

Hobby leads to adventure and second career



Story: CORINNE ABATT
Photos: STEPHEN CANTRELL

After an eight-hour day as a dental technician, John La Porte walks down the hall to his studio and puts in another eight hours as a stained glass artist.

As a student at Brother Rice High School in the late '60s and early '70s, he didn't foresee this kind of future — his inclinations ran to writing and journalism. However, the turn of events, or careers, has proved to be a satisfying one for the man who loves to work with his hands.

His interest in working with glass was piqued when his mother, Fran La Porte, became interested in the art. He remembers coming home and watching her work in her home studio. Then one of his seven brothers, Paul, began to work in glass, and the interest continued.

After high school, La Porte went to Highland Park College to train as a dental technician and pursued stained glass as a hobby, making sun catchers and small items.

"I WAS fascinated by how glass was manufactured," he said, explaining how he reached a decision to take glass more seriously.

The result was a year in Oregon making stained glass for Bullseye Glass when he took time off from his dental lab job.

With a more solid background and understanding of the medium, La Porte and a friend began doing commissions for homes in the mountains. He bought a pickup truck, set up a glass studio in it and drove up through British Columbia.

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"The people there hadn't seen much glass art. It was all new to them," he said. This resulted in a number of commissions, including a large one for a bar owner who wanted a piece with several skiers to match the decor.

When La Porte returned to this area to follow his dental technician career, he found a studio in the Professional Building on Fourteen Mile, just east of Woodward, on the lower level, next door to the dental lab where he works. He hopes to expand his space into a kind of artists and craftsmen co-op.

When he wasn't working on commissions or repairs this past winter, he was making pieces in anticipation of the summer art fairs.

"I do about 10 or 15 of the big fairs and four or five local ones," he said. I like to have about 40 pieces ready when the fairs begin," he said.

HAVING GONE far beyond sun catchers, La Porte does windows, panels, decorated mirrors and other more ambitious projects.

"I'd really like to do a whole environment in glass," he said, "four or five windows in one room."

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ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS WEED CUTTING PROGRAM

City of Farmington Hills
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Sealed proposals will be received by the City of Farmington Hills at the City Clerk's office at 31555 Eleven Mile Road, Farmington Hills, Michigan, 48018, until 10:30 A.M. on May 9, 1979, at which time and place all proposals will be publicly opened and read for the following:

CITY-WIDE VACANT LOT WEED CUTTING PROGRAM

Specifications and proposal forms may be obtained at the City Clerk's Office at the above address. Proposals must be submitted on proposal forms furnished by the undersigned. The sealed proposals must be plainly marked as to their content.

The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive irregularities and/or informalities, to accept proposals in whole or part, and to make the award that in the opinion of the City Council is in the best interest and to the advantage of the City of Farmington Hills.

City of Farmington Hills

Floyd A. Cairns
City Clerk

Public: April 26, 1979

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While La Porte will do designs to order, he is happiest when he has the freedom to create his own. He likes to work from drawings done by his friend, Bill Schafer, also a Brother Rice graduate, now a student at Philadelphia College of Art.

"The part I enjoy most is cutting and getting the colors and grains matched," La Porte said. "I prefer to use all one manufacturer's glass for a piece. It makes for a prettier window."

Along with a consistency of grains, this means that the quality of glass will be the same in a piece. Hardness of glass varies from one manufacturer to another.

"The Germans produce a lot of terrific glass and it's softer than domestic glass," he said.

Once each of the individual pieces is cut and laid into the total design, La Porte must wrap each with copper tape. He works with this rather than

the lead used in earlier times. When the tape is around each piece, he puts flux over the total work and then solders. The solder adheres to the copper tape, but not the glass. Both sides are soldered for additional stability.

LA PORTE estimates that he puts about 20 hours work into a medium-sized window or panel.

He feels fortunate because, as he began to consider glass as more than a hobby, interest in glass picked up dramatically. His studio, being next to the dental lab, has also been a boon to maintaining two careers. La Porte has a few students who come by the studio regularly to use the facility and get help from him.

Crediting his mother for being the catalyst for this exciting second career, La Porte said the hours may be long, but he loves it.

