

The Oum family is spending its first Christmas in America. (Staff photo by David Frank)

## Cambodian clan celebrates holidays in their new home

By LETHA D. WILLIAMS

Trapped in a stagnant Thailand resettlement camp last year, the Oum family didn't care about Christmas. But this year they're in America. And they've decked their Pontiac Township halls with Christian tradition and memories of their beloved home:

and memories of their beloved home: Cambodia.

Spansored by St. John's Lutheran Church in Rochester, the Cums arrived in Detroit on June 28, 1979. There were seven of them, plus a cousin, Savon Tieng.

Members of St. John's resettlement committee met the Oums at Detroit's Metropolitan Airport. The parents, Mony and Vanna, were supporting three sones and two daughters.

The boys are Sereyruth, Dara Rassy and Reaksempe Chivi. The girls are Sokunthea and Sokuntheary.

All were ill when they arrived in America. Doctors who examined them to Mod St. John's committee members the family was suffering from malnutrion. But that wasn't unsual.

In 1975, Oum took his family and fed their Pnompenh home. The city had fallen to communists, and Oum's life was in diagn't. Cambodia, he die, "Mrs. Oum explained.

"He they communists) kill me," Oum added.

"He (the communists) kill me," Oum added.

OUM HAD been a government offi-cial before Pnompenh fell. And govern-ment officials, even clerical people like Ourn, were usually the first to be exe-cuted.

- Before the Ourns left their home, the

cuted.

- Before the Oums left their home, the communists took all their possessions. Even their photographs and shoes were confiscated.

Even their photographs and shoes were confiscated.

For three years the Oums led a no-madic-type life. They wandered from village to village, through all kinds of terrain, until they were sent to the Thailand resettlement camp.

Meanwhile, St. John's Lutheran Church's congregation was approached by Lutheran Immigration Services. The congregation was asked to sponsor a Cambodian family.

Congregation members agreed and, thinking they had several months to prepare, established a resettlement committee. However, in only a few weeks they learned the family had to leave Thailand immediately or be sent back to Cambodia.

Preparations center building on Preparations and control to the sent the control of the

Ourns, and oonatours to turnish it were collected.

Arrangements were also made to house the Ourns' cousin. He lives in Uti-ca with members of St. John's congre-gation, and works at Avondale Conva-lescent Home in Avon Township.

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FOR

the family

America, Villi Inso Pornings, a Portilac Township door company.
Their four school-age children attend classes at St. John's Lutheran Schol Oum and his wife also study English two nights a week.
They have slowly adapted to American life. Members of St. John's congregation help the Ourns by providing transportation and explanations of American traditions.
Their Christmas tree, donated by members of St. John's, stands lighted in the dining room corner. On the wall next to the tree is a map and flag of Cardodia.
Ourn said Christmas is not new to.

Ourn said Christmas is not new tohim or his family. They attended many
holiday parties at the French embassyin Cambodia before the communiststook power.

He said he is still Buddist, but doesn'tcomplain about the Lutheran churchservices he attends with his familysach week.

"Christian help me much," Ourn said.
The Ouns will have Christmas presents this year. A basket, provided to
Rochester's Neighborhood House, will
be delivered, filed with enough food
and gitts for each family member.

"I like Christmas," Ourn said, his
yess flashing as he and Mrs. Ourn prepared to attend a holiday office party.

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## obituaries

DELBERT S. ADAMS

Delbert S. Adams, 64, of Farmin died Dec. 18 at Botsford General He

died Dec. 18 at Botsford General Hospital.

Mr. Adams was a mechanical engineer for the Coquillard & Associates Co. and a member of Our Lady of Sorrows church.

Surviving are his wife, Susan R.; son Denais, daughter Mrs. Kenneth (Karonsthir Sorth; brothers Guy and Jack; sister Mrs. Eliza Morgan; and five grandchildren.

nars. Luza morgan; and nive grandendren.
The scripture was read Thursday elvening at the Heeney Sundquist Fuberal Home of Farmington. A funeral mass was said Friday, Dec. 21 at Our Lady of Sorrows Church with the Rev. Rean Cronin officiating.

