

People

CLOSE-UP

'Y's' preschool program turns 2

By ROBIN BARKSDALE
Chronicle Staff Writer

It was a celebration of major proportions last Sunday at the Winston Lake Family YMCA when students, parents and special guests turned out to celebrate the second birthday of the Y's pre-school program.

What started two years ago as an empty room within the new YMCA facility on Waterworks Road has grown into a respected child development program that serves 50 children. Satia Orange, the director of the Y's preschool program, said the center now fills an important need in the Afro-American community.

"The reason we opened it was that we identified a need for day care in the community," said Orange. "There also needed to be some place for children to operate in a safe environment."

But Orange is quick to point out that the YMCA program is not just a babysitting service, nor, she said, is it a kindergarten program. Teachers and staff at the preschool program operate under an early childhood development curriculum, which Orange said allows more flexibility than a traditional kindergarten setting.

In addition to Orange, the program's staff consists of two teachers who have studied child development education.

"We take them where they are and then we try to move them at their own rate," Orange said. "We're following basic child development practices. It's not a little kindergarten. It's an early childhood program."

Orange said the difference between a kindergarten and an early childhood program is evident in the practice of teaching young children to read. She said her staff is pushing to teach according to standards they feel the children will need when they're older. Orange said that the staff is "less interested in children reading at four and more interested in children having all of their reading skills. It's more important that they feel good about themselves. If they're afraid to try they won't be able to be open to what teachers are trying to teach them when they get to school."

One parent is convinced that the YMCA's program is the best way to go and she gives the preschool high marks in providing an atmosphere conducive to developing children at an early age.

"The teachers seem to be very dedicated and they project a lot of love to the children," said Robin Mouzon, whose son, Dominic, attends the preschool.

"I like their approach to discipline. They don't believe in spanking. If a child has been having a problem behaving, the teachers work with him to get him to try and understand why what he is doing is wrong. They don't just send a kid off into a corner by himself. I think they do a very good job. I don't think, in all of the times I've been out there, that I have ever seen a child upset or crying. They all seem happy to be there. They take kids as individuals and I like that."

Orange is pleased that parents have developed an interest in the preschool program and calls their support a "vital" element in the program's success. But she said she originally worried that parents would be skeptical of a new day care program for their children. She said that earning the trust of parents has been one of the biggest challenges she has faced since begin-



Preschoolers at the Winston Lake Family YMCA recently celebrated the 2nd anniversary of the program with a birthday party. Parents, students and guests attended the event held last Sunday at the YMCA.

ning the program two years ago.

"After two years of growing, we're starting to see more parent participation," she said. "They've felt comfortable in having their children there but now they're willing to fight to get things for the program. One of the biggest challenges for us has been overcoming the fears parents have about day care in general. We're working to ensure parents that we're good for their children and that we're safe."

One of the "fights" parents have undertaken is a campaign to raise funds to purchase an outdoor recreation area for the children. The area will include a gazebo, a hardtop surface for games and other pieces of exercise equipment. A parents committee has been formed to coordinate the fund-raising effort which will culminate May 15 at the YMCA. The event will include a Little Mr./Miss Winston Lake Family YMCA pageant and other activities. Cordelia Woodruff, the co-chairman of the fund-raising committee, said she is active with the project because her son has had such a good experience at the day care.

"The programs they offer at the preschool are very beneficial," said Woodruff, whose son was one of the charter members of the preschool program. "The staff

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

THURSDAY, MARCH 17

- "Salem Chapter of the American Needlepoint Guild," an exhibition of needlepoint presenting original compositions, adaptations and class projects, will run through April 13 at the RJR Gallery of the Sawtooth Building, 226 N. Marshall St. The hours are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday; and 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday.

- Dr. Jay Isaac Newton, a local gynecologist, will present a seminar on mid-life without crisis from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Glade Street YWCA. The free seminars for women are being presented by local physicians and other health care specialists. Due to limited seating, pre-registration is required. For more information call 768-7680.

- Make Today Count, a support/education group for cancer patients, family members and friends will meet at 7:30 p.m. at Ardmore United Methodist Church, 630 S. Hawthorne Road. Gene Ryder, educational coordinator for Forsyth Memorial Hospital, will present a program on "Humor." For more information call 725-7421.

