

An introduction to the bush country

By LORAIN McCLISH

About two or three dozen persons will take their first canoeing trip this summer, after a series of classroom instructions preparing for the weekend event, that is now going on in the Farmington Community Center.

TS-Instructor and guide is John Graham, creator of Michigan Wilderness Adventure. He said he has spent "all of my life, it seems, out in the bush."

He was with the military for 18 years where he taught survival training to every branch of the service. His training for this was with the Indians in the Philippines and Panama and some tribes in Alaska.

"They know what they're doing," he said. "They work and survive with just what mother nature gave them. Doing just what their ancestors did."

HIS FULL TIME business now, which he runs out of his Franklin Village home, has to do with outfitting and planning the trips for those who want anything from mountain climbing to kayaking out in the wilds.

His clients might be nature lovers or sportsmen, those who have seen something on television or in a travelogue they would like to experience for themselves, or it might be someone who wants instructions pertaining to a job.

He has trained persons who were going off into primitive lands on oil explorations and persons who were going to work on the Alaskan pipeline.

His most unusual client, he said, was a middle aged lawyer who dealt in land claims "that dated back into the 1800s. He had to get out on this land for surveying purposes."

Age is no factor. "We once celebrated the birthday of a 71-year-old man out in the bush."

SAFETY IS ALL-IMPORTANT in training. Equipment is tested over and over again. If Graham doesn't think a particular piece of equipment is suitable for a given trip he has been known to manufacture it. One of his creations was a device for carrying equipment for long portages on a 1,400-mile canoeing trip in Newfoundland.

But the in-depth training Graham gives is psychological. He finds himself combatting fear on the one hand and over-confidence on the other. Of

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the two, he says, "Over-confidence is the one thing that will kill you."

Parties that go out in the bush go as a team with Graham, or one of his partners working as a member of the team "because an individual will just never make it."

"In 20 years, I've never known one who did," he said. The parties also might be sent on a test run "in the most remote place in the severest weather we can find," though all trips are set up according to the participants' abilities.

He has arranged trips to "any place in the world, complete with rescue techniques for any kind of terrain or weather."

Of the fear aspect, Graham believes the average adult has the same psychological stress ratio as a five year old.

"You wouldn't believe fears concerning animal life. Reptiles are the worst."

I've brought snakes into the classroom on occasion just to let them (the students) know what they look like and what they can expect."

Lessons on animal life in a particular habitat, wild-lands, and flowers are all part of the classroom instruction.

"As to the fun seekers and the abusers, those who just want to do something once and aren't interested in learning, well, we can spot those readily enough."

"And there are those who are going to break mentally, those who are just out to freeze in their tracks, and that sometimes happens. But we can spot those, too, and we're prepared for them," he said.

THE TEAM EFFORT Graham stresses in his adventure trip extends to his home life. "I'm a firm believer in the adage that if you don't work, you don't eat," he said.

Graham's wife, Joan, handles most of the contacts while he's out in the bush, and has taken some groups on trips herself.

Cindy had her 16th birthday party this month and has been backpacking since she was old enough to walk. She has given backpacking instructions for Michigan Wilderness Adventure classes, does a lot of the organizing and a lot of the cooking.

Fourteen-year-old Paula was described by her father as "coming along, taking after her sister."

Ten-year-old Dale "could be turned loose with a climbing party. There is not much he doesn't know about it, and he's an expert in flora and fauna and wild foods."

Dale also does his climbing equipment for his father's classes illustrating how to come down a mountain wall "using any side of a building or tall tree that's available."

Another canoeing trip as well as a backpacking trip, with preparatory classroom instructions, will be offered through the Farmington Community Center later in the summer. When dates are set the announcements will be published in this newspaper.



Ten year old Dale Graham dons his climbing gear and comes down a tall tree to illustrate to his father's clients the way it's supposed to be done.

Staff photos by Craig Newman

Widow finds 'answer' in singles camping



By CORINNE ABATT

Twice widowed Marge Miner of Farmington Hills figures her life might have been grim without the National Campers and Hikers Association.

Saying how much she has enjoyed her more than 10 year affiliation with the national organization, she adds, "It has really been the answer to my life as a single!"

WHILE MOST of the 363 chapters in Michigan are made up of family unit members, one of which Mrs. Miner is field director, "Campers Without Partners" is oriented to singles and single parent families.

This group holds weekend campouts twice monthly during the summer and

a few outings during the fall, spring and winter months.

Before individuals can be a member of any chapter, they must attend one meeting, one campout and join the national organization.

Mrs. Miner says the type of camping equipment is not important. Members in a station wagon to the latest in motor homes and everything in between.

There is some program planning for each of the weekend events—Saturday evening potlucks, Sunday pancake breakfasts, bonfires and optional hikes.

Generally private campgrounds are used. The weekend of June 27-29, the singles campers went to Groveland Oaks near Holly, and July 11-13 they

will be at Lake Walden at Hartland.

Single parent campers encouraged to bring their children.

"IT TAKES children to really make a camping trip fun," says the field director whose adult son and daughter were both very active in the programs and organization's teen group in past years.

She says campers are expected to conduct themselves according to the by-laws of the national organization adding, "National doesn't allow any of this hanky-panky stuff—the morals of NCMA just won't stand for it."

She says the singles chapter was organized because many of them loved to camp, but felt like "fifth wheels" in the family chapters.

