

Seniors invited to Junior Miss meeting

The Michigan Junior Miss Scholarship Program has announced that a new At-Large program will be held this August to give senior girls graduating in the Spring of 2004 the opportunity to qualify for the State Program held in Alpena.

Formerly, only those girls participating in a local program could go on to compete at the state level.

The new At-Large program is open to all senior girls living in the southern Michigan area who have no local program. Girls compete in the

areas of scholastics, talent, stage presence, fitness and interviews.

Contestants qualifying for the State program will compete for cash scholarships and tuition grants at the Michigan Junior Miss Program to be held in February, 2004 and the opportunity to represent their state at America's Junior Miss in Mobile, Alabama, which is televised nationally.

The America's Junior Miss Program was founded in 1957 and is the oldest and largest scholarship program for high school senior girls. More than

\$1.8 million in cash scholarships and \$32 million in college granted scholarships are available each year.

For more information visit www.JMM.org or www.societies.com/MIJU-NIORMISS

An informational meeting will be held on Saturday, May 10, 2 p.m., at Jan's Dance Connection located at 260332 Ford Road in Dearborn Heights. Questions can be addressed to Lydia Soroosh at 734-426-4744, or email yvonnelorenz@comcast.net or JMSickle@aol.com

Youth Theater presents 'School House Rock'

The city of Farmington Hills Youth Theater, in conjunction with Sky's the Limit Productions, is presenting "School House Rock," the popular musical stage version of the '70's educational television cartoon of the same name.

The musical will be presented at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 8 and then at 1 and 7 p.m. Saturday, May 10, at the Costick Center, 28600 West Floren Mile Road, between Middlebelt and Inkster.

The cast includes 60 young performers age 7-17, who were selected from among 127 local young people who auditioned for the coveted roles.

For several months, students have been learning stage technique in preparation for the show, painting scenery and singing and dancing.

Producer Lisa Muscio has years of experience running youth theater programs. She is supported by directors Terrie Spencer and Jim Snideman, both veterans of youth theater as well.

Tickets for the production

are \$8 per person and may be purchased at the door based on availability, ordered from a cast member, or reserved by calling Sky's the Limit Productions at (248) 219-0020.

Group rates are available for groups of 15 or more. Call Sky's the Limit Productions for more information.

For more information on Cultural arts programs, or to receive a calendar of cultural activities in the area, call the Farmington Hills Cultural Arts Division, at (248) 473-1800.

MCCULLOCH

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tests over the past 100 years such that we have a good classification system for different categories of intelligence.

A "normal" or Average IQ falls between 90 and 109. Fifty percent of a sample of test takers, at any time, will obtain scores within this range.

Working upwards, a High Average or bright IQ falls between 110 and 119. A Superior IQ falls between 120 and 129 and a Very Superior IQ is 130 or above.

Only 2 percent of the population falls in the Very Superior Range. A 130 IQ is typically the cutoff point for acceptance into schools for gifted children.

On the other hand, working downwards, an IQ score from 80 to 89 is considered Low Average or dull. A score from 70 to 79 is called Borderline Deficient and a score of 69 or below constitutes Mental Deficiency, and is found in only 2 percent of the population and is diagnostic of mental retardation.

The Wechsler Intelligence Test has versions for different ages. The Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence assesses children age 3 years, 10 months up to 6 years, 6 months.

The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children was designed to evaluate children age 6 through 16. The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scales are used for people age 16 and up.

The content and statistical reliability of this test has been constantly improved over the past century such that the tests are now in their third revision. The tests are typically valid over time span.

This means a person tested at different points in life tends to score generally within the same range as he/she did on previous testings (assuming there has been no injury to the brain or other acquired event which would change one's status).

The intelligence test itself is made up of about 10 subtests

that measure a variety of areas proven to be related to a demonstration of problem-solving abilities and knowledge of learned facts.

These subtests are divided into two basic areas: verbal and nonverbal.

The verbal tests include the ability to answer questions about general information (example, in what direction does the sun rise?), the ability to see similarities between different objects (how are a coat and a suit similar?), arithmetic reasoning and knowledge of vocabulary words, comprehension of social events (why child labor laws are needed, for example) and so forth.

In the nonverbal areas, the test taker is asked to identify missing parts from pictures, arrange pictures in order so that they make sense, assemble objects, and perform hand-eye coordination tasks while being timed.

Another way to think of intelligence is by comparing it to a bank account. The more money you have in the account, the more you will be able to spend on things you want to have. Similarly, the number of IQ points you have in your "brain bank" will determine how much you have to spend on learning and achievement and mastery of events in your environment.

Some causes of low intelligence have been shown in the field of genetics (what we inherit from our parents) and intrauterine experiences (the pregnant mother's nutrition, ingestion of substances of abuse including cigarettes, etc.).

Also, birth injuries can result in oxygen deprivation directly associated with low intellectual development.

Finally, a big problem which can impair intellectual development is lead poisoning.

This continues to be a bigger problem than you may think. Recently, USA Today ran an article, "Even safe lead levels in blood may be unsafe."

The article described how children with blood lead levels

considered safe by federal guidelines may still suffer impairments of their intellectual abilities.

We know lead is in metal, and we know it wreaks havoc on the developing brain and is directly related to many causes of mental retardation. The article reconsiders guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to question what levels of lead exposure are safe, if any.

Lead can cause dangerous swelling of the brain and even death in high concentrations. The problem is there are still many houses that children are raised in which were painted with lead-based paint.

Another problem is many cars are still running on leaded gasoline.

Interesting studies have shown, in general, people living within a few blocks radius of expressways, regularly had higher concentrations of lead in their blood than those living beyond a certain radius of expressways with the increased automobile traffic.

RESOURCES

Every school district has school psychologists specifically trained in the administration and interpretation of standard intelligence tests.

Gibson School for the Gifted in Redford maintains a list of referral psychologists and holds open houses several times throughout the year for parents who want to determine if their children are in the gifted range for educational planning purposes.

The Center for Human Development at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak provides diagnostic assessment of intelligence and can be reached at (248) 691-4744.

Leonard J. McCulloch is a Diplomat of the American Psychotherapy Association, board-certified in trauma, a consultant to the Gibson School for the Gifted and director of Psychological Services at Broe Rehabilitation Services Inc. He can be reached at (248) 474-2763. His monthly column, "Our Mental Health," appears in the Observer & Eccentric the first Thursday of each month.

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