

Rurban Life

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Christmas celebrated 1760 style

"A Williamsburg Christmas" will capture the sights and sounds of the historic city in Virginia with authentic colonial decor, food and music.

The evening planned for Saturday, Dec. 13, is a Christmas gift to the community from Nardin Park United Methodist Church's Music and Fine Arts Committee and represents the collective artistry of more than 200 church members.

Augmenting the candlelight atmosphere of the entire church, visitors are invited without charge, to enjoy several 1760 experiences.

The evening begins at 7 p.m. with a concert of brass and strings performing the baroque music that was played in colonial times.

At 7:30 p.m. the audience will be invited to join the 70-voice Sanctuary Choir, intertwining traditional carols with special holiday music for choir, brass, handbells and strings. The featured soloists are

Alice Avedisian and Faith Rick, sopranos, with Keith Witmer, bass. The musical event will be directed by Melvin C. Rookus, minister of music for Nardin Park.

Following the music program, members of eight organizations within the church will host their own reception.

Guests will be welcome to wander from one to another, seeing the displays of centerpieces, the settings of the tables, sampling the beverages, the desserts, the finger foods that were typical holiday fare 200 years ago, and served by the hosts and hostesses in period costume.

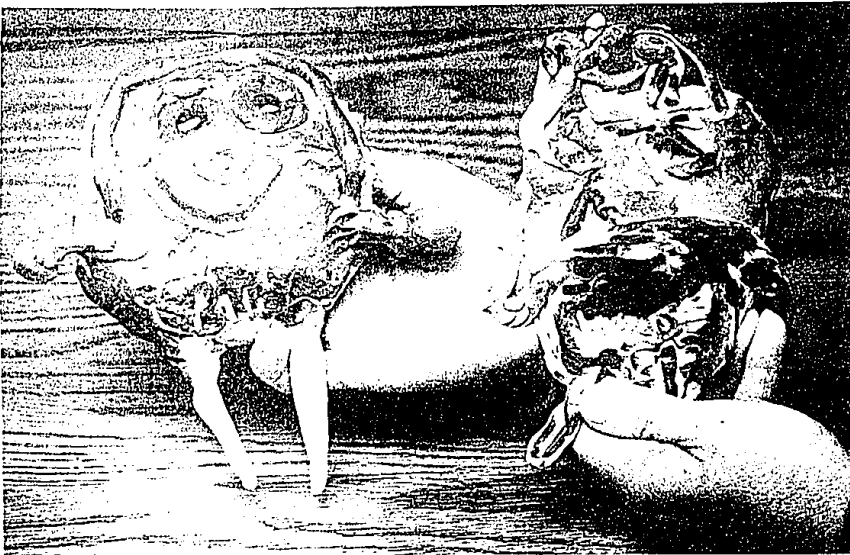
Some groups may choose to sell their centerpieces. Others have already been committed to be given to area nursing homes.

Dr. William A. Ritter is senior minister of the church, on 11 Mile Road, west of Middlebelt.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Dorothy Cook and Ruth Pryor prepare for "A Williamsburg Christmas," a gift to the community from members of Nardin Park United Methodist Church.



photos by RANDY BORST/staff photographer

The Halloween masks were created out of clay by preschoolers in classes led by Sue Katz.

Creative Art for Kids

The emphasis is on the process, not the product

By Loraine McClish
staff writer

THE TOOLS OF THE trade for Sue Katz are everyday items that can be found around the house. Coffee filters, shredded paper, a piece of corrugated board, some aluminum foil, some seeds or some beads might be used in her classes "Creative Arts for Kids."

"It's all for exploring and experimenting with found materials," Katz said. "This is not a cut and paste class. I give a very minimal amount of instruction and then let the creativity soar. How they handle the materials is up to them."

"All of the emphasis is on creativity and the process of the doing rather than on the finished product." Katz has led 4-6-year-olds in developing their creativity in Southfield Cultural Center, Akiva Day School, Gibson School for the Gifted

and Jewish Community Center.

She offers the first "Creative Arts for Kids" classes in her Farmington Hills home, both mornings and afternoons, Wednesday and Thursday.

"There is a need for this," she said. "Children today are so programmed with their learning curriculum there is little time or opportunity for them to know the joy of creating."

A NATIVE OF Canada, Katz won a scholarship in Toronto to obtain the Supervisor Certificate of Art, the highest certification one can obtain in the field of art education.

"What I teach is mentally healthy," she said. "Every piece the child creates is a success that builds up his self esteem. My students can't wait until they are able to show their parents what they've made — an original piece that is like no one else's."

"And it spreads out to so many

other things in life. When a child knows that if one piece of the materials he has been given won't work in one spot, it might work in another. That knowledge will enable him to adapt to many different, maybe difficult, situations. That child is going to find a different road to take, knowing that there is more than one road leading to a goal or a given point. As the child grows older there will be more willingness to try new things, no matter what the circumstances are," she said.

In the meantime, Katz said, "The child will take what he learned in class and carry it one step further exploring with simple things lying around the house. He or she will have learned that things always don't have to look as they appear and has learned a new way to occupy themselves in their free time. And parents aren't forever buying the newest toy on the market."

CHILDREN IN Katz's 90-minute classes work on a crayon table, then a printing and painting table, then a pottery table in each of the once-a-week 10 week sessions.

"They'll learn what dyes and India inks or styrofoam or clay, or feathers, or any other materials of varied textures can do for them," Katz said, "and each child creates three projects every week."

Following her enjoy-while-creating philosophy, Katz said, "The kids are not responsible for any cleanup. I do that. The only trouble I might have is the child that doesn't want to leave at the end of the session."

Katz lives at 34299 Commons Road, between 13 and 14 Mile, between Drake and Farmington Road. Fee for the class is \$75 which includes all materials. Wednesday and Thursday classes begin at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Each class is limited to 10 students. Registration is made by calling Katz at 661-5293.

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— Sue Katz



The much-loved and much-worn T-shirt was created by its owner, Wade Hirschman, a kindergartener at Forest Elementary School.



Farmington Hills kindergartener Emily Leach produced this three-dimensional painting when she was taking "Creative Art for Kids" classes in the fall at the Jewish Community Center.