SATURDAY, MARCH 19

- The Winston-Salem/Forsyth County chapter of the NAACP will hold its annual Freedom Fund Banquet at 7:30 p.m. at the Benton Convention Center. T. Willard Fair, Urban League director in Miami, will be the featured speaker. There will be a reception before the event at 6:30 p.m. For more information call 785-0289.

- The Winston-Salem Recreation Department is seeking volunteers as scorekeepers for a bowling tournament for the visually impaired from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The tournament will be at Major League Lanes. No special qualifications are needed to be a scorekeeper and all ages may apply. Ending date for volunteering is March 18. To volunteer, call Sandy Penn at 727-2505.

- The Winston-Salem Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity will sponsor a drug education seminar at the Winston Lake Family YMCA at 1 p.m. Deputy Sheriff John Politte and Superior Court Judge James Beauty will conduct the seminar. Refreshments will be served.

SUNDAY, MARCH 20

- The Winston-Salem Chapter of Jack & Jill of America Inc. will celebrate its 50th anniversary at Grace Presbyterian Church at 11 a.m. A reception will follow the morning worship. Several of the chapter's charter members will be present. Iris Officer will offer reflections of previous Jack & Jill activities. All former and present members are invited to attend. For more information call Beth Hopkins at 761-5926 or Stephanie Davis at 765-6774.

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SOCIAL NOTES

Zeta soiree to feature nine Miss Enchante contestants

Nine local girls took initial steps last Saturday which will lead to one of them being crowned "Miss Zeta Enchante."

The crowning will be held when Rho Zeta Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority presents its soiree this spring.

The soiree will be held at the Benton Convention Center at 8 p.m. May 28. It will feature former Winston-Salem resident Fay Hauser, dramatic actress and producer, with music by The Kings, a local musical group.

Delores Graham, a local teacher, model and charm specialist, conducted a "Charm Clinic" for those aspiring to win the title of Miss Zeta Enchante. The clinic was conducted Saturday morning at the home of Dr. and Mrs. C.B. Hauser. It featured instruction in the finer points of etiquette, poise, personality and qualities which enhance and enrich the development of girls between the ages of 12 and 15.



Miss Zeta Enchante contestants, from left, Patrice Toney, Benita Parks, Kimba Prince, Cheri Allen and Jerri Allen listen as Delores Graham conducts a charm clinic (photo by C.B. Hauser).

Attending the clinic were Cherie Aldrich of Philo Middle School, Benita Parks of Hanes Middle School, Holly Stepp of Paisley Middle School and Charlene Blackburn of Carver High School.

Also attending were Patrice

Toney of Northwest Middle School, Jamita Griffin of Reynolds High School, Jerri Allen of Philo, Kimba L. Prince of Kennedy Middle School and Monica D. Dillard of North Forsyth High School.

The soiree is the principal

fund-raising project of Rho Zeta Chapter. Proceeds will assist chapter with its human and community betterment activities which include scholarship assistance, Meals on Wheels, Crisis Care, the Soup Kitchen, the NAACP and the United Negro College Fund.

ABOUT TOWN

Priscilla Thompson receives governor's service award

The community service efforts of one local resident have attracted the attention of Gov. James G. Martin and he has presented her with a special Governor's Award for Community Service.

Martin presented the award to Priscilla Thompson, who over the years has volunteered her time to help develop the skills and talents of the city's young people.

Thompson is the founder of the Ebony Angels, a group of young women who participate in a variety of projects during the year. She currently is in the process of organizing the 1988 Ebony Angels Jr. Pageant, which will spotlight young women in the community.



Priscilla Thompson, the recipient of a recent Governor's Award, is joined by friends, from left, Kenta Sharp, Sherry Nelson, Michael France, Folenia Patterson and Michale Towers (photo by Santana).

Thompson said her interest in working with young people came from a disappointing situation which she encountered as a young woman.

"I never had anybody to talk to me when I was growing up," said the 24-year-old Thompson, who is a counselor with the school program at the Winston Lake Family YMCA. "There wasn't anyone to teach me things, to just talk to me. Then, I met named Harold Ellison who would come to talk to me and he taught me things and it meant so much to me. So now I'm trying to pass that on to other young people."

She said the Ebony Angels

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