

Creative Living



Monday, January 1, 1990 \$4E

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New decade brings new choice options

Happy New Year!
As always, the New Year is a time for New Beginnings, especially since we are also starting a new decade. It's a time to look back at what has been happening in our lives, to ponder if our lives have taken the direction we've wanted, to look forward to what is ahead.

Many of us have been with relatives for the first time in a while, or perhaps we've missed being with our families and become nostalgic. It may have been a time of remembering, of recreating a feeling for what our lives used to be, of the standards and values with which we were brought up.

A lot of us have broken away from the way we were reared. This happened with great purpose for some, for others it has been unintentional. We may have floated away from what was important in our families, to being caught up in an excessive, materialistic society. We may have lost the habit of taking time to keep in touch, to pray, to do good for others. Or perhaps we feel good that we really have helped others during this holiday season and we'll do it again — next year.

NOW IS A TIME to become introspective. It is a time to imagine what we want to be in the future — 5 or 10 years down the road — and how we will get there. What is most important to us? What are we driven by? Do we want to be Mr. or Mrs. Success? Is money what we are after? Title? Position? Will even more possessions give us the life we want? Or would we like to recapture a little



organizing
Dorothy Lehmkuhl

of the past? Would we like to evaluate the importance of faith in our lives?

If we feel religion is worthwhile but we've not taken the time to practice it, perhaps this would be a good time for a new beginning. Rather than waiting for the next Easter, Hanukkah or other religious holiday, perhaps now is the time to begin praying more, to attend our places of worship regularly, to treat others the way we feel our God teaches.

Too many of us lament that, while we do believe, we "don't have time" for religion. What we must remember is that there are 24 hours in our day — just as there is for everyone else. Even some of the busiest, most important and influential people in our country regularly take time for their spiritual life. Lack of time is no excuse at all. What we must admit is that we chose to spend our time doing other things.

This is not intended as an argument with those who do not believe in religion; rather, it is to stimulate those who do feel faith is important, but whose actions do not mirror their beliefs.

Dorothy Lehmkuhl is owner of Organizing Techniques of Birmingham 48016.

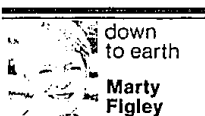
In winter, there's garden work, too

Even as the New Year opens, there are things that can be done in the garden. If you haven't secured upright growing evergreens such as yew, upright junipers and others that might be broken down by heavy snow, it isn't too late to do it.

Tap three tall pieces of dowl-type wood into the ground around the trees and wrap twice or heavy cord around them; they will appreciate it. Wind barriers are best made of burlap or fabric that will breathe. If plastic is used, the temperature can get quite hot in the winter sunshine under such coverings and the plants can be damaged by the heat generated.

Although many communities have now begun to compost Christmas trees, you may want to use yours as a snow fence or sun and wind shield for broadleaf trees and shrubs that are in an open area. Or you may enlist several neighbors and tie your trees together to make a safe winter weather for the birds in severe weather.

When I was a child we often made a tree for the birds after Christmas. This might be a project for the children on a cold winter day. Strings of unsalted popcorn, cranberries, and peanuts in the shell will provide a welcome treat, as well as decoration. Pine cones can be rolled in a mixture of non-salt peanut butter which has been diluted with water or other oils.



down to earth
Marty Figley

A home-made recipe called "Marge's porridge" that birds seem to love can be made. Two parts each of ground suet, corn meal and sugar, one part flour, water. Mix ingredients with water (not over 1/4 part) and cook in a double boiler (covered) until quite thick, about 25 minutes, stirring several times while it is cooking.

This mixture, after it cools, can be put into a cage made from hardware wire or packed into orange or grapefruit shells. After the mixture sets up in the shells, punch four holes evenly around the edge of the shells and up through the suet mixture.

Tie a cord at each hole, leaving the ends long enough to meet at the top so that they can be tied together. Now tie this feeder on a branch of a tree and watch the birds go for it. The shells can also be set in a crevice of a tree or at ground level. Have fun with these ideas.

I hope the New Year brings health, peace and joy to all of you.



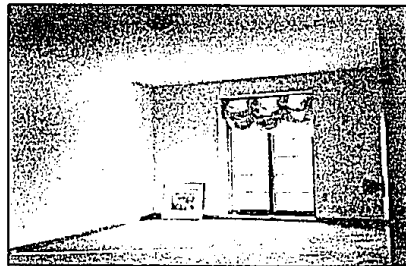
JIM RIDER/staff photographer

THIS ...

Interior designer Judy Hewes (left) and real estate agent Theresa Levett in the furnished living room in the house that is serving as a pilot project involving houses for sale due to relocations.

... vs. THIS

An empty room in the same house left vacant when the family moved due to relocation.



