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ing from "she's nice and helps me," to "she has all her big-girl teeth."

"Children grow when they feel loved and nurtured," she said. "We have returning families."

Last year Flagg's daughter attended a mom and tota class with Flagg's 2½-year-old granddaughter, Marlee.

"At home, I'm grandma Maxine. Here, she knew to call me Miss Maxine."

As she moves briskly from one room to the other, she reflects on why she has stayed in a traditionally low-paying career for so long.

"I love it here," she says simply. "I love little children. They are so innocent, so excited about learning."

Field trips are a part of the experience. Recently, the 4-year-old class visited Michigan Aviation in Waterford, where they got to sit inside small airplanes and moved the wing

flaps. The older group of 4-year-olds is planning a Mother's Day Tea that will feature chocolate dipped strawberries and a play they will perform, complete with costumes and scenery.

For Earth Day, the kids cleaned up litter outside the school.

As parents arrive with their



Tool man: Jamie Damone

3-year-olds, there is socializing among the group of adults as well as the kids. Teacher Sande Neeley knows of one alumni group that still gets together once a month for an evening out two years after its children have left the program.

Tuition ranges from \$300 for the mom & tota group to \$1,080 for the 4½-year-old enrichment class. Classes run September to May.

"We've been full each year and we have a waiting list for the 3-year-old program," Flagg said.

Rachael McCormick, former head teacher at Mayflower, now brings her 3 year old grandson, Andrew, to the Tuesday/Thursday morning program. She also substitute teaches there when needed.

"The kids are so great at this age," she said, watching Andrew disappear into a large bright colored climbing toy in the middle of the room. "They soak up every new experience like sponges."

For more information on the Mayfair Co-op, call 626-2765.

City kids from page B1

points when the boys bounded over to join him. The kid, whose parents run a local motel, wistfully watched the group leave the next day, taking away the only game played on that court in two years.

Rules were simple: Be neat, polite, stay on the paths and with the group. No boom boxes. Anyone playing a radio in the foresta would be mailed home in a doggie bag. Also, even if it was just a word or two, everyone had to write down in his "log" what he did or saw that day.

The weather, happily, was beautiful and skies were clear when needed most. Of course, there were less-than-golden moments.

"No way am I going to walk in those woods to the bathroom. NO way!" The girl was talking about a 30-foot path to a fully lit, flush-toilet facility. She adjusted quickly. Getting going in the morning was hard. The long miles between McDonald's was not a happy discovery, yet there were no outbursts of incontinentia.

Stepping toward an unfamiliar world, the participants now know why these inland seas are called Great Lakes, and they have felt amazing softness of sand tugging at their feet. They've stood on high places, squinted at far horizons, and tested the waters of tumbling streams.

This year will be the fifth trip north, each time with some "veterans," some new recruits. A new tent has been acquired so that boys and girls have

their own total space instead of a tent with rooms. The adults have additional small tents, and all of them are easy set-ups, especially with all hands working.

Michigan Adventure hopes it can help church organizations, Scouts or families who want to reach out to organize a trip. It's a project that takes shape quickly, uses simple equipment and not much money. A folder telling what is needed, where to go, where to contact the children is being prepared. Call Doris Scharfenberg in care of Outer Drive Faith Lutheran Church, at 313-341-4095.

Body contact with the natural wonders of Michigan should be part of a child's growing up.

Doris Scharfenberg, a long-time Farmington Hills resident, is the author of several travel books.

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As you're talking about options with your kids, remember they have been dancing all night. They need something different to do. Some may want to hang out with videos, others to play a euchre tournament. Some have come in at a regular time but planned a trip to Cedar Point the next day.

Keep from a safe and sober night, which provides fond memories for a lifetime.

Linda Enberg is a community volunteer, past president of Farmington Families in Action and a mother of two recent graduates.

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