

Monday, August 17, 1981

(F5B)

Farmington Mothers of Twins

'A Pair Makes a Full House'

By Loraine McClish
staff writer

A gathering of twins and their families filled up one section of Farmington City Park this week for the annual summer gathering of Farmington Area Mothers of Twins Club. There are 30 members in the club now that got off to a shaky beginning in 1976 when three area mothers of twins got together to organize a support group for women who had given multiple births. A lot of the growth is credited to a wide distribution of a booklet called 'A Pair Makes a Full House,' filled with helpful hints for mothers of newborn twins. It was distributed through area hospital and pediatricians in keeping with the club's philosophy of aiding one another. "We gave ourselves six months to get

established," said Diane Sands, one of the club's charter members.

"Our purpose was to provide friendship among mothers of twins, give them the opportunity to exchange ideas and information and share a common experience." One of those three women was Jill Held, who had been a member of a similar club in Ohio and offered to take on the leadership role. But after a few weeks her husband was given an unexpected job transfer and responsibilities fell to Mrs. Sands and Elenda Wise.

WITHOUT ANY background in club organization, Mrs. Sands assumed the position of president and Mrs. Wise appointed herself vice president. Together they worked as program director, publicity chairman, and a two-

woman speaker's bureau drumming up membership.

"From the beginning enthusiasm and mutual support held us together," Mrs. Sands said, who believes she will soon be relinquishing her membership now that her twin sons are of school age.

"Membership tenure runs about three or four years when we need each other the most," said member Linda Noble.

"What we have to offer is probably the most beneficial to the pregnant woman who has just learned she is going to have twins and those with newborns. But it is a support system for all of us who have problems that are unique to the mother who has single children," she said.

Members joke about twins being generally the youngest children in the family.

"The chances of your having a second set of twins are so great, most of us just back off and settle for the family we have," Mrs. Sands said.

Since the first few meetings over coffee and conversation in one another's homes, members have heard programs led by child psychologists, pediatricians, social workers, time management and stress reduction experts, all geared to the problems of mothers of twins.

EARLY ON, when there were not more than a handful attending the meetings, members went ahead with the club's first sale of used children's clothing, an event that is traditional in Mothers of Twins Clubs nationally.

Five women gathered up maternity clothes, infants and children's clothes, equipment, and toys and exchanged them among themselves.

Six months later they opened the sale to the public.

"This past spring we had a line circling the Masonic Temple an hour before the sale opened waiting to get in the door," Mrs. Sands said.

Several mothers have arranged to take off the entire day, Saturday, Sept. 12, when their next fund-raising sale is scheduled in the downtown temple.

Many of the items that go on sale are two of a kind, but the members also donate a host of household equipment and miscellaneous items in hopes of adding to the club's coffers. In addition to the summer picnic, the club throws a winter holiday party, and some periodic pot luck dinners, cookie exchanges, makeup demonstrations, pool parties and the like as social affairs.

Sometimes an event will be arranged just so twins can meet twins.

IN SPITE of its name, the Farmington Area Mothers of Twins Club does not restrict membership to residents only.

"If they need our support, they're welcome," Mrs. Noble said, who was the driving force behind the publication of 'A Pair Makes a Full House.'

"Members have come and gone from places like Southfield and Novi," Mrs. Noble said. "But we have heard from women as far away as Roseville and Pontiac who had somehow gotten hold of that book."

Deb Kembell takes over the presidency of the club for the 1981-82 season, with her vice president Liz Fitzgerald.



PHOTO BY SANDI HORNE

Sean and Cory Noble cavort on the monkey bars during a summer outing for twins. Their mother, Linda, is a past president of Farmington Mothers of Twins Club; the group spearheaded the publication of 'A Pair is a Full House.'



PHOTO BY SANDI HORNE

Curly-headed Tim and straight-haired Keith were among the fraternal twins who came to the picnic. The two year olds are the sons of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Oliver of Novi.



PHOTO BY SANDI HORNE

Fifteen-month-old Erin and Kerry Fitzgerald are the daughters of Mr. and Mrs. James Fitzgerald. Their year-old mother, Liz, has been elected vice president of the Farmington Mothers of Twins Club for the 1981-82.

New chamber orchestra coming here for concert

By Shirlee Iden
staff writer

Facing the music may be tough for most folks, for Edward M. Benyas, it's a matter of choice.

The 18-year-old University of Michigan sophomore climbed onto the piano bench for lessons at age 4, later turned to the oboe, and recently, is developing as a composer, arranger and conductor.

Growing up, music was always part of his life. Where programs didn't exist, Benyas created them.

Tonight at 8 p.m. at the Franklin Park Apartments before a gathering of senior citizen residents, he will conduct the Bloomfield Chamber Orchestra, a group that is one of those creations of his. Their program will include Beethoven, Faure and Mozart.

An ensemble made up of student and professional musicians, the Bloomfield Chamber Orchestra has 25 members from around the metropolitan area. Benyas is its musical director.

Before he returns to U-M for studies in both music and liberal arts next month, the chamber group will present another Southfield performance, a free-to-the-public concert at Tel-Twelve Mall at 1 p.m. Aug. 22.

Organizing musical groups isn't new to Benyas. Born in Detroit, he has resided in West Bloomfield for 10 years and was graduated from Roper School.

"FOUR OR FIVE years ago at Roper, I organized chamber music groups because we couldn't have an orchestra or band," Benyas explains.

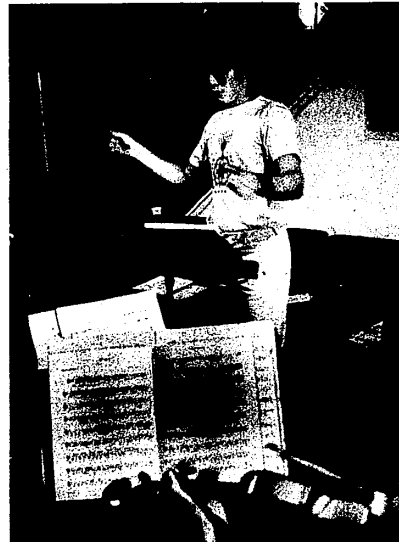
His artistic endeavors have always been encouraged by his parents, Shirley Benyas, a soprano and vocal music teacher, and Robert, an award-winning photographer. Benyas has one brother, Mark, 23.

"Our house is designed as kind of a concert hall, so it's ideal for rehearsals," he says.

Through the years Benyas played in the Southfield Youth Symphony and the West Bloomfield Symphony as well as at weddings and concerts, including some at the Ann Arbor Art Fair.

This is the third summer he has played for performances at the Will-O'-Way Playhouse, a job that has given

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BOB BENYAS

Edward M. Benyas has been a musician for half his 18 years. Tonight he will conduct the Bloomfield Chamber Orchestra in a Southfield concert.

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