

Ukrainian culture and history is told in the art of pysanky

By LORRAINE MCCLISH

The co-hostess of "Soul of the Ukraine" on WMZK radio will give a three-session class on the art of pysanky in Farmington Community Center beginning March 14.

Working with stylus, beeswax, a lit candle and jars of dye, Anastasia Volker designs the intricate religious symbols on Easter eggs.

Pysanky is an integral part of her cultural heritage and she shares this history in the workshops, lectures and demonstrations she has been giving for close to 40 years.

The symbols on the eggs are all representative of God, nature, man and the resurrection of life while her students come to know as they learn to create the talismans.

"We treat the decorated eggs with great regard. They are never eaten and

they are never destroyed," she said, adding that there is not a Ukrainian home in the world that doesn't have some pysanky on display.

A very adept artist can write a full message on the egg, in symbols, to give as a gift on Easter morning, when friends or relatives are sent wishes of fertility, or health, or prosperity, or eternal youth.

MS. VOLKER explains that all of the symbols used on the eggs fall into three categories: Geometric, plant or animal.

She is a stickler for symbolism, because without it pysanky loses its meaning. She is a member of the Ukrainian National Women's League, which zealously guards these symbols, and as a representative of the group, it is her purpose to perpetuate as well as share the Ukrainian cultural background.

The rooster is one of the most com-

mon symbols on pysanky and is called the Sun Bird because it greets the sun.

The chicken represents the fulfillment of wishes; the butterfly represents the emergence of new life.

In the plant category, pussywillows are symbolic of the first signs of life; oak leaves represent sturdiness; flowers send love; the fir tree is symbolic of youth and health.

The unbroken line on the eggs means eternity; the eight-pointed star represents the octagon of creation; and the tripod carries the message of the Holy Trinity.

The instructor makes things as easy as possible for the artist as well as the non-artist by furnishing kits and basic designs, but well knows that once she has taught a class she has no control over the students' creativity.

AS SHE ACKNOWLEDGES this she

says, "But my first job is to share. Once the students learn the religious significance of the symbols, it is up to them to combine what they know into something meaningful."

The word pysanky is singular, derived from the verb pysaty, which means to write.

A big part of the technique Ms. Volker teaches is how to write on a curved surface.

She believes students can each complete three eggs in the classroom, but can complete more before Easter arrives, "depending on how much homework they want to do."

Ms. Volker's class runs for three Wednesdays, from 7:30-9:30 p.m. beginning March 14. Fee is \$14 plus a kit containing all materials necessary.

Registrations are necessary and will be taken by calling the Farmington Community Center, 477-8404.



Clad in a sleeveless jacket, which identifies her as a mountaineer from the western part of the Ukraine, Anastasia Volker works with stylus and beeswax creating the symbols of pysanky.

Greenhouse gardening

Cooler homes help winter bloomers

By MARGE ALPERN

This time of year many indoor gardeners get discouraged with their house plants because they are pale, soft and listless.

Like their owners, they probably would like nothing better than to spend two weeks in Florida. However, don't give up quite yet, spring is coming.

I have already peeked inside the greenhouse windows several times, and now a few plants are showing new pale green growth tips. With this first sign of growth I'm going to fertilize for the first time since last November when dormancy began.

There are some winter plants that stored up their energy from last summer and fall and are now producing blooms that are more precious than those that fill our summer garden.

ALL OF THESE WINTER flowering plants need as much of the illusive winter sun as possible. But sunlight isn't the only requirement. The really spectacular indoor winter bloomers, the azalea and the cyclamen, need extremely cool growing conditions, both day and night. Now that our homes are kept so much cooler more people are reporting success with these true winter bloomers.

When shopping for these plants to brighten the house or greenhouse, try to postpone your purchase until late January. The plants that appear on the market earlier have been given intensive forcing and frequently can't survive outside of special forcing houses. You can frequently see the sad specimens languishing in the grocery stores.

Cyclamens aren't as easy as azaleas to maintain in the house, because they want extremely cool conditions. In the greenhouse they are fantastic bloomers all winter, especially the miniature specimen. Bringing them back to bloom a second year is difficult for most people, but it can be done.

Azaleas, however, are much more amenable and can be maintained in the house for many months and, with a little care, can be enjoyed for several years. Indoor azaleas come in two blood lines, both of which respond to the same treatment. The variety "Indica" has large flat and open flowers, the "kurume" has smaller flowers and small trumpet-shaped flowers.