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CITY OF FARMINGTON SPECIAL ELECTION

TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A SPECIAL ELECTION WILL BE HELD IN THE

CITY OF FARMINGTON, COUNTY OF OAKLAND
STATE OF MICHIGAN
TUESDAY, MAY 8, 1979

at the places of holding the election in said city as indicated below:
PRECINCT 1 - Farmington City Hall, 23600 Liberty Street
PRECINCT 2 - American Legion Hall, 31775 Grand River
PRECINCT 3 - Farmington Senior High School, 32000 Shawwassee
PRECINCT 4 - Flanders Elementary School, 32600 Flanders St.
PRECINCT 5 - Longacre Elementary School, 34850 Arundel St.
PRECINCT 6 - Farmington Training Center, 3500 Thomas St.
(Old Farmington Jr. High)

FOR THE PURPOSE OF VOTING ON THE FOLLOWING PROPOSITIONS:

- CREATION OF A DISTRICT LIBRARY AUTHORITY
Shall the Farmington Community Library be re-established as a district library authority for a district including the City of Farmington and the City of Farmington Hills under Section 2 (3) of Act No. 465 of the Public Acts of 1973?
- AUTHORIZATION OF A PROPERTY TAX TO PROVIDE FUNDS FOR OPERATIONS OF A DISTRICT LIBRARY AUTHORITY
If the re-establishment of the Farmington Community Library as a district library authority is approved, shall the Board of Trustees of the Farmington Community Library be authorized to levy a tax to provide moneys for the operation of the library up to a maximum of one and one-half (1.5) mills on each dollar (\$1.50 per \$100) of the assessed valuation of property as finally equalized in the library district?

THE POLLS OF SAID ELECTION WILL BE OPEN AT 7:00 A.M. and will remain open until 8:00 P.M. of said day of election.

NEDRA VIANE, City Clerk

Public: April 26, 1979

CITY OF FARMINGTON COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS (Summary)

A Regular Meeting of the Farmington City Council was held Monday, April 16, 1979 in the Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan. The meeting was called to order at 8:00 P.M. by Mayor Richard L. Tupper.
Present: Mayor Tupper, Councilmen Bennett, Buckler, Yoder.
Absent: Councilman Hartsock.
City Officials Present: City Manager Deadman, Director Byrnes, City Attorney Kelly, City Clerk Viane.

The Minutes of previous meetings were approved.
The Minutes of Other Boards were received and/or filed.
A Public Hearing to Review the Special Assessment Roll for Cass Court Cul-de-Sac Paving was held. Resolution No. 3 approving the Roll was adopted.
A Public Hearing to Review the Special Assessment Roll, as Amended, for Whitaker Street Paving was held. Resolution No. 5 approving the Roll was adopted.
Council received a Resolution from the City of Birmingham regarding postal regulations.

Council voted to oppose Senate Bill 65.
The following Resolutions were adopted:
Delaying action regarding the Farmington Hills proposed housing project at Drake and Freedom Roads until Friday April 20, 1979.
Approving the transfer of the Class C Liquor License with Dance and Sunday Sales Permit at 32005 Grand River.
Authorizing the City Manager to accept the quotation from Holloway Sand & Gravel of Wixom and to enter into a formal contract for a refuse disposal landfill site from 1979-83.
Accepting the bid from Roger Penske Chevrolet for One Steel-Bodied Van in the amount of \$7,328.58.
Rejecting the bids received for Playground Equipment and authorizing the City Manager to go out for re-bids.

The following Proclamations were issued:
National Music Week
Poppy Month
Keep Farmington Beautiful Month
City Manager Deadman reported on the recent Ice Storm.
Council instructed the City Manager to contact State Senator Doug Ross and State Representative Sandy Brobertson regarding Senate Bill 210.
The following Reports were received:
Building Department Quarterly Report ended March 31, 1979.
Financial Report General Fund 9 months ended March 31, 1979.
Financial Report 47th District Court 9 months ended March 31, 1979.
Monthly bills were approved for payment.
The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 P.M.

RICHARD L. TUPPER, Mayor
NEDRA VIANE, City Clerk

Public: April 26, 1979

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FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN NOTICE OF LAST DAY OF REGISTRATION

An Annual Election will be held in Farmington Public School District on the 11th day of June, 1979.
THEREFORE, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the last day upon which unregistered persons may register in order to be able to vote at said election is

Monday, May 14, 1979
up to 5:00 P.M., Eastern Daylight Saving Time
Application for registration should be made to the clerk of the city or township in which the elector resides. Registration will be received during regular office hours Monday through Friday of each week. Farmington City residents may register at City Hall, 23600 Liberty Street. Farmington Hills residents may register at the Farmington Hills City Hall, 31555 Eleven Mile Road. West Bloomfield Township residents may register at the West Bloomfield Township Hall, 4690 Orchard Lake Road.
Persons already registered upon the registration books of such city or township need not re-register.
Absentee ballots will be available at the Board of Education Offices, 32500 Shawwassee, until 2:00 P.M., Saturday, June 9, 1979.

EMMA MAKINEN
Secretary of the Board of Education
Public: April 26, 1979

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Public: April 26, 1979

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Public: April 26, 1979