LUCILLE B. BERRYMAN

Lucille B. Berryman, 64, of Farmington Hills died Dec. 18 at Grace Hos-

ington Hills dief Dec. 18 at Grace Hos-pital Northwest in Detroit.
A bomemaker, Mrs. Berryman was an area resident for 20 years.
She is survived by her husband, Ches-ter, daughter Pamels Sue; son Douglach Aller, sisters Evelyn Akroyd, Alice Reid, Doris Simpson, Marie Buttori and Ruth Klot; brothers William and Richard Pankratz; and three grandchil-dren.

dren.
Funeral services were held Friday,
Dec. 21 at Thayer Rock Funeral Home
with Dr. Harold C. Vernon of Trumble
Ave. Presbyterian Church officiating.
Burial was in White Chapel Cemetery.

MARIE E. BRUNETTE

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Marie E. Brunette, 76, of Farmington died Dec. 20 at Botsford General Hospital.

Mrs. Brunette was a homemaker and a resident of Farmington for 41 years. She was born in New York Mills, Min-

Surviving are her husband, Fred; daughters Mrs. Jack (Carmen) Miner, Mrs. Jack (Carmen) Miner, Mrs. Jack (Carnel) Haller and Mrs. Bull (Julie) Goers; daughter-in-law Mrs. Bobble Brunette; sister Mrs. Ida Koria;

Bobble Brunette, sister Mrs. Ida Koria; brothers Walter Hoppe and John Haapoja; 20 grandchildren, and 19 great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Saturday from Thayer Rock Funeral Home and Our Lady of Sorrows Church. Burial was in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery.

VIOLET BELLE FREELAND

information about our Caribbean

Do it for yourself.

Holiday.

ington Hills died Dec. 18 at Botsford General Hospital. Mrs. Freeland was a homemaker and a nursing aide at the Farmington Nursing Home.

Nursing Home.
Surviving are two brothers Robert
and Leron Glime.
Funeral services were held Thursday, Dec. 20 from the Thayer Rock Funeral Home with the Rev. J. Kenneth
Hoffmaster officiating.
Burial was in Grand Lawn Cemeters.

BENNIE HUNKELE

Bennie Hunkele, 76, of Tuscon, Arizona died Dec. 13 in Arizona.

zona died Dec. 13 in Arizona.
A former resident of Farmington,
Mr. Hunkele was retired.
Surviving are his wife, Elizabeth;
daughters Mrs. Charles (Mary) Denzig,
Mrs. Cletus (Sally) Gonyea and Virginia
Hunkele, brothers Leo, John and Jo-

Hunkele, brothers Leo, John and Joseph; seven grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.
Funeral services were held Thursday, Dec. 18 from the Thayer Rock Funeral Home and St. Gerald's Catholic Church. Burial was in Holy Sepulchre

FRANK JOSEPH KOCH Frank Joseph Koch, 63, died Dec. 14

Frank Joseph Koch, 83, died Dec. 14 at Botsford General Hospital.

A resident of Farmington Hills, Mr. Koch was the founder of Koch Metal Products. He designed mobile home doors, window enclosures and utility tub stands.

tub stands.

Suriving are his wife, Orena; daughter Mrs. Dan (Sharon) Duquet; son Robert; sisters Raty Berford and Eva Riffenburg and six grandchildren.

A funeral mass was said Dec. 18 at St. Gerald's Church with the Rev. Decker officiating. Burial was in Grand Lawn Cemetery.

## GEZA LANG SR.

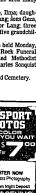
Geza Lang Sr., 70, of Southfield died Dec. 13 at Redford Community Hospi-

A native of Hungary, Mr. Lang was executive chef at the Raleigh House in Southfield. He lived in the area many

years.
Surviving are his wife, Ilma; daughter the Rev. Zelma M. Lang; sons Geza,
Anthony and Dr. Theodor Lang; three
sisters; one brother; and five grandchil-

fren.
Funeral services were held Monday,
Dec. 17 at the Thayer Rock Funeral
Home and Hope United Methodist
Church, The Rev. G. Charles Sonquist

Burial was in Southfield Cemetery.



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