MY WHITE TREE AZALEA of the indica variety has just completed six weeks of beautiful bloom. This is its fourth year in the greenhouse and each year the fluffy canopy of flowers gets larger.

Whether one owns a greenhouse or not, certain cultural procedures can almost guarantee success in bringing the plant back to bloom next year.

After the azalea finishes blooming, immediately begin pinching back the small green growth that develops at the base of the flowers. During dormancy keep the plant in a cool place, continue watering and don't panic as it continues dropping the old leaves. Just keep pinching off the first green growth. This severe pruning of the first growth will give a more shapely plant and many more flowers.

By late spring the denuded, pathetic looking plant will surprise you with a second crop of green growth. Now is the time to give it more light, warmth, and regular fertilizing. Miracle is beneficial and an occasional feeding of fish food is recommended throughout this rapid growth period.

During the summer, azaleas, unlike most greenhouse plants, prefer to be moved outside. Keep it in their pots they like a dappled sunlight until September and then they want exposure to the full sun. Leave them outside through the cool nights and warm days of late fall during which they will set buds.

PIONEER WOMEN, Greater Detroit Council, will hold its annual American Affairs meeting at 8 p.m. Thursday in Labor Zionist Institute, 2555 Middlebelt, Farmington Hills.

U.S. District Court Judge Patricia Boyle will speak on the criminal justice system.

Judge Boyle has been a Recorders Court Judge in Detroit, a prosecuting attorney for Wayne County and an assistant U.S. attorney.

She has been designated "Feminist of the Year" by NOW (National Organization for Women), has received the "Spirit of Detroit" award, and is a member of the Women Rape Crises Task Force.

Marsha Katz, attorney with the Crime Strike Force for the U.S., will be chairwoman of the evening.

The program was arranged by Evelyn Noveck and Isabel Slutsky, council co-vic-presidents of education.

Guests are welcome at no charge.

FARMINGTON GARDEN CLUB meets at noon, Monday, March 5 in Farmington Community Center to hear guest speaker Richard Schmidt, president of the Detroit Rose Society.

Schmidt will show slides and give advice on the care of roses.

The meeting is open to guests.

FARMINGTON MUSICALES meets at 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 7 in Farmington Community Center. The agenda for the afternoon lists a full musical program, hosted by chairman of the day Maxine Zeitz, and election of club officers for the coming season.

Opus V opens the musical part of the program. The quintet made up of Marilyn Van Geisen on flute; Pat Van Dommelen on oboe; Louis Swanson on clarinet; Sharyn Susinko on bassoon, and Isabel Metry on French horn.

The woodwind quintet will perform music of Beethoven, Haydn and Reicha.

Later this spring they will perform at Sinai Hospital and the YMCA.

Sopranos Margaret Savelly and Joyce Bigelow round out the program with operatic solos and duets of Mozart and works from "The Magic Flute" and "The Marriage of Figaro." They will be accompanied by pianist Jan Smith.

A tea, hosted by Lois Cavanaugh, will follow the program.

Membership inquiries will be taken by Fern Barber, 661-4644.

The Farmington Musicales is an affiliate of the National and Michigan Federation of Music Clubs.

FOCUS ON LIVING members meet at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 8, in Orchard United Methodist Church, 30450 Farmington Road.

The self-help group brings together cancer patients, their friends and family members, who have questions or

problems from living with cancer.

With the assistance of a nurse consultant and other resource persons, participants discuss their mutual problems in a positive manner.

Persons may attend the meeting without Pre-registration, but inquiries will be taken by calling American Cancer Society, 557-5353.

CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S CLUB meets at noon Thursday, March 8 in May-

flower Meeting House, Main at Ann Arbor Trail, in Plymouth for a "Bee Fashionable Luncheon."

Guest speaker Dorothy Sample's topic is "Bee Sweet." Music is furnished by soloist Gary Temple in a segment called Bee Sharp. Fashions will be shown from the Bee Line.

Luncheon and baby-sitting reservations are necessary through Dorothy Mowry, 428-0472.

The group's events are open to all church women in the area.



Artist of the month

Donna Vogelheim has been chosen as "Artist of the Month" by Farmington Artists Club and will have her work on display throughout the month of March in Farmington Community Library on Liberty. Ms. Vogelheim's media is watercolor and collage. Her

training in art extended to graduate studies at University of Michigan and University of Detroit. Locally, she has studied under Marge Chellstrop, Edee Jopich and Alice Nichols.

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