



# reative Living

Marie McGee editor/591-2300

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(F1E)

## briefly speaking

### DSO'S 'MESSIAH'

The musicians of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra will produce two performances of Handel's "Messiah" at 8 p.m. Saturday and 3 p.m. Sunday in Orchestra Hall. The performances are part of the musicians' commitment to keep music playing for the residents of metropolitan Detroit.

Joining the musicians will be singers from the Detroit Symphony Chorus and the Cantata Academy. The performances will be conducted by DSO violinist Felix Hirsch. The Dec. 13 performance will include the audience singing along with the chorus and orchestra.

Admission is \$10 for general admission; \$15 for loge tickets; and \$25 for box seats. Tickets may be bought by calling the Orchestra Hall box office at 833-3700 or at all Ticket Master outlets. Information about other holiday festival concerts is available over the Musicians' Concert Hotline at 559-1987. All proceeds will be used to pay the musicians' insurance benefits during the current DSO work stoppage.

### MADONNA EXHIBIT

A fine art and commercial art exhibit by G. Panyard will be on display at Madonna College, Livonia, Sunday, Dec. 20 through Monday, Jan. 18 in the Exhibit Gallery in the library wing. The event is open to the public free of charge. Gallery hours are 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 1-4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For more information, call 591-7548.

### YW-REDFORD BENEFIT

The Northwest YWCA will host a benefit performance of the award-winning Australian movie "My Brilliant Career" at 7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 13 in the restored Redford Theater.

The evening will begin with a champagne reception and organ concert on the Redford Theater pipe organ by Sharon Patterson. The film, which was the winner of six Australian Academy Awards, including one for best picture, will begin at 6:15 p.m. Money raised from the gala evening will be used to maintain the operation of the Northwest YW in Redford as a community service organization.

The public is invited. Patron tickets are \$25 per person and general admission is \$10. The theater is at 17360 Lahser. Valet parking will be provided. Call the YW at 537-8500 to reserve tickets.

### DICKENS FESTIVAL

Historic Holly will present its 14th annual Dickens Festival beginning with a hospitality weekend this weekend, followed by celebrations the next three weekends in December.

The event calls for authentically dressed Dickens characters strolling through the town and shops, including Scrooge, Tiny Tim and Marley's Ghost. Shopkeepers in full Victorian costumes, strolling musicians, carolers, jugglers, food vendors hawking their wares of roasted chestnuts, baked potatoes, meat pies and wassail are others who will add to the special atmosphere.

Other characters will be the town crier, who will be announcing special events and passing out gift certificates, Father Christmas, and "Put-Pockets" who will be putting little gifts in people's pockets.

Hours for the festival are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday; 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday. For more information, call 634-3501 or 634-7711.

### AUTO BARON'S CHRISTMAS

The opulent lifestyle of the auto baron era is brought to life again during "An Auto Baron's Christmas, a Return to Elegance," through Sunday, Dec. 13 at Meadow Brook Hall, Oakland University, Rochester.

Reminiscent of the many elegant family balls and parties once held in the 100-room mansion, Christmas Walk visitors are invited to celebrate the holidays among the lavish displays throughout this historic home.

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Mary Fishell, a teller at the First Federal of Michigan branch in Farmington Hills, and one of her saucy Raisin guys.

## Bank artist is 'raisin' interest

By Marie McGee  
staff writer

**M**AYBE THIS story should have appeared in the business section.

After all, it centers on banks, money, checking accounts — financial stuff like that. The main thrust is how one area banking establishment successfully handled an in-house promotion involving checking accounts.

But the telephone caller who reported the story had a different idea. She thought the artist who did the clever caricatures that caught the eye of the customers (the caller was one of them) should get some kind of credit deposited under that side of the ledger entitled Creative Endeavors.

BESIDES, THE colorful artwork by teller Mary Fishell was clearly raisin' some interest.

Customers would view the artwork — a version of the saucy California Raisin characters who made their debut as the result of a raisin commercial — at each of the teller windows and then ask

why they were there.

That was all the opening personnel at the Farmington Hills branch of First Federal of Michigan needed to begin their spiel about the virtues of a First Federal checking account.

