

# CREATIVE LIVING

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THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 1994

## GARDEN SPOT



MARTY FIGLEY

## It's almost a snap to raise snapdragons

During the 1940s when I was a child, we often pressed the special spot on a snapdragon to make the "dragon's jaws" open and then snap shut. Time has a way of repeating itself, and since the National Garden Bureau has designated 1994 as the Year of the Snapdragon, perhaps many gardeners will once again grow these tall annuals and share the secret with little children.

The snapdragon (*antirrhinum majus*), a native of the Mediterranean and Southern Europe, belongs to the botanic family Scrophulariaceae, or Figwort. Penstemon, nemesis and torenia are some relatives.

The tall spikes of blooms come in many colors: white, yellow, red, scarlet, lavender, pink, rose and bronze - some bi-colored. There are two other forms of the flower as well as the "dragon jaws." One is the "butterfly" flower form; the other is "double azalea flowered." The blooms, which open from the bottom of the stem to the top, are long-lasting in the garden.

It's too late to start seed indoors in this area, but the plants can be found in the nurseries. When you set the plants out in a sunny area, stake the varieties that will need this support, fertilize (5-10-5) when they begin to flower and water before they wilt, although overwatering will cause the roots to rot. A few inches of mulch will help retain the moisture as well as suppress weeds.

These flowers are undemanding, and relatively disease and pest free. They will add a tall dimension to the garden - and provide some old-fashioned fun at the same time.

## Mighty melon

Also, The National Garden Bureau celebrates the watermelon for 1994. This fruit now comes in three shapes - round, oval and cylindrical - with light to deep red, and yellow or orange flesh.

Watermelons (*Citrullus lanatus*) are in the Cucurbitaceae family, which contains 700 species - pumpkins and cucumbers are some.

There are many varieties - small bush types or those with vines up to 12 feet of this easy to grow fruit. They require a sunny spot and warmth both day and night. Good draining is essential. Coarse sand to help in this regard can be added to heavy soil. Till the soil six to eight inches deep and add some good rich compost when you plant them. For this area, I would suggest a variety that requires a short growing season. They will be available as bedding plants soon.

Water the plants regularly; fertilize with a balanced granular one as the package directs when the flowers form and the fruit sets, then at three- to four-week intervals.

Black plastic can be put on the ground early in the season to protect the fruit, or a mulch of straw or hay can be used.

Watermelons are ripe when the white spot

See FIGLEY, 8D

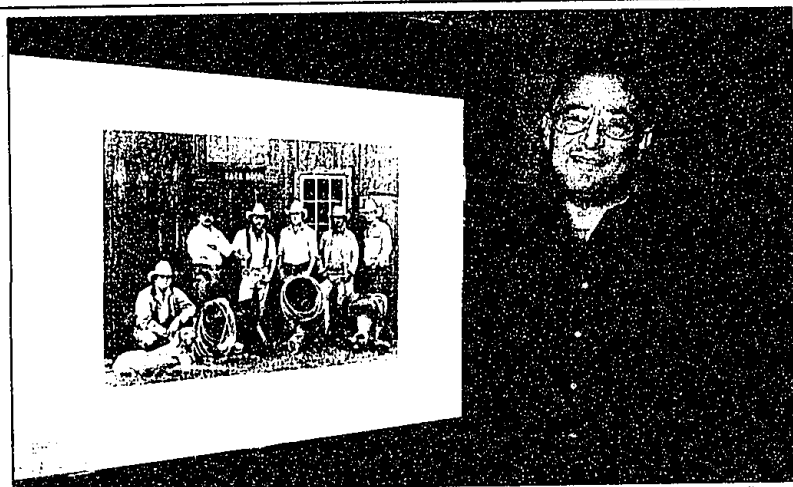


Shady character: *Astilbes* are excellent for a shady garden.

## LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Creative Living next week:

- A visit with Carolyn Joseph of West Bloomfield, one of the artists taking part in the 28th annual Westacres Artist Market.
- A look at the international plans of pianist Flavio Varani of Birmingham, professor of music and artist in residence at Oakland University in Rochester.
- Mary Klemic's Perspectives column.
- Exhibitions, art gallery event listings.



STAFF PHOTO BY ART EXAMINER

Serene Imagery: Monte Nagler of Farmington Hills delights in sharing his work from around the world with others. Here, he's shown with his photograph of six wranglers and their dogs posed outside a tack room closer to home in Rothbury, Mich.

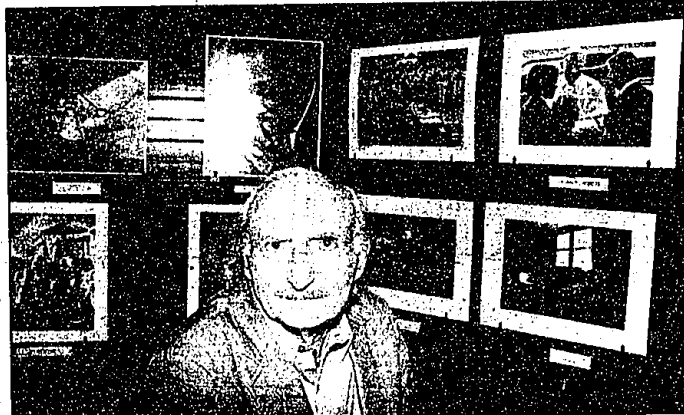
## Renowned lensmen focus on the world

■ The Livonia Arts Commission presents a rare opportunity to view the works of two distinguished photographers, Tony Spina and Monte Nagler, in a moving exhibition in the Livonia Civic Center Library Fine Art Gallery.

