

From Any View, AFS Exchange Looks Great

By MARGARET MILLER

Women's Editor

When it comes to the American Field Service exchange student program, the Timothy Brennan family of Livonia knows the view from several sides.

And all of them are good, agrees this clan that includes parents and five daughters as

well as another daughter adopted for this year.

Four years ago, when she was a high school junior, Mary Brennan went to the Philippines for a summer-long visit under the AFS program. Then her sister, Maureen, spent a year in Australia, again as an AFS visitor.

And this year the Brennans

are host family to lively Melika Ben Ammar, better known as Mickey, whose home is in Tunisia, North Africa.

THE PROGRAM that seeks to spread world understanding through individuals and families has had a definite broadening impact on this Livonia family, said Donna Brennan.

"I'm not much interested in traveling—but I don't have to," she added. "I can learn so much about the world right here."

"And I think what the AFS program has done has made us more aware that families are the same the world over and that parents are concerned about their children whatever country they come from."

Mary and Mickey laughingly agreed on one area, at least, where this was so. Before each went traveling to stay with a family on the other side of the world, they said, their mothers worried over where they would be and what they should take along and their fathers wondered how much it would cost.

"But for me," Mickey added, "the big thing was neither of those. It was just that I was going to the United States."

COSTS ARE well divided under the American Field Service International Scholarship program, and those who have been closely associated with it feel they are low for the benefits received. The student's own family contributes what it can afford—plus clothing, luggage, transportation in his own country and medical expenses for pre-existing conditions.

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m. m. memos

Consistency is the important thing when you're a parent, my reading always has told me.

Starting with Dr. Spock, of course, and continuing through every expert I've studied, the message has been the same—react in the same way each time to the same kind of behavior so the children don't get confused.

And from Daughter No. 1 through Daughter No. 4, I've been so consistently inconsistent that I kept wondering how they managed to grow up at all.

So it was with great interest that I read an article delightedly clipped by a colleague who admits to the same problem.

It seems that a Columbia University psychologist decided to blink red and green lights at a couple of groups of pigeons. Both had to learn the difference between red and green in order to be fed. The pigeons in one group were consistently rewarded when they pecked correctly; the others received rewards only intermittently.

Well, reports the psychologist, the pigeons that lived in the well-ordered, consistent world really went to pieces when suddenly signals were switched. Whereas the ones that had lived with the erratic kept their cool and just kept pecking away.

I'm not sure just what this means to me. Maybe that my offspring are just as well off even though I break all the rules about being consistent.

Or maybe that I ought to be raising pigeons.

—Margaret Miller

70 Years of 'Expression'

Mrs. Lancaster Is Feted

"We thought we'd give her a corsage and let her take it from there," said one member of the Soroptimist Club of Farmington when her group planned a day to honor Mrs. William Lancaster.

And that's exactly what the remarkable 91-year-old lady did for the women who

gathered in the Farmington Community Center.

Delighted at having a day of her own, the longtime teacher of expression and lover of young people and growing things recalled some of her experiences in teaching the art of expression.

"OFTEN SHE doesn't have

the strength for a lot of speaking," said a friend of long-standing who was there with her. "But that day she seemed to find it."

And a Soroptimist reported: "We usually break up at 1 p.m. after lunch. That day we kept going until 2:30."

Margaret Slifer Lancaster

has taught expression—the word she definitely prefers over the "dead" term elocution—for more than 70 years.

She put herself through college teaching in Illinois and Indiana, taught it at Marion College in Indiana after earning a bachelor of oratory degree there, was both teacher and performer during the years she and her husband lived in Texas, and hung up a sign advertising speech lessons in the window of her Farmington home soon after they moved here in 1944 to be near their son.

IN THE YEARS she has lived here, more than 600 students have gone to her home on Grand River to follow her set course for effective speech and have participated in her recitals in the first United Methodist Church.

In the last two years, the lessons have been in a different home in Farmington. "I think it's remarkable that at her age she could move to a different home and enjoy it," a friend said.

Besides her young students of expression, Mrs. Lancaster has taught many with speech defects and many retarded children who have difficulty being understood.

Recently she hasn't been able to take care of the abundance of roses she loved, but she can't give up planting things. "I can't guess how many tomato seedlings she's given away just this spring," her friend added.

Mrs. Lancaster found the occasion totally enjoyable and confided with pleasure that one of the Soroptimist members had mentioned she might like to join the list of 15 or so current pupils.

"You know," she said, "when my husband and I arrived in Farmington, he told me I shouldn't be disappointed if no one wanted to study with a gray-haired lady."

But 600 pupils have hardly noticed the gray hairs, and neither did the Soroptimists.

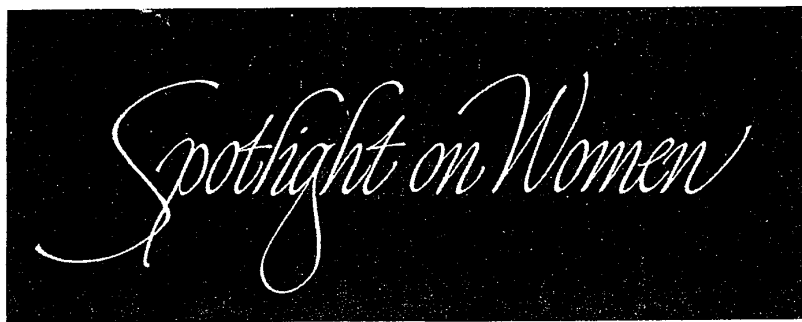


MRS. WILLIAM LANCASTER, (right) was honored guest for the Farmington Soroptimists at a recent luncheon. Mrs. Arthur Grosop is shown here with the lady known to hundreds of young speech students. (Evert photo)



MARY BRENNAN (right), shows her "sister" from Tunisia, Mickey Ben Ammar, the statue she bought in the Philippines when she was an AFS exchange student.

MRS. DONNA BRENNAN (left) checks the evening meal with Mickey. (Photos by Dewey Jenkins)



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