

FRIDAY



The Village Players of Birmingham present "My Favorite Year." Call (810) 644-2075 for ticket information.

SATURDAY



The rivalry between two toys leads to comic complications in Walt Disney Pictures' new animated comedy-adventure "Toy Story."

SUNDAY



Detroit Symphony Orchestra features guest conductor/pianist Dennis Russell Davies at an All-Concerto Evening. Call (313) 833-3700, (810) 645-6666.



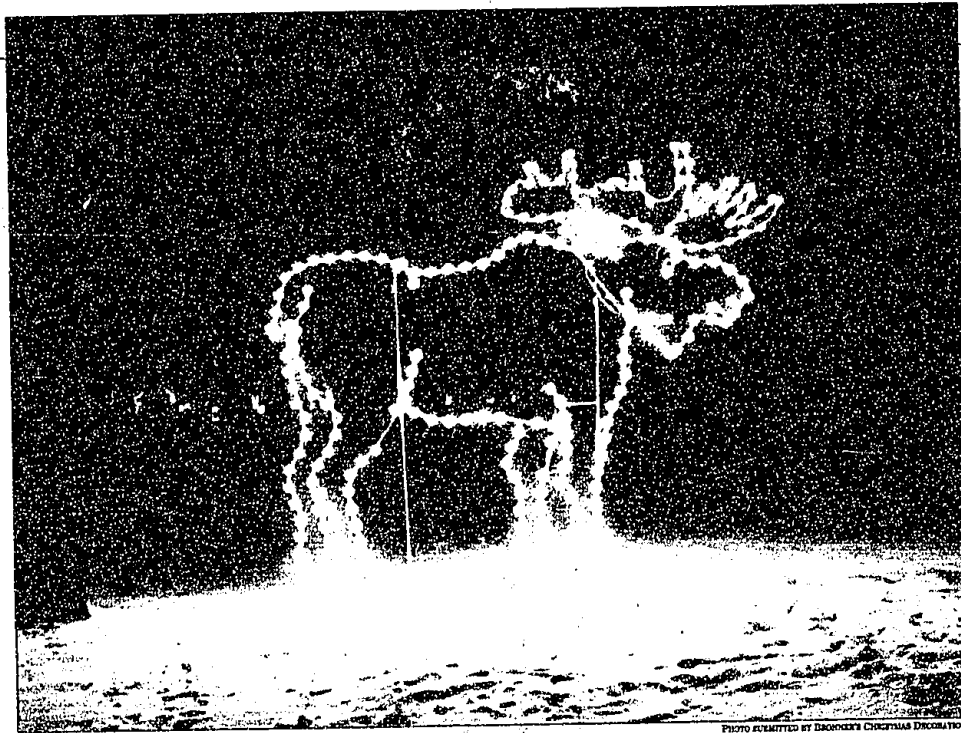
Hot tip: A three-story tree sparkles with light in the indoor winter wonderland at Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn.

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

WHAT TO DO, WHERE TO GO

KEELY WYGONIK, EDITOR • 313-963-2105

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Wild lights: This moose is one of more than 40 animal creations that spring to life in an explosion of 250,000 multi-colored lights at the Detroit Zoological Society's Wild Lights exhibit.

LIGHT SHOWS keep holidays aglow

Metro Detroit is turned on to holiday light displays. Holiday light shows make for an inexpensive family evening out and a way to brighten the season.

The 3-year-old LightFest is Wayne County's offering. It features 26 displays over a four-mile stretch of Hines Drive, between Merriman and the Warrendale picnic area in Dearborn Heights.

LightFest, produced by the county parks division, includes about 600,000 lights. New this year are a Nativity scene, a Menorah scene and a Kwanzaa scene.

LightFest continues through Jan. 1 (closed on Christmas) 7-10 p.m. The cost is \$5 per car, (including vans and recreational vehicles), \$20 for limousines and small buses and \$30 for full-size buses.

Traffic enters Hines Drive at Merriman in Westland, proceeds east, one way, and exits at Warren, just east of Telegraph. Refreshments, a gift shop and photos with Santa will be available at the Warrendale picnic area.

For more information, or to arrange a bus tour, call (313) 261-1990.

Here's a look at three other area holiday light shows.

The Detroit Zoo's Wild Lights boasts more than 40 displays of over 250,000 lights along a half-mile walking path. The trail features an animated whale, a pair of elephants, a trail full of animals, a stegosaurus and more. Trees and shrubs along the path are also decorated with lights.

