

Today's dinner parties go versatile

Not so many years ago, the dining room was the ultimate in pomp and circumstance. In the center of every large dining room was an endlessly long table where two dozen diners lined up shoulder to shoulder like New York townhouses.

You were expected to chat first with your neighbor on one side, then on the other. If one of them failed to give you his attention, there you'd be, staring at your plate.

Today, thank goodness, we are more concerned with the personal in entertaining than with perfection. Dinner parties have shrunk in size, there is variety in food and decoration and dining is spread out to include any room in the house.

The best new dining rooms are more versatile, more inventive and less con-

stricting than ever before. They reflect our modern, relaxed approach to life. There are many ways and places in the home in which to dine — for example, an outdoor terrace, a family room, a library, even a foyer if it is set up properly.

All share a common trait. Something special happens when you walk in and sit down in these congenial settings because certain requirements have been met. The walls are lined with wallpaper, art, fabric, mirrors or books so diners needn't gaze at an empty space beyond the table.

Rugs, curtains or table skirts deaden clinking sounds of fork against plate. There are flowers, or plants, or both, inside the room or floor beyond it. The table setting is planned to make food and drink look as good as they taste.

Dining, as opposed to eating, is a lovely little ceremony in our lives. It is an occasion to anticipate a time to talk unhurriedly, a place to linger. Perhaps the highest compliment you can give another is to serve a delicious meal in a setting that pleases.

For dinner parties, we have accepted that wonderful invention, the buffet, at which people get up from their chairs and move around the buffet table and mingle. And more and more, the big long table is giving way to more versatile round ones.

BACKGROUNDS FOR DINING: A DINING-LIBRARY room is a popular partnership that makes good sense. Bookcases take no floor space and dining takes no wall space; neither room needs full-time rights. Change light for

reading to soft for table talk — which ever the occasion calls for.

If you have to dine in an area of the LIVING ROOM, make it a corner because two walls are cooler than one. You can even create a corner with a divider of some sort. Another area might be in front of a window that looks out on a pretty view of city lights or garden.

A GALLERY-DINING ROOM will stimulate dinner conversation easily with a background of art works set on a wall that has been done with paint or wallcovering. The color of the walls might be emerald green, or chocolate brown or bright peach. Whatever background color you choose, it shouldn't be somber. You might use a table linen to match.

Where there was no dining room but there was a LARGE FOYER, I have designed it for dining. Under the hanging light fixture which was a large crystal, I placed a round dining table with four high-back chairs. By day, the table wore a handkerchief cloth with silk flower centerpiece — by night the table was opened wide and set for a formal dinner. The marble flooring and elegant wallcovering were a perfect setting with many tall green trees and plants to complete the environment.

Dining at home can be a many-splendored thing.

Award winning scouts look for a scoutmaster

Boy Scout Troop 179, which meets in Church of Christ, continues its search for a new scoutmaster.

Fourteen of the young men have just returned with a total of 47 awards after a week's camping in Northwest Scout Reservation near West Branch. And for fifth straight year, Troop 179 took first place in the camp-wide water carnival competition.

"In addition to that," said Julieann Hovanesian, "Troop 179 is extremely well equipped and well financed."

"We sure would appreciate hearing from any interested adult who wishes to serve as scoutmaster. Lots of help will be provided."

Interested persons are asked to contact Bill Short, 474-9421.

The troop basically serves the same area served by Longacre Elementary School. Church of Christ is located at 34550 Freedom Road, Farmington Hills.



Two-year-old Elizabeth Brooke Sterling models a dress created by Patricia Ponte, who teaches two new classes on the art of smocking this fall in Farmington Community Center.

Smocking expert shares know-how in fall classes

Patricia Ponte comes from Plymouth this fall to teach the beauty of smocking to beginners or advanced students in Farmington Community Center.

The only class requirement is that the student know the basics of sewing to add smocking to decorate a child's dress or make something special for themselves.

A two-session class runs from 9:30-11:30 a.m. on Fridays, beginning Sept. 28 for beginners. The sessions will acquaint the student with the art through the construction of a simple T-shirt, or a more elaborate one, depending on the participant's sewing skills. Fee for

the beginner is \$12, plus materials.

Smocking for the advanced student gets under way Friday, Oct. 12, and runs for five Fridays from 9:30-11:30 a.m. Fee is \$25 plus materials for the complete creation of a child's dress, pinafore, sun dress, or robe, depending upon the student's expertise.

Mrs. Ponte is noted for her work in Plymouth, and before that in Indiana, where she has worked as a teacher.

The smocking classes are new at the center this year.

Persons may stop in the center, at 24705 Farmington Road, or may call 477-8404, to register.

Antique show opens Friday

The annual Bloomfield-Birmingham Antique Show, which benefits the Birmingham-Oakland Humane Society, will be held Friday through Sunday at the Masonic Temple in Bloomfield Hills.

The show, which will feature 26 professional antique dealers, will run from 11 a.m. until 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday and from 11 a.m. until 6 p.m. on Sunday.

The donation of \$1.75 will help finance the humane society's work for the next year, said Lydia Stack. The society needs between \$50,000 and \$60,000 each year to cover expenses for food, veterinarian bills and payments on the society's kennel in Sterling Heights.

Each year the society finds home for 1,000 to 1,200 cats and dogs. Last year its work with animals resulted in a deficit budget. "We received loans from several people to keep us going," said Mrs. Stack. "We really need about \$52,000 (per year) just to pay our expenses."

Persons who adopt a pet through the society pay \$25 to \$45 depending on whether the animal has been neutered. "We make sure each animal has had all its shots," said Mrs. Stack. "And we try to have every animal spayed before it goes out, but we don't always have the money for it."

The popular antique show, which was formerly known as the Cranbrook Antique Fair, usually raises about \$4,000 for the society's work.

This year's show will feature antique furniture, jewelry, glassware and other items. "Everything is top quality," said Mrs. Stack.



Edith Buck of the Birmingham-Oakland Humane Society believes having an antique show to benefit the Humane Society is a natural. Pets like Chaka, her Doberman Pinscher, and Jackie, a Maltese terrier, turn a house into a home just the way antique furnishings do. Mrs. Buck, of Farmington Hills, is sitting on a 125-year-old couch and the painting overhead is from the Hudson River School of painting. It is dated back to about 1840. (Staff photo by Randy Bors)

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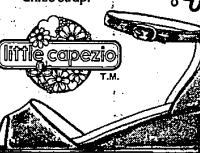
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