Fishell's version of the TV Raisin bunch has done a lot to pump up the number of checking accounts opened since the promotion began — and it has another couple of weeks to go, a bank spokesman said.

Fishell said she decided to make the signs for the promotion because she "loves the Raisins." After the signs went up and everyone liked them, Fishell decided to add some stuffed Raisins, all done up in purple, and now they causing a lot of comment, too.

"I've had offers to sell them," said Fishell, "but when the promotion is over with, they're mine."

"I've always loved to draw," she said with a smile.

While her first one-woman show was exciting, she isn't banking on any more exhibits. Anyway, the Raisins' popularity is sure to dry up any day now.



Fishell's clever signs at the teller windows are prompting customers to ask questions, thus promoting the bank's checking account promotion.

## Artistic trade: palette for pestle

By Rob McCabe  
special writer

Fifty-seven-year-old Manny Cutler is happy.

The former pharmacist is finally realizing his artistic dream — his acrylic paintings have caught the attention of at least one well-known art gallery, Linda Hayman Gallery in Southfield, where several of his works were on exhibit until recently.

Although he has only been painting for the last six months,

his works show a certain level of experience that usually takes years to develop. "When Linda told me that she was interested in exhibiting my pieces, I was really excited," Cutler said with a smile.

His paintings are abstract in nature, incorporating both bright and pastel acrylic paints in precise, geometric designs. "I try to make my paintings asymmetrical symmetry to give a different look. I also make my frames two or three inches thick so that they look like a sculpture," he notes.

He goes on to say that his paintings make a particular statement about the room in which they appear: you can't help but notice them when you walk into that room. His works seem to vibrate with a life all of their own because of the way the paints are applied to the canvases.

CUTLER, WHO LIVES in Farmington Hills, said that artists Alex Katz and Frank Stella have had the most influence on him and it shows in his paintings.

Besides being a painter, Cutler also makes stained glass windows, sculptures and works with wood. All of his knowledge is self-taught; he has traveled extensively to museums around the world, he has taken classes at both Oak-

land University in Auburn Hills and Oakland Community College.

He was also a docent at the Detroit Institute of Arts for eight years and it is through this intense exposure that he attributes his understanding and appreciation of art.

"I had the ideas all in my mind before I started to paint but I wanted to wait until the time was right because I didn't want to be simply another ubiquitous landscape and flower artist," he said.

Although there weren't any sales of his work while it was on display at the gallery, response was very encouraging. According to one salesperson, "a lot of people liked what they saw, but many are afraid to take that first step when buying works by un-

known artists."

The salesperson also noted that gallery owner Linda Hayman doesn't take chances when exhibiting unknown artists and that if she has the works in the gallery, it means that she believes in their marketability.

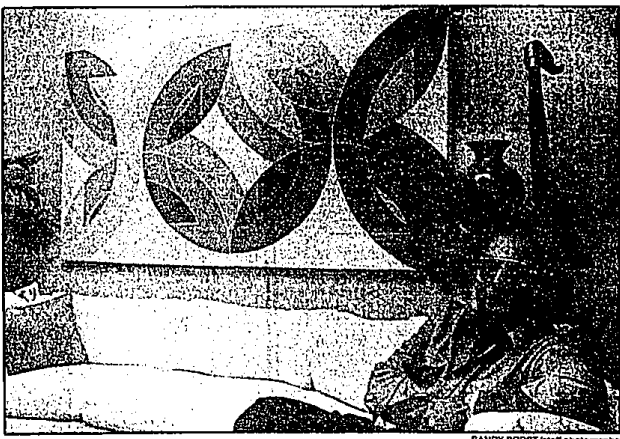
CUTLER IS ALSO aware of comments made during the gallery exhibit by some viewers that his works are too similar to the works of Frank Stella. But other than that, comments in general were encouraging, according to the gallery sales staff.

"Stella's painting go for about \$100,000, while mine are

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Manny Cutler and his year-old granddaughter Ashley look inside the Victorian-style dollhouse he built.



Manny Cutler relaxes in the living room of his Farmington Hills home. In the background is one of his paintings.