

Call for help

Youth center's popularity is FYA's expansion headache

By LORAIN McCLISH
 Jerry Young is hovering between mixed emotions and a nervous breakdown in his job this summer as director for Farmington Youth Activities Center.

"The place is jumping," Young said of the rooms in William Grace Elementary School that are a summer meeting place for the 13-to-17-year-old set.

"And that's good. But we have been hit with so many numbers we've been playing catch-up with the budget since the first day we opened these doors."

Young, who was hired as director by the Summer Activities Committee of Farmington Youth Assistance (FYA) appeals to the community for monetary help to aid him in keeping his promise to the 80 or 90 youths who daily flock to the center for summer recreation.

It is the second summer for the youth center's loosely scheduled, informal format.

It is a place to go for a spontaneous soft ball game, to rap, or listen to music or play bumper pool or to sign up for a every-Tuesday field trip with little (maybe 50 cents) or no charge.

YOUNG AND the FYA committee thought they had done pretty well last summer, but knew they could and would expand, so they set their budget accordingly.

"But we hit crisis time right off the bat," Young said. "We averaged 27 kids a day last summer, and after two weeks in operation this summer we were averaging 87 a day."

"We averaged 21 a day for each of our field trips last year, and now we're averaging 80. Figure it out. We rented 10 canoes for our canoe trip last year and this year we rented 27."

"When we boarded the buses for the Tiger game last week, I thought every kid in town was with us."

The Youth Activities Center in Farmington is one of 11 in the county supported, in part, by money from United Community Services (UCS); the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills both help with funds, as does FYA itself.

Because money is accepted by UCS, the large percentage of the activities offered to the youth must be free. The most Young can charge for a field trip is 50 cents, and he doesn't really like doing that.

He schedules trips that might be

inaccessible any other way for the group, who are, for the most part, too young to get jobs and too young to drive and consequently have a lot of time on their hands.

YOUNG SAID he was "pretty autonomous in how we use the money just so we help kids make creative use of their time."

Then, when crisis time set in, about the first of July, money came from the Farmington Area Jaycees; Farmington Kiwanis, North Farmington Baptist Church and St. Alexander Catholic Church.

In addition, Young cited Abbey Road Amusement Arcade for loaning, as well as maintaining, pin ball and game equipment. Paper books that came from the libraries and ping pong tables that were pulled from some one's basement also help support the center.

"But we're \$1,000 behind right now and we still have a promise to the kids that that center will stay open until Aug. 17," he said.

"It is still difficult for me to believe that we have hit a 300 percent increase and now the USC is talking about opening up another youth center at the north end of Farmington Hills."

Young refers to his summer success as his "expansion headache."

He has already cancelled one field trip, to see the Detroit Express, but is holding the line on one suggestion from the FYA committee, to close the center two weeks before scheduled.

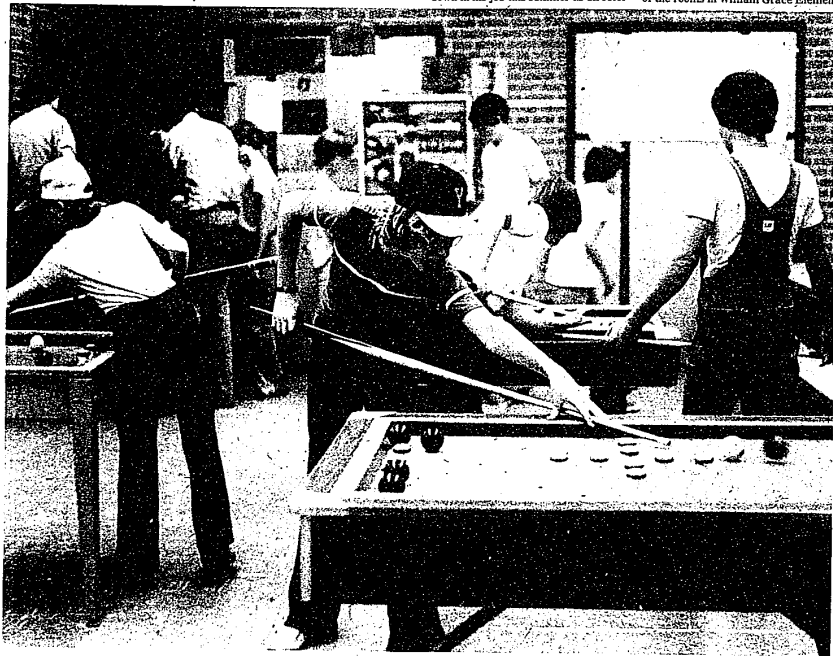
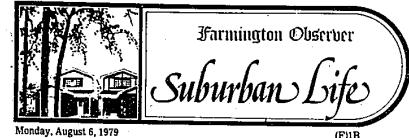
"THAT WOULD be the very last resort," he said.

