



STREET SEEN

Denise Susan Lucas

Our intrepid Street Scene reporter is always looking for the unusual and welcomes comments and suggestions from readers and entrepreneurs. Send those to this column in care of this newspaper, 38251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150, or call 591-2300, Ext. 331.

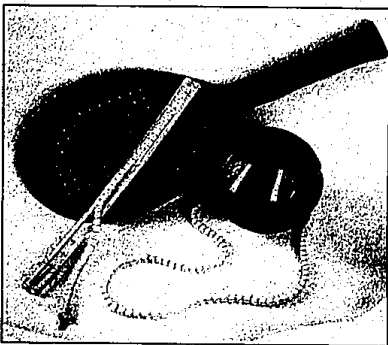


Baskets of cheer

Looking for a different kind of gift for someone special. Be patriotic this Christmas and give them the U.S.A. basket (\$50) that includes a chocolate apple from Washington, peach cobbler from Louisiana, spicy chardonnay mustard from Michigan and Aspen mulling spices from Colorado to name a few. There's also an Apple Basket (\$35) filled with muffin mixes, spices and jellies, and an Apple Wreath Basket (\$35) with preserves and a cutting board snugged in the hollow of a grapevine wreath. All are available at The Apple Wreath is at 32628 W. Seven Mile Road, Livonia. Call 474-6090.

Give me a hug

Need hug? Want to give a hug? Then grab a Hudson's Club Kidz doll. Created by toy inventor Peter Blank, president of the Imagination Factory, the Club Kidz dolls are hand embroidered, so no two dolls are alike. The creed that accompanies each doll was created from the belief that children have four basic rights — the right to shelter, the right to education, the right to be loved and the right to dream. The soft sculptured dolls are available as boys and girls and sell for \$19.99 at all J.L. Hudson's stores.



Diamonds are forever

It will definitely be a love match for the lady who receives this diamond tennis bracelet. Doble Jewelers presents the diamond tennis bracelet with its own 14K yellow gold jacket. Complete her outfit with diamond tennis earrings, then satisfy her sweet tooth between matches with a chocolate tennis racket and ball from Gayle's Chocolates.



Picture this

Oh, the wonders of computers. How about a photograph with your face on the body of a shapely Playboy bunny or a sexy Chippendale dancer in just two minutes. The images can be transferred from a photograph or you can pose right there with several backgrounds to choose from. Have an action shot with a Detroit Platoon, stand in front of the Eiffel Tower or put your face on Mt. Rushmore for \$12.95. "You're in the Picture" computer imagery at the Summit Place Mall in Pontiac. This unique service is also available for private parties and special events. Call Mark Schechter, 258-5444.

STREET SENSE

A choice of friendship or self-esteem

Dear Barbara,

My husband and I have been very agreeable and accommodating to the parents of our children's friend because the friendship means so much to our child. As a result of this and, also, since we probably aren't dealing with overly mature adults, they have become increasingly more demanding in expecting to always have their own way.

We have become resentful of their expectations and have started to exert some control over the situation. In turn, they have become more sarcastic and combative. Please comment.

A Parent desiring give and take

P.S. I like your new picture and hairstyle!

Dear Parent,

Thanks for your P.S.

If your description of the other parents is accurate, you are faced with a choice. Either you cut off all relationships between yourself and the parents, which might result in your child being unhappy at the loss of this friend, or you have an open discussion with them.

If your choice is to have an open discussion, explain the way you feel and give them a choice of changing their attitude toward you or having their child lose his friendship with your child.

I am presenting this in the worst possible scenario because if you can solve the worst scenario any other ones will be easier.

The point is that you must make a choice even though neither one is quite satisfactory. If you allow your-

selves to be abused for the sake of keeping the boy as a friend, you are giving your son the message that interdependence with others is of greater value than self-esteem.

You don't give his age and so he may be young for lesson learning. But your values will be transmitted to him through the years. High self-esteem even at the price of friendship is an important one to learn.

So, if your son loses his friend, you will try to help him learn this lesson at an appropriate age level. If you are successful, then you will have made a virtue of necessity.

Barbara

If you have a question or comment for Barbara Schiff, a trained therapist and experienced counselor, send it to Street Sense at 38251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.



