



These youngsters enjoy ballet, just one of many classes sponsored by the Farmington Hills Recreation Department this spring. Classes begin the week of April 23 and residents can register until April 20. For more information, call the Recreation Department at 474-6115.

Psychologist's change of mind brings career satisfaction

By JUDITH BERNE

Howard Shapiro thinks it's too bad we make career decisions so early in life.

"If anybody had said to me you're going to end up in health administration, I would have thought they were crazy," the executive director of the Epilepsy Center of Michigan said.

In college, Shapiro was turned on by psychology and received his masters degree from Wayne State University.

The West Bloomfield resident began as a psychologist in an Oakland County Mental Health Clinic. He was promoted to program director for one of their branch offices and then became administrative director for all branches.

Appreciating that his career was veering, he returned to school for additional course work in administration, including management by objectives, use of computers, accounting and the art of grantsmanship.

"I really feel I'm a better administrator than I was a psychologist," Shapiro, 40, reflects. "Family and group therapy is very emotionally draining. Success is harder to see."

"I think it's unfortunate we made decisions so soon," he continued. "I'm interested now in things I was totally unaware of before. I could still see myself totally changing my field. I was not aware of so many possibilities."

BUT FOR NOW Shapiro is captivated by the challenges and opportunities his current post affords.

Hired to bring in more funds and expand the services of the non-profit, statewide epilepsy center, he has done just that.

During five years as director, Shapiro has helped double the Detroit-based agency's revenues — from \$350,000 to \$700,000 annually.



SHAPIRO: "If anybody had said to me you're going to end up in health administration, I would have thought they were crazy." (Staff photo by Charlie Kidd)

The result is more staff, further emphasis on research, broader services and launching of a statewide network of area counselors.

The center is supported with public funds, primarily from United Way of Michigan.

Shapiro is well aware the public continues to view the disease with fear and misinformation.

"People still don't understand epilepsy," he said. "Many people still believe

they have to stick something in the mouth of a person having a seizure or he will swallow his tongue."

He discounted the old wives tale, saying "you can do damage to a person" by that type of intervention.

Shapiro had never viewed a seizure himself when he became director of the epilepsy center. That is no longer true.

He suggests making sure a person having an attack is not in a position to injure himself.

"Don't try to stop it" and "reassure them afterwards," he urges. "They have no knowledge of what happened to them."

FUNDS FOR and public knowledge of epilepsy are deficient partly because it affects such a small percentage of the population (1 percent in Michigan) and is not a killer, according to Shapiro.

"It is also not an attractive disease," he acknowledges. "It doesn't evoke the sympathy of a leukemia victim." Our mannered, rigid society today doesn't allow for "someone who has lost control."

Although most epilepsy first occurs in children and can be controlled through medication, there is no known cause or cure.

Shapiro is pushing for a National Institute of Health grant toward a comprehensive epilepsy study in conjunction with Wayne State University and Detroit metropolitan area hospitals.

It would mean \$1 million for each of five years.

Auto course offered

A one-year certificate course in automotive service will be offered at Schoolcraft College this fall.

It will be in addition to the two-year associate in applied science degree offered by the college. The one-year program is expected to attract 20 students.

College administrators found "many students are enrolling in local trade schools where they can readily acquire skills necessary to enter the labor force," according to a memo to the board of trustees from President C. Nelson Grote.

The one-year program includes most of the technical courses offered in the two-year degree program but eliminates English, math, practical speech, American government, personnel management, merchandising and customer service.

The one-year program covers basic automotive electricity, engines, suspension, brakes, starting and charging systems, fuel systems, accessories, tune-up, transmission, air conditioning and diagnosis.

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Generic drug law subject of study

House Majority Floor Leader Joe Forbess, D-Southfield/Oak Park, and Rep. H. Lynn Jondahl, D-East Lansing, will introduce a resolution calling for creation of a special committee to investigate the effectiveness of the generic drug substitution act of 1974, which they co-sponsored.

Effectiveness of the law was questioned by a recent study conducted by Dr. Theodore Goldberg, director of the Department of Community Medicine of the Wayne State University Medical School.

Goldberg's survey of 130 Michigan pharmacies revealed that in a recent one-year period only 2.5 percent of a possible 15 million prescriptions were filled with a generic substitute.

"This means that the savings to the consumer we projected at the time of

the law's passage has simply not materialized," Forbess said.

"Dr. Goldberg's study raised some serious questions," he added. "Why aren't pharmacists supplying the generic equivalent when more than 97 percent of doctor's prescriptions allows them to do so? Is there some unseen incentive for druggists not to supply the generic?"

"Is there a need for an incentive to substitute the generic? If the law really is not working, how can we make it more workable? Do we have to educate the people more about generics?"

"Blue Cross-Blue Shield tried, as well as the UAW, the AFL-CIO and the Michigan Pharmaceutical Association and Mr. Lou Sesti — they all have tried."

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