

The Mini look hits BAHS; students, teachers learn

by Ann Seligmann

Although Mini Courses are not a new idea, they are new to Berlin American High School. Mini Courses are designed to provide an opportunity for students to develop an awareness and knowledge in areas not normally part of the school curriculum.

The idea of the Mini Course program originated when a group of interested students approached Mr. Robert Spier, the Career Guidance Counselor at Berlin American High School. Without hesitation he offered suggestions for the program and became the chief sponsor, and the advisor to the interested student group.

Plans for the Mini Courses started directly after the fall semester with the organization of a Mini Course committee. After a slow start, interest began to grow. The committee of about five students recruited teachers for Mini Courses by setting up booths in the main PX, securing spots on AFN and AFTV, and searching for individuals who would be willing to share their talents, hobbies, or special interests with the students at BAHS.

Each senior high student was expected to select five courses of his choice, each one hour long, with a one hour lunch period. The students then consulted with the Career Guidance Counselor to complete their schedules, and the Mini Courses were assigned room numbers.

Sixty-three classes, ranging from Egyptology, Berlin History, Existentialism to Tie Dye, German Cooking, and Acting were taught by regular teachers, parents, by professionals and amateurs, by Germans and Americans, all interested in supporting the Mini course program. Some teachers offered instruction in Mirror Making, Crocheting, and Film Discussions.

The whole atmosphere of the school seemed to change drastically during the week — the students were actually in a good mood on Monday morning and everyone was able to relax a bit and recuperate from their mid-year exams. Students, teachers, and special Mini Course instructors commented on the amount of enthusiasm and interest displayed within their classes. Most everyone agreed that "learning" was really taking place.

Despite a good deal of concern and worry at the outset about the final success of the program, evidence proved by the end of the first day that the Mini Courses would be educationally sound. They offered an opportunity for students to learn in a comfortable and stimulating environment. It is hoped that one week out of each year can be reserved for the Mini Course program so students can learn different things in a different way.



MIRROR MAKING was one of the popular Mini Courses offered to the students at BAHS during the Mini week.

(Photo by Wally Roberts)