

# Magical Poet

## A 20th-century Cyrano de Bergerac

By Carol Aazilan  
staff writer

In the 17th century, Christian DeNeuville commissioned Cyrano DeBergerac to pen poetic love letters so he could woo the fair Roxane through verse.

Like DeNeuville, Robert A. Lytle, owner of Lytle's Pharmacy in downtown Rochester, is confident his "Magical Poet" will lure customers to his fair pharmacy.

There are no signs advertising "poems and poems," and Lytle would be the first to admit that the ghost writer's 20th-century counterpart — a computer sennetier — has neither Cyrano's romantic vision nor his emotional impact.

**BUT, THE "Magical Poet"** — high tech's answer to the itinerant bard — is sure to have commercial appeal, especially for consumers hard-pressed to find "original" greeting cards for the holiday season.

"Being a country poet myself, I thought it would be a good idea," said Lytle, whose rhymes have been published in the "Vintage Views," (Older Persons Commission's newsletter) the Chamber of Commerce publication and Great Oaks Mall's "Oak Leaf."

"It's a money maker," Lytle admits. "But I don't really care about that."

Still, in less than two weeks as poet-in-residence at Lytle's the computer — affectionately dubbed "Waldo" by the pharmacy staff — has cashed in a pretty penny. More than 20 customers al-

ready have composed custom inscriptions to place inside cards with holiday greetings, serene scenes or cute characters. Card and poem together cost \$2.95.

Andrew DeVillers, a Van Hoesen Junior High School student, thought it would be fun to send a personalized note to his brother, Michael, and sister, Suzanne, who are attending the University of Wisconsin.

**EVEN THOUGH** he owes them \$3 on a bet, Andrew chose the message: "You Owe Me Money."

"They owe me a birthday present," he said with a laugh.

After selecting the type of card he wanted to send, Andrew picked two traits describing his siblings: loves golfing and spoiled.

Here's what "The Magical Poet" came up with:

"The study has just been completed  
You, Sue and Mike will be greeted  
You're golfers in action  
I'll your satisfaction

In Wisconsin you often are seated  
I'm sorry to say that you're spoiled  
Enough so my blood will get belled  
You get what you want  
Desires you flaunt

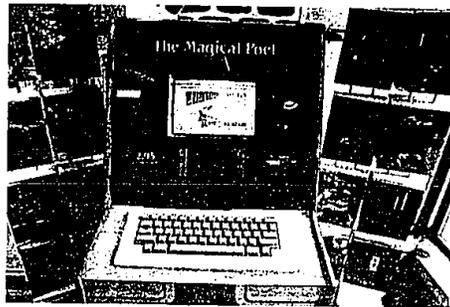
In getting your ways you're well oiled

You know that you owe me some money

And being in debt isn't funny  
I don't want to offend

But I can't pretend  
So pay and your days will be sunny."

"It's clever," concedes Carol DeVill-



The Magical Poet is a computerized version of the itinerant bard.

ers Fette, Andrew's mother.

"But I think it's a little high-priced. The cost should be a little less so that kids could play with the computer."

Adults, however, will find more practical uses for "The Magical Poet." Besides the traditional greetings — birthday, anniversary, holiday, newborn baby, God bless you, graduation — there are a few unusual ones.

**FOR INDIAN** givers, there's an "I want it back" message. Rejected lovers may choose an "I feel hurt" note. Bankrupt businessmen could send wealthy patrons or sympathetic, philanthropic family members an "I lost my shirt" card. Cosmopolitan crooners may want to pen a "Te Amo" letter in Spanish. Complimentary or condescending

adjectives may be selected to describe attributes of the recipient. To win friends and influence people, one may pick two of the following: good person, so cool, jolly, shy, loving, sexy, handsome, gentle and generous, cuddly, bright and smart.

Chapskate, weird, bossy, lazy, messy, loud and boisterous, opinionated, unpredictable, silly, spendthrift may be appropriate for poison pen letters.

Party alliances — Democrat, Republican, Libertarian — and hobbies — cat, dog or computer lover, loves golfing, loves fishing — add that personal touch.

The results may make Cyrano roll over in his grave. But they will certainly prove that the Apple computer company is still very much alive and well.

# Gingerbread House patterned from old Farmington home

An artful and elaborate Gingerbread House is under construction at the Novi Hillon by banquet chef Clark DeKett, to be displayed in the hotel lobby through the holidays.

Developing first an architectural-type plan, DeKett's design was inspired by an old home he noticed while passing through Farmington. The home includes a latticed entranceway, planked stairs leading to a porch and a sun room.

DeKett's gingerbread house stands approximately 3 1/2 feet high and 2 1/2 feet wide. Landscaping and finishing touches on the house are being done with pulled sugar and icing while the base of the house is molasses.

He has already devoted nearly 70 hours to the house's construction with the assistance of other Novi Hillon kitchen staff.

The Gingerbread House can easily be made on a smaller scale for the home. Chef DeKett's step-by-step home recipe consists of all edible ingredients to be enjoyed by the entire family. Plans and recipes for the gingerbread house and frosting are available. For information call 349-4000.

DeKETT, WHO is of French descent, joined the Novi Hillon from the Hotel St. Regis in Detroit, where he was pastry chef.

Other merits include his involvement with the Detroit Public School System teaching the physically and mentally impaired the art of pastry, pantry and dessert techniques.

He is a Detroit resident who studied in the Oakland Community College Culinary Arts Department.

"I want to construct a work of art that is in keeping with the quality of the Novi Hillon," DeKett said, "and this project has generated a lot of interest."

The Novi Hillon is located at 1275 and Eight Mile Road.

## Ham radio classes set

Farmington Amateur Radio Club begins a new 11-week class for beginners at 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays, beginning Jan. 15 in Room 406, Farmington High School. The class provides all instruction necessary for obtaining a novice class radio license.

There is a materials fee, but no class fee. Registrations are being taken now by Chuck Tanton, 553-4009.

## Trees festival slated to become a tradition

Visitors, designers, chefs and children were all winners at the recent Festival of Trees benefit for Children's Hospital of Michigan. The five-day holiday fantasyland attracted more than 35,000 people and raised \$100,000 to establish the Evergreen Endowment Fund to support research into the causes and cures of childhood diseases and other specific hospital programs.

One hundred and nine festival trees, donated by Frank's Nursery & Crafts, were decorated by area designers.

According to chairperson Kathy Neumann, Festival of Trees is slated to become an annual holiday event.

"Festival demonstrates the true meaning of the holiday season — giv-

ing to others. It is our gift to Detroit and Children's Hospital that will grow into a holiday tradition for future generations to enjoy in the years to come."

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