

editorial opinion

Orchard Ridge celebrates wonders of 10 growing years

By CORINNE ABATT

The Oakland Community College Orchard Ridge campus is celebrating its 10th birthday Sunday, June 8, with an open house.

It looked so raw when it first appeared on the skyline, angular brick buildings, miles of cement sidewalk stuck up there on that hill. And the public's concept of its function was equally raw—a retreat for high school graduates who couldn't make it any place else.

Ah, the wonders of time and the maturity it can bring. Today that hill belongs to the college, the brick colors have mellowed.

The gaslights along the drives are a familiar nighttime landmark, the shrubbery has shaped itself around the buildings. The walls are not covered with ivy yet, but evergreens and maple, beech and oak cast some welcome shade.

NOT ONLY has the maturing taken place on the outside, it has been a total process on the part of the college and the surrounding community.

It is a campus where 18-year-olds and 60-year-olds sit side-by-side in classes. More often than not both hold daytime jobs to support their night-time classes. It is not a campus of those who finished last in their high school classes, but more and

more it is becoming a student body of those in the top quarter of their classes.

Orchard Ridge campus is a meeting place for public school teachers who come for a day or a weekend to gather special training, for housewives and homemakers wanting to learn a new skill, for college students home on vacation who pay \$10 a credit hour for courses that would cost them much more on their home campuses.

MANY OF the faculty hold full time jobs in their professions and teach because they love to.

There is no Ivory tower on the Orchard Ridge campus, no place to hide from reality. Those who teach in the art department are themselves recognized artists, those in the life-science department practice what they preach. Those who teach advertising and management and communications actually work in those fields.

Sunday, June 8, noon to 6 p.m., the college will hold an open house for the community. It is a light-hearted event, complete with displays of art and photography and refreshments to sip while listening to Dixieland jazz.

What nicer gesture on the part of the community than to show up on Sunday and salute a neighbor who in the last 10 years has become a good, close friend.

Jackie Klein writes

People improvement business

A group of 22 women are lounging around listening silently as though hypnotized, listening to one dynamic masculine voice.

The silver-haired, distinguished looking speaker stands erect, his eyes contacting every woman in the room, his voice commanding attention, his words penetrating.

He moves slightly at first with a kind of subtle body language. He gains momentum, bounds and springs agilely, then touches a hand, radiating enthusiasm.

Arthur Brooks is a cross between Dale Carnegie, John Powers, Flo Ziegfield and Walter Pigeon. He's a consultant in sales and management development in West Bloomfield Township but now he's selling himself and his philosophies to his rapt female audience.

THE WOMEN are attending a "get-away weekend" at Mercy Center in Farmington, sponsored by Do Something Different Inc. of Birmingham.

I ATTENDED that workshop and this article I wrote appeared in a March issue of the Birmingham Observer & Eccentric. I said Brooks is as interesting as his topic. "How to be rational in an irrational World."

Brooks has been a farmer, a logger, a lumberjack, and engineer and a gandy dancer. He built radio stations in Japan after World War II and lectured through the country for John Robert Powers products.

He's lectured and conducted workshops and seminars for business and industry, was in television and commercial movies for 20 years, taught courses in professional salesmanship and personal development and was sales representative for Pan American Airways in the territory of Alaska.

Some of Brooks's quotes at the Mercy Center seminar were: "This is a generation of idiots who are taught defrosting

but not how to cook in a plug-in, pell-mell world."

"MAN IS only 10 per cent effective if he fails to ask questions, seek a better job or have a real zest for living. He's worried and afraid in a 'thank God it's Friday, my God, it's Monday again' society."

"OUR NAMES weren't in the obituary column today. There's no bad weather, just warm clothes. Apathy leads to mediocrity and stagnation."

Brooks believed in planning for change and discovering new challenges instead of letting things just happen. He talked about starting an idea file, the need for "mental vitamins" and the fear and lack of self worth that prevent change.

On May 23, I received a letter from Brooks. He said he had gone to Minneapolis to become a certified coordinator for Adventures in Attitudes and he hoped to be offering these classes in many areas by fall.

"I'm doing a series of workshops for Michigan National Bank managers," he wrote. "The subject is communications with special emphasis on how one comes across."

"I WAS ACCEPTED as a member of the National Speakers Association and am going to Phoenix June 8-13 for a week-long workshop and meeting to become even more professional. People improvement is my business and I look forward to your reporting on me again one day."

I didn't expect that day to come so soon. On May 26, Brooks, 60, died in Pontiac General Hospital. He is survived by his wife, a daughter and four sons he proudly spoke of at that weekend seminar.

"Tributes may be made to the Michigan Heart Association," his obituary read.

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