

# A center of service

By LORRAINE MCCLISH

The Farmington Community Center receives enough calls every day, asking questions about the city, its educational and recreational facilities, its organizations and how to contact them, that one of the staff quipped, "Our secondary name might be Farmington Information Center."

"We can generally answer these questions," said Alberta Taylor, director of the center, and if we can't we can give them a referral number to call. It's one of the services we provide that we just kind of fell into."

The calls come mostly from newcomers to Farmington who want to know: Is there baseball for my son in town? How do I get to be a member of the Garden Club? Where is City Hall? Do you know where I can get a baby sitter? How do you meet a single man in Farmington?

How do you meet a single man? "Yes, we get some pretty ridiculous calls sometimes, but they aren't ridiculous to the person who is doing the calling. Unfortunately I couldn't tell that girl how to meet a single man. That's one of the few questions I couldn't answer," Mrs. Taylor said.

SHE DOES NOT think of these calls as an extra burden on herself or her small staff but rather as a free service the center can provide, if that's what the community wants or needs.

Currently in the midst of a fund drive to put the center on a more solid financial footing, Mrs. Taylor is also in the midst of balancing a precarious small budget taking care of current needs, and hoping for a future that will give more service to the community.

She mentions a service that would provide baby sitters, or help for elderly people when a family is away on vacation. Or a kitchen, with a crew that could provide food service to visiting groups. Or additions to the band shell that could be used for concerts, plays and pageants.

"I find that a lot of people believe we are supported by taxes, and that isn't so, nor do we have subsidies nor endowments."

"Or they believe that we make a great profit on our classes," she said.

"The center charges for classes and for room usage but it does not make a profit on them. If we did make a great profit we couldn't provide those classes at a reasonable cost. We want

to be competitive (in price) with others who are providing the same service. If we charged to make a big profit the only ones we'd be competitive with is country clubs."

AN ESTIMATED 65 per cent of the class charges go to the instructor and for materials. The balance goes for operating and administrative costs. "And these far exceed the income we are able to generate and still keep activities within people's reach," she said.

Room rentals go towards the normal operating expenses of any houses: utilities, repairs, snow removal, cleaning and the like.

The center has received funds from innumerable groups in the way of benefits and has a good working number of volunteers. Yet the annual fund drive in March, asking for community contributions, is a necessity. "One very large expense item is insurance. We must pay \$3,300 a year for that alone," she said.

Another misconception about the center Mrs. Taylor is anxious to clear up is that there is a charge for every activity that goes on in the building, or the grounds.

Free space has been given weekly for the past four years to "Sewing for Needy Children," a volunteer group which yearly makes and donates hundreds of both beautiful and useful garments for needy children in the area as well as the Ruth Alden Dress Drive. And free space is also given weekly to the "Fifty Plus Club."

The center also sponsors special interest clubs by scheduling space for several months during organizational periods.

PERIODIC FREE events in the past have included the senior citizens' open houses, a youth theater group for three summers, several art exhibits in cooperation with the schools and the Farmington Community Arts Council, and a number of concerts. More are in the planning stage for 1974.

In addition local civic groups regularly use the facilities for informational meetings, picnics, tree sales, and bird house contests.

"We look forward to the day when we are sufficiently well funded to offer many more opportunities and services free of charge," she said.



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## PEOPLE

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## Another Fun Fair coming up

With the student-selected theme, "It's A Family A Fair," Mercy High School's fifth annual Spring Fun Fair will be held Friday, May 3 through Sunday, May 5 on the school grounds at Middle Belt and 11 Mile rds. The fair will be open on Friday from 5-10 p.m., Saturday, noon to 10 p.m., and Sunday from 1-9 p.m.

Nearly 30 different rides, guaranteed to attract both young and old, will be dotted around the school parking lot and approximately 30 games will be located in the "Big Tent," according to General Chairman John Brady. His co-chairman is John Hollingsworth, and student co-chairmen are Linda Hanson and Wendy Wilber.

SISTER MAY Camille Kelley, R.S.M., Mercy High School principal, whose school faculty is also co-operating in putting on the fair, said that it is a joint venture of the Mercy students and their parents and has two prime objectives: to bring parents' and daughters together in slaying a highly enjoyable activity that produces fun for all who attend, and to raise funds to help underwrite the operational expenses of Mercy High. She emphasized that the fair is Mercy's only fund raising activity of the year.

Ticket chairman for the fair is Frank Nakagawa, assisted by Sister Joel, R.S.M., of the Mercy faculty, and the student body. Nakagawa said that many fine prizes would be awarded for lucky ticket holders.

Arthur Drost is chairman of the games and rides committee. Girls from more than 70 parishes in the Detroit area attend Mercy High.



## Manning boutiques

An enamel on copper ash tray catches the fancy of this foursome representing students and parents of Our Lady Of Mercy High School. It will go on sale in boutiques that are being readied

now for the annual Fun Fair, set for the weekend of May 3-5, by, from left, Sue Stasel, Cindy Thomas, Mrs. Gerd Schaefer and William Reid.

## Search for members

The Women's Assn. of the Oakway Symphony will be recruiting new members next week when it holds its first membership tea on Sunday, May 5, from 2-4 p.m. in the Farmington Community Center. Ex-

pertise and knowledge of music is not a requirement, but talents of all kinds are needed and used. Barbara McCann, at left, is chairman for the tea, who is preparing for the affair with Frances Gambino, president of the association. (Evert photo)