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(F)10

Library boasts interactive learning tool

By Casey Hane
and Sue Buck
staff writers

A NEW approach to learning began at the two-branch Farmington Community Library this fall, giving parents and preschool children a chance to interact.

"I think the benefit of this, is the children interacting and being creative," said Kathleen Neils Wood, a library technical assistant at the Farmington branch. "It's very open-ly structured."

Called "Learning Activity Centers," the concept links both parent and child with a variety of activities.

FARMINGTON IS the first public library in Michigan to offer such children's programming, although similar programs are offered in other states, said library director Beverly Papal. The centers are offered at both branches.

Nearly 5,000 preschoolers and their parents in the Farmington area could benefit from such a program, according to library estimates.

The program was put together with the assistance of \$3,000 from the Farmington Friends of the Library.

It is the brainchild of the Farmington Hills branch director, Clara Bohrer, who has a master's degree in early childhood development.

"We have substantially changed our approach to children's services," Bohrer told library trustees this fall.

"I'm very excited about this — I think this is what our community wants. It also provides a learning environment not only for the child but the parent, too."

EIGHT ACTIVITIES are available at each center, with a selected bibliography of books related to the theme. The parent and child participate in activities that allow them to manipulate, explore and play with a variety of materials.

Children might learn about any number of themes, including the color red, the recognition of shapes, Mother Goose rhymes or the changing of seasons.

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— Clara Bohrer,
branch director



RANDY DORST/staff photographer

Susan Sleesman and her children, Eileen, 8 months, and Michelle, 3, of Farmington Hills, are shown at the Play-Doh table in the downtown Farmington library.



GUY WARREN/staff photographer

Daniel and Stephen found one another when their parents found refuge in Baldwin Avenue Shelter this month. The 11 and 12-year old are now fast friends.

The wish list

Agencies loads get heavier as the holidays get closer

By B.L. Good
special writer

Community agencies work year-round serving basic human needs. While some receive community-based or church funding, others are totally dependent upon private contributions and fund-raising. All have one thing in common.

As the holiday season begins, they will serve more meals, clothe, counsel, and/or shelter more individuals, often with fewer volunteers. Resources, too, can be strained. Some agencies never close, and the cold weather accentuates needs for warm clothing and shelter.

In an effort to assist these human service agencies and organizations during this busy season, The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers talked with them about their programs and their needs. Readers have the opportunity to open their cupboards, their wallets and their hearts to help alleviate needs and, at the same time, experience the special joy and rewarding feelings that come from brightening the lives of others.

A guide to the agencies and their needs follows:

THE HAVEN
P.O. Box 787
Pontiac 48058

334-1284 or 334-1274 (Crisis line)
The Haven provides services and programs to victims of physical and sexual abuse. Needed are: Baby diapers (medium and large); children's videos (non-violent); laundry detergent; vacuum cleaner; hand-held vacuum cleaner; sturdy kids' furniture (good, used or new); toiletries (soap, shampoo, lotion); bleach; light-bulbs; batteries; books on physical and sexual abuse (call for titles); punching bags; Nerf toys; cookies; saltines; and cheese crackers (no candy).

PONTIAC AREA LIGHTHOUSE, INC.
109 Williams
P.O. Box 425
Pontiac 48056

335-2462
Lighthouse works in cooperation with individuals, churches and agencies to provide emergency assistance. It needs \$1,500 in large or small donations to upgrade the phone system; money for security deposits and rent; housecleaning and home repair items for housing

classes; money for baby formula; cloth diapers; personal products (soap, toothpaste, toilet paper; good, clean, used or new sheets and blankets; towels; newborn baby clothes (new or in good condition); gift certificates for groceries for seniors with limited incomes; bathtub seats for seniors; volunteers for fundraising, client interviewing, helping in clothing closet, clerical assistance (training will be provided); typewriter for Lighthouse, North (new satellite location soon to open in N. Oakland.)

BALDWIN AVE. HUMAN SERVICES CENTER
212 Baldwin Ave.
P.O. Box 3960
Pontiac 48059

Baldwin Ave. provides for the hungry and homeless and has a special commitment to families in need. The center's needs include: money (for food, supplies, staff salaries); donations of basket items (by Dec. 20), such as non-perishable food, household paper products, personal first aid kits and personal hygiene items; shelter bedding (good, clean sheets, warm blankets, towels); new books

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