

Totem traces tall tale

BY MARIE MCGEE

Some heap good carving went on at the Jeffrey family residence at 28700 Seven Mile Road following the devastating wind storm recently that tore branches from a giant tree in the family's front yard.

"Bored with sitting around," 17-year-old Christopher Jeffrey used a hammer and chisel to whittle the trunk of the de-branched and defoliated tree into a colorful totem pole that stands about 10 feet tall.

It took him about two weeks and now it has caught the fancy of the neighborhood — especially the senior citizens

who pass by the house on route to the Livonia Mall.

All the while he was chipping away at the trunk, passing motorists would honk and shout encouragement, Chris said.

"Everyone seemed to get a big kick out of it. People walking by would walk around it — especially some of the older ladies," he said.

Chris said he didn't know the first thing about carving a totem pole. He just dug in, spending three or four hours every other day on the project until it was done.

How long will it last? Chris isn't sure but he put on a lot of base paint but "I

don't expect it to stay forever."

While he admits he likes to "mess around" with art projects, he has had no formal training.

Besides, the Clarenceville High School senior said, he's kind of "into sports" and he really hasn't much time for art.

Being "into sports" is being a member of the high school varsity football, wrestling, and baseball teams. Two years in a row, he was voted the most valuable player in football and wrestling. Besides that, last year he brought home a report card with all A's.

Then there's his job at Hungry Howie's Pizza. When the family comes

in, they often get special treatment. That's a pizza with a funny face.

Ancient Indian lore has it that totem poles supposedly reflected the lineage of the people who carved them.

Chris wasn't aware of that fact when he started, but coincidentally there are six faces on the pole — one for each of his five brothers: Dennis, Patrick, Timothy, Brian and Keith. His mom and dad have to share a face. That's not exactly the way the Indians would have it, but for the Jeffreys the present is a lot more interesting.

Besides their ancestry is Irish — and whoever heard of an Irish totem pole?

Record buffs storm nostalgia counter

Right there in the plain cardboard box with the "10 cents" sign over it were the hits that made them rock in the mid-60s.

Relegated to a sidewalk sale in front of Classic Comics and Books in Farmington during the Farmington Founders Festival, were "The Beat Goes On" by Sonny and Cher and "Some Kind of Love" by Tommy James and the Shondells.

Even the very names of the artists inspire memories of an age when Tommy James was considered naughty and a time before Cher discovered Bob Mackey beaded gowns.

As groups of the curious and the nostalgic browsed through the cartons, C.C. Moffet of Classic Comics stood by and smiled.

"Business has been pretty good. We're moving a lot of stuff we couldn't have otherwise," he said.

The "couple hundred" records the store had out for sale were accumulated by buying private collections, according to Moffet.

As he spoke, two teens were gloating over finding a copy of "The Best of Traffic."

"You snailed it," laughed one boy to another in tribute of his friend's success and virtually snatching the record out of another customer's hands.

"I recognized the cover," said the record snatcher, modestly.

His friends and other shoppers thumb their way through the cardboard boxes back to a time when Billy Joe Royal sang "Down in the Boondocks."

As teens searched for relatively recent rock releases, one shopper quietly accumulated a stack of 45s. One after another, he carefully filled up his selections, rejecting a few but accepting more.

"I have 3,000 singles at home," said Paul Attard of Detroit.

"I'll buy anything. Last Saturday I bought a 45 of the 'Ritual Fire Dance' by Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops. It was wild."

Attard, who works in Farmington, was on his way home Thursday night when he noticed the record sale in front of Classic Comics. In a hurry, he resolved to return on Friday.

Friday afternoon found him in front of the boxes of records.

"I got out of work early today so I could come down here," he said, examining and stacking up records.

Some of the selections were scratched but that didn't seem to bother him too much.

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worn out records are listenable."

"You see this record," he said, holding out a so-so copy of "Yummy, Yummy, Yummy" by the Ohio Express.

"This will be my fourth copy of it," he said as he placed the platter on his stack.

Scholarships are awarded

Two Farmington area residents were among those students receiving regent scholar awards from Eastern Michigan University recently.

Karen Leppanen, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Norbert Leppanen of Farmington, received a \$1,200 scholarship. She is a junior, recipient of the Campus Leader award, a member of Phi Beta Kappa and the St. Cecilia Society.

Susan Kopicko, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Kopicko of Farmington Hills, received a \$400 scholarship. She attended Oakland Community College and plans on becoming a teacher after graduation.

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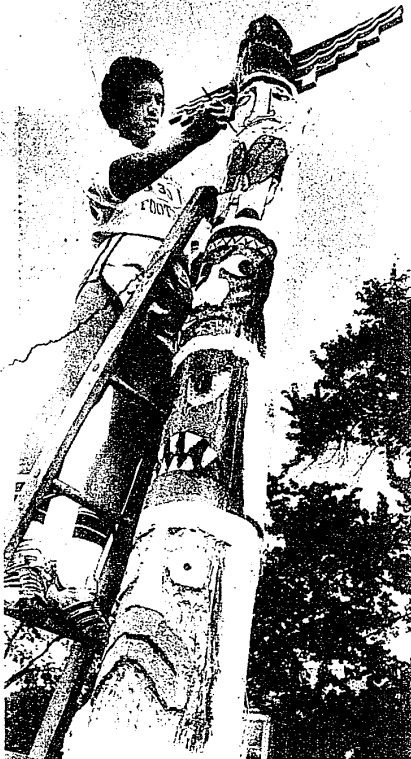


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Atop a ladder, Chris Jeffrey adds a little more paint to a face on the 10-foot totem pole he carved from a tree in the family's front yard that was a victim of the recent wind storm. (Staff photo by Bill Bresler)

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