

# Center gives teens a place to unwind

By Joanne Mellazowski  
staff writer

**I**T'S A PLACE to catch up with old friends and make new ones. And it's where teens can ease the boring summer days

when there's nothing to do.

In its ninth year, the Summer Activities Center — sponsored by Farmington Youth Assistance — serves Farmington-area teens with a slice of fun, friendship and good old adult direction and advice.

"The purpose of this program is that we try to keep the kids off the streets and out of trouble," said Sam Shivers, center director. "We plan a program on a weekly basis. And we offer counseling, friendship and advice."

Many of the teens attending the drop-in center in the Shiawassee School, on Shiawassee, between Orchard Lake and Nine Mile roads, echo Shivers' feelings about the program.

"Last year, I came here to see how it was. Now I come every day," said 13-year-old Kathy Magee, who, with twin sister Karen, agrees the program gets them out of the house.

"It's probably be sitting at home," said David Arnt, 13. Les Luark, 13, agreed. "It keeps me from just sitting around the house."

**OPEN MONDAYS, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 4-6 and 7-10 p.m., the center offers teens a**

host of games — table tennis, air hockey, pool, video games, basketball and touch football. The eight-week program will be capped with a dance from 7-10 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 13, in the school gym.

Wednesday is field trip day for the teens. This year, day trips will include horseback riding, canoeing, a visit to the Oakland County Wave Action Pool, a picnic at Kensington Metropark and a day at Bobo Island. Movies, pizza and ice cream parties are also on the center's agenda.

"I meet all my friends up here," said Nathan Snowberger, 15, who is in his second year at the center. "I come here everyday. They take you on field trips, too."

In its first week, the center drew about 83 teens a night. Although teens who are registered for the program aren't required to attend the center each afternoon, they are required to sign in if they are there.

Teens may still join the program by obtaining a permission slip and having it signed by parents, Shivers said.

**THE PROGRAM** is loosely structured, allowing teens a choice of activities. If they want, they can just sit on the school steps and talk to their peers.

Besides the activities available to teens, advice, counseling and friendship is there for the asking from Shivers or any of four college-age assistants — Becky Ehle, Ken Zisholtz, Ann Brown and Mary Beth Balog.

With the aid of a relaxed atmosphere, the center is designed to meet the restlessness and short attention span of many young teens. The center also provides teens with a place they can call their own at a time of day when tensions between youngsters and parents are often at their highest.

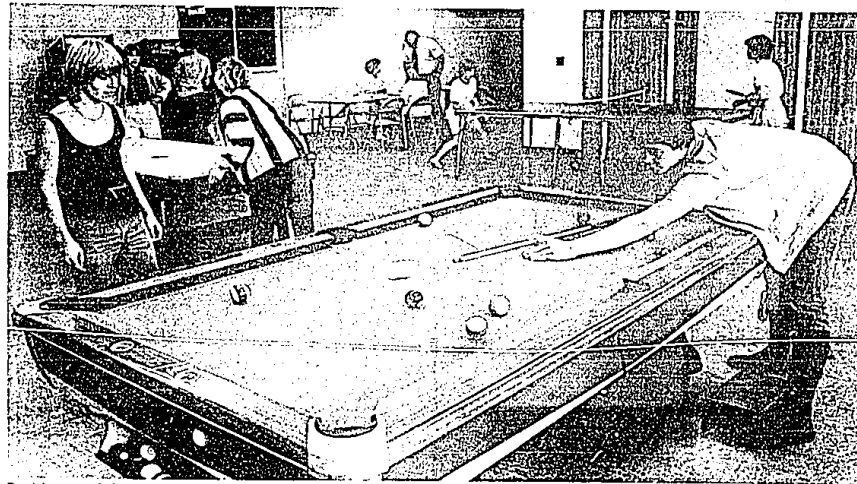


Kathy Magee, 12, of Farmington, plays air hockey.

"They're good kids. They just need somebody to give them a positive sense of direction," Shivers said.



David Arnt, 13, of Farmington Hills, tries his hand at the pool table.



Pool is one of the activities that teens can take part in at the center, in Shiawassee School in Farmington Hills.

Staff photos by Rick Smith

## Neighborly Residents may form coalition

Representatives of 34 subdivision associations in Farmington Hills turned out for the first of what's expected to be a series of meetings concerning possible revival of the former Council of Homeowners.

The homeowners council — an umbrella organization of neighborhoods that formed prior to the city's incorporation in 1973 — fought for cityhood, battled for consolidation with Farmington, worked against construction of a stadium (what became the Pontiac Silverdome) on 11 Mile on Southfield's edge, as well as against a major shopping mall on Haggerty (which became Twelve Oaks Mall in Novi). The former council also interviewed and endorsed local political candidates.

