

Creativity commands spotlight

By Casey Hans
staff writer

It's all about the kids — how their minds work and what is created with the ideas they generate. Any student can be creatively gifted, given the opportunity to develop, according to Paul Barber.

Barber is coordinator for Creativity Springs Alive, a daylong Farmington Schools event where "children doing very, very good things are given recognition." It stresses individual creative efforts and gives a lesson in cooperation to teachers and support staff as well, he added.

Displays and demonstrations in the fine arts, industrial arts, metal works, home economics, business, computer science areas and original music scores will be highlighted this year.

"Many of these are things we need to get through on a day-to-day," he said. "We want to recognize the need for rounding out the education through fine arts."

Barber wants students to know "there's life after five, and we need to learn how to live that life to the fullest."

If we realized that, we'd get more out of life."

THIS YEAR'S event is slated for Saturday, March 1, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at Farmington High School, and Barber calls it his "pet project that's grown rather big."

He works on the district's marketing committee and is Farmington's music coordinator, but believes a select few students in athletics and music usually get the recognition needed by all students. Projects that involve all creative student works, in all areas, should be emphasized, he added.

"What about the student who works for weeks and weeks at a lathe, and often doesn't get a pat on the back?" Barber asked. "This is about students using talent and feeling good about themselves." His hope is that the strokes students receive will serve as motivation for further development and involvement of more students, he said.

An estimated 300-500 students received recognition in the Creativity Springs Alive program last year, either through active participation or display

of a work, Barber said.

"Creativity" started originally at 12 Oaks Mall in Novi two years ago, where students played original scores in music stores, displayed and did artwork in art supply businesses, and showed the general shopping public the creativity of Farmington students.

THE PROJECT was expanded last year, moving to Farmington Harrison High School and organizers have decided to keep it within the district, involving as many students as possible from all grade levels.

Students receive "equal recognition," according to Barber, and are not judged on their creative work, although all participating receive certificates.

In addition, Farmington Public Schools is sponsoring the Olympics of the Mind (OM) this year in conjunction with Creativity Springs Alive to include all students. Formerly sponsored by FACET (Farmington Association for Children with Exceptional Talent), OM teams of 5-8 students from all schools can now participate, Barber said.

Overall, Barber called the project a "harmonious" one. "I never had anybody turn me down when I asked for help," he said of teachers and support staff. "We all focus on one project and work together."

The district's bus drivers will volun-

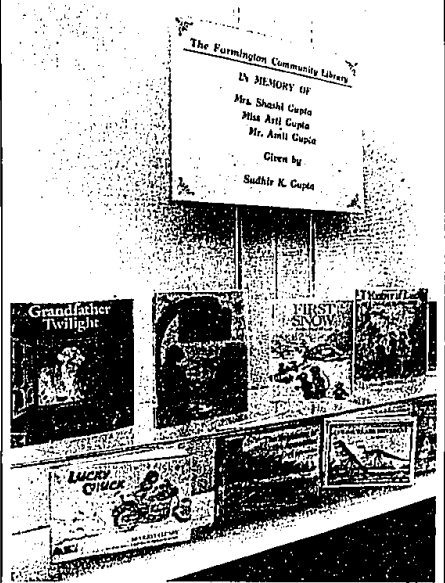
teer their time this year, as they did last year, to transport area senior citizens to the event, Barber added. The district will contact senior homes in the area to determine attendance.

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

In memoriam

The Farmington Community Library's Farmington Hills branch is displaying more than 40 books recently purchased with a donation made by Sudhir Gupta of Farmington Hills. The donation was made in memory of Gupta's wife, Shashi, and his two children, 10-year-old Aril and 8-year-old Amit, who were among 328 passengers aboard the Air-India Boeing 747 that crashed into the sea off the coast of Ireland June 24. The books are for children in grades two through six. Mrs. Gupta worked in the Farmington Public Schools as a bilingual teacher. Aril and Amit attended Woodcreek Elementary School.

Psychologist to be guest

Denise Swope and Sharon McDonald of Community Upbeat will produce another call-in segment of "Ask the Counselor" at 8:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 5, on Channel 12, featuring area psychologist Keith Levick.

This month's segment will be a half-hour special on the ups and downs of

marriages. Along with Levick will be Dr. Alan Hoffman, an expert on marriage counseling. They will discuss and analyze the problems most married couples face every day and discuss how to better cope with these everyday pressures.

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