

# Even in the woods, 'you gotta have art'

By Kathy Parrish  
staff writer

Living in the suburbs, Jeff Valade never expected to join 4-H.

To his surprise, the Troy sixth grader spent last week at 4-H camp. But instead of horses and cows, he and 50 other suburban kids took along their violins, ballet slippers and cameras.

During its two July sessions, Oakland County's first 4-H Cultural Arts Camps offered music, dance, drama, art and photography.

A staff of professional artists also taught folk arts like decoy carving, candle dipping, fiddle and dulcimer building, weaving and ethnic dancing.

"There's such a variety of offerings, not just one thing to do," said Margaret Valade, who enrolled her 10-year-old son for music instruction.

"And the artists are here just for them."

Though 4-H began as an organization for rural youth, it now takes in kids from all backgrounds. Offerings range from animal care and gardening to rocketry, mountain climbing and recreational sports.

Part of a statewide 4-H arts thrust, the Cultural Arts Camps aimed at offering instruction for youth not able to attend programs like Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp and Interlochen Music Camp.

Helping out with scholarships to the 445 sessions were Farmington Area Arts Commission, Huron Valley Arts Council, Rochester Arts Commission and Royal Oak Arts Council.

"WE NEED TO develop the arts," explained Tom Schneider, one of Oakland County's two 4-H youth agents. "Schools are cutting back on these programs and this is a chance for self-expression."

Although hoping for 100 youths each

session, the camps brought out 60 the first week and 50 the second.

The 9- to 16-year-olds had their choice of five major study areas — music, drama, dance, arts and photography. They also chose minor areas as well as receiving folk art instruction and taking part in a recreation program which included tennis and swimming in the county wave pool. All the activities were in Waterford Oaks County Park, Waterford.

Artists and teachers came from all over the tri-county area to share their skills with the youngsters.

"There are lots of resources in the county not being tapped," said camp director Carolyn Calandri, adding that the response from teachers and artists was "terrific."

"IT'S THE IDEA of sharing something you really love with kids and seeing what it does for them," explained assistant camp director Alicja Jahne.



Candle making was one of the folk arts taught by professional artists who visited the camp.



At the end of a day at Oakland County's 4-H Cultural Arts Camp, Jeff Marraccini of Clarkston relaxes to the folk sound of Just Friends.

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### Church groups lists officers

Maris Zeros of Southfield and Steve Fekaris of Farmington Hills have been elected co-presidents of the Holy Cross Junior Goyans.

GOYA (Greek Orthodox Youth of America) was officially founded in 1951 and is comprised of young men and women committed to their own spiritual betterment and the benefit of their church.

Others elected include: Steve Peterson of Farmington Hills, treasurer; Erin Scarvelis of Southfield, corresponding secretary; Anita Angelas of Southfield, recording secretary; and George Koutouras, historian.

Executive officers are Cathy Casoglos, Maria Griglio, Liz Kargilis, and Suzanne Nafie.

Staff photos by Richard Marshall

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