JIM RIDER/staff photographer

Sales tactic

Designer poses a question: empty vs. furnished house?

By Cathleen Collins Lee
special writer

NOBODY has lived there since last April, but it would be hard for a visitor to this contemporary Rochester Hills house to tell.

A small Oriental rug lies on the dark wood floors in the entryway and a variegated ficus tree stands near the stairs.

The kitchen table — a glass top set on slabs of marble — is ready for lunch, with navy blue placemats and colorful napkins.

Mauve and gray contemporary love-seats are set at right angles to each other in the family room, while books and knick-knacks fill the shelves on either side of the fireplace.

While this house may lack only a stray sock or a few days' supply of newspapers to look completely lived in, it actually is the product of a 72-hour decorating blitz by area interior designer Judy Hewes.

Hewes is working with Chamberlain Realty's Relocation Department on a pilot project to temporarily and inexpensively decorate houses that are vacant because the homeowners have been transferred.

SELLING AN EMPTY house, no matter how attractive, can be difficult because buyers have a hard time imagining it furnished.

So Hewes, who heads her own firm, Continental Interior Design, persuaded Theresa Levett, director of Chamberlain's Relocation Department, to let her use rental furniture and a few accessories to brighten up what might otherwise be a sterile-looking house.

"This is an attempt to sell a Traveller's relocation home that's been on the market since April," Levett said.

"It's a nice home, but there's tremendous competition with new construction houses sold through model homes."

"Judy Hewes has been calling me every month with this idea," Levett said, laughing. "And I'm glad she kept after me, because I think it could work."

WHEN A relocation company acquires a house, they normally have it painted and carpeted in neutral colors — at a cost of approximately \$6,000, according to Levett.

For an additional \$1,200 or so, she can improve the house's appearance dramatically — and help it sell more quickly, she said. "We did something similar with a house in Ohio that had been on the market for a while — and it sold in two weeks," Hewes said.

WE DO IT on a shoestring — we gear it so the really company can afford to do it."

WHAT DOES \$1,200 buy? Hewes' approach is to rent furniture for a few key areas — the kitchen, living room and family room — and buy some inexpensive accessories, such as used books and pottery.

Chamberlain bought the Oriental rug, the ficus tree and a brass fireplace screen to use in other houses. In rooms that weren't furnished, such as the den and bedrooms, Hewes hung attractive prints and positioned flower arrangements on shelves and windowsills.

The prints were loaned for a month by Aardvark Custom Framing in Farmington Hills and the silk flowers were provided by Victoria's in Brighton.

THIS PARTICULAR house had attractive window treatments, but if it hadn't, Hewes would have used inexpensive valances.

She can also add color to a room

by installing wallpaper borders with double-sided tape.

"I want to stress that it takes one totally committed designer to accomplish this," Hewes said.

"It took a good 72 hours of work. Everything was hand-coordinated — every house we do would be totally different. But if you stick with it, you can transform a house pretty quickly."

IN ORDER to make sure area real estate agents saw the change in the home, Chamberlain hosted a luncheon there, complete with a drawing for a car phone.

Approximately 50 real estate agents attended, and many seemed favorably impressed.

"I've never seen a house professionally decorated to be sold like this," said Suzanne Clark, a sales associate with ERA Meadowbrook. "It's very effective. I have shown several vacant homes and not sold any of them. This might help."

The house represents an exciting new approach to selling relocation homes — and also some risk, Levett said.

BECAUSE Traveller's Relocation, which owns the house, was unwilling to pay for anything more than the customary painting and carpeting, Chamberlain has invested in the additional decorating itself.

"If we lose the listing — which expires in a month — and if this

house doesn't sell it's an expense I'll have to eat," Levett said. "But we wanted to show Traveller's that we're extremely committed to selling relocation houses and will promote them to the best of our abilities."

Levett hopes that if this house sells fairly quickly, relocation companies will be more willing to pay for design services in the future.

BUT THIS approach is only worthwhile in certain situations, she said.

For one thing, the price of the house has to be high enough to justify the expense of decorating. This particular one in Rochester Hills is listed at \$198,900.

Secondly, decorating a house would be more useful in an area like Rochester Hills or West Bloomfield, where real estate agents are competing with new houses.

And finally, this approach makes most sense when the real estate market is soft and houses are taking longer to sell.

WITH THOSE reservations, Levett is optimistic that between them she and Hewes can pioneer a creative approach to selling relocation homes in the Detroit area.

