

Consumers will ante up for liter price conversion

By TOM LONERGAN

"People wanted 29.9 gasoline again. They're going to get it."

So says Charles Shipley, executive director of the Service Station Dealers Association of Michigan, headquartered in Southfield.

But don't go out and bet your big oil company dividend on Shipley's prediction if you think it means gas prices will take a radical dip from \$1 and up per gallon.

THE 29.9 Shipley speaks of would be for a liter of gas.

That's a little more than a quart. There are 3.785 liters in a gallon.

"We do think a high percentage (of gas stations) will be using metric by this time next year," said Shipley, a Farmington Hills resident.

The pricing of gas is a monster out there today.

Many gas stations have been selling the precious petrol by the half-gallon because most pumps aren't equipped

for prices that exceed 99.9 per gallon.

Shipley says newer pumps that can handle \$1 and up prices have been manufactured only during the past five years.

THE U.S. METRIC board, which met in Dearborn last week, expects major oil companies to convert soon to liter pricing because changing the pumps to liters will be cheaper.

The Metric Board staff estimates it will cost \$100 million less to change the nation's 1.5 million gasoline pumps to liters than to pump gas at more than \$1 a gallon.

The estimate was based on a \$50 per pump cost of converting to liters versus \$200 a pump for the other alternative.

Whatever the conversion cost is, the consumer will pay.

As Charles Vincent, chairman of the National Conference on Weights and Measures, told the 17-member Metric Board:

"Exxon ain't going to pay for that.

The people that pay for gasoline are.

"Oil companies will do it (convert to liters) when it's cost efficient for them," said Vincent, a Texan who is also director of the Dallas Department of Consumer Affairs.

Vincent said Exxon plans to convert its pumps over a seven-year period.

Vincent's group, which represents state and local weights and measures officials, have recommended the conversion to liters be completed by 1983.

The Metric Board, created by Congress in 1975 to coordinate voluntary conversion to the metric system, also endorses liter-pricing for gas. The

board is not a compulsory regulatory body.

IN THE DETROIT area, no stations are selling by the liter now, according to Shipley.

Amoco, the largest gasoline marketer in Michigan, is experimenting with metric in Muskegon, while Shell, sec-

ond largest, is planning to convert all its stations to metric by the end of March.

Shipley agrees that the conversion cost will be paid by the gasoline buyer.

"It's a business expense," he said. "Eventually all costs are passed on to the consumer."

Halloween: Parks host boo parties

A weekend of Halloween festivities will take place Friday and Saturday, Oct. 26 and 27 at the Waterford Oaks County Park activities center, west of Pontiac, and at the Paint Creek Cider Mill, north of Rochester.

Waterford Oaks will host a senior and adult Halloween dance from 8-11 p.m. Friday. The dance will feature ballroom dancing with Charles Lundgren's String and Keys Quintet, presented by the Pontiac Federation of Musicians.

Awards will be given for the best costumes. Admission is free and refreshments will be served. Waterford

Oaks is at 2800 Watkins Lake Road, west of Telegraph.

The SECOND ANNUAL Great Pumpkin Cut-up will take place from 2-4 p.m. Saturday at the Paint Creek Cider Mill, 4480 Orion Road at Gallagher, Addison Township, in northeast Oakland County.

The event is open to children and adults. Participants should bring their own carving tools and pumpkin. Additional pumpkins will be available for purchase at the cider mill.

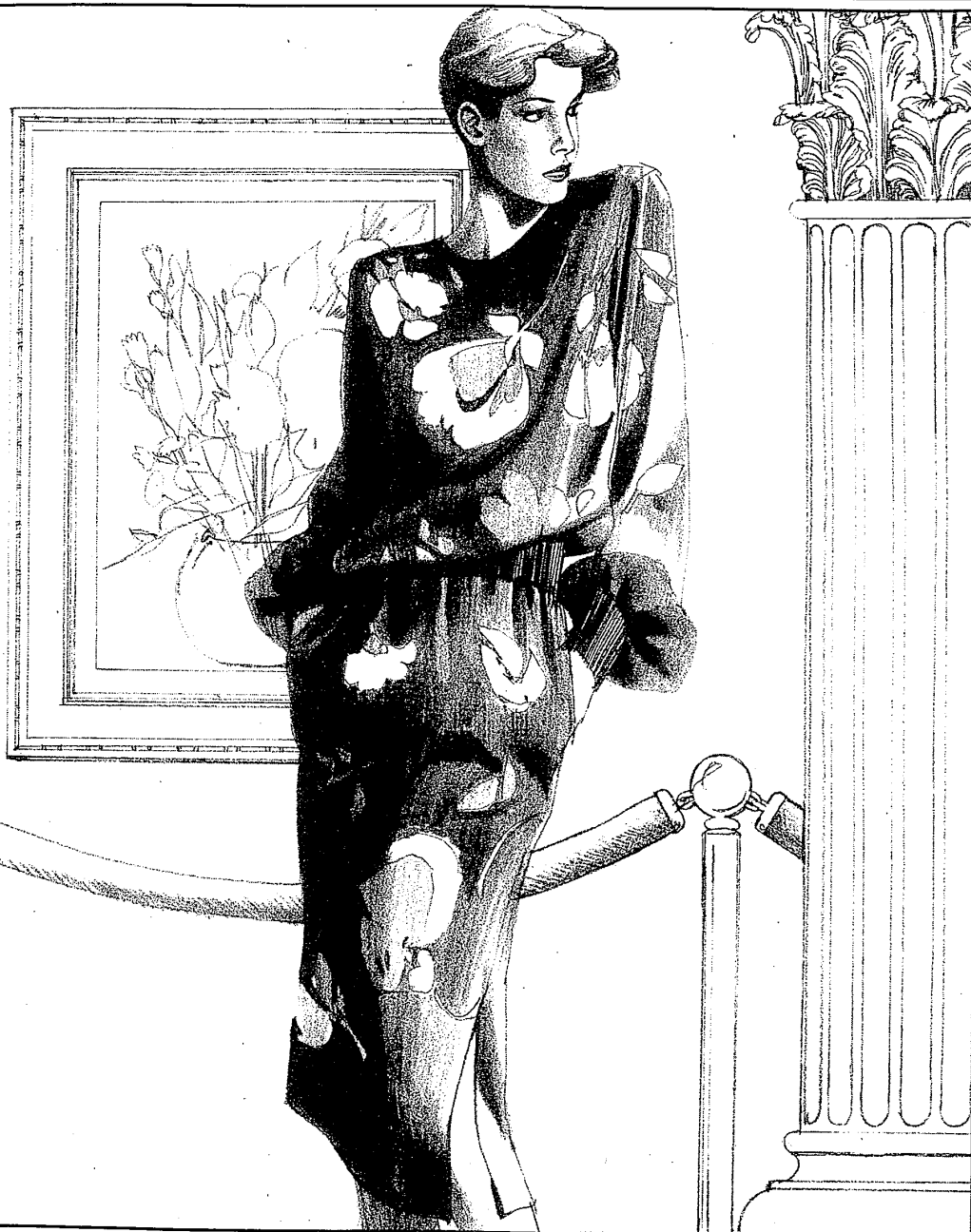
Awards will be given to the oldest and youngest participants and for the

largest and smallest pumpkins. Prizes will also be given for the most creative, spookiest and happiest pumpkin in each age category.

Cider and donuts will be served.

"THIS WILL be a great time for the whole family to enjoy the fall colors while driving to the cider mill," said Sandra Pulk, recreation intern for the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission.

The Halloween dance and Pumpkin Cut-up are sponsored by the Oakland Parks and Recreation Commission.



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