

# Girl Scouts Meet New Challenge



IN TRAINING to be special aides for summer special education classes in Farmington are Girl Scouts Nancy Evangelista, left, and Janice Madge, right. Nancy, a member of Cadette

troop 701, and Janice, a Senior Scout in Troop 1047, are working with Anna Marie and Chris, both Farmington special education students. (Evert photo)

For cadette girl scouts in Farmington, community service is taking on a new dimension this spring and summer.

These junior high girls — between 30 and 40 of them — are taking over as special aides in the six-week summer school program offered to the handicapped and retarded by the Farmington Schools department of special education.

THEY'VE SPENT four Saturday mornings in training for the work, so when summer school opens June 27 they will

be on hand to assist the teachers and regular aides with the group of about 100 youngsters registered.

In the past, college students and future teachers have helped in the program.

A budget cut posed some problems this year, so Mrs. Herbert Philo, girl scout area association chairman in Farmington, suggested that cadettes could do the job.

Eighth and ninth grade volunteers from nine cadette troops, as well as a few girls from Senior Troop 1047, began the training April 15.

They took out one weekend to go camping and finished it up May 13.

During the training sessions, several professionals in the special education field worked with the girls.

FRED PARKER, director of special education in Farmington outlined the duties and responsibilities of aides and told the girls how to deal with the children.

Mrs. Helen Moore, physical therapist, gave them some suggestions for helping the physically — handicapped

youngsters, especially those who come to school in wheelchairs.

Mrs. Lawrence Sharpe, speech pathologist, showed them how to make some of the elementary sounds they will be using in helping with the pre-schoolers who will be coming for speech therapy.

Mrs. Judy Stanley, who has been leading a girl scout troop for the special education classes at Beechview school, showed them some games they could play with the children and gave them an idea of what they can expect from the children.

The summer school session will run four days a week, and the girls probably will be on duty one day a week each.

THEY WILL EARN a special cadette patch — maybe decorated with a turtle, Mrs. Stanley suggested.

They'll also earn the thanks of the Farmington School District and some specialized knowledge that will long be valuable.

"It's a meaningful service, the kind girl scouts are looking for these days," Mrs. Stanley

said. "And it's good for them to know these special children."

For the school children too, the experience should be valuable, believes Mrs. Nancy Viles, special education teacher.

"They'll have a chance for new contacts, and there will be that many more young people who will have a better understanding of their problems," she said.

## m. m. memos

The Mother's Day gift I received this year warrants public display, and I'm luckier than most mothers because I have this little show-window to use.

My gift was a junior-sized cherry tree, and it had been carefully planted in our back yard by the time I first viewed it Sunday.

I'm sure I'm not the first mother to be given a tree — mine is a delightful but hardly unique present.

But I wonder how many other mothers have received trees that were lugged nearly a mile through pouring rain in a grocery cart borrowed at the store.

Or how many other Mother's Day gifts have been planted — still in pouring rain — in soil so hard that only a huge hole and plenty of peat moss to replace the rocks and clay would fulfill the planting instructions.

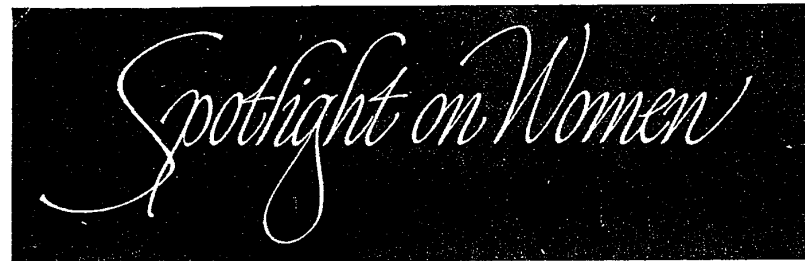
A definitely — to — be — treasured note from the girls mentioned that "more TLC couldn't have been used" and I'm sure that's the understatement of the year.

