

Detroit Story League

Storytellers find new ways to better tell the tale

Dressed in a colorful, many-pocketed apron, Clarenceville School teacher Linda Aldrich pulls a gray, stuffed mouse out of one of these pockets and begins to recite a poem: "I think mice are rather nice."

This is followed by other poems, some funny, some serious, some familiar so the audience can join in, some new, most accompanied by appropriate visual aids that are pulled out of Aldrich's innumerable apron pockets. Children as well as adults laugh and enjoy the experience.

The Plymouth resident's poetry recital is her own creation. President of Detroit Story League, she is one of more than 50 Story League members who will provide storytelling programs to organizations and institutions on request.

The league's aim is to preserve the ancient art of storytelling. At the monthly meetings, usually in members' homes, the program always includes the performances of three storytellers. Different aspects of the year's theme are designated for each month of the year. This year's theme is "Wind." This month's version of the theme is "Winds in the Chimney."

WORKSHOPS ON various aspects of storytelling are also a part of every meeting.

This winter Bruce Smith, a resident of Clarkston, is scheduled to do a workshop on "Music." Alice McCoy from



Ruth Kroepel

Southfield will tell members how to research stories for special interest groups.

Another member will talk about props to use in storytelling performances, and another will talk about using puppets to better tell the tale.

Recurring workshops for newcomers that are scheduled are "How to Tell a Story," "How to Get the Attention of the Audience" and "Poetry."



Violet Altschuler

Members of Story League come from diverse backgrounds. Their careers cover a wide range of occupations: engineers, business executives, homemakers, writers, teachers, librarians and retirees. As members, they either acquire, improve or learn the skills of story telling.

Storytellers draw upon vast literary resources for their materials as well as their own imaginations, talent and ex-



Roberta Bullough

periences. Smith, manager for membership development for FTD, often tells his own original stories and writes songs for his programs.

STORYTELLERS say they will take any assignment for any special interest group.

This past summer six league members pooled their talents to stage an Ethnic Storytelling Festival in International Institute.



Linda Aldrich

For the past two years Cella Goodman of Southfield has been a regular storyteller for children in O'Connell School on the grounds of St. Vincent Sarah Fisher Home in Farmington. She works closely with Carol Alamedine, a special education teacher at O'Connell, who believes the storytelling sessions are both instructive and therapeutic.

Farmington resident Ruth Kroepel was the entertainer for a bridal shower

with appropriate stories for the guest of honor.

Michael Deller, a librarian for the city of Madison, has been the chief storyteller for the Detroit Ethnic Festival for several years.

Hille Altschuler from Farmington Hills uses clown costume and makeup for her storytelling stunts.

The members have performed in parks and in camps, in schools and churches, for social and service clubs, for private parties and public institutions.

All of the members volunteer their time in their effort to keep the ancient art alive, but a small fee is asked of those who request storytelling engagements to perpetuate the league's goals.

THOSE INTERESTED in engaging a storyteller for either entertainment or educational purposes are invited to call Roberta Bullough, a Livonia resident, at 464-7084.

Guests are invited to sit in on any regular meeting without charge or obligation. The meetings begin at noon on the third Saturday of each month. Members as well as guests bring their own sandwich for lunch; hostesses for the day furnish the beverage and dessert.

Donna Teichman, a resident of Redford, will give newcomers directions for the next meeting by calling her at 531-6359.

community calendar

• **PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION** Thursday, Dec. 29: Registrations are being taken for 3-5-year-olds entering

Fairview Early Childhood Center for morning and afternoon programs, by calling the school, 626-8335. Winter

term begins the week of Jan. 23.

• **PRENATAL-POSTNATAL** Monday, Jan. 2: Prenatal and postnatal exercise classes begin this week in Botsford Hospital's Administration Building. Participants have option of morning or evening sessions. Registration, at \$24, taken by calling the hospital's Health, Promotion and Development Department, 471-8090.

• **ON GRIEF** Thursday, Jan. 5: "A Personal Perspective on Grief," six-week program offered at 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. in Botsford Hospital. Fee is \$35. Reservations taken by calling the hospital's Health, Promotion and Development Department, 471-8090.

• **CONDITIONING WITH WEIGHTS** Thursday, Jan. 5: "Conditioning With Weights," free workshop 9:30-10:30 a.m. or 7-8 p.m. in Mercy Conference Center, 28600 11 Mile. Reservations are requested by calling the center, 476-8010.

• **SMOKELESS SYSTEM**

Monday and Tuesday, Jan. 9-10: Free introductory session to American Institute for Preventive Medicine's Smokeless System begins at 8 p.m. each night in Botsford General Hospital's Administration and Education Building, 28050 Grand River. Fee for the program is \$125, payable at the first session.

• **DANCEFIT**

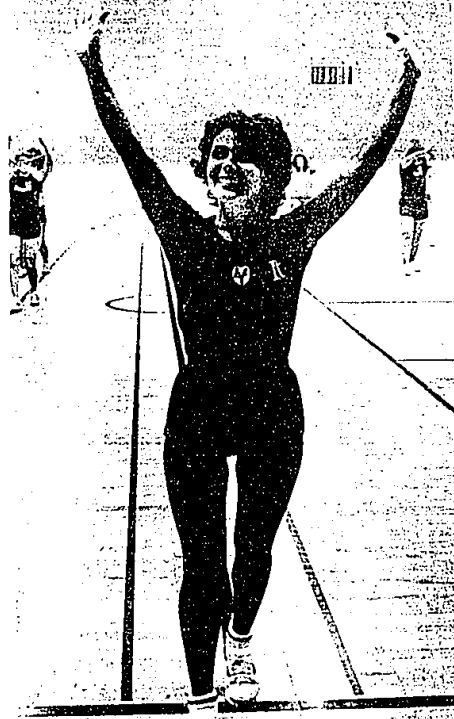
Monday, Jan. 9: DanceFit classes begin this week in several Farmington-area locations. Participants have options of both time and place when registering with DanceFit, 553-7362.

• **HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE** Tuesday, Jan. 10: A series of four classes in High Blood Pressure Management begins at 6:30 p.m. in Room A, Botsford Hospital Administration Building, 28050 Grand River. Registration information given by calling 471-8090.

• **DIABETES MANAGEMENT**

Wednesday, Jan. 11: Diabetes Management, series of five classes begins at 7 p.m. in Botsford Hospital's Admin-

istration Building, 28050 Grand River. Registrations taken by calling the hospital, 471-8090. Fee is \$12.



RANDY BORST/Staff photographer

DanceFit

DanceFit, a cardiovascular women's fitness program that combines the fun of dancing with the benefits of an all-over workout, begins in several locations in the Farmington area the week of Jan. 9. Participants have a choice of daytime or evening classes that meet twice a week with Mary Williams (above) and several other DanceFit instructors in the area. Registration information is given by calling DanceFit, 553-7362.

VAAL classes to start

Wednesday, Jan. 9 will be the starting date of art classes offered by the Visual Arts Association of Livonia (VAAL). The classes are given in its new location, Jefferson Center, Room 22, 9501 Henry Blvd., Livonia.

Day and some evening classes will be taught in basic drawing, figure drawing, watercolor, oil and pastel painting.

For those artists who wish to work independently from a live model, a stu-

dio session will be available for a minimum fee.

Saturday watercolor workshops will be taught by Edie Joppich and Anne Dase-Loveland.

The teaching staff of VAAL is made up of area art professionals and is supported in part by the Livonia Arts Commission. Beginners and advanced students are invited to obtain a winter schedule or further information by calling Lee Skerritt, 422-6889.

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