

# Boomerangs boom back in popularity

Former Birmingham resident and artist Peter Ruhl has, quite literally, thrown himself into a movement to popularize the boomerang in this country.

Not only did he illustrate a book on the sport, "Many Happy Returns," written by his uncle, Benjamin Ruhl, but he competes in national boomerang contests and usually comes out in the forefront.

Often called "the thinking man's Frisbee," the boomerang's origin is

**Riding camp sets 5 summer sessions**

Five two-week sessions of riding day camp for young people from age 6 through high school has been scheduled at Rochester Hills Riding School in cooperation with Farmington Community Center.

Campers will learn stable management, grooming, care of tack and equipment, in addition to daily riding instruction. The camp also offers swimming, arts and crafts, games, field trips, and a horse show at the end of each session.

A bus will take campers up to the school each morning at 8 a.m. from the center, and return at 5 p.m.

Special rates are offered for members of the same family.

Sessions begin July 3, 17, 31, and Aug. 11 and 14.

Reservations are to be made at the center.

lost in history. Ruhl points out in his book that this ancient throw stick has been discovered in ancient Egypt, South India, North Africa and prehistoric Europe. It was apparently used as both a fighting weapon and a hunting device.

Whatever its origins, Australia is generally considered its home today although Americans, particularly on the Eastern seaboard are trying very hard to adopt it for their own.

The SMITHSONIAN Institution in Washington D.C. has held open boomerang tournaments in late spring at the Polo Grounds near Lincoln Memorial for the past four years.

The boomerang's return to popularity, more than it has ever enjoyed before, has led to other tournaments in Cleveland, Ohio, Baltimore, Md. Portland, Ore. and Allentown, Pa.

But just because someone knows

**Registrations taken for ArtStart term**

ArtStart is now accepting registrations from pre-schoolers who will be joining sessions scheduled for the fall term.

The nursery class, located in Mercy Center, is open from 9:30 a.m. to noon. Persons may choose Monday, Wednesday and Friday sessions, or Tuesday and Thursday sessions.

Nancy Bates will take inquiries and registrations by calling her at 474-7175.

how to get a boomerang out and back without skinning knuckles doesn't mean a prize will be forthcoming. The champions are way beyond basic flying. One man catches blindfolded, lots of them, one right after another.

Contestants throw for distance as well as consecutive catches.

Ruhl is record keeper as well as organizer of the popular Washington D.C. event. A publicist at the National Archives, Ruhl's sister is Sally Ruhl, who with her husband Dick, moved to Allentown, Pa. after living in the Birmingham-Farmington area 15 years.

Peter Ruhl, a graduate of Groves High School and the University of Michigan, was established as an artist before he left the area. He had had several one-man shows at Little Gallery and later received a scholarship to work with architect-philosopher Paolo Soleri at Arcosanti, Soleri's community in Arizona.

RUHL'S ILLUSTRATIONS and Ruhl's text in the book detail the basics of how to make a boomerang as well as fly it. There are reasons why the banana-shaped stick will fly when similar ones won't, making it a marvel of aerodynamics, a deceptively simple looking gadget.

It is in total about three feet long. The arms, Ruhl explains in the book, are shaped like the wings of an airplane with a flat side and a curved side.

"Like the airplane wing, the spinning arms of the boomerang will produce a lifting force in the direction of the curved surface."

While the tendency of those who understand the lift would be to throw upward, that's a mistake.

Ruhl quotes one Australian manufacturer who prints a warning with his boomerang, "Never throw up."

The book has a sprinkling of humor and enough background material, past and present, to quickly pique interest.

There are some helpful hints for catching as well as throwing and since the boomerang is in essence a herring stick, it can be enjoyed singly or in crowds. However, the novice should make certain to give himself ample room, at least 100 yards from anything when first practicing.

The boomerang was an effective weapon for too long to be taken lightly. In the right, skilled hands, it can become an engaging sport.

Ruhl's book, published by Viking Press in 1977, can be ordered, if it isn't on the bookstore shelves.



Mark Haight, of Hargrove Court in Farmington Hills, was named first prize winner in the 1970 Midwest Kraft Student Culinary Challenge, in Chicago. He is a student at Schoolcraft College.



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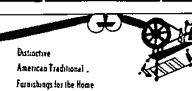
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