

No place like home

Hills world traveler's roots are deep

By Loraine McIlhish
staff writer

Perle Briggs said seeing the Acropolis in Athens was the biggest thrill in her life. The reality lived up to the fantasy of all the stories and Greek myths she had ever read in her youth.

The thrill that runs second to that was standing high up in the Andes overlooking the ruins of the Incan civilization.

The most recent thrill for the Farmington Hills woman was seeing her name and the name of her first published book in the Book Review section of the New York Times.

"World Travels of a Middle-Aged Naive" by Perle Briggs chronicles the journeys that began soon after her marriage to Don Briggs and never stopped.

She'll be traveling to her native Avon, Ohio, where she taught school, to be a guest of honor at a 50th high school class reunion the end of August.

Almost immediately on her return, she and her husband will leave town to board the S.S. Bermuda in Montreal for a cruise along the St. Lawrence River where they will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.

She's lost count as to how many times she's been around the world — "three or four times I think," she said.

OF ALL her travels, she carries fond memories, but only that. She claims never to have thought of living any other place but here.

"There is no place like home. The more you see of the world, the more you appreciate home."

"I know that is a cliché. But this is what we are. We are small-town people."

The couple has lived here for 35 years and has dug deep roots.

She is an early member of the Farmington Branch of the American Association of University Women. Both she and her husband joined Farmington Players in its very early fledgling days.

She is a past president of both groups and has served on "just about every committee the Players have," she said.

"I try very hard to be here for

'I know that is a cliché. But this is us. Farmington Hills is us. This is what we are. We are small-town people.'

— Perle Briggs
travel author

AAUW's (used) book sale, and if I'm not, I work on one of the committees." Briggs has spent a lot of summer days in a portable school room that the branch has been given to store, sort, categorize and prepare the donated books for the annual fall sale.

"It's fun to find a first edition — that happens once in a while — and that's a little selfish, I guess. But we hire the people in New Horizons to help us load and move the books, which is certainly worthwhile, and the money we make all goes into scholarships, so the book sale is one of my pride and joys."

"I've been doing that every year in one way or another for 25 years, at least."

THE PLAYERS Audience has seen her on stage and seen plays she has directed. They are all invited to a reception in her honor 2-4 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 11, in the Players Barn.

The reception is hosted by the Players in celebration of the publication of "World Travels of a Middle-Aged Naive."

Briggs' first big trip was to Australia, a business trip for her husband, now retired from General Motors. She continued to accompany him on business trips the world over but often went off on her own when the goal was set to see the world.

She took pictures and kept logs, "which had to be drastically cut for the book."

She shared the slides and her memories of her trips when she was home with elementary school children through Seniors Active in Giving to Education, a program begun here by AAUW. Through it, senior citizens volunteer to go into the classroom to bring their skills



RANDY BOST/Staff photographer

Perle Briggs' favorite memento from all of her travels is the carved teak wood head from Nairobi, Kenya. The ash tray is from the island of Rhodes in the Aegean Sea. The two pieces sit on a coffee table in her living room she bought in Pakistan.

or knowledge or stories to the young.

It was a natural for the former school teacher, who said: "I always brought artifacts of the country we were talking about, always taught them a few words of the language; sometimes, I brought food of that particular country if that were feasible, anything to make it more real to them."

"The seniors at Mercy Center (Farmington Hills Senior Adult

Center) have since taken over that program, but it was fun for me. I was reliving it all."

"World Travels of a Middle-Aged Naive" was published by Vantage Press. It is available at most book stores and sells for \$16.95.

Autographs and discounts will be available during the reception hosted by the Players in September.

Dolans debate ballot billing

Continued from Page 1

• that political party designation and gender differences between the candidates are enough to distinguish them.

• that any similarity in first names should be disregarded, because Jan Dolan is not using her full legal name on the ballot.

• that the proposed "council person" designation for Jan Dolan could be construed as "illegal political advertising."

TO DATE, Jan Dolan has not replied to the suit, but said she has turned the matter over to her attorney.

A third Dolan, John A. Dolan of the Mount Clemens law firm of York and Dolan, is representing his father in the matter. John Dolan has said

Birmingham-area Democrats encouraged him to run for the state House seat.

The 69th state House district covers the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills and the villages of Franklin, Bingham Farms and Beverly Hills in Southfield Township.

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Chambers plan mixer

The Farmington/Farmington Hills and Livonia chambers of commerce will co-host a business after-hours mixer Thursday, Sept. 8, at the Botsford Inn, 28000 Grand River. AT&T will sponsor the 5-7 p.m. event.

Reservations are \$5 per person for members and \$10 per person for non-members. Call the chamber, 474-3440.



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