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Russian gymnast to coach at SAG

By CORINNE ABATT

Alexander Bard, a Russian-born gymnast who has coached champions like Olga Korbut and Svetlana Oroszova, has been hired to coach the Southfield Association for Gymnastics' two competitive teams, the Acrobatics and Aerobics.

Bard, 38, arrived in Southfield on a Friday about six weeks ago. SAG president Jim Drenfield hired him the next day, and he began coaching on the following Monday.

"This seems to typify the Bard style since his arrival with his wife and son from his native Kiev by way of Italy. His English, which he studied largely during his stay in Italy, is readily understandable.

"My language is my work," Bard said. "I must study English. I must tell my gymnastic students what I want them to do."

"During this transition period while he is coaching and studying the language, Bard and his family are being subsidized by an agency of the Jewish community.

The Bard family—wife Nina and their nine-year-old son, Vitaly—have adapted to their new country.

Art show winners are recognized

An unusual floral study in oils was judged the "Best of Show" at the Southfield Arts Council's recent exhibition at the Tel-Twelve Mall.

Artists Assunta Sue Sera of Warren was the recipient of the \$200 cash prize. A wide variety of media was represented in this year's show. First place winners in the various categories were Karen Roth, drawing; Margaret Reed, graphics;

Walter Reddig, watercolors; Terrace Bert, photography; W.H. Newman, sculpture; and Margaret Reed, oil and acrylic.

All received \$50 cash for their achievements. The arts council provides a creative forum for artists, both professional and non-professional, to display and sell their work. A non-profit organization, the council will use some of the proceeds from the show to provide scholarships for talented youth in all areas of the arts.

Southfield Arts Council is the official cultural arm of the City of Southfield with membership extended to all residents and business firms in the greater Southfield area.

The council exists for all those who are interested in the various areas of the arts. It is multi-faceted, covering a wide spectrum of the arts, including visual and performing arts and literature.

Further information on the arts council may be obtained at its office in the Southfield Civic Center, 26000 Evergreen Road.

IF THE TEACHING certificate is issued (based on his educational background) in Russia, Bard will be qualified to teach physical education in all grades and science in grades seven through 12.

Bard was graduated from the Kiev Institute of Physical Culture in 1961 as a physical education teacher with additional credit in Linguistics (German and Russian) and sciences.

After gymnastics training at the Sport School of Russia in Kiev, Bard entered active competition at age 12. He has won many honors as a performer and a coach.

From 1957-59, Bard was all-around high school champion of the Republic of the Ukraine. Beginning in 1960, he was all-around champion for three straight years at the Kiev Army Camp.

He continued to compete in the army through 1966, placing third in the Olympic competition. In 1963, he was awarded the coveted title, master of sports in gymnastics.

From 1966 until his arrival in the United States, Bard coached individuals and teams. Many of his students were among the top competitors in the Ukraine and the Russian Army.

In 1973, he was one of three coaches selected to train the National Elite Gymnastics Team in Belgium. Coaches Alexander Maleyev and Aleksander Djijst.

While Bard obviously appreciates Miss Korbut's skills, he said of Miss Oroszova, "She has an even better line."

He mentions Miss Oroszova's prowess on the balance beam and the unusual way she caters with her legs forward and do a kind of dance.

"The Russian name for that is 'spac,'" Bard said. "I tell my students that Grotzova spends more time on her hands than on her legs."

AT PRESENT, Bard coaches only the SAG teams, but SAG officials hope to use him as the head instructor in the organization's summer program.

Bard's students, 19 girls and four boys, are preparing for the state regional tournament, which will be held Feb. 28 and March 7. The top three gymnasts will be eligible for the state finals to be held later in March.

Bard said he likes to work with beginning gymnasts. "I want to be able to say that this is my girl," he said.

Mrs. Drenfield added: "He said that he doesn't want champions ready-made. He wants to build champions."

Bard's students are expected to practice at least as well as when they meet with their coach. He gives them simple exercises to be completed each day, and checks their routines each week. To Bard, gymnastics is a way of life, not just a leisure-time activity.

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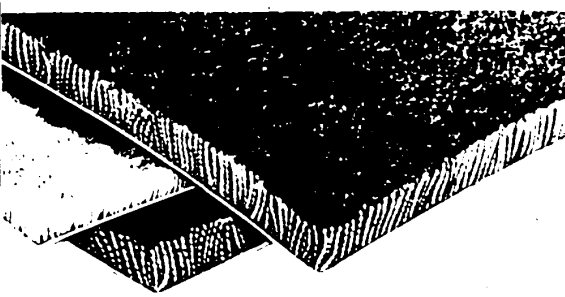
As soon as Bard's provisional teaching certificate is granted, he hopes to work as a substitute teacher in the public schools.

SAG was chartered as a non-profit organization in 1971. It's original goal was to develop and promote gymnastics for the youth of the community.

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