Barbara Schiff

GRADING THE MOVIES

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disappointments are to be abandoned, not conquered.

"Mermaids" opens on such frustration and the family Flax moves to a small Massachusetts coastal town where Charlotte is fascinated by the storybook convent on the edge of town. Charlotte is attracted as well to the handsome, silent type, Joe (Michael Schoeffling), who drives a truck and does chores for the nuns.

Meanwhile, Rachel quickly develops a relationship with Lou (Bob Hoskins), the local shoe merchant. Kate just dives into the local pool and swims for gold.

ONE OF THE film's greatest strengths is the carefree romantic attitude synthesized so well in Rachel's character. Both Mrs. Flax and the film never lose sight of the importance of family and of personal, stylish self-expression. While having a good time is their chief priority, value and worth lurk just beneath the surface.

Jane Roberts' well-written screenplay prospers with Cher's breezy delivery. Winona Ryder's voice-overs commentary is often humorously and pleasantly at odds with the action and images on the screen. — adds immeasurably to the film's appeal. The photographs terrific, too.

But the film centers on Cher and Winona — both are appealing with adolescence and maturity intermixed. Both are child/women who synthesize femininity's most appealing qualities. "Mermaids" is marred only by a somewhat forced and predictable semi-tragedy that serves to bring the girls together for their final splash.

"Edward Scissorhands" (C, PG-13, 100 minutes) is also about family at Christmastime. But this family lives in a la-la land dreamed up by someone who was smoking funny cookies. Despite a successful track record, including "Beetlejuice" and "Bilman," director Tim Burton seems to have misjudged the possibilities (which are slim) of a film mixing "Frankenstein" and "Beauty and the Beast" with a teenage sitcom/fairytale about the Avon Lady bringing snow to the suburbs.

BUT THAT'S what "Edward Scissorhands" is all about. Diane Wiest is the Avon Lady who decides one day to call on the castle at the end of her gaudy subdivision. (Don't ask how developers missed that tract, this is a fairytale). She finds Edward (John-

ny Depp), a creation of the castle's owner (Vincent Price), an inventor who passed away before he could finish Edward's body. So poor Eddie has scissors for hands. Why not tweezers?

That's the set-up for numerous clichéd sequences about aliens experiencing our culture. As well, there's the entire range of tired satire on middle America, conformity, fear of strangers and the desire to be a pacemaker, the very first on your block. The Avon Lady's daughter (Winona Ryder who's working a lot these days) has the local teenage Rambo (a hefty Anthony Michael Hall) for her boyfriend.

If all this seems too much for one film, go to the head of the class. It is and the half-baked satire is pretty limp. Despite all these complaints, betcha it sells lots of tickets.

This week's entry in the sequel column, "Look Who's Talking Too" (F, PG-13, 75 minutes) demonstrates how a plot with enough story line for a 15-minute sitcom can be elevated to feature film length by adding a few toilet jokes and lots of music video sequences. It's all too cutesy for words. . . or boring.

REPRISING THE first edition, John Travolta's cutesy little sperm swim upstream — here's the exciting new twist — they cleverly slip by Kirstie Alley's cutesy little birth control device and impregnate her cutesy little egg.

Even a cutesy Caesarean delivery of Mike's kid sister, Annie, lacks excitement. One might hazard a guess that Travolta passed out from boredom rather than, as the film tries to convince us, he whimpered out at the sight of blood during the delivery.

It doesn't get any better than this. Since you only go 'round once, don't waste travel time on this ridiculous piece of fluff.

STILL PLAYING:

"Avatar" (A+, PG, 126 minutes). Excellent film chronicles an immigrant family's successes and failures in America.

"Child's Play 2" (C, R). "Chuckie" returns.

"Dances With Wolves" (A, PG-13, 180 minutes). Kevin Costner's magnificent ode to brotherhood and brutality on America's western frontier during and after the Civil War.

"Ghost" (A, PG-13, 116 minutes). Banker's ghost (Patrick Swayze) hangs around after life to protect loved one (Demi Moore). Spiritualist (Whoopi Gold-



Mikee (Lorne Sussman with a voice-over by Bruce Willis), Julie (Megan Milner with voice-over by Roseanne Barr) and Eddie (Danny Pongle with voice-over by Damon Wayans) have a lot to say about growing up in "Look Who's Talking Too."

berg) helps him in this romantic-comedy/thriller.

