

# Suburban Life

Lorraine McClish editor/477-5450



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(F3B)

## Open House

Nursery school alumni invited to reception for retiring teacher

By Lorraine McClish  
staff writer

**A**LL NARDIN PARK Community Nursery School alumni, their parents and friends are invited to a reception for Mada Briggs, the school's first teacher and director who retires at the end of the spring term.

The nursery's annual spring open house, when parents and their tots are invited to visit the premises and meet the staff, is set for 2-4 p.m. Sunday, March 9, in Nardin Park United Methodist Church, on 11 Mile west of Middlebelt. The reception for Briggs, hosted by the nursery school board, begins at 4 p.m.

"Not much will change here, certainly not the philosophy of the school," said Briggs, who was hired by a church committee to begin the nursery as a service to the community in 1971.

"We are non-denominational and our program is one that educates the whole child, the creative, the intellectual, the physical and emotional aspects. Our aim is to give our children a good start, so that they love school and succeed as they go along."

"That was my own philosophy. It agreed with those that hired me, and it's been that way ever since. The only change so far as the board is concerned is that they've hired two people to replace me," she said.

**BRIGGS DESCRIBES** herself as "teacher-director" of the nursery school, putting emphasis on "teacher." "I never sat behind a desk and administered. I am a teacher first and I'm probably one of very few nursery school teachers who work a full schedule of classes five days a week," she said.

Briggs' teaching career started in

upper elementary school classes "and kept working down," she said.

After a short stint as a nursery school teacher for another church, she went back to school to get her master's degree in preschool education. When she was hired by the Nardin Park church committee she was given full control in setting up the nursery.

The Nardin Park Community Nursery School Board of Directors, which she initiated, is made up of parents of the current students who rent space from the church, and is entirely independent from the church.

"The parents do the administering, but we are not a co-op. They do not do any work in the classroom. They come and go through the years, as teachers come and go, and it's all worked quite smoothly," she said.

And likewise, Briggs foresees a smooth turnover as Judy Turnquist assumes directorship of the nursery when it opens next fall.

When that time comes Briggs expects she will have sold her home of 22 years in Farmington Hills, and be in residence somewhere on the far northern coast of California with her husband, Charles, who is retiring this year from Wayne State University.

**TO HER SUCCESSORS** she leaves a legacy of goals to promote physical development and motor coordination in the youngsters, self confidence, language skills, free self-expression and the broadening of intellectual horizons through art, music and dance.

"Self confidence, self expression, those are the big ones," she said. "We teach through play, which is the child's work. We teach by giving them experiences and activities so they can learn while they don't realize they're learning, and we make that learning enjoyable."



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Mada Briggs carries on class-time projects as usual with her charges until the end of the term when she retires from Nardin Park Nursery School, which she established in 1971. Four-year-olds Bob

by Cassir and Todd Bentley are on her left. Julie Kluka is on her right.

## Michigan cartoons published in 2 volumes

By Corinne Abalt  
staff writer

After eight years Four Corners Press of Franklin turned the page from publishing service to company to publisher.

Last December the company came out with volumes one and two of "Michigan Cartoons" by Cliff Wirth, who has been doing cartoons for newspapers and other publications for 35 years. His work appears in the Observer and Eclectic Newspapers as well as the Detroit News. The cartoons for the two soft-cover books were taken from the latter.

Charlotte Anne Ellison, president of Four Corners Press, said that even without much ballyhoo, the first printing of the books sold out and the book is "already into its second printing."

To have found Wirth's work, was according to Ellison, a stroke of good fortune.

"He was looking for a publisher, went to Michigan State, some friends heard about his search and referred him to the Four Corners Press."

"He has an extraordinary gentle touch to things," she said, "all of his humor is light and whimsical — amusing without a sharp edge. They're unique — no sardonic touches. They're just nice and funny."

"He turned over 1,500 cartoons and we started narrowing things down. We were looking for what other people would like, but there's a remarkable consistency to them."

She said volume one consists of cartoons about Michigan and outstate locations and two has about half that would be familiar to anyone with the rest "particular to Detroit."

