

How teamwork turned fireplace into solar idea

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY
Solar heating has leaped from the drawing boards to actual use in the Farmington Hills home of Robert Rossi.

Rossi's solar fireplace became a reality through coincidence as much as through conviction.

The 49-year-old management consultant for Alexander Grant and Co. in Detroit became interested in solar energy when he worked on an environmental emissions and fuel economy program at the Ford Motor Co. several years ago. But when he considered adding a fireplace to his home, he wasn't thinking of solar heat until his brick mason, Don Bradley of Farmington Hills, suggested he consult Lou Soper of Southfield.

Soper, a siding salesman-turned solar heating designer, first came up with the notion of working solar heat around a conventional fireplace about three years ago in North Dakota. After build-

ing solar heating systems for himself and others in North Dakota, the Michigan native recently returned to his home state.

He began planning to implement his design in Michigan with Bradley's help.

The solar fireplace in the Rossi residence, which Soper says is the first one to be built in the state, is constructed on the interior rather than the exterior of the home. Heat collectors are set within the studs of the home.

THE BLACK METAL collectors gather the heat attracted by a series of glass, which look like clear plastic blocks. The blocks are set into the side of the home, giving them the appearance of being a part of the outer wall.

Insulation behind the collectors keeps the heat on both sides of the metal and allows warm air to be blown into the fireplace's air duct and subse-



Lou Soper

quently out into the room.



Don Bradley

nels on either side of the fireplace. This allows the owner to burn wood in the

hearth as well as use it to collect the sun's warmth.

The Rossi fireplace required 64 square feet of the black metal collectors which were contained in two 4x8 panels. The solar fireplace has the capability of heating a 20x30 foot room.

Together, the fireplace and the solar heating devices cost about \$6,100 to install. About \$4,000 went to building the fireplace and \$2,100 went toward the solar heating apparatus, according to Soper.

But Soper believes that the project is feasible for the less-than-rich because state and federal tax credits are given to those who construct solar heating devices in their homes.

THE \$6,100 project in the Rossi home made him eligible for a \$1,400 federal tax credit and a \$1,100 state credit, according to Soper.

"That means the solar fireplace costs about \$3,500 to construct once you take into account the tax credits," he said.

"And once you have it in, the heat is free," he adds.

Soper says that two out of three days in Michigan are days with sunshine. But Rossi remains skeptical.

"I decided to try it, but I don't know if Michigan has enough sunlight to benefit me," he said.

According to the Detroit Weather Bureau, the sun shone on the area for about 33 per cent of the month of December.

The National Weather Service in Asheville, N. C., has 72 clear days

logged for the Detroit area during 1977. Partly cloudy days in 1977 totaled 104 and 189 days were cloudy. The service's 19-year projection shows an average of 76 clear days in a year in Michigan, 108 partly cloudy days and 181 cloudy days.

Soper predicts 40 sunny days in the state.

But even Soper admits that solar heat is incapable of warming a Michigan house year round.

"SOLAR HEAT IS supplemental," he said. "It's not likely to replace conventional heating methods."

"We won't go 100 per cent solar," he added.

The idea for using black coated collectors and a conventional fireplace for solar heat began to occur to Soper when he saw his construction men warming their hands against dark siding when they were working in the winter.

Eventually he set up a small solar heating chamber in his car. A black metal plate and insulation was teamed up with some glazed panels. The small solar heating device helped Soper to warm caulk in the winter.

Another experiment he tried involved painting a pickle jar with black enamel, placing two hot dogs in it and covering the jar with its cap. Placed in the sun and after 50 minutes, the results, according to Soper, are cooked hot dogs.

Using the sun for daily tasks intrigues Soper.

"I'm intrigued by what the sun can do," he said. "Everything we do can be solar, but no one uses it."

'Cults are strange animals'

Beleaguered family warns of cults

By JACKIE KLEIN

The movement known as the People's Temple may have died in the mass carnage in Jonestown, Guyana, but cultism in this country is alive and well, according to Ed Schnee. His two sons were once members of another controversial religious order, the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church.

Schnee and his son Danny, 24, a member of the church for one year, addressed a sparsely-attended forum on religious cults last week in Southfield sponsored by the Metropolitan Detroit-British Council.

Jeremy Schnee, 27, is still involved in the "Moonie" movement.

"Cults are strange animals," said the elder Schnee. "Off-the-wall religious groups are highly publicized in the mass media and the phenomenon is known around the world. These complex organizations use coercion, persuasion, Madison Avenue hype and brain-washing to capture their followers."

"Cults aren't merely small groups of persons whose beliefs differ from those of organized religions. They're highly deceptive, manipulative, exploitative groups using psychological techniques to exert control over individuals like the 900 who committed suicide in Guyana."

SCHNEE CLAIMS there are between 1,000 and 5,000 cults in the United States alone and they're still

growing in number. Many persons join these cults to get away from a materialistic society, Schnee said.

