

Little bits of silk and wire turn into realistic blossoms

By LORRAINE McCLISH

Several dozen women in some Farmington Community Center classes are putting together silk and wire to come up with spring bouquets of iris, poppies, tulips and daffodils.

"I'm a purist," said Mary Foran who leads the classes. "Flowers have always been a hobby of mine; growing them, pressing them, painting them. I studied seed catalogues and pulled flowers apart to find out how they were made, so when we finish a rose, it looks like a rose."

Though Mrs. Foran takes a great deal of time and patience in perfecting the duplication of every tiny stamen on a particular flower, if her students want a blue poppy she sees no reason why they can't produce one.

"I once made some green roses for a wedding party, and though I don't think I'll ever run into anybody again who wants green roses, it can be done," she said.

MRS. FORAN started making silk flowers in response to a request for the classes in the center. "We couldn't find anyone else to do it," she said.



Farmington Observer Suburban Life

Thursday, February 16, 1978

(F11B)

"While everyone else was getting a sun tan last summer I was home gluing, dyeing materials, reading, experimenting, to find the best way to put these flowers together and the best way to teach others to do it."

Her experimenting hasn't stopped. While snowed in during last month's blizzard, she figured out how to duplicate a hibiscus from a flower she had pressed from a trip to Florida.

For beginners, Mrs. Foran makes each student a kit of pre-cut pure china

silk squares and rectangles dyed with food colors. The four basic colors in the food coloring give her any color that is necessary.

Students squeeze and press the pieces into the desired shapes for petals and leaves; then put them together on wires for the finished product.

But in the interim, they also learn how it's done so they can reproduce any flower of their choice.

"Roses are another matter," Mrs. Foran says. "They demand a class by

themselves. It's another technique altogether and the women who take that workshop will already have taken the first class."

LEAFs ARE reproduced with anything from organza to velvet, depending on the flower it's meant to adorn. Or, students may choose to use no leaves and fill their bouquet with staves.

Her feelings are once the student knows how to duplicate a real flower, then artistic license can take over and they can make flowers not found in nature.

But more often than not, those who pass by her desk will comment on her bouquet, believing that it is made of fresh flowers, and several persons have stopped her to warn that she "shouldn't be leaving those flowers in her car when it's so cold outside."

Her desk is the reception desk in the Farmington Community Center where she works several days a week answering the telephone.

The position led her to take several classes in the center. This was followed with teaching applique and how to make panoramic Easter eggs, before she got caught up in duplicating flowers.

Because artificial flowers are becoming popular now for weddings, she has made some bridal bouquets, and answers a call for a special order once in a while from nearby Springbrook Florist.

This month she will be giving her first public lecture-demonstration at a vocational school.

SEVERAL NEW classes are set to begin the latter part of February and the first week in March with options of dates and morning or evening sessions.

She will take 12 in one class but says she really prefers to hold it down to eight or so, because in the beginners' first two-session workshop, students learn to make four different kinds of flowers "and that demands a lot of individual attention."

The classes on how to make silk roses will be scheduled for later in the spring. Registrations for all classes are necessary, by calling the center at 477-8404.



The lifelike flowers are the subject of a workshop at the Farmington Community Center beginning Feb. 23. (Staff photos by Harry Mauthe)



Mary Foran arranges a bouquet of silk flowers to show students a sampling of the finished product.

Teens and alcohol make a volatile mix

By IRIS SANDERSON JONES

"I'm lucky. I can always talk to my parents about problems."

"My older sister told me what to do that was OK and what to stay away from."

"I used to be a weekend alcoholic but my friends look after me now."

"I have this terrific teacher, who is very easy to talk to."

Those were the words of teenagers who gathered in the senior high lounge at North Congregational Church in Southfield recently to talk about the use of alcohol among high school students.

It is difficult to talk about anything as sensitive as alcohol when you are young and relatively inexperienced. But these students decided during a recent church retreat that it was one of the major concerns of young people. They hope to explore the problems and some possible solutions in a sharing atmosphere Feb. 12 with Joe Kobus, associate director of the Robert W. Groves Center of Royal Oak.

The Rev. David Howell of Oak Park, who has been at North Congregational since last November, sat quietly in the lounge during the rap session. This program had been the students' idea and he wanted both the workshop and the dialogue to proceed from a teenage rather than an adult point of view.

Members of the Youth Fellowship gathered around in couches and chairs and on the floor, including Cath Erickson, a 10th grader from Southfield High School; Bob Daniels, an 11th grader from Northville High School; Dave Driscoll, a senior at Southfield-Lathrup High School; and Paul Douma of Franklin Village, a freshman at Oakland County Community College.

Cathy: "In high school they don't give parties just to dance or to be together. They give parties to drink. That's why I don't have parties at my house."

"How early does this peer pressure begin?"

"It usually starts in junior high school just before you go into grade nine. I think it's because kids are looking ahead to high school."

Dave: "The trouble is that a lot of kids drink until they can't handle it, and if you suggest they cool it they say 'Don't worry I'm not drunk.'"

"How old are you before you see that you might be making trouble for yourself with too much party drinking?"

Dave: "I realized it when I was 16 and got my driver's license."

Bob: "Listen, if you go to a party and you don't even think about it in advance, it's your own fault for being so naive. When somebody asks you to a party you know that person well enough to know whether there's going to be drinking or not. So if you don't want to drink, don't go. And if you decide to go and don't drink, be prepared to be hassled."

Paul: "If you're with people you know well, it's different. They might just tease you a little."

"What happens to the problem when you get into the higher grades?"

