

Forest

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and shop windows. At one time she owned a store selling her work "Mira-Lu-Pets" through Briarwood Mall in Ann Arbor.

To make her November deadline for the Twelve Oaks Mall exhibit, Imbras-Jansen asked artist Dick Robbins to airbrush details on some of the animal's faces. Another artist, friend and neighbor Marie Reksan, lent Imbras-Jansen her driveway and then the Canton Analytical Labs warehouse on Beck Road, to help her complete and store the animals.

The animals will become part of a shimmering art nouveau fantasyland of animals, trees, snowflakes, and cottage home to Santa, in center court. It opens to the public on Monday, Nov. 21.

Visitors to the exhibit will receive a free, full-color poster with information and pictures of the 10 Detroit Zoo animals represented in the Crystal Forest.

"It is thrilling to think of the enjoyment these animals will bring to visitors young and old," Imbras-Jansen said, 138 creatures later. "People relate to animals. Everyone will have their favorite based on the animal's expressions and stances that I tried to make particular to each one of them. I know the men like the rhinoceroses. I myself like the reindeer."

Phil Morosco, Twelve Oaks general manager, said he liked the polar bears best after previewing the collection. He said on a typical Saturday in December as many as 85,000 families shop at the mall. He predicted within the next two months up to 3 million people may visit the mall's Crystal Forest.

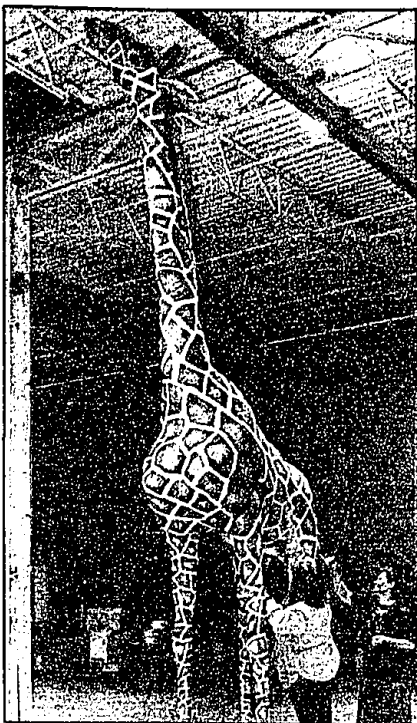
Twelve Oaks' marketing staff invited the Detroit Zoological Society to benefit from the exhibit and it was a quick partnership combining a strong educational element with holiday fun.

"We plan to use the mall exhibit and the Crystal Forest Gallery on the upper level in Sear's court to offer zoo memberships and build winter attendance at the zoo," said Darlene Thomas, director of membership services. "The center will feature posters, brochures and signs to teach visitors about the feeding and habitat of the different species at the Detroit Zoo."

Some visitors find that winter is actually the best time to visit the zoo. If you can brave the cold, the animals are much more playful than in the summer, and the indoor exhibits provide places to warm up."

Christine Peck, director of development and marketing for the Detroit Zoo, said "Wild Lights" is the mall's marketing director Elaine Kah.

"I've done a lot of promotions in the past, but this one is very special because of the caring people involved," she said. "I hope mall visitors will enjoy the results and bring their cameras!"



Gentle giant: Marie Reksan (left) and Ira Imbras-Jansen remove the masking tape design guide from the 18-foot tall giraffe.

walk through a display of more than 25 light sculptures some as high as 19-foot-tall."

Chuck Hammond, executive director of the Detroit Zoo, likened the magic of the mall's Crystal Forest to the same type of magic that takes place when a toddler visits the Detroit Zoo for the first time.

"It's an eye-opening experience full of wonderment," he said. "A child looks around and sees a 24-ton elephant, a giant giraffe, and realizes there's a huge world out there."

"Also, Ira Jansen's work is incredible. She has a god-given talent for interpreting an animal's idiosyncracies with an original flair. She's not motivated by business or enterprise. Ira has a mission."

One of the chief architects of the Crystal Forest exhibit is the mall's marketing director Elaine Kah.

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Trees

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ated organizations should submit their name, address, contact person and phone number, specifying the size and number of trees that could be used. Non-profit organizations must serve the Greater Metropolitan Detroit area.

"In the spirit of the holiday season, we feel that this is the perfect way to give something back to the community," Buescher said. "Our hope is that these beautiful trees can continue to brighten a local non-profit organization's holidays for many years to come."

'We are asking non-profit organizations to tell us, in 100 words or less, how they exemplify the holiday spirit 365 days a year.'

Mike Buescher
assistant manager

The entry deadline last 4 p.m. Monday, Nov. 21, 1994. Entries can be mailed, dropped off, or faxed to the Laurel Park Place Management Office, fax number (313) 462-6210, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Send essays to "Brighten the Holidays," Laurel Park Place Management Office, 37700 W. Six Mile Road, Livonia, MI 48152.

Entries will be judged by area media representatives and contest winners will be notified on Tuesday, Nov. 22, 1994, by phone. For more information, contact the Laurel Park Place management office during regular business hours at (313) 462-1100.

Laurel Park Place is east of the 1-275 exit at W. Six Mile and Newburgh Roads in Livonia.



Trees for free: This 16-foot high fir is looking for a home in the lobby or community room of a local charitable organization. Contact Laurel Park Place shopping center to nominate a favorite worthy group.

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