

Livonia Mall theater to reopen next year

BY DAVE VARGA
STAFF WRITER
dvarga@oe.hometown.com

An early present for frugal film buffs: Livonia Mall's silver screen will flicker once again next year.

Plans to reopen the three-screen mall cinema were announced on a marquee inside the mall recently, but the opening date may not be until March 1 due to planned improvements and needed inspections. The cinema closed in 1996.

The actual date isn't set, since the operation is "at the mercy of the county health department," according to Karl Zarbo, general manager of Livonia Mall.

New theater operator Harold Turel, a veteran of the film business, plans to open the show as a \$1 operation — something that was settled by the recent closing of the Terrace Theater's \$1 show on Plymouth Road.

Originally, the plan was to open the show as a mid-priced theater, charging about \$2.50 like the Penn Theater in Plymouth or the soon-to-reopen Farmington Civic. "We decided to stick to \$1 since the Terrace closed," Turel said, noting the next-closest \$1 cinema is the Ford-Tel in Dearborn Heights.

The Terrace Theater will have another legacy on the new Livonia Mall theater. About 600 "practically new" lavender seats are replacing some of the original, 30-year-old seats that filled the old Livonia Mall Theater.

Turel's background is film. "My father's been in the movie business," he said, adding that he's "been in the business all my life." Most recent jobs

included working at the Detroit Screening Room Point of View theater for previews of films and the Detroit Film Theater at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

His film expertise should show at the new Livonia Mall. "I will be there seven days a week. You're not going to see projections out of focus," Turel said, noting previous problems for audiences.

Along with some new seats and paint, Turel projected improvements to include making the restrooms handicapped accessible and new offerings at the snack counter.

Turel has other ideas for the nearly 1,500 seat theater, too. He plans to offer free matinees for children, something the previous mall cinema offered; he would like to offer two-for-one discounts; and he'd like to offer pay-per-view boxing matches, perhaps charging \$7 or \$8 a ticket and selling beer, if the city approves, Turel said.

Zarbo said once the cinema opens, the mall will be 85 percent filled.

The opening of Crowley's Value City was a big step. "The whole thing with Value City has been a phenomenon," Zarbo said. "The goal was really to have someone come in that really did present good value and give an excuse to get you back once a month."

"The beauty in this (new cinema) is that this is where you can achieve that goal again."

Other recent mall changes included the opening of the "Classic Taylor" shop, doubling the size of the U.S. Postal Service office, the expansion planned for Dollar Tree, M.J. Diamond and Leather City, which will also change locations.



Mr. Saturday Night: New theater operator Harold Turel, a veteran of the film business, plans to open the show as a \$1 operation.

STAFF PHOTO BY BRYAN MITCHELL

Former Canadian 'proud to be American

BY PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER
pmurphy@oe.hometown.com

Richard MacDonald could hardly contain his happiness. "It's an over-worked phrase," he said, "but this really is a land of opportunity."

Moments earlier, MacDonald and 93 others — with friends and relatives watching at the Oakland County Commissioners' Auditorium — took an oath of allegiance to the United States. They were finally citizens.

"I feel exhilarated," MacDonald said Friday. "It's been a long wait,

but it's finally over. I'm an American citizen."

MacDonald came to the U.S. from Canada in 1986. He graduated from the Detroit Institute of Technology and is currently a mechanical engineer working at the Ford World Headquarters in Dearborn.

He still loves Canada and cherishes his Canadian roots, MacDonald said. "But I'm proud to be an American."

To become naturalized citizens, MacDonald and the others underwent extensive background checks, including fingerprinting by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. "We

also had to take a test," he recalled.

That test was relatively easy, MacDonald remembers, taking about 10 minutes. "But I think it was easy because I spent so much time studying for it."

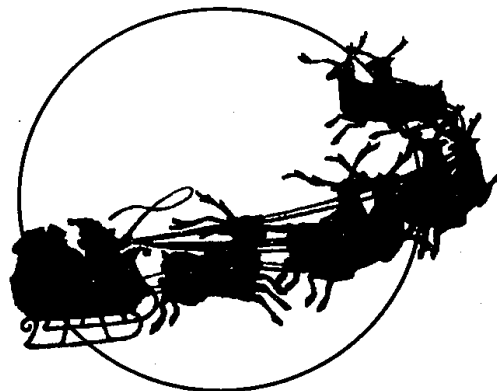
In his excitement, MacDonald was fairly typical of new naturalized citizens, said Michael A. Saroli, a supervisor with the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the U.S. Department of Justice. "Most are nervous," he said, "many cry, and some even faint. It's a big day for them and their families."

OCC hosts author Harryman

Noted author Carla Harryman is the next speaker in Oakland Community College's Writers Live Series, Tuesday, Jan. 18. The program begins at 7 p.m. in the Royal Oak Campus' Jones Johnson Theater. Admission is free and the public is invited.

Ms. Harryman will read selections from her published poetry, essays, plays and fiction; a question and answer period follows. The program concludes with an afterglow and book signing in the theater lobby.

Although Carla Harryman has published 10 books, no two fall under the same genre heading. Her works include plays, poetry, essays, experimental fiction and serial prose poems. Her most recent publications include *The Words* (1998) and *There Never Was A Rose Without A Thorn* (1995). In her forthcoming book, *Games*, some of the "games" described involve patriarchal myths, while others bring to light the tensions between the individual and society.



“And away they all flew like the down of a thistle”..

It's time to say goodbye to Santa!

The Somerset Collection is planning a very exciting send-off for Santa this year.

Join the members of the Royal Court in this magical farewell to the Jolly Old Elf.

You'll take home a fun package of treats to leave for Santa and his Reindeer with your own personal message.

Plus there's a special treat for you!

Friday, December 24th
2:00 p.m.

North Grand Court

SOMERSET
COLLECTION

248.643.6360