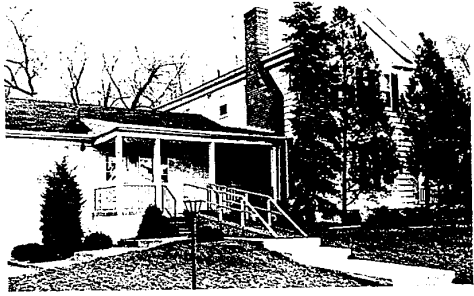




HOUSEFATHER Craig Daniels and Frances, one of the residents of Merriman House, begin evening meal preparations on the huge stove in the remodeled kitchen.

Spotlight on Women
 Wednesday, December 6, 1972 Page 1C
 OBSERVER NEWSPAPERS
 Publishers of Farmington Enterprise & Observer, Garden City Observer, Livonia Observer, Plymouth Mail & Observer, Royal Oak Observer, Southfield News & Observer, Westland Observer



MERRIMAN HOUSE, above, with its wide porches and tall trees, is an inviting residence for special teens. At the right, Cheryl and Diane share one of the airy bedrooms.



This House Is A Home

By MARGARET MILLER

They call it Merriman House, and it's home to 10 quite special teenagers.

You'll find the address, 6012 Merriman in Garden City, painted on a stone in front of the rambling frame house.

Go inside and you might meet Craig Daniels or his wife, Linda, houseparents, or maybe Mrs. Nola Thomas, mental retardation coordinator for the Northwestern Guidance Clinic which serves this area.

And if you see a yellow school bus pull up, you'll be right in the middle of the kind of bedlam you might expect in any home when a bunch of excited kids arrive with stories of the school day's doings.

Institutional care ranges from \$21 to \$29 per day per patient, depending on the size of care involved, Torma said.

"We're operating here on \$15 per day per child," he added. "Actually, we're renegotiating with the state — that figure is somewhat low. But if we could get a little closer to that \$21 minimum for institutional care, we could staff the house more adequately and depend less on volunteer help."

CENTERING the staff that takes care of this most unusual home are the Daniels and Mrs. Thomas. Craig Daniels, a big, warm-hearted man, and his wife, who is completing work toward a degree in special education at Eastern Michigan University,

day, helps set up programs and is on hand to be part of greeting the young residents when they return from special education classes.

An employee of the Northwestern Guidance Clinic, she also helped a number of younger former residents of the Plymouth State Home move into a new residence in the Evangelical Home in Detroit, and eventually she'll move from Merriman House to some other program for the clinic, maybe another sheltered workshop.

Other staff members are Elaine Templeton, Valerie Templeton, Phyllis Betz and Susan Torma, who put in varying hours helping with meal-preparing, housework and laundry, and Sharon Barber and Doug Redding,

the immediate neighborhood is indicative of the acceptance Merriman House has found in its Garden City location.

"Our relationship with the neighbors has been great," Craig Daniels said. "We haven't been bothered at all by vandalism or pranksters, and there's been no name-calling."

"Our kids visit homes in the neighborhood, and some of them come here to play. And several women in the area have become volunteers here."

More volunteers are needed, Mrs. Thomas said. Residents of Merriman house need a lot of individual attention, and that isn't always possible in a family as big as this.

Merriman House are convinced its establishment is a good move for these young people.

"We feel there's been a major improvement in the kids' social adjustment and that's the biggest problem," said Daniels. "The Plymouth home just isn't set up to foster a social atmosphere."

"They fight and they socialize," Mrs. Thomas put it.

Torma pointed out that two

Continued on Page 3C

TEENS WHO LIVE in Merriman House were residents of the Plymouth State Home and Training School until last July 5.

Their present living situation represents part of a new policy on the part of the Michigan Department of Mental Health — to leave the institution space for the profoundly retarded and seriously handicapped and move into a more homelike atmosphere the mildly and moderately retarded.

There are two good reasons for doing this, said Soini Torma, director of the Northwestern Guidance Clinic, which is located across the street and up the block from the former dentist's office that now is Merriman House.

"It gives the kids the advantage of living in a community, and because they can be housed at less cost in a home than in an institution, it costs the taxpayer less," he said.

How much less?

live at Merriman House with the five boys and five girls ranging in age from 12 to 16. As "parents" to the assorted group, they keep the home running, see that everyone does his assigned task and arrange activities and recreation.

Daniels also does the heavy man- or -of-the-house chores and he's the one in charge of getting dinner most evenings.

Mrs. Thomas works at Merriman House during each

who are substitute house parents and fill in for the Daniels a couple of weekends a month.

SUPPLEMENTING their efforts is the help of many volunteers — both adult and teen. They help with projects, work with the girls on grooming, take the young residents on outings and just come and visit.

The fact that a number of these volunteers come from

THOSE IN CHARGE of

SANTA'S WORKSHOP is a Christmas project planned for Saturday, Dec. 16, by Girl Scout Cadette Troop 38 of Farmington. The junior high scouts will help younger children make ornaments in three sessions beginning at 9:30, 10:30 or 11:30 a.m. in Orchard Methodist Church, 30450 Farmington Road, north of 13 Mile. The Cadettes also will serve refreshments. The cost is \$1.25 a child or \$4.50 for a family of four or more, and reservations should be made with Ann Dougherty, 30015 Valley Side, or Karon Perkins, 29849 Beacontree. Previewing the workshop are, from left, Suzie Jewsbury, Cadettes Ann Dougherty and Janey Malloy, Monica Breen and Tim Rennard. (Evert photo)



THOSE IN CHARGE of

SANTA'S WORKSHOP is a Christmas project planned for Saturday, Dec. 16, by Girl Scout Cadette Troop 38 of Farmington. The junior high scouts will help younger children make ornaments in three sessions beginning at 9:30, 10:30 or 11:30 a.m. in Orchard Methodist Church, 30450 Farmington Road, north of 13 Mile. The Cadettes also will serve refreshments. The cost is \$1.25 a child or \$4.50 for a family of four or more, and reservations should be made with Ann Dougherty, 30015 Valley Side, or Karon Perkins, 29849 Beacontree. Previewing the workshop are, from left, Suzie Jewsbury, Cadettes Ann Dougherty and Janey Malloy, Monica Breen and Tim Rennard. (Evert photo)

make christmas last a lifetime,
 give her a Sweetheart Chest by Lane

The gift she'll cherish through the years! And in our great Christmas assortment, you're certain to find the Lane Sweetheart Chest that's perfect for her! All with cedar interiors, locks and keys, multi-use design features.

BANKAMERICARD MASTER CHARGE OR CONVENIENT TERMS

Rugged antique pine chest in early American design.

Handsome, dark oak chest with impressive detailing. Concealed casters. \$165.00

Elegant colonial design in rich, glowing cherry. \$184.50

OPEN MONDAY THRU FRIDAY 10 A.M. to 9 P.M.
 SATURDAY TO 5:30 P.M.
 SUNDAY — NOON TO 4 P.M. for browsing only

the Hearthside
 Michigan's Largest Ethan Allen Dealer

LIVONIA 15700 MIDDLEBELT Just North of Five Mile Road PHONE 422-8770

UTICA 50170 VAN DYKE Between 22 and 23 Mile Roads PHONE 739-6100