"We really have a lot of fun and we all share some common interests."

One of the newest of the common interests which the national organization is encouraging is conservation.

Last weekend, one program director, called either wagon master or rally chairman, assembled kits for building birdhouses and at the next campout, these will be put up. Projects like these are done in cooperation with the park officials.

Mrs. Miner recalls a recent weekend when the group came with rakes and shovels to clean up a beach area and the fun everyone had doing it.

THE NATIONAL organization gives shoulder and back patches for participation in the various campouts and projects. Individual chapters also

have their individual identifying patches and each chapter has a special color of vest to sew the patches on.

Mrs. Miner has earned five out of a possible seven conservation stripes and variety of colorful patches from her years of participation in national, regional and chapter campouts.

The Oakland County chapter will host a statewide fall campout, Sept. 19-21, at Groveland Oaks and some 1,800 places are already spoken for. Mrs. Miner says the number will be probably cut off at 2,000.

During the school year, she is a full-time bus driver for the Farmington schools.

Those interested in either single or family camping activities may contact her. She lives on Medbury.

'3 Ceramists' challenging

By MARILYN FINKEL

The Birmingham Gallery, whose new exhibit is titled Three Ceramists, has set itself some challenges.

First the challenge of assembling a group ceramic show in which the work of each artist has the strength to exist by itself but also in conjunction with the others.

Then the challenge of exhibiting clay as a sculptural art form rather than as a functional object. The gallery is up to the challenge and the show is one of strength.

The working and molding of clay is a personal, tactile involvement of the artist with the material, but certain characteristics unite the work of these artists to make this a cohesive exhibit.

THE ARTISTS, Susanne Stephenson, Marie Woo and Michael Padgett, share a respect for mass and volume so that each artist, and in turn, each piece, makes a strong statement.

Call these ceramic forms jars or platters if you must, but look at them as sculptural forms that incidentally are related to basic functional shapes.

These are pieces to be looked at, turned, and lived with, just as a painting or a piece of sculpture, for clay should be taken seriously as a fine art form. This exhibit demonstrates its legitimate claim to that title.

All of these exhibitors are Cranbrook graduates and have or are

now teaching in this area. Marie Woo is concerned with keeping the essential feeling and quality of the softness of clay in the fired or hardened state. She prefers this to the asymmetrical, precise look of other ceramists.

BOTH HER large, flat pieces and deep, open shapes show a propensity for generosity and giving with nothing held in check. Her flat pieces have just slightly raised rims with irregularly torn edges and inserts as if the clay just happened to break there and harden.

These edges are accented by slight slip drawings which reinforce the edges and shape, but just barely intrude and never dominate. Her glazes of earth tones ooze and flow over these organic forms. Deeper, massive shapes share this earth giving/receiving concept.

Michael Padgett's wheel-thrown shapes have the appearance of coil pots with personal finger imprints. These massive, deep forms tilt and lean, not in a state of imperfection but as a means of coping with challenging underlying states of tension or temporary imbalance.

These states of tension are never seriously threatening because of the inherent strength of these pots. Glazes of earthy, flowing shades become part of this being/becoming state. Another series of cylinders with heavy, re-inforcing lips also has these implied states of

unrest as if nature relaxed momentarily.

SUE STEPHENSON'S ceramic to quote a cliché, "tell it like it is." What it is is bold, aggressive and daring. They are technically exciting, visually striking and besides that, just plain fun.

Her central theme is lids/covers and bases to hold both the lids and act as a foil and background for the fantastic tops. Jars of luster glaze and matte finish become fantasy land with their bio-morphic, sculptural lids.

Another group of shallow, round forms have soaring, Disney-world covers of purple, mauve and blue luster glazes.

There is nothing retiring or delicate about either color or shape and certainly nothing reticent in her wonderfully, irregularly shaped straight-sided slab pieces that are topped with shiny, strong, phallic and bulbous shapes that make no apology for what they are.

By coming out of the closet and into the gallery, these erotic shapes have become artistic forms.

Color is wild. One series is in sharp oranges and blues or blue and gold. It is both outrageous and exciting with its blatant commercial color and sexual connotations. Her bright, bold forms are a marvelous balance for the earth-bound subtle ceramics of Marie Woo and Michael Padgett. Totally it is a well-integrated, well-constructed exhibit.

DAVID EINSTEIN, in his one man show at Birmingham's Little Gallery, reflects on his visual impressions of the northern California coast. His series of water colors and acrylic paintings are titled Landscape West.

The constants of this area are mountains, sea and a marvelous luminous color arising out of the melding of this landscape.

It is this luminosity, an indefinable but persistent light, permeating through the color which causes a radiant flow that is the potent force in these lyrical canvases.

Color is strong! Oranges, yellows, greens that flow and reach and touch from area to area. His water colors are rectangular shapes, a favorite of his, and the shape of the canvas is reinforced with strong horizontal masses that alternate between being a mountain and being an abstract form.

THIS LUMINOUS quality is most successful in those canvases in which color values are the closest. Variations of oranges and yellows emanate energy and vitality. Edges are built up and overlap as they constantly create new confrontations.

In a group of large acrylic paintings, color again is the dominate force of movement and mass.

Ambiguity occurs as areas of color flicker in and out, demanding continual redefinition of place. In the acrylics, strong contrasts of color are very successful.