



Jill Splinter, far right, talks to Ben Maddox, 5, of Algonquin during the "Kids Only" flea market at the Dundee Township Public Library.

Daily Herald Photos/Gilbert Boucher

Flea market draws budding entrepreneurs

BY STEFANIE CASCIO
Daily Herald Correspondent

"Everyone's a winner," shouted 8-year-old Erik Myers of Gilberts in an effort to attract young customers to his game booth.

A vendor at last Friday's Kids Flea Market sponsored by the Dundee Township Public Library, Myers created a game in which for 20 cents kids had a chance to try to extinguish the flames of three candles with a squirt bottle.

"I went to one of my friend's birthday parties, and they were doing it there so that's how I got the idea," he says. "We figured out how much we should charge by the cost of the candy that we bought."

Erik's mother, Dawn Myers, helped out by buying the candy bars that were given away as prizes.

"This is our second year here," she says. "The kids have so much fun because they think they're going to be millionaires when they leave, and they like to shop at other booths too."

About 60 booths were set up on the front lawn of the library, offering children a chance to buy items such as toys, games,

books, hair accessories and baked goods. Some creative youngsters made their own craft items to be sold at the flea market.

"I have heart magnets," said Andrea Martin, 11, of Algonquin. "Sewing them took just a few minutes. They have felt on the back, and this is the first time I made them."

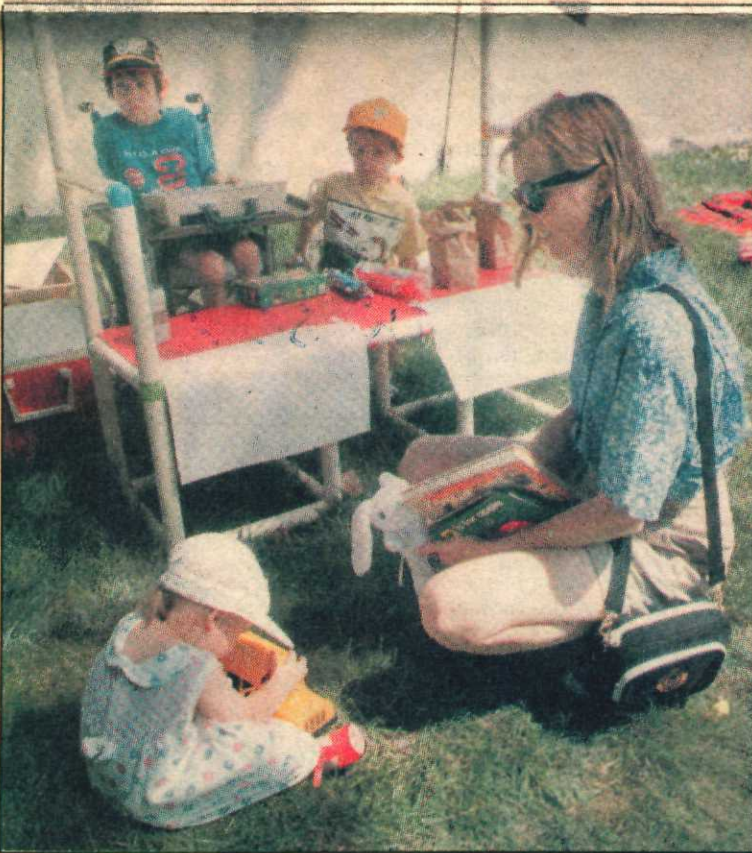
Andrea sold three of her magnets in the first hour of the sale for 30 cents apiece.

Sharing the booth with her was 10-year-old Juliann Elliott of West Dundee. Juliann sold stationery that she designed herself using a heart stamper.

"I thought it would be a good idea to sell stationery," she says. "And since I didn't have a lot of stamp pads, I used markers to color the stamp and then put it on the paper."

Children and adults could purchase her selection of pads, paper and book markers, which were cut to size with her father's help.

Children's librarian Kathy Mitchell, who helped organize the event, says that children could reserve a booth for free



Cathi Layman of Carpentersville and her 15-month-old daughter, Ann, buy soda pop from Ryan and Sean O'Toole, ages 9 and 6.

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MARKET: Children sell old toys, books, or their own crafts

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and sell as many items as they wanted.

"In order to have a booth at the flea market, you had to belong to the library reading club," she said.

"The children can be any age, and a lot of the moms come with because they enjoy helping out the kids and sitting outside."

It seems that the event has grown larger each year since the first flea market in 1984, according to Mitchell.

ell. In the first year of the market about 30 booths and a small number of shoppers showed up. But this year, all 60 booths were occupied, and about 200 vendors and shoppers took part.

"We push teachers and grandmothers and caregivers to come to the sale," says Mitchell. "It's almost like we don't have to advertise anymore for it because so many people hear about it by word of mouth."

Mitchell said that 20 additional booths were added this year to accommodate all of the young en-

trepreneurs, but she doesn't see it growing past 60 booths since there wouldn't be enough space in the front lawn of the library.

Many vendors chose items that they had outgrown or didn't want anymore. Nikki Hollander, 15, of Carpentersville, wanted to get rid of some old books and tapes, but also made her own beaded necklaces to sell at her booth. After learning how to make marbled paper in school, she created her own book markers and sold those, too.

"I have about 25 books," she says.

"I've already read all of them, and I've outgrown some of them."

One enthusiastic father looked at the sale as a way of getting rid of old toys that his children no longer used.

"We have an assortment of goodies," says Glenn Gilcrease of West Dundee. "We needed to clean out our bedrooms, and I think we did a good job of getting it all out. I like to do things with my children, and this is a neat idea. Plus, they like Dad to be here so that they can go off and spend their money at other booths."



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