

# 4-H Clubs Hit Poisoning

A group of young people, 4-H members between the ages of nine and 19, are undertaking a timely program on the dangers of poisons in the home.

Pres. Richard M. Nixon has declared the week of March 14 to 20 as Poison Prevention Week. The poison prevention project is being stressed in cities like Phoenix, Ariz., where one small club of just five members held 56 meetings stressing safety in the home.

"Our club stressed safety of children, safe toys and how to store poisons, cleaning materials, etc., so that

children cannot get them," said the leader, Mrs. Teresa Tompkins.

The Nez Perce County, Idaho, 4-H Junior council made a project of providing public information on household poisons and methods of prevention at the request of local doctors. They secured TV programs, visited hospitals and contacted service organizations, youth groups, schools and civic organizations.

The group provided posters that were set up in local stores and offices and distributed more than 4,000 pieces of literature throughout the county.

Special attention is being paid to poisons in the home. Things like bleaches, oven cleaners, solvents and old medicines are usually easy for the toddler to find. What they see goes into the mouth before even the most alert mother can prevent it.

Clubs from all parts of the country have taken the problem of poison prevention as one of the major projects in the safety program. This is true because the club is made up of rural boys and girls or young people from the inner city of large metropolitan areas.

Other safety projects getting special attention include

bicycle, skiing, radiation, avoiding eye damage (eclipse), baby sitting courses, drug safety, testing of drinking water and safety while snowmobiling. These projects are, of course, in addition to traditional safety programs such as driving, accidents in the home, electric wiring, fire prevention, safe handling of guns, water safety and first aid.

General Motors sponsors a lot to become one of the top 10 working women in the Detroit area. But not as much as the hundreds of her friends her business has gained.



By MARGARET MILLER

## Women on the Go Businesswoman Loses To Gain High Honor

Florine Mark of Farmington lost a lot to become one of the top 10 working women in the Detroit area.

The apparent contradiction, of course, lies in the fact business for this mother of five is heading Weight Watchers, Inc., for Eastern and Central Michigan.

The Detroit Chamber of Commerce said it well in honoring her during its 16th annual Salute to Women Who Work last week.

"Through her business acumen and tireless devotion," her citation read, "more than 100,000 weight-watching men, women and youngsters have lost an aggregate weight comparable to a flotilla of heavily armed naval vessels."

MRS. IRVING MARK, now 35 and a native Detroit, can't help letting enthusiasm for her business creep into any report on how it became a successful establishment.

That's not surprising, because she started Weight Watchers here by being one.

So her career story begins with the words "I was fat." And, said Mrs. Mark, she was allergic to diet pills and had tried for 17 years to lose about 45 pounds. In the fall of 1965, the youngest of her children started school and there was no one coming home for lunch and not much to do at home all day.

"So I decided to do something about my weight problem," she said, "and convinced my husband the best way to do it was to go to New York and look into an organization I had heard about."

The organization was Weight Watchers, and it had been launched several years earlier by Jean Nideitch, a formerly fat businesswoman, and a partner named Al Lippert.

FLORINE MARK'S system was to go to New York for one week each month. "I stayed in a cheap hotel and went to three Weight Watcher meetings each day from Monday to Friday," she recalls.

"Then I'd figure I was brain-washed and could stay on the program on my own for the rest of the month."

Her mode of operations was unusual, to say the least, but it was working and it also brought her to the attention of Mrs. Nideitch and Lippert.

They recommended that she take the program to the Detroit area, so Florine boned up on franchises, talked to an attorney and decided to take the plunge.

BESIDES her many Weight Watcher enterprises, Mrs. Mark is secretary to the Franchise Advisory Council and does all kinds of volunteer work, from heading the Mothers March of Dimes in 1970 to helping with parent activities at Hillel Day School, which her two younger children attend.

The whole family benefits from her business, says Florine.

"I had had some business experience and my husband and our attorney friend had faith I could make a go of it," she said.

THE FIRST WEIGHT WATCHER class in the Detroit area was held July 12, 1966. Before that, Florine had put up signs in a candy store and a delicatessen in her neighborhood.

"That's where I figured fat people would go," she remembers. "And you know, that candy store went out of business a few months later. But I don't think it really had anything to do with us."

There were 35 women in the class that first hot Tuesday night, Mrs. Mark said.

"Within three weeks we were up to 10 classes. I had to train my mother, father and sisters to teach them. That was all right, because they all were fat and now they've slimmed down."

HER EMPLOYEE ROSTER now numbers 600, nearly all of them people who have lost weight through the program.

"They're loyal and enthusiastic," says the president of the two Weight Watcher groups that now go into Flint, Ann Arbor and Toledo as well as Detroit. More than 250,000 attend 325 weekly classes, and the program here has its first 200 pound loser.

New aspects of Weight Watcher program are being worked out now. There's the voluntary HOPE, for Help Obese People Everywhere, in which WW lecturers go to the homes of people so heavy they cannot get out. Mrs. Mark's sister, Sandi Lynn Berlin, is in charge of that program.

Then there are maintenance programs for those who have lost the necessary weight, and a mini-plan for those who have just a few pounds to go.

Florine also is working on a special program for those who have joined and rejoined several times, and she has helped, in the work of a Weight Watchers Foundation, Inc., that does research into the problems of obesity. She belongs to a speakers bureau, and fees from talks go to the foundation.

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"When I have a weekend meeting my husband and some of the children join me Friday after school," she said. "And we all travel at Weight Watcher convention time."

Furthermore, she feeds her slim children the foods prescribed for Weight Watchers.

"I'm not going to feed them junk while I fix myself the good stuff," says Florine Mark, with an enthusiasm that may hold some clue to her success in business.



FLORINE MARK

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