

Budget cuts curtail crafts activities at Marillac

By Loraine McClish
staff writer

The afternoon staff at Marillac Hall asks area residents for donations of materials and equipment that could be used in all types of arts and crafts projects.

"Whatever we get we'll find a way to put to use," said Ann Hamlin as she rattled off a list that ran from iron-on transfers to scraps of lace and ribbon for trimming; from craft kits to crochet hooks.

She needs the items for the young women who are awaiting the birth of their babies in the Sarah Fisher complex on Inkster Road, north of 12 Mile.

Marillac Hall suffered a \$50,000 cutback in funds from the United Foundation this year, a sum its direc-

tor, Sister Kathryn Gordon, suspects "might be only the beginning."

"When the cutbacks came there wasn't enough money left to buy embroidery thread, much less yarn," Hamlin said. "We could use oodles of yarn of any kind for needlepoint, for knitting, for rug hooking. In any amount or color. Any leftovers will do."

"Our biggest job is to keep the girls busy."

HAMLIN WORKS with Linda Noble, Peggy Winget and Mary Ann Mylenek on the 3-11 p.m. shift, a period when "filling up the leisure time is crucial," Sister Kathryn said.

"Many who come here have never done well in school; never attempted anything that would give them a feeling of success upon completion. Many

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— Linda Noble

have just never had the opportunity to look at a finished product and view it as a job well done," she said.

"Or get excited about it," Noble added.

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has maybe been a handful who couldn't get excited about anything. But most of them are not only interested in learning new things, they are eager to try something new, and in some cases almost desperate to have

something to keep their hands busy."

This is most evident when a craftsman from the community volunteers to give a workshop, whether it be quilting or making fabric picture frames or candlewicking, a staffer said.

The staff of the afternoon shift also welcomes skilled handcrafters who would be willing to set up a workshop to teach the residents a new skill or craft during the afternoon or evening hours.

MARILLAC HALL houses a maximum of 25 pregnant women whose average stay is three to four months. "We had four deliveries this week and four admissions this week and that is not unusual," Sister Kathryn said.

Most of the residents are teenagers and all of them, no matter what

age, attend classes in the hall given through Clarendonville School District.

Each resident gets an allowance of \$4 a week, which comes from fund raising done by the Louise de Marillac Guild.

"That's hardly enough to buy supplies to make a bib for the baby, much less an Afghan," Mylenek said. "The only girls who are knitting now are the ones who have their own money to spend for yarn."

Another small allowance for outings comes from the guild, and often it will purchase a gift, such as a game table or a cassette player.

But Noble points out that because the turn-over is so fast, it is important to have a variety of craft materials on hand at all times.

"A lot of the girls got caught up in doing cross-stitch recently but of course this is not for everyone."

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'Fantasticks'

Nancy Gurwin is back and hopes to stay for a while

By Loraine McClish
staff writer

Nancy Gurwin Productions and Botsford Inn Dinner Theatre have teamed up again after a hiatus that's been too long for the Southfield resident whose musicals and light comedies have played to audiences throughout the metropolitan area.

"This is my favorite place," Gurwin said, speaking of the historic inn on Grand River near Eight Mile. "It's the perfect size with perfect acoustics and audience for dinner theater."

"I wish I could stay in one place long enough to sell season tickets," said the actress and producer. "The job at hand now is to build up the momentum we

had when we left here five-six years ago."

Gurwin is building up the momentum with "Fantasticks," the Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt musical that holds the record for the longest-running show in the history of American theater, still being performed in the New York City theater where it opened 23 years ago.

The show has an eight-member cast, which is a large cast for dinner theater, and a venture she likens to "A Ben Hur epic for me."

Even so, though other local dinner theater companies have attempted musicals, Nancy Gurwin Productions is the only one that has proved its staying power here.

THE GURWIN productions are back at the Botsford Inn for the third time, but it is the first time that its owner is not the star of the show.

"I was a lot more nervous sitting in the audience than I've ever been getting ready to go on stage. I was a wreck until the final curtain went down opening night," Gurwin said.

Turning over the starring female role of "Fantasticks" to Jody Marie who plays "The Girl" is the first off-stage vacation Gurwin has had since 1977.

All the while she was watching the play opening night, she said her mind was on the next production wondering "How am I going to top this one? What are we going to do next?"