Her thought was to push volume one in the out-state areas and two in the metropolitan area. Wirth, who spent most of his working life in this area, now lives in Wilmet, Ill., working with the Chicago Sun Times, as well as other papers.

Ellison, who graduated from Olivet College in 1973, worked for Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. of Grand Rapids until three years ago when she joined the book manufacturing firm of Cushing-Malloy as their only national sales representative.

Since she founded Four Corners Press with her mother, Charlotte A. Ellison of Franklin, in 1977, they have handled all publishing services (design,

typesetting, printing, binding and promotion) of 30 some books in the Michigan area for municipal, historical and private groups.

Ellison said emphatically, "We help other people publish their books. We are not a vanity press," adding the charge is for services, but they, unlike the vanity presses, do not take a cut of the proceeds.

With their first full-fledged publishing effort now successfully launched with the Wirth books, she has plans for two more, which the company will bring

out on its own — a coloring book for children of historic Michigan scenes and an activity book for those vacationing in Michigan.

"Accidentally we are finding ourselves as a regional publisher," she said, adding that she has no plans for doing novels and isn't interested in looking at submissions, "we're not geared to novels."

Ellison is on the road more than at home, but that's the way she likes it, juggling services and publishing activities as easily as other people bounce tennis balls.



## Chance of a lifetime

Farmington Hills residents Marcia and Perry Johnson vie for cash prizes on the Chance of a Lifetime game show, to be aired at 7:30 p.m. tonight, Wednesday and Thursday on Channel 2. Couples have a chance at winning up to \$1 million on the game show.

## Eagle rank earned

Mark Leaning, the son of Mr. and Mrs. John Leaning of Farmington Hills, has achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. The North Farmington High School student is the 70th Boy Scout from Troop 263, sponsored by Kenbrook Elementary School, to achieve scouting's highest rank.

The 15-year-old has served as assistant patrol leader, patrol leader, librarian and scribe since he joined the troop in 1981.

His community service project, a requette for the rank, was completed at Farmington Community Center where he planted shrubs and a rock garden on the grounds.

At North Farmington High where he maintains a high academic grade average, he played on three undefeated indoor and outdoor soccer teams, and is a member of the school's track team.



Mark Leaning

He has cadetted for three years at Franklin Hills Country Club where he achieved the rank of captain.

## Oakway cabaret is set March 22

Doors open for Oakway Symphony Orchestra's 13th annual Choral Concert at 7 p.m. Saturday, March 22, in Madonna College.

Fat Bob Taylor is master of ceremonies for the event and will also perform with soprano soloist Beverly Sharett.

Two major works by Gershwin will be performed. The Madonna College Chorus will perform "Porgy and Bess" and John Cannon, a piano pro-tege from Juilliard will play "Rhapsody in Blue."

Tickets are \$8 each. Discount rates are given for advance purchase of tables for eight and 10, available by calling 355-9280.

Madonna college is at I-96 and Levon, Livonia.

## Shay's men

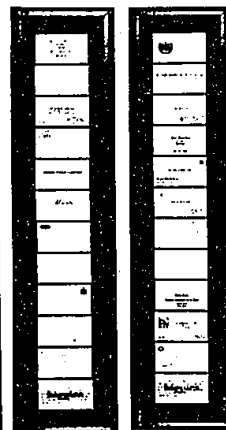
Dateline: Aug. 1786 to Feb. 1787, Massachusetts. Shay's Rebellion. The economic depression after the Revolution forced many property owners into debt, for which they could be imprisoned. In Massachusetts, town meetings were held to petition for lower taxes, court reform and revision of the state Constitution.

In one instance, an armed force led by Daniel Shay, a veteran of the Revolutionary War, tried to resolve the issue forcibly and narrowly avoided a clash with local militia. Shay's men were disbursed or captured with the assistance of federal soldiers. The rebellion served to emphasize the need for a strong central government and, indirectly, for a Constitution for the United States. Quakertown Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution urge you to study American History.

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