



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

### Up the Down Staircase

A confrontation between teacher Sylvia Barrett and Calvin Coolidge High School's principal is acted out by Jennifer Kannisto and Brian Zuckerberg in North Farmington High School's production of "Up the Down Staircase." Curtain is 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday in the school auditorium, 13 Mile, east of Farmington Road. Tickets are \$3, or \$2.50 for seniors and students, at the door.



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### Easter bunny comes for lunch

Sarah Wise (in front) and Jennifer and Margaret Ammann meet the Easter Bunny, who will come for lunch Saturday, April 18, in First United Methodist Church of Farmington, 3312 Grand River. Lunch, Easter treats, entertainment and photos taken by Moto Photo are all part of the holiday party at 11:45 a.m. or 1 p.m., sponsored by Farmington Area Community Women. Reservations, at \$2.50 each, are necessary, made by calling Pam Ammann, 477-6337.

### Playgroup in session

Farmington Youth Assistance from 9:30-11:30 a.m. Wednesdays in (FYA) sponsors a Playgroup for mothers and their children from infancy to five years of age, who meet Church of Christ, Farmington Hills. Inquiries are taken by calling FYA, 476-3840.

## Plants have a retirement center

PEOPLE AREN'T the only ones who retire in the condominium complex where Joe and I now live. We also have a retirement spot for plants.

Well, that's not what the manager or anyone else calls the garden out by the swimming pool. But that's what it seems to be. The garden surrounds several large trees so it gets a fair amount of shade. It's a hodge-podge of plants, with quite a few vacant spots. I hadn't paid it much attention until late spring rolled around the first year we lived here.

THEN, HANGERS with house plants in them started appearing on the tree branches. They were left by residents going north for the summer. When fall came, I noticed several of the hanging plants went back to their apartment homes. Others didn't, and then I noticed they had been planted in the garden. "We just stick them in the ground if they seem healthy," the manager

retirement memos  
**Margaret Miller**

told me. "Gives us some variety in the garden."

I started looking more carefully. Sure enough, tucked in various corners of the plot were poinsettia plants, assorted ornamental palms, crotons with their multi-color leaves. Variety indeed for growing things retired from their apartment homes.

I STARTED THINKING more about the garden when a small palm we had in a corner pot began to out-grow its space. It had come to us three or four inches high, the center of an arrangement sent by a couple of daughters for an anniversary,

Now it measured three feet high and had a lot of brown leaves. Not very attractive in the apartment, but how would it do down in the garden?

I gave it a try, using rather primitive horticultural techniques and taking down a bucket to water it occasionally since we were in the midst of a rather dry summer. It looked pretty dead for a long time. Then new leaves sprouted, and now it's a graceful little palm I much enjoy greeting when I go down to swim.

I MENTIONED the plant to a friend who also lives here. She laughed and said: "I'll tell you about my contribution to that garden —

but I've never told anyone before."

Then she pointed to a Norway Pine, taller than her second-floor apartment but bending from its usual straight shape because its top was tangled in the branches of the larger trees.

"My daughter and her family bought it the first Christmas I was here," she said, "and after Christmas they insisted on planting it out there. If we'd known how well it would do and how fast it would grow, we wouldn't have crowded it in like that."

I don't mind the crowded appearance, and I'm getting more and more fond of that hodge-podge garden. In fact, we have a Christmas poinsettia that is going into retirement soon. Quite soon.

Margaret Miller was Suburban Life editor for Observer Newspaper for 16 years. She and her husband, Joe, have retired to Florida, where she writes Retirement Memos.

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