

Suburban Life

Lorraine McClish editor/477-5450



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(F5)

Co-op format in preschool bends to needs of today

By Lorraine McClish staff writer

Farmington Co-op Preschool, located in Universalist-Unitarian Church of Farmington, opens its fall season with an offer of extended care for parents who work.

The extended care is a deviation from the co-op nursery, or preschool, whose strong base of operation has always been to involve the parents with their kids' first away-from-home experiences.

Mary Lou Grant, now entering her 16th year as teacher and director of Farmington Co-op, explains this deviation.

"We have always worked to fill the need, and we feel there is a need here for the working mother, the mother who works part-time, or the mother who works on an afternoon or night shift, who still wants involvement with her child's early learning experiences."

Hours and dates are still iffy, and probably won't be firm until Grant and her board of co-op parents hear from area residents who are inter-

ested in the proposed fall program.

What is firm is that the parent wishing extended care could choose to be scheduled as part of the parent and teacher co-op for a minimum number of hours a month, or she could choose to elect an aide, or a surrogate, in her stead.

Other firm-up factors for the extended care offered would be "An afternoon of variations," Grant said. "Less structured time, but in a classroom with all facilities used and a wide variety of free choice for the young child. And if the mother did choose to use a surrogate, it would be one and only one because that consistency is important. And we'll keep our one adult to every 4.5 student ratio, which is a grand ratio to have."

CO-OPS. ONCE the most popular of choices of format for parents — maybe because of its philosophy or maybe because of its built-in free help and subsequently lower tuition — has now given way to the franchised day care centers that are all over the country.



Kathy Prost



Mary Lou Grant



Linda McSween

In the Farmington area, only two co-ops remain, Farmington Preschool, and Mayfair Cooperative Nursery School, both distinguished by remarkable longevity.

Linda McSween, the group's current membership chairman, said that modern-day mothers shopping for a preschool have often questioned her about the word "co-op" in the school's title.

"When I explain to them that this is our school, the parent's school, that we run it (through an elected board of the students' parents), that they will be scheduled to be in the class working along with the teacher on a regular schedule, it is sometimes a surprise for them that such a school exists," McSween said. "That they don't know what the word co-op means is also evident in the callers who are asking about taking infants, or if we are open at 8 a.m. Since I've gotten this job I think I explain what co-op is about four or five times a week."

Grant says her favorite definition of co-op preschool is "a school before elementary school."

but that, Grant said, "was too reminiscent of babies and cribs. Preschool says it better. We nurture and enrich the total child. I don't stress teaching. I do stress learning, subtle learning, so the child doesn't know I'm teaching."

"WE ARE ALL learning," said Kathy Prost, who is the newly elected president of the co-op's board of parents. "We learn every day we go to nursery school."

The learning she speaks of comes from several sources. The most beneficial in Prost's mind comes from the shared experiences among the mothers who have children of similar age. She describes this "as a sort of revival of talking about your problems over the back fence."

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And yet other learning comes from just being in the classroom, observing, and working along side the teacher.

"The entire original design of the co-op was to teach the child, the teacher and the parents," Grant said. "The par-

ents go to workshops. I go to conferences. The kids learn from all of us. And we learn from the kids."

Grant says her philosophy for herself is "Keep the curriculum flexible enough for free choice and scheduled enough for the children to feel secure."

Her advice to her parent-aides is "Be natural in your manner, be positive in your approach and you can't go wrong."

FARMINGTON CO-OP was founded in the mid-'60s, and has been housed in the Universalist-Unitarian Church at 25301 Halsted for the past five seasons in a physical set-up that Grant describes as "a child's paradise."

The church does not charge the co-op rent, but the co-op, through its board, does make donations to the church.

Grant stresses that the co-op is not church affiliated, that it is non-profit, non-denominational and non-discriminatory.

Her affiliation with Farmington Co-op started when her daughter was a student there and she was asked to fill in as a teacher.

Up until 10 years ago the co-op was open for morning-only classes. Afternoon classes were added as a temporary measure to accommodate a waiting list, and now that 10-year "temporary" class appears to be expanding to extended care.

"The school always had a good reputation, the best of reputations, and it still does," Grant said.

As the co-op's hours have expanded, so has the curriculum.

"There has been a lot of changes in education over the past 16 years," Grant said. "Much, much more is expected of the child today entering kindergarten. There is a long list of what is expected, and it is not an unresponsible list."

"My job is to motivate and stimulate, broaden the horizon, instill confidence, along the way and give the child a good start."

The preschool is licensed for a full complement of 60 divided into three classes. Licensing has also been granted the school for extended day care.

McSween will take inquiries by calling her at 476-2553.

Families needed to foster those from birth to 17 years

Many children who would ordinarily be placed in an institutional setting are now receiving the help they need from a foster family.

"Just as we as a society are realizing the value of the family, so is the state looking toward families as their most valuable resource in caring for abused, neglected or dependent children," said Deborah Hyde of Foster Training Network in Oakland County.

The network is comprised of public and private foster care agencies who work cooperatively to recruit families interested in foster parenting and to run foster-parent training programs on a variety of pertinent subjects.

