Jokey look at our elections

ERALD GARDNER, author of "The Mocking of the President," (Wayne State University Press, hardbound, 1975) was in town last week to talk about that necessary ingredient in any presidential campaign — humor.

Gardner knows whereof he speaks. In his lifetime, the television producer/writer ("The Monkees," "The Smothers Brothers," "That Was has how writen 25 books, including "All The President's Wils," "The Quotable Mr. Kemedy," "Robert Kennedy in New York," and the perennial favorite, "Who's in Charge Here!" the photo-caption book Bantam brings out during the year preceding the presidential election.

His latest book, subtitled, "A History of Campaign Humor from Ize to Ronnie," covers the funny stuff originated by comedians, humorists, journalists, cartoonists and sometimes the candidates themselves — though with the advent of White House gag writers (yes, all too true), the prospect of a president creating his own oceilners becomes more and more rare.

STILL GARDNER believes that, "Thanks to

STILL, GARDNER believes that, "Thanks to the humorists who brighten our election campaigns..., we can maintain our sanity, even when those who seek our votes seem most crazed with the quest for power. We can keep our senses of humor when the candidates frailities, foilles, and frauds seem most intolerable." Humor is a most essential element in a democracy, Gardner says. "The one ingredient that totalitatian societies seem to have in common is a lack of humor. In a dictatorably the practice of satire is a jeopardous pastime indeed."

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John Kennedy had an ironic outlook on life
and could make the connection that creates wit
("Mothers still want their sons to become president, but they don't want them to become politicians in the process.") Kennedy was the last
original wit in the White House, Gardner says,
though Ronald Reagan's wit seems original because his timing is on target.

Jimmy Carter's humor could be sardonic (to
no numually enthusiastic crowd: "It's a pleasure
to see people waving at me with all five fingers", Gerald Ford's humor could be self-deprecating. "Arnold Palmer has asked me not to
wear his slacks, except under an assumed
name," while Richard Nixon's sense of humowas, according to Gardner, and DeGaulles finneral: "Table is a great day for France!" Astride
the Great Wall of China: "This is a great wall."

BILT "TILE MOCKING of the Presiden!"

BUT "THE MOCKING of the President" dwells mainly on how the media draws on the humor of the presidential campaigns and presi-dencies. Gardner moves from the "soft" mono-



book break Mona

Grigg logues of Johnny Carson and Bob Hope to the harsher cartoons and strips of Garry Trudeau, Jules Feiffer, Pat Oliphant, Jeff MacNelly and others

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He gives wickedly funny examples of how television serves to routinely skewer and deflate the pomposity of the presidency. Our memories are refreshed with replays of skits from "That Was The Week That Was" and "Saturday Night Live." In addition, Gardon lets us on how the presidential "victims" themselves received them. (Gerald Ford cringed at Chevy Chase's imitative pratfalls on SNL.—while Ford's own children hooted with laughter).

Gardner spent this nummer hot on the trails of Michael Dukakis and George Bush, collecting compaign humor for inclusion in yet another book. He'd better watch it—this could become shabit.

a habit.
"The Mocking of the President" is the first in
Wayne State Press' "Humor in Life and Letters"
series, edited by Sarah Blacher Cohen.

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THE FRIENDS OF the Baldwin Public Library hold their annual book sale this weekend. Saturday hours are 9:30 am. to 4:30 p.m.; Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Proceeds from the sale go toward more books, equipment and library programs.

Congratulations to the West Bloomfield Township Library, celebrating its 50th year. And how are they doing it? With "Murder and Mayhem in Michigan." Mystery writer Loren Estleman ("Downriver") began the speaking series Wednesday, (Sorry we didn't get the indo sooned, "Downriver") began the speaking series Wednesday, (Sorry we didn't get the indo sooned, "Downriver") began the speaking series Wednesday, Nov. 9, at 8 p.m. Elmore Leonard ("Freaky Deaky") will be at the Westacres Stranch (7231 Commerce Read) Thursday, Nov. 17 at 8 p.m. The programs are free, but advance registration is advised. Call 682-2120 (naml) or 353-4022 (Westacres).

On Friday, Nov. 11, at 8 p.m., poets Margo LaFattuts, Lawrence Pike, Gay Rubin, M.L. lichler, Farry Z. Bey and others will read at a benefit for H.E.A.R.D. (Holistic Education Alternative creative teaching organization. The Program Center is at 29 West Lawrence, Pontiae, Call 334-6716 or 577-7713. Donation is 33 and an open reading follows.

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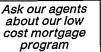








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Art is lecture's theme

As part of its ongoing campaign that uses "Let There Be Art" as its slogan, the Livonia Arts Commission will present a lecture on art appreciation by Hope Palmer in the Civic Center Library auditorium, 22777 Five Mile Road, Livonia, on Wednesday, Nov. 18.

The lecture, which is open to the public, begins at 7:30 p.m. There is no admission charge.

Palmer has her bachelor of fine arts and her master's as well as a doctorate in art history from the University of Michigan.

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