

The Garret Studios and Gallery

12 artists in search of a studio

By LORRAINE MCCLISH

The 12 area artists who own and operate the Garret Studios and Gallery host a thank-you-for-your-support open house during regular studio hours, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday, Sept. 24-27 as the group prepares to leave the downtown Farmington studios at the end of the month.

The members of Farmington's first cooperative gallery, who set up shop at 33310 Grand River give years, have been combining the area without success for other accommodations after they learned their lease would not be renewed.

"I wish we were throwing a grand opening (in another site) instead of a good-bye party," said Alice Nichols. "We're not going to break up our group," she said of her fellow studio owners, "but as of right now there is just no place to go."

Century 21, which bought the old bank building on the north side of Grand River a couple years ago, will be using the second floor that was renovated by the artists for their use, as class and seminar rooms.

THE ARTISTS consider the Garret a success by the amount of work they were able to produce in a working studio, "as opposed to trying to work in your basement," Mrs. Nichols said.

Another measure of success was in the quality of work produced, the number of awards won which in turn has

made the Garret known as a prestigious studio.

The format of the Garret from the onset has been come in and browse, meet the artists and see them at work.

Gallery space ran down the walls along the stairway and in a small reception room.

Several shows were given, exhibiting the owners' works in the beginnings. Then as the Garret became known, the artists were able to attract other quality artists from throughout Michigan to show their work in special shows.

A standing exhibit in the reception room comes from a couple of potters and a sculpture who display there.

"Selling for them has always gone well," Mrs. Nichols said. "All of us have sold enough since we've been here to make it worth our while."

Though a few artists have come and gone throughout the five years, co-owner Mary Souder thinks it something of a wonder that 12 artists have gotten along so well so continuously, sharing expenses, space and housekeeping.

"We must be doing something right and we want to keep it together one way or another," she said.

THE CO-OP occupies about 1,400 feet of space they say is barely adequate.

"We've looked at old warehouses, old schools, every un-curtained window in town and even nearby towns, though we would like to stay in Farmington," Mrs. Nichols said.

"The location is very handy for all of us. If one of us has one extra hour to

work at night this is convenient. We couldn't use that one hour painting if we had to spend 30 minutes of it traveling to Novi.

"We'd be willing to move into a barn if it was heated."

One problem the artists had in trying to find space was access to the building on nights and weekends.

"There are 12 of us that come and go as we choose, yet there were some places we saw that wanted to lock up at night," she said.

The artists are not adverse to renovating.

"We scrubbed this place for weeks," Mrs. Nichols said of the Garret before it opened to the public. "We used gallons of paint and kegs of nails and painted every wall with peg board to get

us going here.

"We are not looking for anything fancy. This is a working studio."

MRS. NICHOLS and Mrs. Souder work with artists Edie Joppich, Marge Chellstrop, Jerine Habsburg, Dorothy Clark, Judy Gresser, Barbara Turney, Gladys McMillan, Cecil Surbrook, Herb Joppich and Beth Wasenach.

Each of them are prize winners with awards garnered from both local and state-wide shows. All are members of Farmington Artists Club.

All of them will take calls about possible rentals by calling the Garret, at 474-5896. Mrs. Nichols will take calls at her home in the evenings, 474-5137.



Mary Souder completes one last landscape in the Garret before the end of the month when she and fellow co-owners of the gallery host a thank-you-for-your-support open house. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)



Alice Nichols begins the job of weeding out pictures, cleaning up and packing to leave Garret Studios and Gallery, at 33310 Grand River, that

served as a home-away-from-home for 12 area artists for the past five years. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

Plumbing repair class offered

Do-it-yourselfers who want to tackle a plumbing job without botching the project are invited to join Morris Schwartz' "Plumbing Repair Class" in the Farmington Community Center.

A four-session class will meet from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Tuesdays beginning Sept. 23, and another will start on Mondays, at the same time, beginning Oct. 20. Schwartz believes that economy-minded homeowners can easily learn to correctly solder water pipes, replace and fix toilets, install their own hot water heaters or garbage disposals.

"All they need is a few simple rules plus some practical experience they'll get in class," Schwartz says, who adds that as far as he knows there is no other class in the area that teaches plumbing repair and replacement.

He has been in the business for 30 years and a master plumber for the last 20.

"With what the homeowner will save on labor, the few parts they purchase are virtually free."

Registrations will be taken by calling the center, 477-8404.



Porcelain doll making

Eve Edwards, who has been making porcelain dolls for five years, will show beginners how it's done in a four-session workshop beginning Sept. 22 in Farmington Community Center. Students will learn the complete assembly of a porcelain-head doll, finishing and painting arms and stringing the doll form. Clothing patterns, suitable for the era of 1900, will be available. Registration is necessary by calling the center, 477-8404. (Photo by Pat Bordman)

Conference calls aspiring writers

Farmington Community Center's new "Writer's Conference," set to begin Wednesday for eight sessions, will offer aspiring writers a unique opportunity to practice their craft.

Four seasoned professionals will lead workshops. They have all been active in the area writing community and active participants and organizers of many writers' conferences.

Doris Scharfberg, Marilyn Lyman, Iris Sanderson Jones and Betty Cannon are all members of Detroit Women's Writers Organization and each has served as its president.

The workshops will run from 1-3 p.m. in the center, 24705 Farmington Road. Fee is \$44 for the eight sessions. Registration is necessary by calling the center, 477-8404.

DORIS SCHARFBERG has written poetry and juvenile articles for numerous markets. She is an experienced travel writer and contributor to Better Homes and Gardens magazine and the Detroit News Sunday magazine. She is presently working on a book contract.

Marilyn Lyman has written books, short stories and a potpourri of articles for various publications. She is an experienced organizer for writer's conferences and workshops.

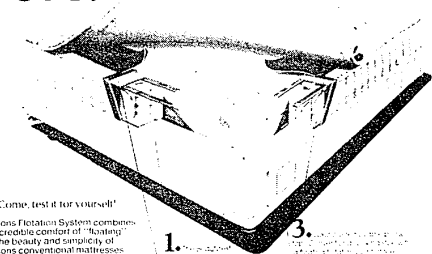
Iris Sanderson Jones is a contributing editor of the Observer & Eccentric newspapers, writes a monthly travel column for Monthly Detroit and is read in Triple-A Motor News. She has published "Early American Doll Making."

Betty Cannon, active in newspaper work, will be presented an Award of Merit from the Michigan Historical Society in October for her book, "All About Franklin."

Constitution Week

Constitution Week (Sept. 17-23) commemorates the signing of the Constitution of the United States, the oldest constitution still in active use in the world today. It is the basic document of the United States government and protects the individual liberties of citizens. The Daughters of the American Revolution urge all Americans to be worthy of its protection.

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