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Auction extravaganza



Sale set: The Women of North Farmington are sponsoring an auction 7-11:30 p.m. Friday, April 7, at the Muirwood Club House at Drake and Grand River in Farmington Hills. Norma Bauman, president; Marion Prover, co-chairwoman; Jackie Greit, ticket chairwoman; and Ann Carrier, program chairwoman, display some of the items for sale. Auction items also include pictures, restaurant packages, golf outings, adult games, show tickets, pottery, gemstones, lamps, dolls, hotel packages and a train trip for two to Toronto. The cost to attend is \$7 in advance or \$8 at the door, and proceeds go to the Meals on Wheels program and the Farmington Area Advisory Council.

Pastor from page 11A

with a woman president in the 1900s and Martin Luther King Jr. as a member, "Baptist" still turns a lot of people off, Sommers said.

"If you want to turn someone off, sit on a plane next to someone and tell them you're a Baptist minister," Sommers said.

He found some brave souls to join the church, and many of them have a lot to offer, Sommers said. A Livonia resident, Sommers started out by making friends with people who would just drop in at the church. If they came back, he would invite them to lunch or out to play racquetball. He thinks many people have been attracted by the friendliness.

The church is becoming healthy, with a good mix of people, he said. "But that first year was very difficult. It was like working a tough room," Sommers said. Often, if he tried to work some humor into the sermon, no one laughed. The first Sunday was so draining that he took a nap after church.

Now the church features contemporary services, some with guitars, flutes, saxophones or clarinets.

After 2 1/2 years, Sommers feels ready to invite more people into the church. Like in a store, a church wants to be able to meet people's needs, he said. People want a place to belong where they don't feel judged, Sommers said.

Of course, it took a little bit to convince people. He did hear "we didn't do that before" comments from longtime members. But since church members basically gave up trying to keep the church going, he has had a lot of latitude in making changes.

In the traditional mindset it's the role of the pastor to make people happy, but Sommers said, "You'll die of trying to keep people happy."

But he has won some support. One change was removing some small, dark, dingy windows from one wall and opening the wall up with large windows. The first night church members saw the new windows was Christmas Eve. The combination of the holiday and the lights in the trees outside made for an impressive sight and won many people over.

With some victories, like the windows, he was able to win trust. "It's like with trading stamps, you have to build them up to trade them in," Sommers said.

Since the church was put on a schedule to get itself out of debt, there wasn't much time to make changes to turn it around. Many churches have committees and boards and changes are made very slowly, but without them changes have been quite rapid, Sommers said.

He found it more beneficial to get members involved in hands-on experiences, like working in a program for the homeless at Cass United Methodist Church in Detroit, rather than on church committees and boards.

"Here you can turn things around quickly because there aren't a lot of people to resist," he said.

He speculates that Lee Iacocca would have faced more opposition if he had been brought in at Chrysler Corp. five years earlier. But desperation brought acceptance.

He still has plans of developing the music ministry more fully, speaking in a fashion people can identify with and stressing children's education.

With young families with children joining the church, he sees getting children to enjoy church as part of the battle. He wants kids to want to come back to church and identify God with good experiences. He also plans to do more with small groups of adults gathering to read the Bible and pray.

He finds an advantage in new members who haven't become cli-

Church message series to start this Sunday

North Farmington Community Church, 32500 W. 13 Mile, Farmington Hills, is planning a message series, "Building a Life Worth Loving."

- "Slowing Down the Speed of Life," 10 a.m. Sunday, March 26.
- "Healing Your Hurts," 10 a.m. Sunday, April 2.
- "Relationships That Last," 10 a.m. Sunday, April 9.
- "Remembering the Last Supper," 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 13.
- "God's Promise to You" 10 a.m. Easter Sunday, April 16.

Other events planned at the church include:

- Easter egg hunt for children, 11:30 a.m. Sunday, April 16.
- Whirllyball for adults, Saturday, April 8.
- Road rally, Saturday, April 22.
- Promise Keepers men's retreat, Friday and Saturday, April 28-29.

quish and judgmental of other people.

