

New council stages a supermart of preschools

By LORAIN McCLISH

The Farmington Area Preschool Council, formed last October and comprised of 32 nursery schools and day care centers, makes its debut this week.

The group premieres with "Taking a Peek at Preschools." The session is a supermart of preschools for parents who are shopping for the staff and facility that will best fit the needs of their youngster.

It begins at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 5, in Farmington Hills Community Library on 12 Mile, east of Farmington Road.

Marjorie Ziefert will speak on "Criteria Parents Should Consider When Looking for a Preschool." She is a fac-

ulty member of Eastern Michigan University and a board member of Washtenaw County Child Care Coordination and Referral Service.

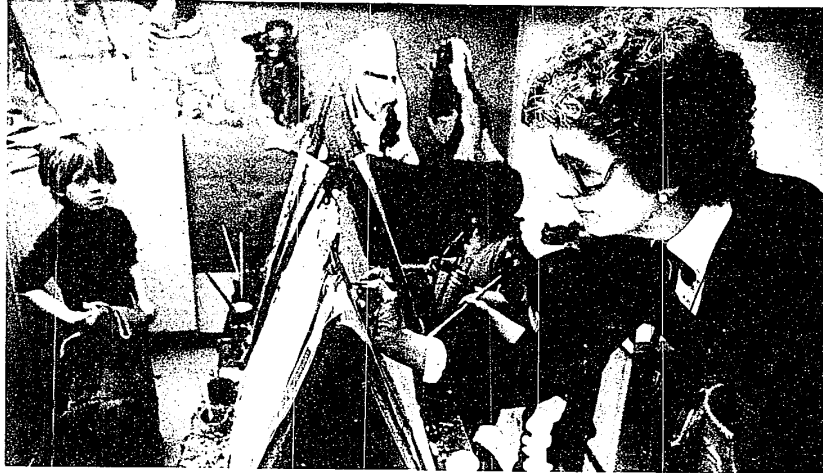
Representatives of each of the member preschools will be on hand with displays to answer questions.

The Preschool Guide, the first of its kind in this area, will be available free to preschool shoppers.

There is no charge for the event.

THE COUNCIL was formed after Linda Noble, a volunteer for Farmington Youth Assistance (FYA), spent the summer shopping for a preschool for her four-year-old twins.

"There aren't many listed in the Yellow Pages. You're pretty much on your own to find what you're looking for," Mrs. Noble said.



Ginny McGuire, who holds sway over the goings-on in Church of Our Savior Nursery School in West Bloomfield a couple of mornings every week, is a co-chairman for the new Farmington Area Preschool Council. Members of the 32 nursery and day care centers who make up the council tell parents of youngsters about themselves during "Taking a Peek at Preschools" Thursday. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

"I did what most mothers have to do. Stop at signs you happen to spot while you're riding around town.

"Sometimes you can just go in and observe. Sometimes you have to take down a number and call for an appointment.

"Sometimes you are told not to bother because there is a three-year waiting list.

"I found out real quick why there are so many of them that aren't listed in the phone book. Their advertising is done by way of mouth.

"But if you don't happen to be a party to that advertising, you're left hanging in limbo."

Mrs. Noble's job for FYA is serving on its program development committee. That committee is a subcommittee

of the public education committee, which assesses the needs of the community, then aims to fill that need.

"The FYA gave its full support to establishing the Preschool Council when I proposed it, and the response from the nursery schools was overwhelming.

"I contacted 40, and we have 32 members. I call that overwhelming for a first-time venture," she said.

CO-CHAIRWOMEN for the council are Ginny McGuire from Church of Our Savior Nursery School and Beverly Ragland of Child Culture Center. They oversee the operation for the 32 facilities within the area that stretches from Plymouth Road north to Long Lake Road and from Inkster west to Novi Road.

Mrs. Ragland views the new council as an opportunity for everyone involved to raise the standards of preschool education.

"We pool efforts and ideas. We can share speakers and workshop costs.

"We've already had one session on story-telling and another on first aid. We can share goals and problems.

"And through our directory (the Preschool Guide), we can let parents know at a glance who we are, where we are, and most important, what we're all about," she said.

What each facility is all about is at the heart of why the council was formed.

"PRICE CAN be a factor," Mrs. McGuire said. "Some (preschools) are

blatantly profit-making.

"Some break even by sponsoring a preschool as a community service. But more than that, most mothers are looking for something special to suit the needs of their children.

"Some need 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. day care. Some want religious education. Some shy away from a school that simply is located in a church because they think or assume religion will be part of the curriculum.

"Some believe their child needs some help in socialization. Others are concerned with reading-readiness. Some like the idea of a co-op, but those are fading out now because of so many working mothers.

"Some mothers worry about their (Continued on Page 7B)

Japanese Autumn, a watercolor lithograph in pale shades of yellow, brown and red, has been chosen as the door prize for the evening of art staged as a benefit for Farmington Community Center. The 12-by-15-inch painting was done by American artist Pat Moran. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)



Art comes to center for benefit auction

Oxford Art Galleries of Detroit will put oils, sculptures, enamels, lithographs, woodcuts and graphics on the auction block Saturday, March 7 in Farmington Community Center.

The preview begins at 7:30 p.m. and the bidding begins at 8:30 p.m. for the sale that is staged as a benefit to the non-profit center.

All the works carry a certificate of authenticity and "generally go for well below retail price," said Richard Rogers, director of Oxford Gallery.

The collection that was selected to come to Farmington Hills was made to appeal to a wide variety of tastes. Value ranges from \$5 to \$1,500, though most will be in the \$25-\$5 range.

Checks and major credit cards will be accepted. "No sale is final. All art may be exchanged," Rogers said.

Some of the artists who will be represented are Dali, Miro, Calder, Chagall, Max, Rockwell, Appel, Vickers, Altman, Goody and Vasarely.

The pieces include colorful abstracts and posters for modern tastes, wildlife, boating scenes, landscapes, seascapes, some original oils and many unusual items.

"Japanese Autumn," a watercolor lithograph by American artist Pat Moran, will be given as a door prize. The ticket holder must be present to accept the art.

Hors d'oeuvres, wine and champagne punch will be served throughout the evening.

Benefit tickets are \$1 each, available at the door or in advance in the center, 24705 Farmington Road.

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