The unusual preparations were both necessary and possible because the man of our house and I returned from a week's vacation just in time for Mother's Day.

And if we had any doubts about our daughters' ability to function on their own, that tree and its circumstances would have to dispel them. Even the mud-covered tree-planting clothes had been laundered and folded when we arrived home a few hours later.

I'm sure of one thing — the cherries the tree eventually bears are bound to be the sweetest we'll ever taste.

—Margaret Miller



## 'Open Door' Provides A Lift

By KATHY MORAN  
Sometimes wearing a new dress or sports coat is like looking at the world through rose-colored spectacles.

That new skirt or sweater is enough to make you different from the rest of the world.

FOR PATIENTS at Northville State Hospital, the world is taking on a brighter hue with the opening of a clothing shop where they can find attire to make their days more cheerful.

Called "The Open Door,"

the shop opened this month in a freshly painted room that had been abandoned for years.

Volunteers have taken on the chore of washing, ironing, mending, sorting, and sizing the stacks of clothing that have been donated.

When the shop opened its doors, racks of fresh colorful clothing were waiting for patients in need to try on and choose from.

Mrs. Josephine Zylinski of Northville has nursed the project along since early

February together with Mrs. Jennifer Bolenbaugh of Novi.

THE PROJECT'S success first began to penetrate, according to Mrs. Zylinski, when an older man walked in hunched over and wearing pants so oversized that "if it weren't for his belt he'd be wearing them around his ankles."

He picked out some pants that fit and just before he left exchanged a sweater full of holes for a suede jacket.

"It was just like a pauper turning into a prince," she said. "He walked out with his head held up as if he was so proud."

The patients aren't limited to how much they can take but it is required that they come to the shop with a staff member.

"That way we can make sure the clothes get to the people who really need them," Mrs. Zylinski said, explaining that the shop is also open for indigent persons in

convalescent homes from the area.

It is completely manned by volunteers who assist the patient in finding clothes that fit in colors the patient prefers.

BEFORE OPENING the shop, the volunteers painted the reception area a bright orange, decorated the chairs, hung artificial flowers on the windows and even put a silver Christmas tree in the corner.

"We wanted them to come to a room that just doesn't look like the rest of the hospital," Mrs. Bolenbaugh said. "We want them to come somewhere where it is bright, cheerful and different."

It is so unlike the rest of the hospital that one visitor on opening day preferred to sit in the orange room and drink coffee with the staff and volunteers than to look for clothing.

One problem they don't

have is a shortage of clothing, according to Mrs. Zylinski who pointed out stacks of clothing that still must be sorted and cleaned.

They do need volunteers and donations of new underwear and unused make-up. Mrs. Zylinski suggested that local churches might hold underwear showers as a special project to help the patients.

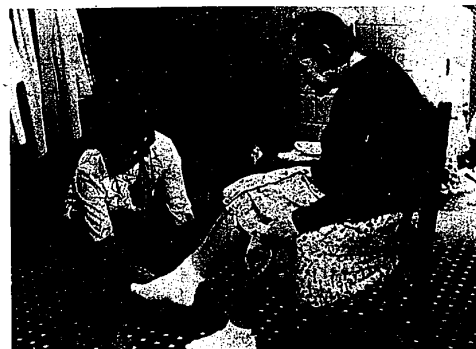
Currently The Open Door can only stay open from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday and Thursday, but the 12 active volunteers hope they can increase their ranks so that they can keep it open every day.

One volunteer, Mrs. Shirley Penrod, has nine children but still finds time to help because "It's a worthwhile project."

With the steady work from volunteers, more patients are walking around with their heads held higher and the world's a little brighter.



MRS. SHIRLEY PENROD of Northville helps fit this gentleman for new pants. The mother of nine children, Mrs. Penrod works at the hospital once a week helping to prepare and distribute the clothing.



STARTING WITH SHOES and finishing up with dresses and skirts, this woman is aided by volunteer Eileen Patrow (left) in finding some cheery clothes. (Observer photos by Bob Woodring)

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