The nine agencies involved are Christian Family Services, Catholic Social Services, Detroit Baptist Children's Home, Lutheran Social Services, Michigan Department of Social Services, Oakland County Foster Care Department, Oakland Family Services, Orchard Children's Services and St. Vincent-Sarah Fisher Home.

All are actively seeking persons interested in foster parenting children from infancy to age 17.

The network stresses that becoming foster parents requires a total family commitment, special training and a lot of agency support.

HYDE FEELS that she can best relate the story of the foster parent by telling a factual story of a family whose name she has changed to Foley in order to protect the confidentiality of their foster child.

"The Foleys were unusual because they have four foster children and

three of their own children," she said. "They are very family-oriented and do a lot of things with their children, but had to learn through training and experience that love is not enough when you foster."

"The greatest lesson that we have learned is that you can't overreact to these behaviors, and most of all, you must maintain a good sense of humor," Foley said. "Johnny's lying and stealing have virtually subsided, and he only wets the bed once every few weeks, and that only if he has a nightmare."

Both parents told of experiencing times of frustration, as well as times of great gratification.

Inquiries will be taken by Hyde, a member of the Oakland County Foster Care Department staff at 859-0202, or Suzanne Franklin, a staff member of Orchard Children's Services, 552-8544.

TEN-YEAR-OLD Johnny was the Foleys' first foster child. He was a nighty bed wetter and had chronic problems with lying and stealing. Ronnie, their second foster son, was a 3-year-old failure-to-thrive child who had worn out two other foster parents with his temper tantrums, fighting and constant throwing up of food.

All of these behaviors, the Foleys learned, were symptoms of underlying emotional deprivation.

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Judges vs. jocks to benefit SCAMP

The judges and the jocks are going to bat for SCAMP, Southwest Oakland County's Camp for Handicapped Children, with a benefit softball game at 6 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 23 in Southfield Civic Center.

Guest sports-caster Dick Puritan from WCZY-FM and umpire Steve Garagiola from Channel 7 will call the shots as Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Robert Tompkins, Steven Andrews, Gene Schaefer, George La Plata and Fred Mosier square off against the team led by District Judge Jessica Cooper.

Area sports figures, celebrities and attorneys will complete the teams. Featured players include national racquetball champion Mike Yellin, former NFL stars Dennis Franklin and Alan Miller, Michigan Panthers David Tipton and Alan Hughes, plus former Detroit Tiger Jim Northrup.

Call 837-4180 for tickets: \$15 regular admission or \$5 for sponsor. All proceeds benefit SCAMP, Southfield Civic Center is located at 26000 Evergreen Road. An afterglow pool party runs from 7:30-10:30 p.m.

MSU offers new degree

Starting in September, students can earn a master's degree in advertising by taking the entire 45-credit program offered at Michigan State University's Birmingham Center.

The local classes begin with "Media Management" and "Advertising Campaigns" on Sept. 20 and 25 respectively. Both are offered 8:30-10:30 p.m. one night a week and will continue through late November.

Constitution Week observed

Constitution Week will be celebrated Sept. 17-23. In the Preamble of the Constitution of the U.S., our Founding Fathers wrote their purpose, "to secure the blessings of liberty to themselves and their posterity." Quakerstown

American Daughters of the American Revolution recommend teaching our youth the virtues of a and a dedication to the preservation of our American heritage: faith in God, faith in our Country. Read your Constitution.

WHY "WC3" THIS FALL?

BECAUSE WAYNE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE CAN OFFER YOU:

- AFFORDABLE TUITIONS
- 5 CONVENIENT LOCATIONS
- FULLY-ACCREDITED LIBERAL ARTS, SCIENCE, CAREER-TRAINING/VOCATIONAL OFFERINGS
- TRANSFERABLE ASSOCIATE DEGREE & CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS
- EDUCATIONAL SERVICES/CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSES (job-upgrading, social issues, career development and more)
- TELECOURSES (class-room credit for learning at home)

WC3 FALL REGISTRATION BEGINS AUGUST 21

Regular Registration — Including Dropping and Adding will be held at:		Late Registration — Including Dropping and Adding will be held at:	
EASTERN CAMPUS 5801 Cass, Detroit 855-2511	DOWNTOWN CAMPUS 1001 W. Fort, Detroit 855-2511	EASTERN CAMPUS 5801 Cass, Detroit 855-2511	DOWNTOWN CAMPUS 1001 W. Fort, Detroit 855-2511
DOWNTOWN CAMPUS 1001 W. Fort, Detroit 855-2511	NORTHWEST CAMPUS 2801 Greenfield, Detroit 943-4070	DOWNTOWN CAMPUS 1001 W. Fort, Detroit 855-2511	NORTHWEST CAMPUS 2801 Greenfield, Detroit 943-4070
WESTERN CAMPUS 2801 Greenfield, Detroit 943-4070		WESTERN CAMPUS 2801 Greenfield, Detroit 943-4070	

Registration Date	Time	Day
August 21, 1984	11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.	J-R
August 22, 1984	11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.	G-Z
August 23, 1984	11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.	A-1
August 24, 1984	11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.	A-2
August 27, 1984	11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.	A-2
August 28, 1984	11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.	A-2

WAYNE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

For further information, please call **496-2500**