

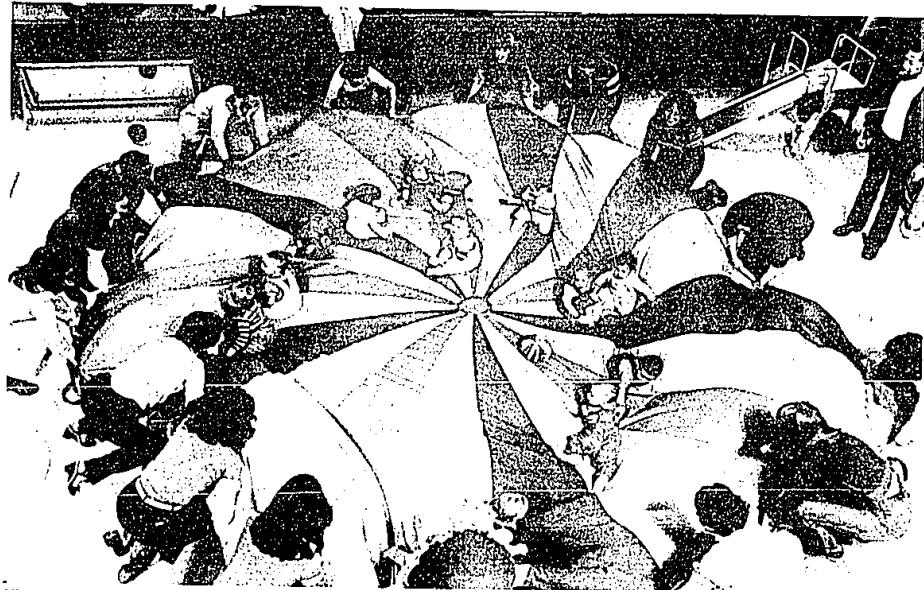
Suburban Life

Lorraine McClellan editor/477-5450



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All Gymboree classes wind up with a huge rainbow-colored parachute that is placed on a confer mat for youngsters to ride on or run

under. Parents and children are invited to open house next week and learn about the class offerings that begin the week of April 9.

Open House introduces Gymboree in Michigan

Gymboree opens in Michigan with open house for parents and their 3-month to 4-year-old children Monday and Tuesday, April 2-3, in Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 35300 Eight Mile.

Mary Michalak, owner and operator of the movement and play program, will introduce guests to the Gymboree philosophy, the equipment and the facilities 9:30-11:30 a.m. and 6-8 p.m. Monday, and 9:30-11:30 a.m. Tuesday. Michalak is one of two franchise owners who are opening Gymboree this spring in the state. She describes the

program as "the most exciting new development in early childhood education to ever happen."

She is a former special-education teacher for Detroit Public Schools and Wayne County Intermediate Schools. Now an attorney, the Farmington resident, who has an 8-month-old baby, said she found Gymboree fit well into both her teaching philosophy as well as enabling her to keep working while raising her child.

"It provides the ideal place for free exploration and experimentation

where learning and play can happen in a cheerful 'yes' atmosphere," she said.

GYMBOREE is a tyke-sized world of colorful, safe gymnastic-like play equipment custom-designed and specially selected for the infant-to-let set. Every Gymboree center, (there are 120 in the country) is similarly patterned after the corporate base in California.

Michalak took training in the Gymboree philosophy, then viewed other centers in action where the little ones were given every possible opportunity

for sliding, bouncing, jumping, rolling, swinging, rocking and climbing.

"The most common question the teachers get has to do with what is all this going to do for a 3-month-old," Michalak said. "Well I can tell you it is amazing how fast they learn; how they will choose themselves to do other things, try different things, come up with their own likes and preferences."

All activities at Gymboree are designed to enhance the development of motor skills and to stimulate vision, hearing, balance, touch and body

awareness, necessary for later learning.

"Researchers have found that half of all learning happens before the age of 4, and it's all coupled with fun," she said.

