

SUBURBAN LIFE

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THURSDAY, MAY 28, 1992

SOCIAL EYES



Denise Lucas

Miss America helps out Haven

To enlighten Social Eyes with information on upcoming events involving Greater West Bloomfield Lakes, Farmington and Southfield area residents, call 442-2339 or mail information to Denise Lucas at The Eccentric, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham 48009.

Miss America 1992 Carolyn Supp, Isiah and Lynn Thomas, Carmen Harlin, Dick Purian, John Kelly and Marilyn Turner (West Bloomfield), Bob Talbert (Farmington Hills), Diann Lewis, Bill Bonds (Commerce) and Michael Farr (Wolverine Lake) were all there to raise funds for Pontiac's Haven (an Oakland County shelter for physically and sexually abused women).

Gorman's Gallery in Southfield held the "Celebration of the Great American Dream: Amertyle" to benefit its favorite charity, Haven, the evening of May 20.

The evening included celebrity dream rooms designed by Gorman's designers, an auction of artwork, a raffle for \$10,000 in furniture, musical entertainment by Elizabeth and Taylor, and incredible edifices donated by Mark of Excellence, Nibbles and Nuts, Merchant of Vines, Anita's Kitchen, Vic's, and Morels who served up a sinful caramel apple pie.

Models were strategically placed throughout the dream rooms, sporting fashions from Saks Fifth Avenue.

See SOCIAL EYES, 3C



Looking for success: Lenore Paxton of Troy and Phillip Siadi of Warren, who together created "Sing, Color, n' Say," check out display of their cassette and coloring book for children, at Waldenbooks in Birmingham.

Say 'I love you' to grandma

Two local musicians are teaching children in a fun way to sing about grandma and to express their love in 10 languages.

BY ETHEL SIMMONS
STAFF WRITER

Going to grandma's is an experience kids love.

Musicians Lenore Paxton

of Troy and Phillip Siadi of Warren want to help kids learn to talk to their grandmothers.

Their newest combination of a cas-

sette tape and coloring book, now in area bookstores, teaches children how to greet grandma and grandpa in 10 different languages, and the picture-to-color acquiring them with grandmas from around the world.

"We write choral music for children.

We thought it would be such a neat idea to combine it with a coloring book for children," Paxton said, telling how the business venture got started. With the tape, boys and girls learn "one fun phrase at a time."

See GRANDMA, 2C

Sharing tragedy Author interviews 'survivors'

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Adversity offers the ultimate telephoto lens for viewing life.

Usually it's a crisis, such as a death, divorce or physical suffering, that inspires us to focus on its true meaning, according to Dennis Wholey, author of "When the Worst That Can Happen Already Has: Conquering Life's Most Difficult Times."

"Pain is a wonderful teacher," said Wholey, a former Southfield resident and host of PBS-TV's "LateNight America." "We don't learn a heck of a lot about ourselves when things are going well. It teaches us how to love ourselves; how to receive love from other people; it teaches you to be compassionate to others. Pain in painful situations teaches us to love God."

"Those are some of the views of 50 people interviewed in Wholey's book who've endured devastating life experiences. From these personal testimonials of tragedy and loss comes a fountain of strength and courage."

Former White House press secretary Jim Brady tells of the torment of his ensuing physical rehabilitation after the brain injury he suffered from a gunshot wound. Nationally syndicated cartoonist John Callahan details his alcoholism and not having the will to live after becoming a quadriplegic.

Well-known names such as former first lady Betty Ford and talk show host Larry King discuss their well-reported battles with adversity. The stories of people not in the public eye such as Troy resident Georganna Fuller whose husband Jim died in the crash of Pan Am flight 103 and Alex Ehrmann, executive vice-president of Alaron Inc., in Troy, who survived the Holocaust are just as powerful.

They related their experiences so matter-of-factly, almost with a certain detachment that only heightens the emotional impact.

"My problems pale in comparison" may be the initial response from readers. Yet, on a larger scale, their subsequent triumphs and re-



Getting over the pain: Dennis Wholey writes about "When the Worst That Can Happen Already Has."

joicing in life after enduring tragedy is far more inspiring.

When Fuller poignantly recalls grappling with the grief following the sudden death of her husband and remarks how she's "missing the roses a lot more now," it's not a cliché but a stem of hope for everyone who has lost a spouse.

"Most of the people have some distance from the specific event they're discussing, the particular adversity they faced," Wholey said. "A person who experienced a certain kind of adversity is forever thinking that someone else is much more heroic in how they handled their adversity than their own."

"John Callahan got a copy of the book the other day and he said, 'Oh, isn't that terrible what happened to Robert Bork?'"

Such reactions to adversity intrigue Wholey, who has opened a whole new career aside from television writing books about "what makes people tick."

His best-seller "The Courage to Change: Personal Conversations About Alcoholism" offered an array of insights about the disease from a

wide-variety of well-known people and was brought about after his own bout with alcoholism and villain addiction. "Becoming Your Own Parent" dealt with adult children of alcoholics while "Are You Happy? Some Answers to the Most Important Question in Your Life" found out everyone is anything but.

With this book, Wholey took a similar approach as he did with "The Courage to Change," interviewing a wide range of people.

Wholey sent letters to those whom he wanted to interview. Many responded favorably; a few declined for various reasons.

The often emotional interviewing process left Wholey only able to do one interview a day.

"When you interview someone for a book such as this, the green light is on where people can get intense very quickly when someone is talking about a loss or an illness," he said. "That's a lot of weight to put on an interviewer's shoulders."

"I realized though it may have weighed heavily on me, to have someone to share their pain with you that is a gift."

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