"The Christian religion talks about grace and forgiveness. It's not going to be perfect," he said. But he only hopes to open the door to the church wider. "That's the heart of what we're trying to do."

Now that he's focusing on operating a healthy church, and the steps for each year are in place, Sommers hopes to keep up the momentum without pushing people.

It's not deciding where to go. It's getting people to come with you," Sommers said.

North Farmington Community Church is at 32500 West 13 Mile, Farmington Hills. (810) 626-6900. Sunday services are at 10 a.m.

Home from page 11A

included in the Northwest Ordinance the requirement that a territory had to show that its schools were teaching the Bible, as well as biblical principles, to be granted statehood. (And yes, I am referring to those same Founding Fathers that wrote our Constitution as well as the First Amendment, that has since, sadly enough, been used erroneously to support this censorship.)

I can also teach, if I should ever decide to do so, such politically incorrect studies as the connection between illegitimacy and crime.

Another great advantage of teaching at home is that I make the decision whether or not my child will be used as a guinea pig for the latest experimental learning method. Granted, the latest educational trends in Michigan education (invented spelling, whole language approach to reading, self-esteem that is free, etc.) might all turn out to be great successes. And perhaps my children will resent that they had to learn math, reading and spelling the "old-fashioned" way, and that they had to develop the merited self-esteem that comes from genuine achievement and the self-discipline that comes from knowing that unyielding standards are in effect. Yet at least I will know that I used teaching methods that had been proven by years of successful results and academic research.

I also have the authority as my home-schooler's principal to decide which, if any, experimental behavioral-modification programs I wish to try on my child. I know, for example, that I will not use the DARE program ("drug abuse resistance education" program) in my "school" after reading the results of a study commissioned by the Department of Justice that found that suburban kids who participated in the DARE program were actually more apt to experiment with drugs.

In addition, I will most likely not be using a child abuse prevention program after reading about the University of New Hampshire study and its troubling finding that children who participated in child abuse prevention programs were not only less likely to prevent being sexually abused, but were actually more apt to be injured during the abuse. Don't get me wrong: I will do everything in my power to prevent my children from using drugs or being abused — but I will not use programs that have ever been shown, in any study, to increase the likelihood of the very things they are meant to prevent.

As my child's teacher, I am also able to choose the curriculum. I can provide a course of study that fits my child's individual learning style. Educators have known for years that this tutorial system is extremely effective. Furthermore, I am able to teach the biblical perspective and values that my husband and I share. My children will not be learning that they must "value" alternative lifestyles nor that sex is acceptable outside of marriage. They will not be taught evolution as though it is fact rather than theory. They will be taught correct American history, not the revisionist, politically correct babble as proposed by the new "history standards."

I am home-schooling because I find that the aforementioned advantages outweigh the disadvantages of home-schooling. And yes, there are disadvantages to home-schooling, but probably not the ones you would think of: I have given up a lot of freedom to home-school my children; I took on what has become almost a full-time job without letting anything else go; and I got a lot of criticism from family, friends and even strangers.

And what about socialization, you ask? That is one item that I am not the least bit concerned with. A University of Florida study revealed what I had long ago noticed: that home-schooled children (when monitored on videotape interacting with both large and small groups of children) actually interact better with their peers and show fewer behavioral problems. This would seem like a natural result of home-schooling, as the behavior being modeled to the child is coming mostly from adults (his or her parents), not other children. And in terms of my child getting the opportunity to socialize with other children, there are many opportunities: from the science club that meets weekly for field trips to factories, museums, etc.; to YMCA classes and 4-H clubs. No, home-schooled kids are not socially deprived. In addition, a 1993 University of Michigan study refutes the claim that home-schooled children will be unable to become productive members of a diverse society: They are more apt to go to college and more likely to get an advanced degree than their public-schooled counterparts. Just ask Harvard.

Lynn Johnche and her family live in northwest Farmington Hills.