Gymboree is a parent, or grandparent, participation program.

"Mom, dad, grandparents, or all of them at once, can get down on the mats and feel good about playing with the child," Michalak said. "What happens

is that indescribable thing called communication, real positive parenting, and an incredible amount of self-confidence built in the children."

GYMBOREE CLASSES in Farmington Hills begin the week of April 9.

Each class is 45 minutes long and is especially designed for each of three age groups.

Michalak will send a Gymboree brochure on request by calling her at 477-1084.

Rules switched for scholarship competition

By Lorraine McClellan
staff writer

For as many years as Farmington Musicals has been giving musical scholarships, the competition has always been open to students who live go to school here. Also included are all children of Musicals members.

Those eligible for the "Awards in Musical Excellence" must live here or be a child of a member.

The new ruling has eliminated young musicians from other communities who attend Hillier, Our Lady of Mercy High School, Beshan Junior High,

Northwest Lutheran High and St. Paul Lutheran School.

A few music teachers and students who feel an affinity to the Farmington area because they work or go to school here were disappointed enough about the ruling to talk about their feelings. The protests brought to the attention of this newspaper brought out at least one glaring fact. To wit: Teens heading for a music career have their own special and separate rows to hoe.

Simultaneously two questions were raised.

What kinds of boundaries or confines it is possible to put on musical excellence? And just how important are

these competitions to young musicians?

THE FIRST question comes from Barbara Grover, chairperson for this year's competition. She was firm in her stand saying the young woman who won the first prize last year, a Pontiac resident "won't be contributing her talents here."

"The money (for the scholarship fund) was raised locally and should be given to local kids who can give back to this community," she said.

The rule was made by the committee Grover heads, passed on to a board which approved it, then was made known to the general membership.

LARRY TEEVENS, head of the music department at Mercy High and director of the Mercymakers, was the most vocal of the protesters against the ruling.

"These kids are a national treasure," Teevens said of his students knocked out of the competition. They belong to all of us and I don't believe that any of us can do enough to develop or encourage any of them."

Teevens said Grover told him, "The musical talents here should be used in the Farmington area." Teevens said the musical talents must move on. "We are only transitional in their lives. We sure aren't the end-all.

"If they stayed in our little league forever, none of us would be doing the job we should be doing for them."

Teevens said he believes it is the job of every music teacher or music promoter to steer the budding musician "to where the action is."

By this he said he means every competition available and every possible place where the student can be motivated to produce the highest quality of music possible.

Lois Swanson, this year's president of Farmington Musicals, suspects the ruling was passed because of the amount of money on hand.

"We only give \$1,000 a year," she said. "That is not much when you consider some of the huge grants some groups get, like Oakway (Symphony Orchestra) for example, to give away. I think the feeling was that the money we have should be returned to the residents who pay taxes here."

The music's scholarship committee is charged with raising the money for the fund as well as spreading it out as the members see fit. From year to year the rules are reviewed, updated, changed, expanded, improved.

Currently cash awards are given in different age group categories for vocalists and instrumentalists. A memorial fund started fairly recently has enabled the club to give a separate competition and a separate award for pianists.

LAURA CULBERTSON, a West Bloomfield resident who has been either a contender or an accompanist in the competition since she was a kindergarten in Mercy will enter Oakland University next fall to pursue a degree in music therapy.

"Win or lose, competition is very important for anyone serious about a music career," she said.

"Even if I got third place, that's \$75 toward school and lessons. Besides tuition and regular other expenses, private lessons are almost a requirement just to keep up and that's a minimum of \$12 a week," the pianist said.

In conversation with Culbertson one gets a sense of a sort of scramble for musical scholarships this time of year, especially among high school seniors who are well aware of the cost and the competition that is facing them. She was certainly aware of where music scholarships were offered throughout the county and how much money each was offering.

As for competition, she puts that value as running neck and neck with the money at stake.

"I am a good pianist. I know I am,

but I know I have to get better and it is important to me to know how I compare; know what I'm up against when I'm planning on this for a career," she said.

