

Honeymoon

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tailed, day-by-day account of their journey.

"Our kids said to us, 'your 50th anniversary is coming up — do you have anything planned?' ... I found the log, and we thought; gee, it'd be fun to re-do that," Vernon said.

Although they will be relying on the log for accuracy, the couple will have to make some accommodations for 50 years of changes: their original room at the Grand Hotel, Number 236, has become a victim of remodeling, and Frankennuth was enlisted as a stand-in for Detroit when Vernon discovered that "the Detroit Stalter no longer exists ... I'm not sure I'd want to take the car into Detroit, nowadays, any-

way."

The alterations in the couple's plans were suggested by Kaye Britton, proprietor of Farmington's Kaye Britton Travel, who has booked the Schafers' travel for over 20 years.

"They are very, very active," Britton said.

Britton said she was glad to play a role in the Schafers' plans.

"I thought it was terrible. I was very pleased that they called me," Britton said.

The Mercury has special significance for Vernon, a retired General Motors engineer: "It was the first car I ever owned. I courted Nancy in it for a year and a half," he said.

Nancy, too, has fond memories of

the car: "We brought our babies home in it," she said.

Fond memories aside, the car does seem a bit, well, old to make a 600-mile round trip.

"We'll be taking the back roads. We did a test drive about two weeks ago, and we made it to Sault Ste. Marie," Vernon said.

Despite Vernon's assurances, Nancy does have some reservations about the car.

"When we first talked about it, we joked about driving 'up there with our son behind us in a tow truck. Now, the tow truck is out of the plan," Nancy said. "Truthfully, I'm kind of worried."

Camp

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social co-operation and understanding.

The Leshners, who live in West Bloomfield, have spent the last year designing the camp; while his wife created posters and worked behind the scenes at the camp. Leshner used the skills necessary to his job as general sales manager at WJLB-FM to become the camp's unofficial spokesman and fund raiser. Although other groups have helped out by providing services and products for fund-raising activities, Leshner has paid for most of the administrative costs himself.

Ex-cop adds input

The Leshners have not worked alone, however; Curtis Davenport, a former police officer and schoolteacher who now runs AGA-E, a human relations and diversity consulting firm, has provided a lot of input into the camp's structure and activities. And will be in charge of the camp's daily operations.

Leshner said he hopes the camp's participants will come from various ethnic, religious, and economic backgrounds; to make the camp accessible to all children, every participant's fees will be paid by the Mark Leshner Foundation for Children, and transportation and extended day care will be provided.

"We're looking for a balance ... We want it to be as diverse as Detroit," Leshner said.

The program's diversity, and its mission of promoting understanding, are meant, Leshner said, to reflect his son's open, accepting nature toward all people.

"My home, Vernon Green, said in her eulogy for Mark, 'Mark created his own rainbow coalition, and if you don't believe it, look around this room' ... He would high-five all the men and blow kisses to all the ladies. He never met a stranger," Leshner said.

The camp will meet in two sessions, each easily accessible from both the city and the suburbs. "Participants can drop by, if they want to," Leshner said. The first session will be a day camp for children 5-7 years old at University of Detroit Mercy's Outer Drive campus; the second will be a residential program for children 8-10, to be held on the campus of Oakland University.

Although Davenport has founded programs to promote diversity



Mark Robert Leshner: The summer camp is named in his honor.

among children in other states, this is the first one he has created for such young children. Both he and Leshner feel it is important to teach children tolerance as soon as possible.

"Some kids have already begun digesting negative socialization," Davenport said.

The sessions are designed to provide positive interaction between children from different backgrounds, thereby preventing the attitudes which lead to stereotyping and hostility, Davenport said.

Overcoming prejudice

"There are two roads to overcoming prejudice: legislation, which helps in the legal arena; and education, which breaks down the spiritual barriers," Davenport said.

If the camp is beginning to sound like diversity summer school, don't worry; Davenport stressed that, in addition to being educational, every activity is designed to be fun and age-appropriate.

"It's designed to teach kids about human differences. Ethnic groups will be coming out to do presentations, but the kids will participate. It won't be lectures," Davenport said.

One such blend of participation and education is the handicap game, in which two relay teams will be divided into those who are "handicapped" by the counselors and those who must help them down the field and back. As with

the other activities, a group discussion of the feelings and issues of being "different" will follow the competition.

Although each session lasts only a week, Davenport knows first-hand how a single experience can have a definite impact on a person's life.

"We're going to do as much as we can in five days to shape people's values. When I was a little kid, a police officer — I still remember his name, Officer Spartan — came to my school," Davenport recalled.

"The teacher chose me to take him around and introduce him to the classes. He put his cap on my head and I felt so tall. It shaped my view and my life in that direction."

That experience has found its way into the program, as police officers will be present at the camp to promote positive images of law enforcement. The remainder of the camp's staff will be mainly schoolteachers and students; some are volunteers, some will be paid stipends.

Much of the camp's success will rest on the friendships formed during the sessions, Leshner said.

"We're looking at reunions and outgrowths of this three months, six months down the road so they can keep the friendships going. Building relationships is what will help the overall relationship of the metro area. I want Mark's hometown area to get along," Leshner said.

Indeed, Mark's determination has inspired Leshner's work on the camp.

"He was a very determined young man. He would throw balls up at 10-foot hoops; we would keep saying, 'almost,' but he would say 'missed,' and keep trying," Leshner said.

Leshner said he hopes the camp will expand and, ultimately, become self-supporting.

The Mark Leshner Foundation, 21st Century Cityurban, Camp is accepting applications through June 18. The Mark Leshner Foundation for Children is a federally recognized 501(C)(3) organization. For information, call 496-2019, or write: The Mark Leshner Foundation for Children, c/o New Detroit, Inc., One Kennedy Square, Suite 1000, Detroit, MI 48226. Donations, payable to "The Mark Leshner Foundation for Children," are tax-deductible and are accepted at anytime.

These hotlines can help seniors

Here's a list of toll free numbers that may be of help and interest to older adults and their families. These toll free hotlines may be able to assist the callers in finding the information they require.

Social Security Assistance
1-800-225-0292
Hospice
1-800-331-1620
Energy Assistance
1-800-292-5550

Cancer Information Center
1-800-422-6237
Arthritis Foundation
1-800-283-7800
Taxpayers Information (Federal)
1-800-829-1040
Taxpayers Assistance (State)
1-800-487-7000
American Council for the Blind
1-800-424-8666
American Diabetes Association
1-800-232-3472

American Paralysis Association
1-800-225-0292
American Parkinson's Disease Association
1-800-223-2732
Auto Repair Complaints
1-800-292-4204
Alzheimer's & Related Disorders Center
1-800-272-3000
Citizens for Better Care
1-800-292-7852

Want a fashion listing?

If you're planning a fall fashion show, we'd like to hear from you.

A calendar listing of shows will appear in the Observer & Eccentric's annual fall fashion section in late August. The section will highlight the latest in fashion wear within the metro area.

Send calendar listings to: Fall Fashion Calendar, Special Sections

Editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 30251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150. The deadline is July 15.

Include the name, sponsor, theme, date, time and location of the event as well as cost and reservation information. Also include a contact name and daytime phone number.

Direct queries to Bob Sklar, special sections editor, 953-2113.

The phone numbers above are provided by Renee Mahler, who writes the On Aging column for the Observer & Eccentric. She is a gerontologist and the director of communications and admissions at a Rochester Hills nursing facility. Mahler is a member of the Michigan State Commission on Services to the Aging. Send your questions to her at Observer & Eccentric, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham 48009.

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