"The center has a kid-oriented atmosphere. It's a kid's place and they have a sense of ownership about it."

"It's supported by the police, the Farmington Advisory Council, Parks and Rec and dozens, many hundreds of local neighbors."

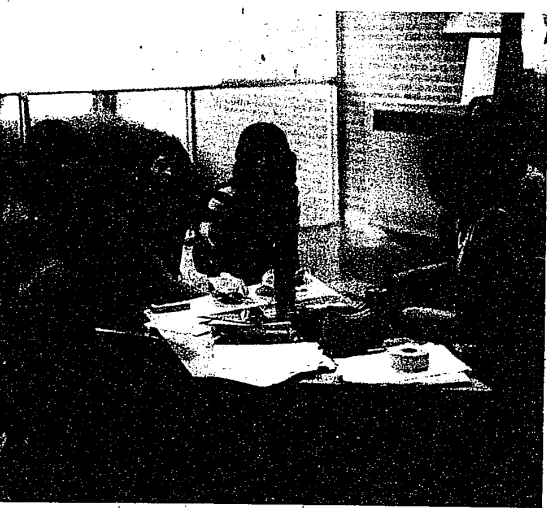
"We hope others will recognize what we're doing over there and help us to finish our original plans."

Persons or organizations who can help with funds are asked to call John Pinkerton, at the FYA office, 466-3940.



Chris Schaefer concentrates on a game of bumper pool in the multi-purpose center at William Grace Elementary School. Much of the

equipment comes as a summer loan gift from Abbey Road Amusement Arcade. Some has come from nearby neighbors' basements.



The Youth Activities Center serves as a place to meet and rap for Mary Terminielli (clockwise from left) Tracy Gow, Lori

Bawden, Judy Carney, Sis Stihler and Robin McCaskell.

Photos by Sandi Horne

Green thumb lunch is set

Christian Women's Club meets for luncheon with a green thumb theme at noon Thursday, Aug. 9 in Idyl Wyld Golf Club in Livonia.

Guest speaker Nancy Petrucelli will give tips on growing, and Terry Campbell's talk is called "Seeds for Thought." Music will be furnished by Sue DiMeglio.

Reservations are requested by calling Dorothy Mowry, 420-0472. Nursery services are available.

The club is without membership. All events planned by the group are open to all church women in all surrounding areas.

Seminar set Aug. 17-18 on 'Alcohol and Women'

A two-day seminar called "Alcohol and Women" will be led by Suzanne Balcer and Diane Sugrue on Friday and Saturday, Aug. 17-18 in Mercy Center.

The event is for the social drinker who may be concerned with her alcohol usage, as well as supportive for the newly or long-time recovering alcoholic woman.

This is not a seminar for professional therapists or agency personnel. Techniques for goal-setting, health care, anxiety reduction and taking responsibility for one's own life will be presented.

Ms. Balcer is a certified social worker specializing in women with alcohol problems. Ms. Sugrue is a certified effectiveness trainer for women.

The two will be accompanied by others who will make up a supportive staff for seminar participants.

Those who attend the seminar are invited for a 5 p.m. dinner Friday. The dinner will be followed by recreation, including swimming, then directed exercise to set the tone for an informal and relaxing experience.

Cost for the seminar is \$40 which includes a private room and all meals. Registration can be made by enclosing a check mailed with name, address and phone number to: Program Department, Mercy Center, 2800 11 Mile Rd., Farmington Hills, 48018. Inquiries will be taken by calling Jean Peteri, at the center, 476-8010.

Carpenters boost Easter Seals funds

The Al Ackerman Golf Club at Bay Pointe Golf Club this month was sponsored by the Michigan Carpentry Contractors Association for the benefit of Easter Seal Society.

The society program includes physical and occupational therapy, a preschool and infant enrichment session, equipment loans, sessions for visually impaired adults, public information and referrals.

This year's golf outing was given in the memory of former members of the Contractors Association - George Wolfe, Art Friend, Don Suda and Gordon Coughlin.

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