It is particularly disappointing to be eliminated because of what she called "probably the most valuable" facet of the Musicals' competition.

"The judges always give the contestants a few minutes of critique. I accompanied a vocalist for the competition last year and though she didn't win, the words of encouragement she got from the judges kept her going."

CHRISTA GRIX, a private music teacher here and in Livonia, told of the value of competition while backing up Culbertson's statement regarding the judges.

"The musicale scores highly respected and qualified judges, so the comments they give to each competitor means a great deal to them. No matter how they place that is a very valuable thing," she said.

Grix has three students who were eliminated from the contest because of residency.

"I tell my students they are not competing against any one but themselves. They are challenging themselves to produce the highest quality of music possible. The benefit of the competition is to put pressure on themselves to see what they can do. Competition is a good educational tool and pressure is a developing quality," she said.

One of Grix students, a Franklin resident living in the Birmingham School District, was caught in the Catch 22 of musical scholarships.

Jacky Krakow, a ninth-grader at Mercy who has won awards for both flute and piano excellence, was eliminated from the competition because of residency.

She was also eliminated from entering a competition in Birmingham which was confined to those who attend Birmingham schools.

The irony of this is that if she lived in Farmington and chose to attend Marietta High School in Birmingham instead of Mercy in Farmington Hills she would have been eligible for both competitions.

Oakway Symphony, Livonia Youth Symphony and Metropolitan Youth Symphony based in Southfield, all have members with Farmington or Farmington Hills addresses.

"They have been motivated to go out of the community to join these groups by nothing else than the chance to produce good music for all of us," he said.

Artists spring exhibit planned

Members of the Farmington Artists Club are in the final stage of preparations for their 1984 spring exhibit Friday, April 13, through Sunday April 15, in Mercy Center, 28800 11 Mile Road, through Gate 4 east of Middlebelt Road.

Hours are 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. There is no admission charge and refreshments are complimentary.

Fran Nicolson, pen-and-ink artist and chairperson of the exhibit, indicates that the successful format of previous shows will be followed. A juried gallery, an open gallery and an unframed area will be featured. Quality works of art offering a variety of styles, techniques and media may be purchased in a wide price range.

Juror for this exhibit is Norita Freka, instructor at Birmingham Bloomfield Art Association and Center for Creative Studies.

Farmington Artists Club members have received increasing recognition of the fine talent and originality exhibited in their work. Many are prominent artists in the metropolitan Detroit area and award winners in national exhibitions.

A popular attraction of the exhibit is a raffle of artworks donated by club members. Donors for this exhibit are Marilyn Liljgren, Fran Nicolson, Lois Bro, Betty Norren, Audrey Dimarco, Vicky Beck, Joan Walsh, Anne X. George, Jim Giannantonio, in addition to a donation from the estate of Lillian Kortula. Raffle tickets will be purchased from club members or at the exhibit. Proceeds from the raffle benefit the Farmington Art Foundation, service branch of the club.

The Farmington Art Foundation sponsors the Picture Lady art appreciation program for Farmington area schools and the painting classes for senior adults in Farmington Hills Senior Adult Center.

The exhibit is made possible through a grant from the Farmington Area Arts Commission.

Students discuss debate

Six students represented Harrison High School at the third annual Oakland County Student Leadership Forum this month.

Shella Hennessy, Margo Freedman, Brendon Fitzpatrick, Amy Jacobs, Mike Alcantara and Marc Tenenbaum were among the 250 students leaders who came together to discuss and debate the proposed changes in high school education in Michigan.

After voting on each of the proposed changes, the students presented their concerns to a panel of Oakland County educators.

The forum is an outgrowth of Project Outreach, initiated three years ago by Michigan School Superintendent Phillip Runkel.



Audrey Dimarco works on one of the paintings she will submit for the prestigious juried gallery of Farmington Artists Club's spring exhibit, set this year for Friday-Sunday, April 13-15, in Mercy Center.