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN  
SPECIAL WRITER

Fine art photography meets photojournalism in an exhibition of works by Monte Nagler of Farmington Hills and Tony Spina of Bloomfield Hills, continuing through May 7 in the Fine Art Gallery on the second floor of the Livonia Civic Center Library, Farmington Road and Five Mile.

Overall, the exhibit is black and white photography with a smattering of color by Spina. Nagler, who writes *Focus on Photography* for the *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*, evokes serenity through fine art photographs primarily of landscapes. Whether it's the Great Wall in Beijing, China, or the megalithic structures of Stonehenge in England, Nagler invites the viewer to join him in a dramatic black and white celebration of Mother Earth. "I hope I give people a better appreciation of the world, to appreciate nature, and a little bit more," said Nagler, a student of Ansel Adams. Not to be missed are Nagler's "Spiral City" in Spain, where the



History Recorded: Tony Spina of Bloomfield Hills documents 60 years of history in an exhibition at the Livonia Civic Center Library. Shown in the background, Martin Luther King Jr., Pope John Paul II and President Jimmy Carter have been among his subjects.

houses literally wind their way up a hill and "The Mittens" in Utah. "Death Valley Dunes" in California is stunning; the sand, lyrical and fluid. The line of a dark sweeping shadow leads the eye into the heart of the image.

Nagler's works are included in the collections of the Detroit Institute of Arts, Center for Creative Photography in Tucson,

Brooklyn Museum, Nikon International, Ford Motor Co., General Electric Corp. and IBM. To think it all started with an Instamatic camera he took along on a trip to Hawaii in 1970.

"I love black and white. Black and white is more emotional. Color is like going to see a movie. Black and white is like reading the book," Nagler said.

In 1969, after seven years as an automotive designer for the Lincoln-Mercury division of Ford Motor Co. and a brief stint as a franchise owner of a Midas Muffler shop, Nagler became a fine art photographer. He was 42. His photos and articles have appeared in *Detroit Monthly*, *The*

See RENOWNED, 8D

## Special exhibition to benefit young artists

By MARY KLEMIC  
STAFF WRITER

An upcoming exhibit at Objects of Art in West Bloomfield will show heart as well as art.

The show is called the first Kennedy Center Art Gala. It will benefit the students and the art department at the center, a school in Pontiac for developmentally disabled young people ages 14-26.

In addition, some artists also featured at the gallery who aren't from the Kennedy Center will donate their proceeds to the students.

"To make the art and to have a showing in a gallery of this stature

," said Alon Marie, art education department head at the Kennedy Center.

"We're not just telling them 'You do good'... the community is... too."

Objects of Art owner Beverly Thompson, who started the plans for the art gala, had been impressed with the quality of art from the center. She saw pieces in the center's booth at Birmingham's annual Art in the Park.

"I started helping them set up one morning... (and saw) how great the art work was," Thompson said.

Thompson met with school officials. Besides working out the exhibit, she got the center featured on

cable TV this month.

The exhibit opens with a reception to meet the artists 6-9 p.m. Friday, April 29, and will continue to May 16. Objects of Art is in the Sugar Tree shopping center on Orchard Lake Road just north of Maple (call (810) 639-3529).

The display will present a wide variety of art, including ceramics, painted furniture and paintings. Posters will be sold, too.

Kennedy Center students come from northeast Oakland County, which includes five school districts (Avondale, Rochester, Pontiac, Oxford and Orion).

A fine arts program has been in place at the center since 1983. Job skills and other skills are taught there as well.

Art has become a valuable tool. The young artists show their work in exhibits throughout Oakland County every year, and dealers have expressed interest. Permanent pieces from Kennedy Center artists are in the Pontiac Schools Special Education Offices, among other sites.

"In the area of art our students can compete and be successful with anyone and everyone," Marie said.

Arbust features various happenings in the suburban arts world. Send news leads to: Creative Living, *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham 48009; or fax them by calling (810) 644-1314.

## Gypsy moth training

The Michigan State University Extension of Oakland County is presenting a gypsy moth seminar in May. To enroll in an overview session, send your check in the amount of \$65 per person (payable to MSU Extension) to MSU Extension of Oakland County, Attn: Gypsy Moth Training, 1200 N. Telegraph, Pontiac

## Art Beat

48341-0416. Payment must be received no later than Monday, May 2. For information, call (810) 858-0887.

The overview workshop must be attended before proceeding to additional sessions. Overview sessions are scheduled 7-10 p.m. Wednesday, May 11, in the City of Rochester Hills City Hall Auditorium and 7-10 p.m. Tuesday, May 17, in the Village of Beverly Hills Office.

## Cranbrook topic

Roy Slade, president of the Cranbrook Academy of Art and director of the Cranbrook Academy of Art Museum in Bloomfield Hills, will speak on "The Cranbrook Vision, Past and Present: The Restoration of the Eliel Saarinen House" Tuesday, May 3, at the Dornos Museum Center at Northwestern Michigan College in Traverse City. As part of its lecture series, the Dornos Museum Center is planning a visit to the Cranbrook Academy of Art, Saarinen House and Detroit Institute of Arts in June. For information about Slade's lecture, call (616) 922-1055.