

ALL IN THE FAMILY



Sarah Child

In her New Year's column, writer Ruth Winter who appears in the morning newspaper and whose work deals with the inner person, culled material from pieces she'd done over the year to come up with eight suggestions for leading a better life.

One of them really struck home for me. It was the advice given her by clinical psychologist Dr. Leo Shatin of New York.

Use music effectively. Shatin says that music is a powerful tool and just like any other tool it "can be used constructively or destructively." He goes on to say that if music is to be used to bring someone out of a bad mood start with blues music and gradually change to cheerful songs. If he is agitated then start with bouncy music and gradually change to quiet melodies.

I think there's probably a good deal of value in what he says.

From my own experience I know that television was slowly

but certainly driving me crazy. When this house was built we noted the standard blue-prints had a wall between kitchen and family room.

"Tear it out and let's make one big room," we said. The idea: I could be in the kitchen and still keep an eye on the kids. Sunday dinner preparation would no longer be a chore if I basted the chicken to the sound of a televised sports event being watched by the head of the house. And the kids could use the kitchen table as a game or craft table and still be part of the family circle.

Well, the plan has backfired, of course. On weekends it would seem that the TV is on 26 hours a day starting with cartoons in the morning through all the games during the afternoon and crime dramas at night. The only way to drown it out was to turn on the dishwasher which brought screams from all concerned.

Then Friend Husband brought the record player from the bedroom down one night to the living room. I went to the basement, brought up 10 or 12 operas I'd bought 15 years ago, assorted musicals "from the olden days," as our kids say, and our favorite symphonies.

During the day I made sure if the pre-schooler turned on the TV I turned it off immediately as soon as her program was over.

During the weekend I fought for equal decibels telling those in the family room to keep the TV quiet enough so just they could hear it.

I began with "Pagliacci" and every time Jussi Bjorling broke himself apart with "vesti la giubba" a few of my frustrations blew away. The Chorus of the Bells took care of any additional cobwebs.

When Jussi, Victoria (de Los Angeles) and Leoncavallo began palling after the 13th or so performance I dug out a much used copy of "Showboat," another of "Kismet" and listened over and over again to such beauties as "Old Man River" "This is My Beloved" and "After the Ball." We went through eight of the nine Beethoven symphonies (I never did like the Choral) and at Christmas a friend presented us with Brahms' symphonies after my husband had asked him to identify a famous melody that he kept whistling but couldn't label. It turned out to be the last movement, First Symphony. And the album is going to take a while to get tired of.

I don't say that my disposition has improved 100 per cent. And the TV still seems to play incessantly over the weekend. But things are more tranquil than they've been since the kids first learned to raise the volume on the home screen.

Whether we realize it or not the noisemaking essence of a TV provides for an insidious corroding of the nervous system. We are responding to that even though we are unaware of it. Conversely the right music can cleanse, freshen, enhance, delight and inspire our inner selves.

Alien Address Reports Due

The Immigration and Nationality Act requires every alien who is in the United States on Jan. 1 to report his address to the Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization during the month of January. Address report is not the same thing as alien registration and must be made each year. An alien may go to any United States Post office or any Immigration Office and ask for an Alien Address Report Card (Form I-53). When completed, the form is simply stamped and mailed.

If an alien inexcusably fails to report his address during January, he may be fined, imprisoned and deported. If an alien failed to report last year it is important that he do this year, as additional failures will make it more difficult to show reasonable excuse.

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Photos by Susan McKinney

Christmas at Plymouth Gardens



The Southwest Ecumenical Ministry sponsored Plymouth Gardens' first religious service Dec. 23. Ten neighborhood clergymen led the Christmas celebration attended by 80 elderly residents with Sister Barbara Moore, pastoral assistant at St. Monica's, acting as mistress of ceremonies.

Above, Father Paul Wohrab of Our Lady of Good Counsel reads the Christmas story from St. Luke's gospel. Seated, from the left, are the Rev. Ed Hannay of Trinity United Methodist Church; the Rev. Bruce Tucker of Westminster Presbyterian, who delivered the homily; Fathers Edwin Metzger and Neil Miller of St. Augustine, and the Rev. Oral Fisher of West Avenue Methodist.

At left, Ann Hensler and Maureen McGuire play O Holy Night in a flute duet, accompanied by Ann's sister, Barbara. In the background is the Rev. Fred Jefferson of Trinity Emmanuel.

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