

## Heavenly tips

### Add a stop to your shopping list

BY DIANE GALE

STAFF WRITER

Looking for a gift for that someone special? If the person happens to be religious, forget about roaming the malls or staring aimlessly at cable television's shopping channels. Add that special touch to your gift giving by wrapping an item that can't be found anywhere else.

You can be sure your present won't be a duplicate when you shop at Farmington Hills' best-kept secret — the gift shop at the Blessed Sacrament on 13 Mile and Middlebelt roads.

The extensive array of items are housed in a cubby hole next to the Blessed Sacrament chapel. It's open Monday through Sunday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

You will find anything from or-

naments, rosaries and christening gowns to icons, table mats, lace and a book collection.

Christmas wreaths, door hangings, table settings and much, much more are on display. And the stock is always changing, so if you've been there once you won't necessarily know what you'll find the next time.

Most of the art work is done by the Dominican cloistered nuns

living at the Farmington Hills monastery. Many of the items are one of a kind and can't be found anywhere but at the gift shop.

If you're looking for something with an angel theme, this is a good place to try. There are angel plaques, angel ceramic wall hangings, glass angel candles and much more.

There are ornaments, greeting cards made from herbs and flowers taken from the monastery grounds.

"It's an extension of our spirituality," Sister Miriam said explaining that the Dominican order is designed to preach the word and one way to do that is through the religious books that are sold.

With the opening of the gift shop last January, many of the 40 cloistered nuns work on projects to be sold.

The monastery is self-sufficient meaning they depend on donations of money and food from the public and what they can earn in the gift shop.

"Probably what people come here most for are the books," according to Sister Miriam. "People have so many questions about their faith. They need examples of how Christians live their lives and more about the doctrine of faith."

The book section started out small and has grown.

"It keeps getting bigger and bigger," she said. "The most important aspect is to make good books available to people who want to grow in their own spiritual life in relation to God."

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### Lakes inn to host writers during the holiday season

BY ERIKA MARIONA

STAFF WRITER

The owners of the Victorian Rose Bed and Breakfast in Commerce Village will be hosting a holiday open house to welcome a forum of special guests who are pleasantly out of the ordinary.

Near one of the many lakes in Commerce Township sits an 1890 farmhouse on Sleeth Road. Innkeepers and owners for four years, Shirley Kittle-Newbold and William Newbold, turned the house into a bed and breakfast, and will open the doors for a special event to ring in the holiday season.

From 2-5 p.m. Dec. 3, the couple will host a poetry-read-

ing party with a group of female authors who, informally, will discuss their new works. Those are contained in a new anthology, entitled, "Variations on the Ordinary," published by Plain View Press last July. All nine female authors featured are from the Detroit area.

Among the visiting writers will be a friend of Kittle-Newbold, 28-year-old poet and author Susan Knopow, who is originally from the West Bloomfield area.

She is the youngest of the nine authors, but she said that did not bother her — it actually helped the entire process.

"The age difference really didn't bother me. Some of us are mothers, some of us are grandmothers, ... the main

thing is that we had different perspectives to bring," said Knopow.

Normally, Knopow works as a business writer for the automotive industry while pursuing a master's degree at Vermont College.

The Victorian farmhouse is fully-restored and renovated. It contains two guest rooms, a large sitting room filled with antiques and stylish decor. "Variations on the Ordinary" features poetry, fiction and essays.

The other eight local writers includes Nancy Henderson (Clarkston), Sandy Geering (Rochester), Vivian DeGalin (Rochester), Nancy Ryan (Oakland), Gerry Tamm (Dearborn), and Pearl Kastran Ahnen (Brighton).

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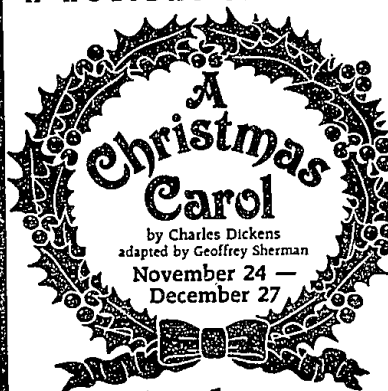
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