Intelligent youths ask where are the old verities and the truths? Schnee said. "Kids feel guilty about their parents' material success. Religion stresses doing good for others. Young persons want to find themselves and work and struggle to change society. They want the answers now."

"A kid backpacking his way in California, for example, is approached by an attractive young cult member who tells the lonely traveler the group has what he's looking for. He joins the group because at first he's surrounded by love and everyone pays an enormous amount of attention to him."

BIOLOGICAL PARENTS of "Moonies" are considered evil, Schnee said. Members of the cult are told that Moon and his wife are their true, spiritual parents. Doubt is transformed into guilt, he said. "Cults such as the Unification Church are totally deceptive," Schnee said. "They pretend to be big on giving money to establish drug addiction centers. But Moon is helped materially by the traditional right of freedom of religion."

"Moon is given tax exempt status. He owns a factory in Korea which manufactures rifles. About two per cent of the millions pouring into the church go to legitimate religious

activities. The church is a one-way charity," Schnee said.

"We hope everyone will bombard their state and federal representatives to do something about the thievery, knavery and mind control permitted under the freedom of religion doctrine."

Danny Schnee, now a Wayne State University student, left Moon's church six years ago. He joined the cult in 1972 when his brother convinced him of the "benefits."

"I joined what was called the Unification Church International Reducation Foundation in Berkeley, Cal., at the time I was planning to enter University of Michigan," he recalled.

"THE SOURCE of my trauma was that I was expected to be a doctor or lawyer. If I refused, I was supposed to go to a shrink. I hitchhiked to California and met my brother, a late 1960s radical, looking as clean-cut as I do."

Schnee said when he joined the cult, he was lectured on the principles of education because "Moonies think Americans don't dig the religious trip." Workshops and lectures are designed to reach persons who want to be good but have fallen from the way, he said. Moon is considered the second Messiah after Jesus.

"Group leaders in the church are responsible for making you stay,"

Schnee said. "They have an entire information network about every member, which includes their parents' incomes. At first, you have a feeling of solidarity, and what you believed in before is overcome."

"The group leaders approach is tailored to each individual. If you're a doctor, the church is concerned about physical and spiritual health. If you're a teacher, the church is education-oriented."

The average age of "Moonies" is 20, Schnee said. Many are unsure of themselves and sensitive to pressures in an unsteady period of their lives, he said.

Schnee lived in a three-bedroom house with 47 cult members, who slept on the floor and used only two bathrooms.

HE WORKED at a number of jobs to raise money for the cult and slept only three hours a night, he recalled. Other members were on the mobile fund-raising team, soliciting money 18 hours a day, he said. They sold flowers at shopping centers and door-to-door and hit the bars at midnight to solicit more money, he said.

"We were taught the world is in bad shape because people are selfish in a materialistic society," Schnee said. "We were told to make sacrifices to return the world to an ideal state and for the good of humanity. They called it indemnity, which means we were to suffer for the past mistakes of mankind."

"You learn to obey and not to have negative thoughts even if you have to drink poisoned Kool-aid and die for the good of the world. I saw misery around me and I even my group leader broke down and cried. That's when I decided to leave."

Schnee went home after one year with the cult and since has helped deprogram other young cult members.

Hills posts agenda

FARMINGTON HILLS CITY COUNCIL
31555 Eleven Mile

7:30 p.m., Jan. 22

• Public hearing regarding the cost of installing sewers in Linden street.

• Public hearing regarding the necessity of installing sidewalk on the south side of Thirteen Mile from Greening, 1,000 feet east of Orchard Lake Road to Detroit Baptist Manor.

Unfinished Business

• Consideration of city code amendments regarding the Thirteen Mile sanitary arm and the Northwest Pressure district.

• Consideration of rezoning land on the north side of Northwestern Highway west of Middlebelt from single-family residential to office service.

New Business

• Resolution regarding city identification signs on I-96, I-75 and I-696.

• Resolution for matching grant for the Saturation Patrol Operational Team (SPOT) for a demonstration project.

• Appointing CETA community service officer position to a police officer position.

• Consent judgment regarding land on Middlebelt and Eleven Mile.

• Consideration of preliminary plat approval for Acorn Valley Subdivision.

• Consideration of resolution permitting the Clarenceville School District to levy taxes during the city's tax collection period.

• Consideration of traffic control ordinance for eastbound and westbound Lamar.

• Consideration of traffic control order for eastbound and westbound Fink.

• Consideration of yield sign for Springbrook Street.

• Consideration of International City Management Association's deferred compensation plan.

• Setting the date for a cost hearing regarding sewers for San Souci Road.

• Setting a date for vacation of Colfax to Halsted.

• Consideration of preliminary plat approval for phase one of Country Ridge Estates on the west side of Halsted, south of Fourteen Mile near Haggerty, 102 lots.

THE INSIDE * ANGLE

A REDFORD TOWNSHIP FAMILY

is asking for help in locating witnesses to an accident this summer in Hartland Township, near Waldenwood Campground at US-23 and M-10. On Aug. 20, following a rock concert featuring the Brownsville Station and the MCS, Robert Semak Jr., 16, was seriously injured in a hit-and-run accident. Witnesses described the car as an orange Volkswagen. The 1974-76 Beetle was driven by a white male, possibly in his early 20s. A young woman was also seen in the car.

