

Good things can come in small packages

SINCE THIS is the time of year that we all start thinking about presents and packages, I would like to talk about packages too — small packages.

The first thing that comes to mind is the TV remote channel selector.

We live in Livonia and enjoy the many channels available on cable TV. That remote selector is what I call a "too-small package."

Now, I am sure that many dollars worth of technology were spent in making that selector as compact as it is. But I wish it was about six inches square, weighed two pounds and was painted fluorescent orange. Why? Because as soon as we all nestle down to watch TV, someone will say "Where's the changer?" prompting us to jump in unison and start pulling cushions off the furniture looking for the "too-small changer."

FOR MOST OF 1986, that little changer has been lost inside our little change, under throw pillows, once in a tennis shoe, five times on top of the refrigerator, three times in the family car, once in someone's robe pocket, in with Lego blocks, under a box of Pac-Man cereal — and I could go on and on.

Upshot of all is that as long as there are families like mine, there will always be a need for a two-pound changer.

But there are some great new little packages this year that make great gifts for artists.

There's the Rainbow Color Mixing Guide, for instance. It's a little color wheel easily recognizable by a little 'elf as its logo. At \$7.50, it seems to be over-priced. But upon using it and reading its information, I found that it can produce 40,000 different colors. It even tells you what percentages of each primary are used to produce the color you select. For example, "three parts white, seven parts color — 70 percent yellow, 20 percent blue and 10 percent black."

Next on the small package list is Derwent Pencil Tins. Derwent graphite pencils come in small flat little tins arranged in three sets according to hardness: "Draughtsman Set" HB-B, "Designer Set" B-B-4H and the "Sketching Set" B-B-11. The pencils are painted matte black and do not slip in your sweaty little artist fingers. Priced at \$6.50 for a 12-pencil set, you can't beat them.

PENCILS NEW "Paper for Pens" is a small pad of unbelievably



artifacts
David
Messing

smooth pure white paper made expressly for pens, tech pens and felt-tip pens priced around \$4.50 per 9-by-12-inch pad. It is a real treat for an artist's quick line drawing.

Standrite has a new little easel that is so strong you park a car on it — granted maybe a small car. This mighty little model is about three feet tall, is a great table easel and a nice carrier/holder for wet oils. It's called the "180" and it sells for \$25.

The ultimate perfect gift for an artist is the smallest of the small packages I have mentioned here. It guarantees the giver that their art/loved one is getting exactly what they want. And that is, of course, the ever-famous gift certificate.

Christmas time is also the best time to indulge in a box of over-priced chocolates, too expensive

knickknacks or showy little sundries that you would never buy any other time of the year.

For me, that kind of item is a three-inch badger fan blender. I said, "I will probably never use it (although I do) but it looks so artsy in there with my other brushes" — and it does. So I spent \$16 for purely reasons of artistic vanity — big deal. It's Christmas time isn't it?

David Messing has been an art teacher for 10 years. He is the owner of Art Store and More in Livonia and Plymouth. He welcomes comments and questions from readers. These can be directed to him in care of this newspaper, at 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.



BILL BRESLER/staff photographer

Northern's Nutcracker

Heather Stants is the Sugar Plum Fairy and Jim Duncan is the cavalier in the Nutcracker Ballet to be performed by the Northern Ballet Theater this weekend in Plymouth Salem High School auditorium. Saturday's performance will be at 8 p.m. and Sunday's will be at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$7 for adults and \$5 for senior citizens and children under 12. For further information, call 455-7870.

briefly speaking

NEW B&B DIRECTORY

A greatly expanded "Bed and Breakfast North America" published by Betsy Ross Publications and written by Norma Stephens Buzan, is available by contacting the publishing house at 3037 Betsy Ross Drive, Bloomfield Hills 48303. The book sells for \$13.95, including postage and handling. Michigan residents should add 4 percent sales tax.

The directory, in its fourth edition, has been expanded to include a comprehensive listing of small inns, guesthouses and reservation services with access to more than 10,000 accommodations in the U.S., Canada, U.S. Virgin Islands and Jamaica.

Highlighting the listings are warm, conversational and informative descriptions written by Buzan who has personally visited or contacted each B&B inn and reservation included in her guidebook.

One of the sections most helpful to new B7B travelers is titled "They've Been There . . . and They Say," which features comments from people who have stayed at specific inns. Often mentioned are the special touches and extra niceties provided by the hosts.

THINK SPRING

Makietaki Berry Farms and Nursery announce the release of its Spring 1987 small fruit plant catalog. The 24-page catalog features such sweeties as Chester thornless blackberry and cherry red currant, both ideal for home gardeners as well as commercial growers. A catalog may be obtained by calling 572-0050 or writing: Makietaki Berry Farms and Nursery, 7130 PR Pitt Road, Ypsilanti 48197.

ELECTED PRESIDENT

Anne-Jane Harbison of Westland has been elected the first president of the P. Buckley Moss Society. The society has been formed to foster awareness and enjoyment of the art of P. Buckley Moss and to support her artistic endeavors.

Moss uses her unique and appealing style of painting to depict scenes of the Amish and Mennonite peoples. For more information on the national society, call Harbison at 721-9198.

NEW BOARD MEMBER

Concerned Citizens for the Arts in Michigan has elected 11 new members of the board of directors. In-

cluded are Louis Redstone of Livonia and Marlowe Belanger of Southfield.

ROWENS' COLLECTIONS

Fans of Marilyn Rowens will be happy to learn that the Livonia residents has published her fourth cartoon collection, titled "Beyond the Middle Years."

For the last years, Rowens has worked as a volunteer with the elderly in the metropolitan area. Some of her experiences with the elderly are reflected in her philosophic captions and delightful stick figures.

The cartoon book is available at Borders Book Store and Pages and Pages in Tally Hall. It can be ordered by mail from Mini-Lectures Press, 26550 Fargo, Livonia 48152.

HISTORIC HOME TOUR

On Sunday, Dec. 21, the 12th Annual Historic Boston-Edison Holiday Home Tour will be held. Tours will be from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. with shuttle bus departures from Sacred Heart Seminary, at Chicago Boulevard and Linwood Avenue every 30 minutes.

The combination walking and bus

tour will take participants back to the turn of the century to view the fine exterior and interior residential architecture of the early 1900s. Resident tour guides will accompany groups throughout, providing interesting histories of the five houses included on the tour. Tickets are \$8 by advance sale only. Mail checks to Historic Boston-Edison Holiday Home Tour, P.O. Box 06666, Detroit 48206. For more information, call 358-4590.

CCC CHORALE

The Oakland Community College Chorale, under the direction of Larry Simmons, will perform a variety of holiday selections at the Orchard Ridge Campus at 8 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 16 in the Smith Performing Arts Theater.

STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHY

Student photography, featuring black and white photos, will be on display Dec. 8-16 in the Madonna College exhibit gallery, Livonia. Gallery hours are 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday; 1-4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Admission is free. Madonna is at I-96 and Levan, Livonia.

RELO CENTER



The RELO CENTER, an exciting new place for Metropolitan Detroit's finest vintage items, is now open through colorful displays and gallery literature maps and brochures of the quality of the greater Detroit. No appointment necessary, and there's a NO CHARGE.

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