In fact, she already has Hewes working on another project — an unusual, contemporary house in downtown Birmingham.

exhibitions

- **SOMERSET MALL**
Thursday, Jan. 4 — "A Thousand Years of Roman Fashions, 500 B.C. to A.D. 500," presented by Norma Goldman on display through Jan. 14. Goldman, professor at Wayne State University, has recreated Roman fashions down to the last seam after intensive on-site research. Open during regular mall hours, Big Beaver and Coolidge, Troy.
- **LAWRENCE STREET GALLERY**
Thursday, Jan. 4 — Etchings, serigraphs and embossed prints by Canadian artist Mathias Mulome are on display to Feb. 3. Closing reception 1-4 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 3. Hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday, 29 W. Lawrence, Pontiac.
- **JOY RYER GALLERY**
Friday, Jan. 5 — Paintings and prints by Michigan artists Stephen Duran, Dick Goddy, Ann Mikolowski and Lucille Nawara are on display through Feb. 3. Hours are 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday, 1040 W. Huron, Chicago.
- **BATTLESNAKE CLUB**
Photographs by National Geographic photographer William Albert Allard are on display in the Grill Room through Jan. 20. This is his only non-museum show and many of the works are for sale, 300 River Place, Detroit.
- **BIRMINGHAM BLOOMFIELD ART ASSOCIATION**
Sunday, Jan. 7 — "Letters, Our Legacy," is the annual, juried exhibit by Michigan Association of Calligraphers. Continues through Jan. 27. Reception 4-6 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 7. Hours are 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Saturday, 1516 S. Cranbrook, Birmingham.
- **ART LOFT GALLERY**
"Images From Italy" — works on paper and sculpture by Corinne A. Ragheb of Birmingham continue through Feb. 3. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday-Saturday, until 8:30 p.m. Sunday, 124 S. Woodward, Suite 3, second floor, Birmingham.
- **RUSSELL KLATT GALLERY**
Newly released serigraphs by American Impressionist Henry Plisson, John Howell and Christian Title and new works by regular gallery artists are on display, 1467 S. Woodward, Birmingham.
- **GARDEN CITY**
Works of several local artists are on display, including oils, acrylics, watercolor and pen and ink. Hours noon to 5 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, 30116 Ford Road, Sheridan Square, Garden City.
- **CHATELAIN**
Watercolors by Peggy Brown, stained glass by Diana Blanchard and other contemporary works by local and Australian artists through December. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday, 370 S. Main Street, Plymouth.
- **ROCHESTER HILLS MUSEUM**
Stoney Creek Christmas Toyfest continues through Jan. 27. The toys span the 20th century. Hours are 1-4 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday. Admission charge, 1005 Van Hoesen, Rochester Hills. For information, call 656-4663.
- **MCA GALLERY**
"Realism" includes works by seven Michigan artists. Continues through March 16, 1200 Sixth St., Detroit.
- **GALLERY 22**
Christmas art show has works by Yoko Moro, Jim Osthoff, Charles Gale and others. Continues to Jan. 13. Hours are 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Wednesday and Friday, until 8 p.m. Thursday and 5 p.m. Saturday, 22 E. Long Lake, Bloomfield Hills.
- **BELIAN ART CENTER**
Objects d'art as well as art and ready to wear jewelry are on display to Jan. 14. Hours are noon to 6 p.m. Monday-Saturday, 5980 Rochester Road, Troy.
- **RUBINER GALLERY**
Holiday show features works by Burkert, Shaler, Summers, Thayer, Jerry and Milton. Hours are 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday, 7001 Orchard Lake, West Bloomfield.
- **DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS**
"Furniture by Wendall Castle" continues through Feb. 4. The DIA is originating this show which will travel to five museums in the United States. Objects by Carol Ann Carter and constructions and drawings by Thom Bohner make up the ninth exhibit of the Ongoing Michigan Artists Program (OMAP) which continues through Jan. 26. Open free of charge 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday, 5200 Woodward, Detroit.
- **COUNTY GALLERY**
The Surface Designers of Michigan, 21 in all, have an exhibit of dimensional art through Jan. 12. Open to the public. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday, Executive Office Building, 1200 N. Telegraph, Pontiac.
- **DONALD MORRIS GALLERY**
Paintings by Clement Meadmore are on display through January. Hours are 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday, 105 Townsend, Birmingham.

Tuesday-Saturday, 1040 W. Huron, Chicago.

● **SYBARIS GALLERY**

Saturday, Jan. 6 — Sculpture by Margaret Keelan, Tony Natsoulas, Frank Ozereko and Susan Martin is on display through January. Reception 1-5 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 6. Hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday, 301 W. Fourth, Royal Oak.

● **ROCHESTER HILLS CITY HALL**

Paintings by Dorothy Poly of Bloomfield Hills are on display through February. The exhibit is sponsored by Paint Center for the Arts. Open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday, 1000 Rochester Hills Drive, off Aven Road, Rochester Hills.

● **ARC GALLERY**

"Visual Dialogues/Emotional Spaces," paintings by Dale Sparague of Southfield are on display through JAN. 27. Reception 5-8 p.m. Friday, Jan. 5. Hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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