"GoodFellas" (B+, R, 143 minutes).

Martin Scorsese's intense, compelling saga of three mobsters. Fine production techniques and excellent performances by Robert DeNiro, Joe Pesci and Ray Liotta notwithstanding, they are bad guys.

"Graffiti Bridge" (C, PG-13).

Written and directed by Prince, who also stars in another production for his fans and his pocketbook.

"Heaven and Jane" (C, NC-17, 135 minutes).

Boring, repellent discussions of sexuality complemented by darkly lit sexual scenes.

"Home Alone" (B, PG, 100 minutes).

Engaging comedy about a young boy (Macaulay Culkin) left at home by accident.

"Jacob's Ladder" (A, R, 115 minutes).

Sensational, riveting film experience redemptive and rewards with its story of Jacob Singer's (Tim Robbins) re-entry to civilian life after Vietnam trauma.

"The King of New York" (R, 103 minutes).

Violent return of recently paroled drug lord.

"The Krays" (C, R).

Twins run vicious underworld empire in London.

"Memphis Belle" (D+, PG-13, 100 minutes).

Boring, trite World War II bomber film with Matthew Modine sleeping behind the joystick.

"Misery" (D+, PG-13, 100 minutes).

Story of writer and obsessed fan writer flies back and forth from psychotic thriller to stalker epic.

"The Nightcracker Prince" (G).

Animated fantasy based on Tchaikovsky's classical ballet.

"Predator 2" (C+, R, 98 minutes).

The hunt continues, this time in the urban jungle of 1997 Los Angeles.

"Quigley Down Under" (D, PG-13).

Humorous, trite western with Tom Selleck in Australia.

"Rescuers Down Under" (C, G).

Disney animation has Bernard and Miss Bianca off to Australia to save rare eagle from poacher.

"Reversal of Fortune" (C, R, 110 minutes).

Maudlin melodrama about important Constitutional issues in von Bulow attempted-murder case.

"Robot Jox" (C, PG-13, 87 minutes).

Post-apocalyptic tale of gigantic robots settling international disputes.

"Rocky V" (C+, PG-13, 100 minutes).

Sialone takes another licking but keeps on licking.

"The Rookie" (D, R, 115 minutes).

Travel beyond belief in this super-macho cop-film with rookie (Charlie Sheen) working with veteran (Clint Eastwood).

SCREEN SCENE

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- 1990. 9:25 p.m. Dec. 18-19. Director Pedro Almodovar links an escaped mental patient with a porno actress in this controversial comedy.

"The Cook, The Thief, His Wife, and Her Lover" (Britain - 1990) 9:25

Dec. 20-21. If you can stomach the first five minutes, you'll probably like this bizarre study of a mobster's violent domination over a fancy French restaurant. Directed by Peter Greenaway.

"Bugs Bunny 50th Anniversary." 5 p.m. Dec. 22; 7:30 p.m. Dec. 23. This

Bugs Bunny compilation focuses on Chuck Jones classics from the 1950s. "Lawrence of Arabia" (Britain - 1962). 7 p.m. Dec. 22, 2:30 p.m. Dec. 23. Peter O'Toole plays T.E. Lawrence, whose heroic exploits during the First World War brought him fame and tragedy. David Lean's restored desert epic looks especially

spectacular in 70mm. WINDSOR FILM THEATRE, 2135 Wyandotte, Windsor, (519) 254-FILM. (\$3.99) "Black Rain" (Japan - 1989) and "Life Is a Long, Quiet River" (France - 1989). Dec. 18-23 (call for showtimes). Two recent foreign films play in a double feature.



The Hannibals' latest release, "From Can to Can't," is marked with Byrds-like guitars and some rather willowy vocals.

Local rock makes for a nice gift

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East Lansing-based outfit that has Birmingham ties. The band's penchant for writing songs with a visual scope provides a heartland feel to some numbers while other numbers stand out as simply as being well-crafted pop songs.

"Southgoing ZAK." Southgoing ZAK — This Ann Arbor-based group proves that a band from a college town can use more than one guitar and not sound like R.E.M. This well-produced cassette runs the gamut from pop, rock and folk — all capped off with some rather stunning songwriting.