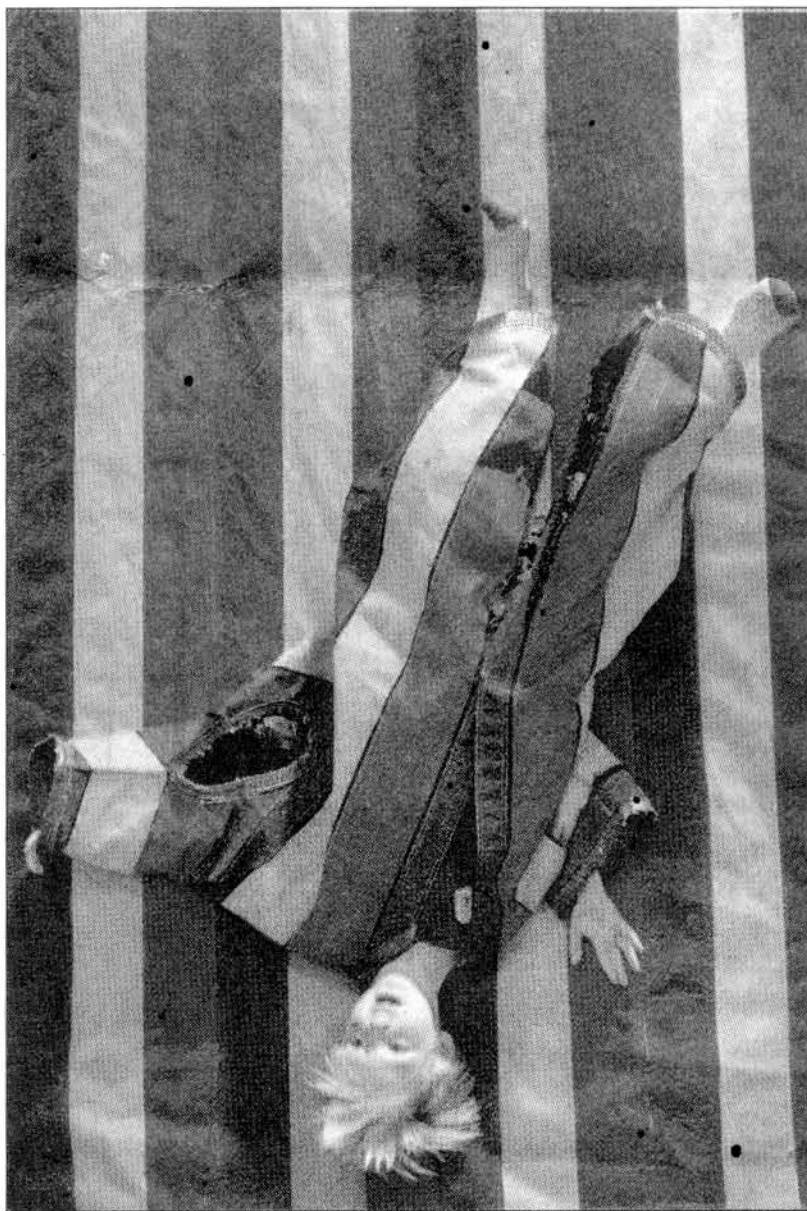
It's the first trip since the German Club went to Europe in 2001, although it isn't a school-sponsored event this time.

At least eight people need to commit, and some need help defraying costs, she said.

The club already raised \$125 through fall caramel apple sales and plans to make about \$300 from the theater concession stand during the first weekend of "Cats" on Jan. 20-22, but this event, which coincided with a fish fry and basketball game, will be the big money maker.

People lined up outside the door at 4 p.m. to get into the five-hour event, and PoPo's waived all but 10 percent of the money raised, covering its own expenses.

"It's not just helping us; it's fun for the community, too," said junior Carly Rittel. She planned to try the sumo wrestling after her shift "so I can knock my boyfriend down."



Kyle Snuffer, 7, looks for help after sticking himself to the Velcro wall Saturday night at the Wheeler High School fieldhouse.



Kaleb Schakel, 3, shoots down the slide after making it through an inflatable obstacle course.