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YMCA staff revs up for the summer

By Loraine McClish
staff writer

Olympic Week, Pirate Week and Aerospace Week are some of the choices campers will have to choose from in the Farmington YMCA's line-up of themes that are shaping up now for the summer session.

"The different themes will give kids a chance to be a hero (during Casey Jones Week) or go back to the days of Mark Twain (during Tom Sawyer-Becky Thatcher Week)," said Vic Kruppenbacher, the Y's youth director.

"And the same themes that are carried out by the teens will be carried out by the three-year-olds," said Dave Potthoff, the Y's physical education instructor for youth.

Camping for the very young was initiated last year at the local Y, in part as an aid to working parents, and in part so the youngsters involved in the summer day-care program could take advantage of day camp activities.

"Most campers are returners and most start out young, but never before that young," Kruppenbacher said.

"Now we see the three-year-olds looking forward to next year's camp, looking forward to being involved in more challenging activities the same as we see the 10- or 12-year-old looking forward to the day he'll be doing his first white water rafting."

PREREGISTRATION days for resident camp, day camp, preschool camp and kiddie camp are Friday-Sunday, April 22-24 in the Y at 28100 Farmington Road. Campers who register on those days will receive a free Y backpack to get ready for their chosen week.

"In many ways the camp's theme weeks correlate to the special interest camps," Kruppenbacher said. "As a teen might be interested in camp that serves in on sailing or horseback riding, a young child might be lured to Critters Week or Mystery Week."

"I got most of the questions last year from the parents who were going to

leave their 3 1/2 year olds with us for the first time, and certainly, rightfully so," said Potthoff of the preregistration inquiries.

The instructor of physical activities for youth said he sees an increasing number of parents who are realizing the value "of physical workouts for their kids to counteract watching TV and playing PacMan."

"And we'll keep right on adding programs for those youngsters as long as there is a demand," Kruppenbacher added.

"We run with the people in the area. There was no one who anticipated we would outgrow that building the way we did. We will start adding classes in schools and churches if we have to, the way we did before that building was built," he said of the Farmington Y that opened just three years ago this spring.

WHILE MAKING camp a fun experience for all of the campers, Kruppenbacher and Potthoff hold to the Y's philosophy that fun is a means to a learning-experience end on several fronts.

All of the specialized camps, as well as the various themes, are learning sessions in themselves, but beyond that, the sessions are geared for learning how to get along with both peers and counselors, learning respect for oneself and recognizing one's own self worth.

"Whether its kiddie camp or resident camp we adhere to the Y triangle of spirit, mind and body. We put emphasis on learning to speak for yourself, listening to others, no put-downs, take charge of yourself, cooperate with others, show respect for yourself, others and nature," Kruppenbacher said.

"This is what makes our camps so unique."

Camp Dudley, founded by the YMCA in upper New York in 1885, was the beginning of organized camping for youth in the world.

"And the Y camps are still in the forefront of all camping because of our camp philosophy," he said.

Those wishing a complete camping brochure should call the Y, 533-4020.



Cook returns from Far East with new recipes

Isa Tchen has returned from her annual visit to China, but not with an album of photographs and bags of souvenirs.

Instead, she returns with a notebook filled with recipes and suggestions for preparing Chinese cuisine she'll share in Farmington Community Center classes.

Tchen was born and raised in China and is an authority on Chinese cuisine. Her annual trips to the Far East bring back recipes that she has made fool-proof. The recipes are both easy to prepare and gratifying to the gourmet.

During her visits, she samples a variety of dishes and discusses their preparation with the country's leading chefs who specialize in all styles of Chinese foods.

"My special emphasis on this trip was to gather ideas for simple quick one-dish meals for the busy family," Tchen said. "All these meals can be prepared ahead and even frozen for future use as an entire meal or individual servings."

Upon returning from China, Tchen must make subtle changes using the ingredients available in the Detroit area. Her know-how is shared in class where students learn the basic techniques necessary for professional preparation of several types of Chinese dishes.

Tchen's basic level class begins at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 19.

"MY CLASSES INCLUDE authentic recipes for soups, main courses and desserts with an entire meal demonstrated at each of the three, 2 1/2-hour sessions. Students will receive recipes of these dishes not often found in local Oriental restaurants, along with taste samples of each dish demonstrated," she said.

Tchen's philosophy is based on presenting a comprehensive sequence in Chinese cuisine emphasizing the professional techniques that cannot be learned from a cookbook.

"Students will find these techniques useful in all forms of cooking. The way you prepare the ingredients enhances the flavor and texture of vegetables and the tenderness of meat."

Tchen has been teaching at the community center for 10 years, and her students run from the novice to the professional chef. Her expertise is sought by cooking experts, and she has served as the Chinese representative for many benefit dinners organized by Detroit's leading chefs.

Also offered is a one-session "World of Wonton" workshop at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 10, which shows how to use wonton for soup, appetizer, snacks and desserts with fast, fool-proof methods of preparation.

Registrations are taken in the community center, 24705 Farmington Road.

Turn-of-the-century farce

Cynthia Doeher and Erik Carlson star in "Three Bags Full," a turn-of-the-century farce set in New York City, produced by Farmington Players. Opening night is Friday, April 29 in the Players Barn on 12 Mile between Orchard Lake and Farmington roads. The play continues for four weekends. For ticket information, call the box office, 535-8822.



School for Brides

Join us at the second of our School for Brides educational seminars. It's a chance for brides of all ages to get the expert home-making advice they've always wanted but didn't know who to ask. Our April seminars focus on The Marketplace. Leonard Sokol, our resident whiz at gadgetry and appliance know-how, shows how to stock the ideal kitchen and gives tips on how to make the latest innovations work for you. Tickets are 2.50 each and are available at Hudson's Bride's Registries, or call 223-1895 to make a reservation. Seminars include how-to's, door prizes, refreshments and most important, answers. Each is presented by Hudson's Bride's Registry in cooperation with our Registry's prestigious sponsors. **Failane:** Thurs., April 21, 6:30 p.m. **Oakland Mall:** Sat., April 23, 9 a.m.

Other forthcoming topics, times and places:

May	Tabletop	Pontiac: Thursday, May 19, 6:30 p.m.
		Lakeside: Friday, May 20, 6:30 p.m.
		Westland: Saturday, May 21, 9 a.m.
June	Modern Bride Magazine	Northland: Saturday, June 25, 9 and 11:30 a.m.
July	Bed and Bath	Oakland: Thursday, July 14, 6:30 p.m.
		Lakeside: Saturday, July 16, 9 a.m.

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