

# Visit with reality

## Students experience life of handicapped peers

By Mary Rodrigue  
staff writer

Children giggled in wheelchairs, struggled to keep weighted arms or legs functional, and learned to communicate without talking.

It was all part of Changing Places Day at Eagle Elementary School, which is one of the Farmington Public Schools centers for physically impaired children.

Last Wednesday, every healthy child from kindergarten through fifth grade at Eagle got a chance to change places with the handicapped by working an obstacle course set up in the school gym.

Physical and occupational therapists, special education teachers and their aides guided the children through the rigors that are a part of regular school activity for handicapped students.

"The purpose is to give general education children a feeling of what it's like to be handicapped," said Dan Schneider, physical therapist who organized the event.

"What it's like to be able to use just

one arm and one leg, to have no muscle coordination, to type using your head instead of your fingers."

Five stations set up in the gym were loaded with machinery from the special education wing.

Handicapped students who watched their peers smiled at the effort made. At one station, a third grade girl wearing bulky suede gloves became frustrated when she couldn't button a doll's sweater.

"A SIMPLE TASK and yet it's not so easy if hand sensation or muscle coordination isn't good," an aide told her.

In another corner, Jennifer Kehl, 8, swatted a plastic ball on a string with a plastic bat while strapped to a tilt table. The tilt table is used to get wheelchair bound children into a standing position for exercise, explained Louise Brown, a physical therapist.

"They also can be put next to a table to do classwork in a standing position," she said.

Other children learned how to develop auditory memory skills by playing games geared for students with muscular dystrophy and cerebral palsy.

"Hearing impaired sometimes goes along with these diseases," said Bob Gorga, an orthopedic teacher.

Students sat before trays full of common objects like poker chips, clothespins, tin foil balls and wood sticks, each in its own compartment marked by a letter of the alphabet.

Two students with identical trays faced each other at each table and dropped one item at a time into a center box to spell a word. They had to lift each item with one hand that was strapped with weights.

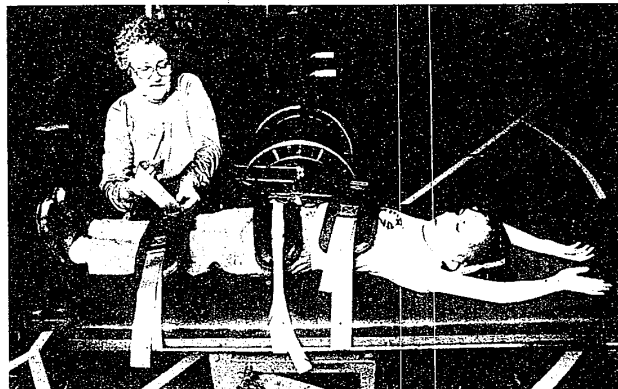
The participant on the other side had to guess what word was being spelled by listening to the sounds dropping into the box.

"Learning the sequence helps auditory memory," Gorga said.

THE GAME ALSO helps youngsters with muscle coordination required to lift the small objects from the trays.

Some of the 40 handicapped children at Eagle school can't talk or read. They use a variety of electronic communications boards to convey messages.

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Jennifer Kehl, 8, is strapped into a tilt table by physical therapist Louise Brown.

RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Physical therapist Dan Schneider works with Michael Hurtig, 5, to show him how to operate a vehicle used by handicapped students who otherwise would be unable to get about on their own.

RANDY BORST/staff photographer

## INSIDE ANGLES

BY LOUISE OKRUTSKY

**MUSICAL NOTES** will float to the rafters of the Farmington High School auditorium tomorrow night when the Wayne State University Symphony Band performs live.

WSU Band Director Harold Arnold produced and directed an award-winning series of radio broadcasts for WJR in 1973 called "The Band Played On."

The band was awarded the 1974 George Washington Honor Medal for the series.