Sponsored by the Springbrook Homeowners Association, the meeting June 23 at the Hills branch of the Farmington Community Library was designed to determine the amount of interest in reviving the former homeowners council.

"It was a catalyst to see if there is an interest. Yes, there is an interest as long as it doesn't become a purely political arm," said Jack Joynl, a Springbrook Homeowners Association director.

A FINAL decision to revive the former council has not yet been made. Information, including the former council's bylaws, will be gathered and studied for further discussion. Another meeting has been scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Monday, Aug. 11 at the Hills library branch, 32737 11 Mile.

Neighborhood representatives at Monday's meeting expressed concern about drainage problems, inadequate sewers, contamination of aquifers and liability insurance for neighborhood common areas or open spaces, according to a press release issued by Lois Johnson, Springbrook association president.

"Representatives seemed surprised in the brief session to find problems their subdivisions faced were similar on occasion to those of other subdivisions," Johnson said.

Also of concern to some of the neighborhood representatives was the need to maintain the residential character of Orchard Lake Road, Joynl said.

During the discussion, subdivision representatives insisted that a new organization should not become "political" except to raise together as a unit when necessary," Johnson said.

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— Jack Joynl,  
Farmington Hills

**ONE OF** the most-repeated criticisms about the former council was its political involvement. Although the organization began on a positive note, it eventually became too involved with politics, often being forced to take sides that were not always in the city's best interest.

Other criticisms included that the homeowners council — at least in its waning moments — was used to buttress local political careers.

The need for commitment as a "necessary ingredient in the reorganization" of the former council was considered important, Johnson said. To that end, subdivision associations

are being asked to write letters expressing commitment to a reorganized homeowners council. Letters should be written prior to the scheduled August meeting.

In discussing the council's revival, neighborhood representatives said they wanted to ensure that such an organization truly represented the neighborhoods.

At the least, representatives said, the revived homeowners council also must voice the opinion of those within the organization that disagree with a majority opinion on any topic, Johnson said.

## Founders Fest — It continues to expand

The 1988 Founders Festival parade will be filled with local bands, pageant queens, clowns and more.

Beginning at 10 a.m. Saturday, July 16, at the Grand River Drive-In, the parade will travel west on Grand River to the Farmington Road intersection.

There are over 50 organizations already participating, and we are receiving more entries every day," said parade chairwoman, Suzanne Miller.

The Shriners will perform as their famous keystone cops, oriental band and drum and bagpipe corps.

Local bands include the Farmington Hills Music Ale and the Farmington Elks Motorized Drill Team. Fuzzy and Sparkle the clowns will again be on hand.

Highlights of the parade include floats for the 1988 Miss Farmington and her court, including Kelly Lynn

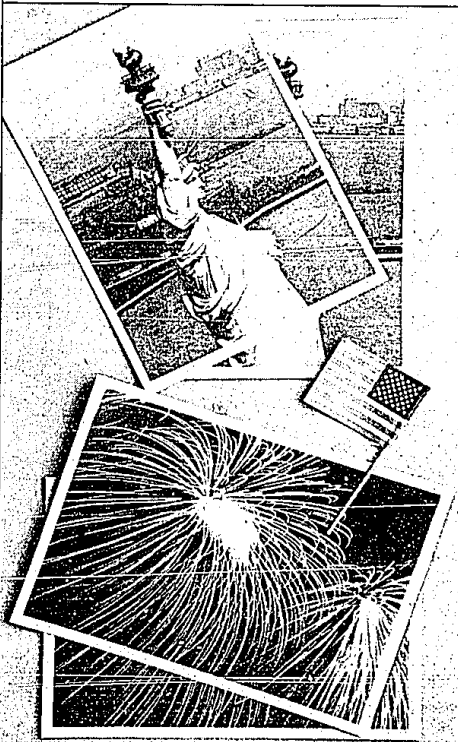
Garver, Miss Farmington 1985, who was recently crowned Miss Michigan. Miss Oakland County 1986 and her court will also greet spectators.

**TWO MAJOR** floats in the parade are those marking the 40th anniversary of the Farmington Jaycees and the 150th anniversary of the Botsford Inn.

The parade grand marshal, Jean M. Fox, recently completed a book on the history of the Botsford Inn and the area, "More Than a Tavern: 150 Years of Botsford Inn." A noted local historian, Fox will explain the growth of the area in a presentation at the Botsford Inn on Friday, July 15.

The application deadline for entering the parade is Wednesday, July 16. For more information, call 474-3440.

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