

Witch Watch

by GUNDELLA



Chinese 'life lock' assures many years

A friend of mine is planning to open a boutique soon and has been shopping for rare and unusual items with which to stock her shop.

She recently returned from a jewelry show in New York, laden with very expensive, authentic, antique Chinese jewelry. She brought these things to my home to show me — and I couldn't resist buying half her stock.

Among other things I now own are a very ornate silver container that once hung suspended from the belt of a Chinese doctor sometime before 1850. This ornament, which I wear on a cord around my neck, was originally used to carry acupuncture needles.

THERE ARE RINGS, beautifully painted porcelain balls, fingernail guards and hair ornaments made from kingfisher feathers — all centuries old.

One necklace has an elaborately carved hollow silver dragon on it. Supposedly, a spirit lives inside this dragon. When you wear it, the spirit helps you travel painlessly and joyfully from this life into the next.

My favorite piece is a Chinese life lock. This is a rope of green soapstone beads, to be worn around the waist. When properly tied, it "locks" in your life, insuring you longevity.

On one end of this rope is a beautiful ornament — quite large, about three inches across — made of breath-taking white jade. Carved on one side of this is a fish, the symbol of life, and on the other side some Chinese letters.

I ASKED A Chinese friend to read them to me, and I learned that this particular life lock was made as a wedding gift and wished the original owner double blessedness.

One the other end of the soapstone rope hang two shiny, silver shepherd bells to ward off evil spirits; a little silver horse, a symbol of prosperity so that you may ride rather than walk through life; and two silver melons, which symbolize the Chinese wish for newlives: "May you have as many children as there are melons in the field."

I think I'll remove the melons and give them to one of my children on his or her wedding day. Then I'll tie the life lock around myself and live to a ripe old age, enjoying all those grandchildren.

Retarded unit praises Larsen

Mel Larsen, the new chairman of the Michigan Republican Party, received a special award Sunday for efforts for the retarded during his six years in the state legislature.

Larsen, a former state representative from Oxford, received the "Friend of the Retarded Award" from the Oakland County Association for Retarded Citizens (OCARC).

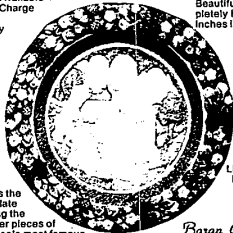
According to OCARC spokesmen,

Larsen personally helped the OCARC staff seek ways to continue a citizens advocacy program and establish a legal advocacy program.

The awards selection committee was composed of chairman Tom Scheuerman of Bloomfield Hills, Carol Jenkins of Farmington, Mary Lou Herrold of Birmingham and Hugh Graham of Rochester.

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Bishop attacks paperwork

State Sen. Donald Bishop (R-Rochester) last week introduced a bill that, he said, would eliminate much of the paperwork involved in providing medical care for Medicaid patients.

"Faced with the mounds of paperwork doctors are now required to fill out in order to be reimbursed by the state, many are becoming reluctant — and justifiably so — to even treat Medicaid patients. As a result, the availability of quality medical care for Med-

icaid patients is diminishing in our state," Bishop said.

Bishop's bill would allow doctors who treat Medicaid patients to waive their fees through the year, then deduct 50 per cent of the charges when they file their state income tax returns.

The proposal still requires doctors to keep records of their Medicaid billings so that claimed deductions can be verified.

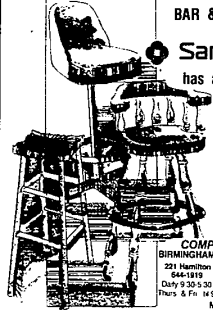


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Thursday, March 1, 1979

(R.F.S.T. Wb) 7A

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