The band has played concerts for the College Band Director's National Association, the Mid-West Music Conference in Ann Arbor, and the Music Educator's National Conference in Anaheim, Calif.

Admission for tomorrow's show is \$1 for adults and 50 cents for students and seniors with proceeds going to help the Farmington High School Instrumental Music Department.

**SHOWBOAT '81** won't be on the Rouge River, but it won't be far away.

The variety show featuring dancers, singers, theatrical skits and live music is coming to Oakland Community College April 10 at 7:30 p.m. in the H Building Multi-purpose room.

The show is sponsored by OCC student government.

**ALAMEDA** elementary school students have heart.

The 233 youngsters will jump rope next Friday morning from 10:30 until noon for the Michigan Heart Association.

The Parent Teacher Association is donating \$1 to the heart association for each child who completes the jump.

Happy skipping.

**GROCERY SHOPPERS**, point your shopping carts at Kroger, Grand River and Halsted Wednesday for yet another supermarket extravaganza.

The Farmington High School booster club teams up with the Kroger staff to present music to shop by, a grocery porter service that shuffles your bags between the store and your car while you enjoy refreshments from a stand constructed in front of the store.

A percentage of the days proceeds will be given to the school athletic club.

**AHOY THERE, MATES** It's time for boating safety clinic April 8 and 15, 6:30 to 9:30 at Shawasssee Recreation Center, 30415 Shawasssee, west of Middlebelt.

Anyone between the ages of 12 and 16 can't operate a motorboat powered by six or more horsepower unless they have a boating safety certificate.

The fee is \$3. For more information, call 474-6115.

**CALLING ALL ARTISTS** Nominations are being accepted for the annual Farmington Area Artist in Residence Award.

The award is designed to recognize the talents and accomplishments of a person who lives or works in Farmington or Farmington Hills. Nominees can be active in art, dance, drama, literature or music.

The winner will be honored with a reception June 7 at the Farmington Community Center and receive a \$500 cash award.

Two service awards will also be given: a distinguished service award to someone who has contributed significantly to the arts and a second service award given to an artists organization which has contributed to the arts environment of the community.

Nominations for all three awards can be made by filling out an application form available at the community center, Farmington Road, north of 10 Mile.

Deadline for nominations is April 15.

**TWO FREE** planning seminars are scheduled at the North Oakland YWCA in Pontiac this month.

Attorney Judith Denney Doran will present a divorce overview on April 28 from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m.

The presentation will include such things as how to select an attorney, custody, property settlement and what to do prior to filing for divorce.

Lynn Korhonen, with a background in business administration and economics, will lead a financial planning support group April 27 at 7:30 p.m.

The group offers a complete look at how to develop a sound overall personal financial plan. Subjects to be covered: budgeting, importance of setting financial goals, types of savings plans, tax-saving ideas, relative value of insurance ownership and different types of investments.

The YWCA is at 269 West Huron Street. Phone 334-0973.

**NO NUKE FANS** are invited to a safe energy coalition sponsored talk at Wayne State University on Thursday, April 9, at the student center building.

Dr. Richard Webb, an independent researcher, nuclear scientist and student of constitutional law will speak on the hazards and the constitutionality of nuclear power.

There will be two presentations. One at 2:30 in the Hilberry Lounge and a second at 7 p.m. in the student center ballroom.



THAT BYGONE INNOCENCE LIVES ON in garden-party dressing from SANDY STARKMAN. She cultivates it in cloud-light white cotton, neglecting nary a delightful detail. Like precious pink tucks

Rows of open lace. And ruffles, ruffles, everywhere. Recapture romance this summer with the guileless charm of her dress duet: high-yoked, full-sleeved blouse with tiny embroidery blossoms up front, \$55. And gathered, petticoat-style double skirt, \$60. Misses' sizes 4 to 12 from The Woodward Shops, at Northland, Oakland, Fairlane and Twelve Oaks Hudson's stores.

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