



Farmington Observer  
*Suburban Life*

Thursday, June 21, 1979

(F)IC

# What can we do NOW?



Vacation days start with a hurrah, but can turn into endless stretches of boredom.

Patricia Bordman, writer and photographer for this page of summer ideas, understands this truth both as a teacher and as a mother.

In the week of fun projects she outlines here, she utilizes her training in early childhood education and communications arts to put together some ways to avoid the nothing-to-do summer complaint.

Using the pen name Salmagundi, she has written a column of ideas for parents to use with their children. She also gives talks on the subject before various organizations.

"You can help fill the gap between studies and beach while making the transition easy

and fun," says Mrs. Bordman, who has child-tested her ideas and photographed her daughters and neighbors while they were in the midst of the projects.

Mrs. Bordman is a graduate of Wayne State University and is completing a master's degree in early childhood education from Oakland University. She also has been studying photography and cinematography at Oakland University since the fall of 1975.

A certified teacher, she taught elementary school for three years in Highland Park, Ill., and has led classes for parents and preschoolers, as well as school age children, at the Jewish Community Center, the Farmington Community Center, West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation and two Birmingham schools.

**Monday**

## Fill a box with fun stuff

Turn the traditional housecleaning day into a treasure hunt.

Give your reading children a list of things to look for in the garage, basement, or other storage area. Non-readers can try to remember two or three items at a time, or you can draw pictures for them.

The items they will be searching for are the supplies needed for the rest of the week's projects.

A box big enough to hold the "treasures" is needed. It provides an orderly place to store all the goodies as well as a project for the first day.

Encourage them to decorate the box first.

Then, they can hunt for: pieces of wood, old shoe boxes, nails, rubber bands, yarn, string, an old plastic pail, paint stirrers, tubes from gift wrap paper, piece of clear plastic wrap, and any other finds that appeal to them as possibilities for toy making.

**Wednesday**

## Rolling in creativity

What is made of paper, comes in varying lengths, usually is a rather dull grey but sometimes surprises with a splash of color, and is inevitably thrown away on sight? The answer is toweling rolls!

Let these cylinders help shape some fun while providing the children with learning experiences in space relationships, form, size, balance, grace and design. All can be "rolled" into these tubes.

Collect rolls of varying lengths and thickness. Then have ready scissors, glue, and a medium size gift box, piece of wood, or heavy sheet of cardboard. The tubes may be cut to various lengths so that a

wide variety is available. The tubes will be glued in an upright position on the cardboard base.

Planning is advisable, though an interesting design can be created spontaneously. Spread a layer of glue on the base, which can be an open gift box or piece of cardboard. A fairly even, thin coat works best, but precision isn't essential. Now position the cylinders on the still-wet glue. Don't move the creation until the glue sets.

If a more colorful design is desired, the tubes may be painted ahead of time. Or the whole design may be painted after the glue has dried and the creation is stable.



Amy Bordman pours a sticky surface for her montage of toweling rolls.

**Tuesday**

## Here's a fine toy a child can make

This project for you and your child offers a chance to create a better toy than most of the plastic products found in stores. It will convince you that children can put together a simple, durable, educational, and fun toy for higher quality and lower cost than what is available in the marketplace.

A design board appeals to a wide range of ages and stages. It requires one piece of left-over wood about one foot square. You also need a hammer, 30 one-inch nails, a ruler, a pencil, sandpaper, yarn, string and lots of rubber bands.

Have the child sandpaper all edges and surfaces. This is very satisfying job since the results are immediate and useful. Next, mark off the wood using the ruler and pencil so that a grid is formed with intersecting lines two inches apart. If the child is 9 or older, you may wish to reduce the width to one inch. Most rulers are about one inch

wide, so it's easy for a child to gauge the distance of the lines.

At each intersection of lines, pound in a nail, and the design board is ready.

By using rubber bands and stretching them between the nails, a pleasing pattern may be created. An older child may wish to form squares, triangles, rectangles, and then count them and see how many will fit onto the board.

One child created a farm scene complete with farmhouse, barn, and sun, and another designed a burrow for a toy mouse.

A 3-year-old is capable, under supervision, of hammering the nails into place. A child in kindergarten or first grade may be capable, with guidance, of setting up the intersecting lines.

Remember, this is for fun and don't worry if it's not perfect. Your child will just form trapezoids instead of squares.

Stories and photos  
by Patricia Bordman

**Friday**

## A closer look at a child's world

The world's contents live in a vacuum of absolute individuality. There is not a pebble in the sea, three leaf clover, hair on the head, or mollusk shell just exactly like another.

The idea of uniqueness can be so improbable to a child that long searches can result. We can help in that search by providing a homemade tool for looking.

Take a soft-plastic pail, the type sold in paint stores, and cut out two or three circles from the side. Leave enough room for a hand to fit through the circle. Over the top, fit clear plastic wrap, leaving about three inches of overlap (cleaners' bags are perfect).

Using either a large rubber band, or a length of elastic, secure the plastic wrap to the pail. The fit should be slightly loose. Pour some water into the plastic wrap.

Gather some items to investigate and look at them one by one by placing them in the hand, through the hole, and under water held by the plastic wrap. The water acts as a lens and magnifies what is looked at through it.

What happens if you move the object closer to the water or farther from it? What happens if you make the wrap tighter or looser? What happens if you add more water or remove some?

No matter what changes are made in the lens, individuality remains.

**Thursday**

## Ready, set, GO with a scooper-doooper



Shari is ready to begin a game with her scooper-doooper.

A shoe box is the most versatile of cardboard wonders. It can be a penny collector's store house, a bed for a wounded bird, a chest of mementoes of times past, and a toy. It can also be what looks like a shovel but doesn't dig — a scooper-doooper.

Discard the packaging material left in a shoe box. Set aside the top. Then, cut the box, using scissors, on the long side about two thirds from the end diagonally. Go down one side, across the bottom and down the other side. It then should look like a scoop.

Using leftover wrapping paper, markers, crayons, or stickers, decorate the box with designs, name, words, pictures.

The handle can be a paint stirring stick, an old wooden rule, or a paper toweling roll. Glue it to the underside of the box and let it dry. The

scoop is now ready for a tossing game that uses a ping pong ball, golf practice ball, Nerf ball, or small wiffle ball.

Some of the fun can come from deciding the rules as the games is played, but the idea is to toss the ball back and forth between two people using the scoops.

To turn this into a really challenging game for older players, the top of the shoe box may be cut in half and glued to the scoop so that only a small opening is left to catch the ball.

Any size shoe box will do, but the smaller boxes with smaller openings make it more difficult to catch the ball. For very young children with limited eye-hand coordination, it is better to use a slightly larger ball.

Amy's shell shows its individuality through her home-constructed lens.



Shari Beaver designs with rubber bands on her homemade design board.

Saturday and Sunday are on page 3C