Wild Lights continues from 5:30-8 p.m. through Saturday, Dec. 30, at the zoo. It is closed on

Thanksgiving Day, all day Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Admission is \$3 for adults and \$1.50 for children. Parking is free. Admission for Detroit Zoological Society members is \$2 for adults and \$1 for children. Refreshments available.

The zoo is at Woodward and 10 Mile, near I-690, in Royal Oak.

The display at Domino's Farms features more than 800,000 lights, a laser show and indoor exhibits of decorated Christmas trees and Nativity scenes.

The show is open 6-10 p.m. through Sunday, Dec. 31. There is a minimum donation of \$5 per vehicle, with the proceeds going to charities around the state.

After driving through the display, visitors can enter Lobby B of Domino's corporate headquarters to view more than 40 decorated holiday trees and a display of crèche scenes from around the world. Refreshments, including pizza, are available.

Domino's Farms is on Earhart Road off Plymouth Road, about a half-mile east of U.S. 23. For more information, call (313) 666-1800.

The Festival of Lights in Ypsilanti's Riverside Park is a 15-acre display of about 100,000 lights. Visitors can walk or drive through the park, on the west bank of the Huron River just east of the downtown business district. The park entrance is at Cross Street near Huron Street. Parking is available north of Cross, behind Depot Town shops.

There is no charge, but donations are accepted. The light show continues from 6-11 p.m. through Sunday, Dec. 31. For more information, call (313) 463-4444.

DANCE

'Nutcracker' casts its magical spell

BY KEELY WYGONIK
STAFF WRITER

Completed in February, 1892, Peter Tchaikovsky's beloved "Nutcracker" ballet has enchanted audiences since its premiere on Dec. 18, 1892.

Based on a story by E.T.A. Hoffmann, the ballet tells the story of a young girl, Clara, who is given a nutcracker doll for Christmas. During the night, the doll comes to life to lead the toy soldiers in a battle with the house mice, led by the Mouse King.

As the nutcracker is about to be attacked by the Mouse King, Clara strikes and kills the mouse with her slipper, and the nutcracker turns into a prince. He invites her to accompany him to the Kingdom of Sweets as her reward.

There she is entertained by the subjects of the court before she awakens to realize it was all a dream.

For local dancers, performing in "The Nutcracker" is their dream come true.

Michigan Classic Ballet Company led by artistic director Mary C. Geiger, and the Birmingham-Bloomfield Symphony Orchestra conducted by Felix Reznick, will perform "The Nutcracker" 3 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 2-3 at West Bloomfield High School Auditorium, 4925 Orchard Lake Road. Call (810) 661-4340 for ticket information.

Sean Kelly of the Houston Ballet is back for the second year as the Cavalier. Jennifer Ball of West Bloomfield will perform as the Sugar Plum Fairy.

Nathan Blume of Huntington Woods, who spent six weeks this past summer studying on scholarship at the Houston Ballet Academy, will dance the role of the Nutcracker.

This performance marks the inauguration of the newly created 1995-96 Ballet Concert Series of the BBSO and Michi-

gan Classic Ballet. On March 30 the two groups will jointly present "Animal Crackers" with "Peter and the Wolf" and "Carnival of the Animals."

Midwest Dance Theatre is presenting "The Nutcracker" 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 2 and 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 3 at Mercy High School in Farmington Hills. Tickets \$12, students and senior citizens \$8, are available at the Dance Academy of Walled Lake, 1169 Welch Road. There is a 10 percent discount for groups of 10 or more. Call (810) 869-8444. Tickets will also be available at the door.

Guest artists Erika Moe and Peter Taylor of the Charleston Ballet Company will be joining Midwest Dance Theatre to dance the lead roles of the Sugar Plum Fairy and Cavalier. They will perform this full-length ballet, in two acts, under the direction of Evelyn Kraszon, artistic director. She brings to the com-



Holiday ballet: Michigan Classic Ballet Company members rehearse for their upcoming production of the "Nutcracker."

pany her experience of 25 previous productions of "The Nutcracker."

The Lakes Area Civic Ballet Company is presenting "The Nutcracker" 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 9 at West Bloomfield High School Auditorium. Tickets are \$8 in advance and \$10 at the door. For information, call (810) 666-1671 Monday-Thursday, 4-9 p.m.

Eric Johnston's Detroit Ballet and the Detroit Ballet Orchestra will present "The Nutcracker" in two acts 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 9 and 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 10 at Farmington High School on Shiawassee and Orchard Lake Road. Tickets \$10 adult, \$5 children and senior citizens. Call (810) 474-9174 or (810) 473-9570.