

Shirt Box takes in clothing for charity

Old shirts, sports shirts and ties can do double duty from now until April 14 at the Shirt Box in Farmington Hills.

Take in your used items and the Shirt Box will donate them to charity. In return you'll get \$3 off your purchases for each

donated item.

The Shirt Box, an independently owned men's furnishings and accessories store, has hosted this charity event for 15 years. It has enabled owner Ron Elkus to donate thousands of pieces of clothing to local charities.

Located at 32500 Northwestern Highway in Farmington Hills in the Courtyard Shopping Plaza, the Shirt Box is now in its 19th year of business.

For more information, call 851-6770.

MOVERS & SHAKERS

The National Association of Women in Construction, Detroit Chapter 183 has announced the winners of the 2001 New Leader and 4-Most Leader awards.



Kelly Taylor

The New Leader award is given to an individual who has shown leadership, commitment and participation within the

chapter. This award was presented to Kelly Taylor, director of marketing, Sachse Construction & Development Corp., Farmington Hills.

Taylor is currently on the board of directors for the Detroit chapter of NAWIC and has been a member since October, 1999. "She has been a guiding force within the chapter and has helped with such efforts as strategic planning, industry relations, corporate sponsorship, special events and overall lead-

ership," said Sarah Keiser, past president of NAWIC Detroit and regional manager of Master Builder Software/Onware Inc. Plymouth.

In addition to her involvement with NAWIC, Taylor also holds the position of vice president of membership, NACORE International. She is a member of Services for Marketing Professional Services and has been involved with CAM and on the AGC Marketing Committee from 2000-2001.

Pictures from page A1

much in the way of special effects, but you'd be surprised.

In *What Lies Beneath*, Harrison Ford carries Michelle Pfeiffer up two flights of stairs. When the scene was shot, Pfeiffer was held up by a cable attached to a harness around her waist so that Ford didn't really have to carry her. Travelling Pictures took the cable out.

In another scene, Pfeiffer is supposed to be unconscious while her eyes remain open - and don't blink. But the scene was long and Pfeiffer blinked repeatedly. Travelling Pictures had to take samples of Pfeiffer's eyes and superimpose them on her blinking eyes in the problem scene - frame by frame.

Castaway effects

In *Castaway*, Tom Hanks rows his homemade raft out to sea, and in one shot before the storm, the camera approaches the raft and circles it. When the scene was shot, the sky was overcast and boats and islands could be seen in the distance.

Travelling Pictures removed the boats and islands, removed the overcast sky and inserted a partly cloudy sky.

This turned into a long project as the inserted sky had to move back and forth to match the movements of the helicopter the camera was on. The sky behind the raft's sail had to be blanked out one frame at a time. And the reflection of the clouds that weren't really there was superimposed on the water.

Elsewhere in the film: A rocky beach becomes a sandy beach; scenes shot in daylight appear to

take place at night; a rock climb in southern California with ears, a fence and a huge air mattress below becomes the remote island Hanks' character is stranded on.

Much of this work is done by Sam Morrocco, the senior visual effects artist, who says, "One of the necessary evils of our business is that it's not fast by any stretch of the imagination."

Loves the variety

Morrocco, a Farmington Hills resident, says he was persuaded to join Travelling Pictures by the best cup of coffee in the world, which he says Burton makes. Morrocco can often be found working late at night but wouldn't want to do anything else. "If you didn't love what you were doing in this business you'd be out of it in an hour," he said. "The variety is fantastic."

Although motion pictures are still shot on film, special effects work is computerized. When a piece of film needs effects work, the director transfers that portion of the film to a digital medium. The movie segment is shipped off to the effects house on a digital tape.

Once the effects work has been done and approved, the tape goes back to Hollywood where it is turned back into film and added to the rest of the movie.

With just 12 employees, Travelling Pictures is small enough to avoid bureaucratic delays that can slow down larger operations, Burton said. "Being small, we can probably tap dance a little better."

Hence larger effects houses often toss overflow work their

way. "They call us in when all hell breaks loose," Morrocco said.

"We got a call, and the person usually says, 'How soon can you get on this project?'," Burton said.

Childhood influences

A 1984 graduate of Harrison High School, Burton knew what he wanted to do with his life, more or less, from a young age. "We all shot 8mm films when we were kids and watched *Star Wars*," he said.

Willette had a similar experience growing up in Grand Rapids. Both attended Grand Valley State University but didn't meet until after college when Willette hired Burton as an intern for Emerald City Video Productions in Grand Rapids.

They became friends and moved on to different companies but stayed in touch and often talked about starting their own special effects company.

That led to the formation of Travelling Pictures in 1991. On March 1 Travelling Pictures was acquired by General Television Network Inc., an Oak Park effects house that does primarily advertising work.

The two staffs are expected to combine later this year in a new building going up in Oak Park. Unlike Travelling Pictures' current location, the new facility will be built from the ground up as an effects house.

Morrocco eagerly anticipates the added efficiency. "Now, hopefully, we'll get to go home at 1 o'clock instead of 3 o'clock," he said.

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