



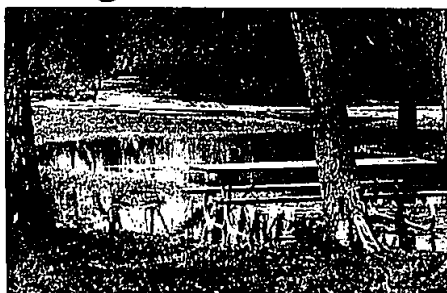
A Buick splashes down Halsted Road south of 14 Mile just after a heavy thunder shower last Monday. Heavy rains flooded some basements and covered a few roads, but the area was spared any really nasty weather.

## A stormy spring!

*Tornados miss Farmington, but there's rain aplenty*



The Rouge River was swollen out of its banks where it goes under Shawwassee Road.



Standing water was a common sight in Farmington City Park Monday.



The Farmington area was pelted with hailstones last Monday morning.

## Tartar professor lauded for years of dedication

By Carmine Brooks  
special writer

Wayne State University's professor Phillip G. Fike was 8 years old when he carved his own tombstone. A boyhood friend's father owned a monument works in his hometown of Reedburg, Wis., that became a place of great fascination for young Phillip.

One day a master stone cutter employed at the stone works noted Phillip's interest. He handed him some tools, a small slab of marble, and showed him how to chisel his name into the stone. Today, his mother uses Phillip's first work as a bookend.

"My first experience of making things with my hands began right there," Fike said.

Since that first experience excited his imagination, Fike has become a metalsmith, sculptor, printmaker and one of the nation's leading goldsmiths whose work has been exhibited both nationally and internationally. He continues to create original pieces in metals, wood and stone, including pins, rings, necklaces and body adornments. He has become widely known as an artist, scholar, craftsman and teacher.

PROFESSOR FIKE, of Birmingham, was honored by Wayne State University on April 27. He received a 1983 President's Award for Excellence in Teaching. He has shared his talent with WSU students for 30 years in the Liberal Arts College Dept. of Art and Art History.

"I am pleased to get the award because I am a studio artist and metalsmith selected among Ph.D.s who publish extensively, and somebody thought what I am doing is valuable," Fike said.

Fike's professional objective is to be involved in the mainstream of contemporary arts and crafts as an artist, craftsman and teacher. He has succeeded. He considers university life and teaching central to his career.

"When I came to WSU I was in the right place in my life and I have been in the right place ever since," he said.

THIS YEAR Fike will complete work on an official mace for the university.

"The mace is a symbol of authority and high human endeavor that will add enormous drama to important academic ceremonies," he explained.

Fike's mace is 48 inches long, made of 168 layers of ebony. On the handle 10 discs fitted together will relate, interrelating to a continuous pattern. At the head is a pentagon holding the WSU medallion. Affixed to the bottom is an ebony earth globe with meridians designed into a symbolic code that can be lifted up to become a map of the planet.

Professor Fike is recognized for his inventiveness with which he has produced genuine original works. All are created with integrity towards ancient processes and a mastery with metals, the citation states.

FIKE is an avid researcher. He has written a paper on primitive lenses and early magnification which explores the history of the use of magnifying glasses to aid in the decoration process.

He has researched the art and history of niello. Niello is a method of decorating silver and gold by filling incisions with a black composition consisting of silver, copper, lead, sulphur, and borax to produce an ornamental effect.

"Generally, the scale of my forms is small and often intricate, and I prefer to make objects which are readily functional and harmonious with human use and spirit," he said.

His impassioned study of ancient historic and contemporary fibulae (a clasp) is a lifetime pursuit. It began in Rome in 1965 where he became interested in the bronze and gold pins of the Etruscans, who gave them the name "fibula."

Fike calls his study of the fibulae "researching the anatomy of the safety pin."

THE BASIC pin clasp is a prime form in human existence, Fike teaches.

"Keeping warm is a primate problem and the development of clasping devices capable of holding heavy skins and furs to the body became as natural as any other shelter and comfort," he writes.