The questions are a standard part of the Nancy Gurwin Productions since its format has traditionally been to

Jody Marie of Pontiac plays "The Girl" in the Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt musical "Fantasticks." Jones and Schmidt also collaborated on "10 in the Shade," "I Do, I Do," and "Celebration."

have two shows running and another in rehearsal as any one time since its inception.

With its seven year history, the company is Detroit's oldest continuous-running dinner theater.

Gurwin credits this in part by saying "In more adventuresome than most. I've tackled a few musicals most dinner theater companies wouldn't touch."

And in part by saying, "I never do a Neil Simon play. He's been done and done and done and done."

THURSDAYS and Sundays are dinner theater nights in Botsford Inn Coach House. Dinner is served at 7 p.m. and show time is 8:30 p.m.

Marie's costar in the musical comedy is Tom Ferrelli who plays "The Boy." Dave Bokas of Southfield takes the part of "The Narrator."



Dave Bokas of Southfield takes the role of "The Narrator" in the Nancy Gurwin Production at Botsford Inn Coach House. The Southfield-based Gurwin Productions dinner theater is now entering its seventh year of continuous operation, at various metropolitan Detroit locations.



Nancy Gurwin

Making it

Homemakers revive self esteem in jobs search

By Shirlee Rose Iden
staff writer

Lonely, worried women looking for self-esteem and a way to support themselves are finding help from a state-funded program.

In September, 1981, the Displaced Homemaker Program was put into place at the Jewish Vocational Service and Community Workshop, 25900 Greenfield, Oak Park.

"It's outreach was to one of the most vulnerable groups in our society, displaced homemakers."

"There are 10 of these programs in the state," said Rita Morse, job development and placement specialist for JVS.

"A displaced homemaker is a widowed, divorced or separated woman, or a woman married to a totally disabled spouse. She must have been a homemaker for 10 years or more and lack adequate skills to secure gainful, full-time employment."

The criteria also provides that the clients must be no longer responsible for dependent children.

With Sherri Lumberg of Southfield, program coordinator, Morse works with women from about 34 to 71, assessing their skills and aptitudes, and encouraging them until they reach the goal — a job they can live with.

"WE've placed a woman in a truck driving job, others in telephone work, sales, bookkeeping and computer jobs," Morse said.

"One 71-year-old woman from this

area went through our program and now does companion work."

Coming to the program, women are first assessed for aptitude, questioned about interests and given tests for one-and-a-half days.

"Then comes a very intense eight-day workshop," Morse said. "We list each client's strength and skills, work on communication and even do some assertiveness training."

Morse came to the agency five months ago and hasn't gotten over her excitement yet. "It's the most exciting job I could have."

A Southfield resident, she is married to Mark Morse, an attorney-litigator in a local law firm. They have four children: Jordana, 9, and Stacy, 6, who attend Akiva Day School in Lathrup Village; Jonathan, 2, and Jacqueline, 1.

"I was pregnant all during my master's program at Wayne, finished my internship in my ninth month," said Morse, who did her undergraduate work at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

"I ALWAYS wanted to be a career woman and have a family also. When I came to work at JVS, I was still nursing my daughter. Every day I would go home for lunch to nurse."

For Morse and Lumberg, the exciting thing about the program is not that it is in place, but that it is working. Each week, they watch as women work up the courage to consider themselves ready to fly into the job market and even find jobs.

Following the workshop, the displaced homemakers work in an ongo-

ing job club which meets every Wednesday and Friday. There, they can look at a job board that lists possible employment.

Placing that first phone call can be very threatening, Lumberg said.

"One of the very important things we do is work on resumes. We give them samples and when they are satisfied with their own resume, they look at the job leads."

"Sometimes women develop their own jobs. Once they have a focus they can often find their own leads."

"The women work in a large room with the materials they need and with several telephones. They can have privacy if they choose."

WORKING WITH a small group in the job club one recent morning, Lumberg smiled when Nora Zellner exulted: "I have an interview. It might be a bookkeeping job," she said.

In a true networking situation, she received the tip from another job club member who reads a newspaper she doesn't get.

Zellner, who lives in Waterford, was last employed in October, 1982 but the job was temporary.

"Remember, Nora, you use all these skills now," encouraged Morse, who said that Zellner is starting computer studies very soon.

"Our program often leads to new training or going back to school," she said.



Joan Freeman hasn't worked since she was a dental assistant and receptionist 23 years ago. But the

Farmington resident keeps tabs on the job board with hopes of getting back in the job market.

MINDY SAUNDERS
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