The Semak family attorney is asking persons who saw the accident to help them locate the driver of the orange VW. Although three persons saw the accident, they left the scene before police arrived.

Semak was alone and walking on the shoulder of the road when he was struck from behind. He was thrust into the windshield of the car and flung over the hood. He received multiple fractures to one leg and was seriously bruised. He was discovered 20 minutes after the accident by youths returning from the concert.

Since the accident, the Semak family has been overwhelmed with medical bills. They have no insurance to cover those debts, and the family is unable to bear the financial burden, said attorney Clifford Roberts. Anyone with information is asked to call 569-2957 in Detroit. Callers identities will be kept secret, Roberts said.

There is a \$100 reward for information concerning the driver of the car.

FARMINGTON HIGH SCHOOL is celebrating its 25th anniversary at its present location on 32000 Shawansee with a dance Feb. 16.

All alumni from graduating classes from 1954 to the present may attend. All administrators and teachers who have taught at the school during this time may attend. Dancing will be from 8-11 p.m. and will feature the Nick Falles's Super Stage Band playing music of the '50s and the '60s. Refreshments will be served in the cafeteria throughout the evening. Dance will be semi-formal and tickets will be on sale in the school's main office for \$5 per couple and \$3.50 for a single ticket. For further information, call Clarence Shenbride at 474-6158.

FARMINGTON HILLS has its share of residents on the dean's list at Madonna College in Livonia. They are: Catherine Burk, a freshman in nursing; Bonnie Mesaroch, a sophomore in nursing; Lynn Wootton, a junior in biology; chemistry; Cynthia Eisenberg, a junior in child development; Carol Reineke, a junior in nursing; Judith Grant, a junior in nursing; Carol Ann Moore, a senior in home economics and family life; Patricia Lange, a senior in nursing; Carole Duquette, a junior in gerontology and Sheri Gilbert, a senior in English.

THE DETROIT BIBLE College, 35700 W.

Twelve Mile, Farmington Hills, is presenting Joan Schnerer in a piano concert at 8 p.m. Jan. 28, in the Kresge Chapel at the new campus. Tickets will be available at the door or by calling 553-7200 during business hours. General admission is \$4. Students will be admitted for \$2.

Mrs. Schnerer will perform Bach's Partita 5, Beethoven's Sonata Opus 90, Ginastera and several other works of other composers.

COLLECTORS CAN FORGET those winter blues when they attend the Livonia Mall antique show from Jan. 31-Feb. 4. Furniture, glassware and other collectibles will be shown.

IT'S ALMOST FEDERAL income tax time again. And to prepare yourself against that deadline, Beatrice Nye, a representative from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), will be a guest speaker from 7:30-9 p.m. Feb. 1 at the Farmington branch library, 23500 Liberty. She will speak about general guidelines to use in preparing the federal income tax forms. To register, call the library at 474-7770.

DOUGLAS GIEBEL, who has his oil paintings on exhibit at the Detroit Bible College in Farmington Hills, will visit the school's Twelve Mile and Drake campuses from 2:30-4:30 p.m. Jan. 28. Giebel attended Case Technical High School in Detroit and Pratt Institute of New York. His exhibit is open to the general public.

TERM PAPER BLUES coming on? The Farmington branch library, 23500 Liberty, will offer a short course designed to provide high school students and adults with instruction in basic methods and tools used in term paper research. No registration is necessary. For further information, call Barbara Brower at 474-7770.

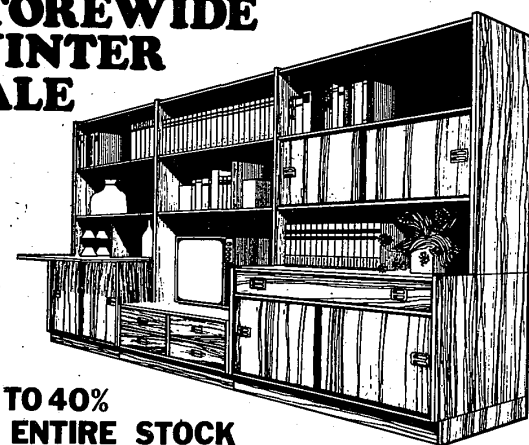
CONSIDERING A CHANCE in career can require planning and counseling, Madonna College in Livonia is sponsoring a workshop on career planning and decision making geared at persons changing their careers. The workshop will be conducted from 7-10 p.m. Jan. 30 in room 275 of the college's Academic Building. There is no fee for the workshop. Registration can be completed by calling 591-5351.

DEADLINE

Material submitted for the Inside Angles, 22170 W. Nine Mile, Southfield 48034, should include the name and phone number of the sender and should be typewritten if possible. Items should be received at least one week before publication, and photographs can't be used. All materials become the property of the Farmington Observer but any laughs are open to the public.

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