"The modern safety pin as we know it in the American culture is an object manufactured in the billions every year and used for domestic emergencies. This is an example of our packaged environment. The safety pin once had a very important aesthetic spiritual function in the life of other cultures. The fibula was not only a spiritual object which reflected a culture, but was also an artistic sculpture which solved the problem a clasp does. People needed safety pins 2,000 B.C. just as much as we need them now."

"The modern safety pin reflects our distance from potential variety and meaning inherent in the ancient clasp. It functions automatically without concern nor pride of display."

"Place the ends of your thumb and forefinger together and press them very hard against each other. The space between is an eternal dimension. The pressure integrity is strong and controlled by will, yielding by choice."

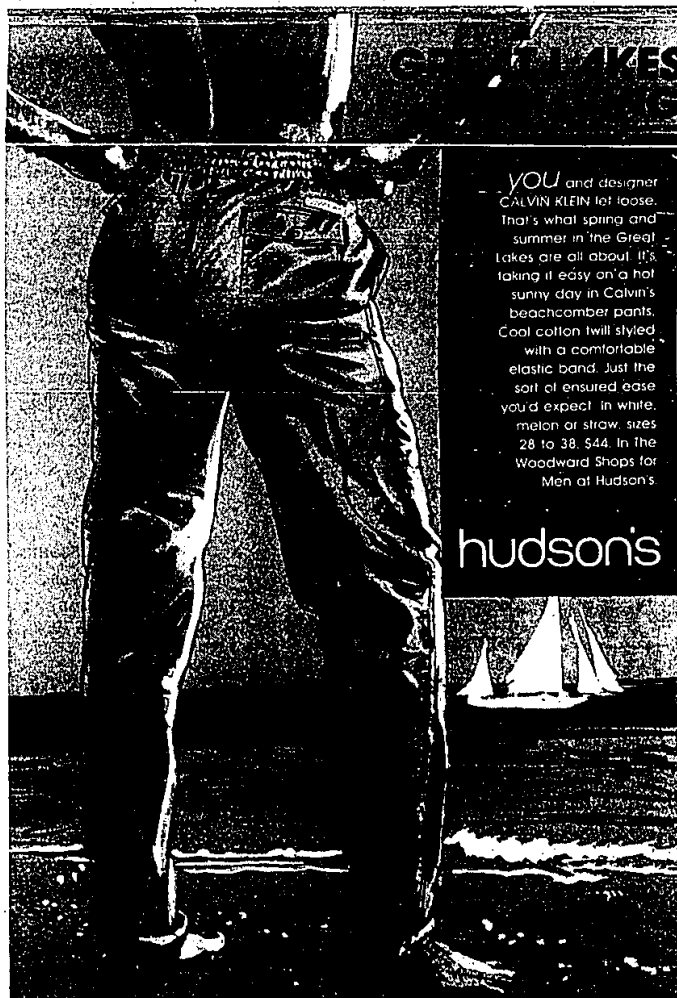
FIKE is called "extraordinary" by his peers. "His charisma, humanism, and generosity is inspiring," they write.

"Professor Fike lends his patience, his skill, and his concern, not only to his materials, but also to his students, who find his concise and articulate presentations unforgettable," the citation continues. "He works on his pieces directly before his students and reveals to them his personal mechanisms of learning."

Fike likes to teach by selecting an object that is taken for granted — a safety pin, a comb, or a pair of shoes. He asks his students to make this article out of anything they like.

A comb, he says, can be made from toothpicks and string, wood, metal, fine wire, or fibres. The Yucca plant has needles and fibres strong enough for combing and sewing, he notes.

"This not only teaches how to work with various materials and simple tools, but they have to deal with something they have always taken for granted," he said.



you and designer CALVIN KLEIN let loose. That's what spring and summer in the Great Lakes are all about. It's taking it easy on a hot sunny day in Calvin's beachcomber pants. Cool cotton twill styled with a comfortable elastic band. Just the sort of ensured ease you'd expect in white, melon or straw, sizes 28 to 38, \$44. In the Woodward Shops for Men at Hudson's.

HUDSON'S



ORDER BY PHONE: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.  
In Metro Detroit, call 569-2454. Elsewhere, order toll-free 1-800-233-2000.