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**Rachel Hansen,
scavenger hunter**

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Harry Potter hoopla spurs scavenger hunt

Teams spent the week looking for items on a list of “required school supplies for Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry”

By AMY CAVALIER
Messenger Post Staff

Harry Potter is a family affair for the Vargases of Penfield. Ramon Vargas has read all six books in J.K. Rowlings series aloud to his children Marisa and Alex, and sometimes their mother, Pat, joins them in listening.

“I like when he reads them because it’s interesting,” said Marisa Vargas. “He does voices and stuff.”

So when the family found out about a Harry Potter-themed scavenger hunt at Penfield Public Library, they decided to enter as a team.

Orientation for the “Harry Potter Friends and Family Team Scavenger Hunt” was July 11. Twenty-six teams, a total of 77 people, registered for the hunt. Each was given a list of close to 70 items to collect, each ranging in point value.

The theme was “required school supplies for Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.” They had to conjure up a plain, pointed hat, a quill for writing, a



STAFF PHOTO/ADRIAN KRAUS

The Vargas family was declared the winner of Penfield Public Library’s Harry Potter Friends and Family Team Scavenger Hunt Thursday morning, July 19.

book about magic and a black or blue wizard’s robe.

Monday was the deadline for submitting the items. The winners were announced Thursday morning. It just so happens, the Vargases were the first team to turn in their items, and the only team to get the full 565 points.

For their grand prize, the family will receive the final book in the series, “Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows” at midnight Saturday, July 21 at Barnes and Nobles Booksellers in Pittsford, and as an added bonus, they won’t have to wait in line.

Rachel Hansen, 14, teamed up with her friends Ally Radley and Monica Nesselbush for the hunt. Her older sister, Cassandra, and younger brother, Jacob, also

participated as a team.

“Because of the book and movie coming out, I thought it was good timing — a good way to pull everything together,” she said.

The movie, “Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix,” based on the fifth book in the series, opened July 13.

Immediately following the orientation on July 11, the Vargases hit the streets and combed their house to find the items on the list. First they hit up stores, like K-Mart, Lowe’s, Burger King, Wal-mart and a Chinese restaurant.

One of the items that gave the Vargas trouble was a four-leaf clover. Since they didn’t get home until after dark Monday

Potter hoopla spurs hunt

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night, searching the yard was out of the question.

“We knew we had one somewhere, but it took us a while to find it,” said Marisa. “It was in tape in my brother’s room.”

The dark didn’t stop Ramon and Pat from searching around the yard and back shed to retrieve items such as acorns and a dandelion.

Alex Vargas, 12, contributed a screaming yo-yo from the drawer of yo-yos he keeps in his room. He hopes it meets the criteria, since the scavenger hunt list calls for a screaming yo-yo.

Locating a spork posed trouble for the family. A spork is a plastic spoon with tongs on the end, like a fork.

“We were up until midnight getting it all together,” said Marisa. “We turned it in the next day.”

You see, the Vargases had picked up on one very important stipulation in the rules. In the event that there was a tie, the team who turned their items in first would be declared the winner. There was no tie though.

After picking up their copies of the book at midnight Saturday, July 21, the family said they will probably stay home all weekend to find out what happens in “Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows.”

“We don’t have anything on the calendar (this) weekend,” said Pat Vargas, “so maybe we’ll be able to get through it with eight hours of reading a day or something.”

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