

FAAC, artists' guild gets set for an old time country fair

Musicians entertain while groups of onlooker weave their way between craftsmen's booths. Painters, metal workers, sculptors and potters do their best to attract a tight knot of browsers to their displays.

That's the vision Marlowe Belanger of the Farmington Area Arts Commission hopes will materialize May 21-22 at the Farmington Community Center when the University of Michigan Artists and Craftsmen Guild brings its fair to the center.

"We're hoping to bring the Ann Arbor mystique here—the magic that happens there," said Guild member Karyl Hill, of Bloomfield Hills, who teaches at the Birmingham Community Center.

Behind the mystique looms hard work and the opportunity for artists and craftsmen to learn the intricacies of marketing their products.

"Many of our people live off their work. They're not Sunday painters," explained Guild member Wally Bilyeau, of Livonia.

BUT WHEN THEY START OUT TO MAKE their living off their brushes and potters wheels, they discover that there's more to selling art than waiting for a rich patron.

"When I came out of art school, I had no idea how you go out and sell your paintings," said Celeste Melis, of Ann Arbor.

Newcomers to the fair learn to build their own booths, to effectively display their products and to price their work, explained Bilyeau.

"A lot of young artists don't know how to approach a gallery owner and present their work. They don't know how to take slides of their work so a gallery owner would be interested in it," added Ms. Melis.

While the novices are learning from their more experienced colleagues, the guild is perfecting its manage-



CELESTE MELIS



WALLY BILYEAU



KARYL HILL

ment techniques with each fair. Since its first fair in 1971, the 600 guild members have taught themselves to plot booth space, smooth over arguments between participants and manage to give the event some cohesiveness.

Now, its reaching out to other area of Michigan for new sites.

Farmington's 108-year-old Community Center seemed an appropriate place to hold a country art fair. "WE WANT to develop the theme of a rural celebration," explained Ms. Melis.

Country food, beer and musicians will help create the atmosphere. "But we won't have any cotton candy," insisted Mrs. Belanger.

The fair will take over the inside of the center as well as the grounds. The guild plans to position more than 100

craftsmen on the premises, selling leaded glass, painting, stoneware, wall sculpture, leather goods and jewelry.

Wooden furniture and lace doilies will take up space along with modern art from 10 a.m.-8 p.m., May 21 and from noon to 6 p.m., May 22.

Merchant recovering from gunshot wound

A Farmington businessman is recovering from a gunshot wound he received when he dropped a .38 caliber revolver while taking it from a shelf.

when Tata accidentally dropped it in his store.

Frank Tata, 39, co-owner of the A & W store, 30732 Grand River, had a bullet removed March 21 from his right forearm at Providence Hospital, Southfield.

Witnesses say the gun discharged

Thursday, March 24, 1977

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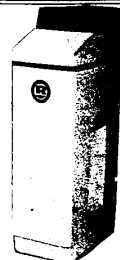
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