

Class designs new playground equipment

Recreational needs of adults, as well as those of kids, were addressed by a University of Michigan class focusing on the design of outdoor play and leisure equipment.

Each of 13 students in an industrial design class taught by Prof. Allen Samuels came up with a new idea for children's outdoor equipment, and a compatible concept for adults.

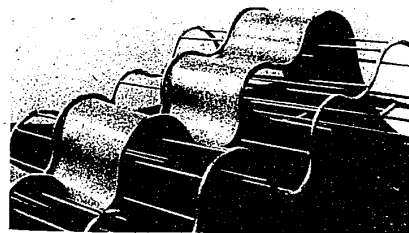
In designing the equipment, the U-M class took into consideration such factors as vandalism, cost, safety and utility for housing projects and park settings.

"There's a great need for new ideas in outdoor recreational equipment, but that need is most blatant in the case of adults," says Samuels, who directed previous student projects involving the design of worktables and toilet facilities for the handicapped, and medicine dispensers for the elderly.

For example, says Samuels, "have you ever seen a park for the elderly? Just like anyone else, they have needs for exercise, but in their case outdoor equipment designers must take into consideration problems of arthritis, glare of cement, and the difficulty of many elderly in perceiving curbs and directional signs."

Among projects for adults produced by the U-M art students were a bench making it easier for arthritis victims to rise to their feet; outdoor cooking units; seats which turn 360 degrees, allowing adults to watch their children at play; a picnic carrying case that folds into a table; and a storage system, with locks, which can fit onto the back of a bicycle.

For children, the designs included multi-directional swings, a "jungle gym" — slide combination, outdoor optics equipment for environmental exploration, a children's game maze, a play system incorporating a series of water hoses, and a recreational "mini"-system with rope ladder, swings and climbing platform.



VA has hints for students under GI bill

If you're a veteran planning to enroll in or return to school under the GI Bill, the Veterans Administration has a useful checklist to help keep those VA education benefits coming:

- Double check your choice of courses to be certain they will count toward your educational objective.

- Register early. You and your school need time to process your registration so that GI Bill checks can be started your way promptly.

- Avoid dropping classes after registration.

- File for your GI Bill benefits as early as possible.

- If you have to interrupt your education, notify VA promptly and advise officials of the date you expect to return to classes.

- If you change addresses, notify VA promptly. Of course, you'll want to notify the school and the post office, also.

- Submit transcripts to the college admissions and records office immediately after application is made. This will speed up the school's certification to the Veterans Administration.

- If you have any questions about the GI Bill or eligibility for it, contact the nearest VA regional office, or a service officer from one of the national veterans organizations.

Age should effect choice of clothing

Dressing like a teenager when you're not can be agonizing, reports a Michigan State University clothing specialist.

Gray hair and wrinkles are two physical changes associated with aging, but others can cause clothing fit and comfort problems, says Isabel Jones, MSU Cooperative Extension Service specialist.

As the body ages, it may become flabbier and lose its shapeliness and firmness, says Jones. A rounded back and shoulders and a loss of up to five inches in height is normal. Other aging characteristics are a thickening of the waistline and a flattening of the derriere.

Jones adds that along with body changes come a lessening of endurance, balance and flexibility. This means that the floor-length gown with rows of buttons you loved as a teenager may be hazardous to your health as you get older.

When buying clothes for a senior citizen, she warns, consider fit, style, construction, fabric and color. Also choose soft colors and be wary of black, yellow and brown tones. Like some blue and purple shades, they can be unflattering to older skin.

Jones suggests that when purchasing clothes for a senior citizen make sure that they can be put on and removed with minimum effort.

Because an older person's skin is especially sensitive to even minor irritation, look for soft fabric and smooth finished seams, she says. Fabrics should be light, provide warmth, and, clothing should be easy to care for.

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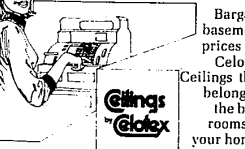
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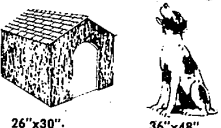
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