Bob: "If you wanted to, you could go to drinking parties every weekend, before a dance, before a basketball game, after a basketball game. If you want to find people to drink with, you can. If you don't want to, you don't

have to. At a dance, the kids who don't drink laugh at the drunks and the drunks laugh at themselves."

"Can you mix it up? Can you go with a group that drinks, but not drink yourself?"

Paul: "I'm in college now but when I was in high school I was a pretty heavy drinker. Then I got hepatitis, so now I can't drink. My friends drink and I don't, but it doesn't bother me."

There were scattered catcalls from around the room. "Yes, but you are a long way ahead of some of the kids."

"Sure," another voice said. "Don't quote me, but a gang of kids used to go over to a house after a meeting with a couple of 12-packs. Some people didn't want to drink, but they were pressured. A lot of them stopped going to meetings because they didn't want to be hassled about not drinking afterwards."

The consensus in the room was that one student pressures another to drink because it makes everybody feel more comfortable about their own drinking. Where were the parents in that house?

"Upstairs, but if they knew kids were going to drive they'd put a limit on the drinking. They figured that if their kids were going to drink, they should do it at home and not at the wheel of a car."

"Do you think that was a good way to handle it? Is that what you would do if you had kids of your own?"

"I wouldn't!"

"Well I would! It's better to get drunk beside a chair than on the road!"

Paul: "If kids want to drink, they'll drink. I've been buying alcohol since I was 14 and I've only been asked for my ID three times."

"You all went through this at some level and you apparently coped with it so is it really a problem?"

Dave: "Maybe not for us right now, but for kids at the seventh grade level it's still a problem. We'd like to give them the benefit of our experience."

"There are ways of going to drinking parties and not drinking. You can carry a glass of pop around and it looks like a drink. You can even carry an empty beer can around."

Cathy: "That's dumb!"

Paul: "If your friends pressure you, you can either find new friends or you can educate your old ones. Tell them they take you as you are and that's it."

Dave: "Yes, but we can still help younger kids to go through what everybody else goes through, but with more information so they do it more gracefully."

Paul: "You can't tell anybody that. He learns it the first time he drinks too much and pukes his guts out."

"What would you tell parents?"

Cathy: "They should notice the signs. Sometimes they do but I think they don't want to say anything because they don't know what to do about it."

Japanese art and culture to be taught in workshop

By LORRAINE McCLISH

George and Mary Bowman begin a new workshop on Japanese Art and Culture in Southfield's Adlai Stevenson Elementary School beginning March 1 and continuing on Wednesdays.

"The workshop can be taken for three hours of graduate credit, or by those who just like, or want to learn about, Japanese things," Mrs. Bowman said.

She is owner of Sumi-e Studio in Farmington Hills and teaches Japanese brush painting, flower arranging, calligraphy, tea ceremony, history, cooking and culture with her husband in the three hour, once a week class. In addition to class work, students participate in two field trips.

Credits come from Central Michigan University. Southfield teachers and staff members who sign up for the course can apply for tuition reimbursement by contacting Jim Hildebrand in the Southfield Education Center. Cost for the course is \$40 per credit hour, plus a \$12 lab fee.

MRS. BOWMAN graduated from Antioch College, in Ohio, with a degree in fine arts and studied sumi-e (the Japanese style of brush painting) in Japan for one year under Beika Inada, a well-known artist in Wakayama Prefecture. She has returned regularly each three years since then to do refresher work.

In off hours on her trips, she has taken flower arranging classes, was tutored in kaisei style calligraphy, the umamake tea ceremony and Japanese cooking.

"I do pretty well with the language, too," she says. Her husband has accompanied her on some of her trips, and the two are now planning another one, when they will live Japanese-style, this summer.

Adlai Stevenson Elementary School and regularly gives programs on the art, Japanese flower arranging or the tea ceremony to art associations, garden clubs, churches, schools and other groups.

Her work can be seen at many area exhibits, and her line of note paper is available at "Happiness Is," at Eleven Mile and Middlebelt in Farmington Hills.

"THE ANCIENT Japanese style of sumi-e is one of mood painting in a brief time span," she explains.

"It is usually done with a simple asymmetrical composition using various dilutions of Japanese black ink with a feather-light bamboo-handled brush on the sensitive rice paper."

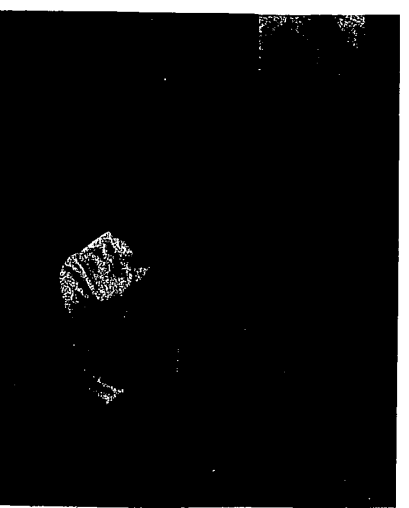
It is a Zen Buddhist art, rooted in the subconscious and the beauty found here and now.

"Expressing personal creativeness is possible with less training in sumi-e than in Western painting techniques," she said.

Adlai Stevenson Elementary School is located at 2777 Lahser, between Eleven and Twelve Mile.

Enrollment can be made by sending a deposit of \$12 to: George and Mary Bowman, 28229 Ridgbrook, Farmington Hills, 48018.

The couple will take inquiries by calling them at 553-4509.



Mary Bowman holds up a scroll, one of her best efforts in sumi-e she feels, completed on her last visit to Japan. (Staff photo by Gary Friedman)