

Artists finds much to be thankful this year

By David Messing
special writer

Well... it's Thanksgiving and I have many things to be thankful for. I'm thankful for the elastic waist band on all my corduroys. This way I am able to stay in the same size no matter what over-weight state I happen to be in. I think by Thursday evening that my waist band will be stretched to the max. I am thankful for

artifacts

lots of little things though. Like every week or so one of my boys will remember to turn off their bedroom light. Sometimes when I go to pour a bowl of cereal, I find the boys even leave a little milk in the refrigerator. I am thankful

when the weeks grocery's are under \$150. I even appreciate my standard poodle who occasionally lets me sit in "our" favorite chair.

Of course I am seriously thankful for the many blessings in my life. First of

which is my faith. Not religion, nor ritual, but my faith. I believe that all that happens to me is by the hand of God. If someone comes along to bless me, then they are sent by God and I am immediately blessed. If someone comes along to curse me then I believe it was allowed by God for my ultimate or future good.

So whether it be blessing or cursing, all is sent or allowed by God for my immediate or future good.

I am thankful for my family. By word and deed they are my highest priority. For no amount of success in my profession could offset my failure as a husband or a father. I am of course thankful for my art. My art causes me to appreciate the colors that surround me. Some may only see a color, I sense the mood, feel the warmth or coolness that this hue may evoke. Some may only look at shapes or forms where my art pushes me to understand the basic structure or grasp a three dimensional shape. Some may only feel textures where my art invites me to enjoy the play of light across the hills and valleys of a surface.

Many have an interest in nature and delight in the attempt to understand it. My art not only seeks to understand nature's function but challenges me to accurately represent it in painting or sculpturing. I am thankful the art affects the whole person. A work of art is not just the business of the hand. It is not just the understanding of the mind, nor a spiritual inclination, nor just an observation of the critical eye, the appreciation of sound or in the tactile response.

Art is the total person and when technical mastery is achieved their art is their purest expression. I am thankful that the teaching of this technical mastery of media is my business. Our staff of fourteen teachers share my enthusiasm and fulfillment as each week we teach over 450 students. For my teachers, all my students and my employees, I am truly thankful. I am thankful for Bill and Jody Oldenburg for the Plymouth franchise of the "Art Store & More."

Finally my warmest thank you to many readers of the Artifacts column. I better not forget Steve Barnaby who

started me out writing, also Roy Meadows who represents me to many. I need and appreciate the many letters from non-artists who read Artifacts for whatever reason... I haven't quite figured out yet. And to the many artists who read for the technique or motivation. So to all of you please accept my deepest thanks for your support and participation in my column, my store, my classes and my life.

This is another in a series of lessons on art and drawing by special columnist David Messing. He has taught for 10 years and operates two art stores, Art Store and More, 16338 Middlebelt, Livonia, and 285 N. Main, Plymouth. Messing encourages questions and comments from readers. You may call him at 522-6311, write to him at his store or in care of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 53102 Grand River, Farmington, Mich. 48024.



Plants need special care

We all know that Christmas is on its way when Cranbrook House has its annual open house. It will be 1-5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 8, 380 Lone Pine, Bloomfield Hills. Admission is adults \$4, seniors, \$3, children \$2 with a family ticket, \$10. Shuttle service will be available from the parking lot of Christ Church.

Flowers and decorations, as always, promise to be spectacular. The emphasis this year will be on food — for show and prizes rather than to eat. The chefs will display a cooked suckling pig and goose and some ticket holder will carry these home as a prize.

Many of you have inquired about techniques for indoor gardening with your favorite potted plants. Here are some tips which will point you toward success.

To begin with, be aware of the thickness of the leaf, those that are thick require less water than those with thin leaves. Right along with this advice you have to have your plants growing in the appropriate size containers, determined by the size of the growing plant. Big containers for big plants and small ones for small plants — a logical progression.

FREQUENT WATERING will be necessary if your house is warm and the plants have hours of sunlight. Low room temperature will cut down on the frequency of watering. High light in-



down to
earth
Alice
Burlingame

tensity coming in the windows, near the plant will necessitate daily watering.

It is a good idea to turn your plants once a week. If you need to transport a plant outdoors be sure and wrap it well in newspaper or in a box to prevent weather damage.

Plants in flower require more water in your home situation. If there are drainage holes in the bottom of a pot and the plant sits in a decorative container, be sure the water accumulated in the outside container is regularly emptied to avoid rot.

Another tip would be to mist the leaves of your plant when they appear to be drying up due to the climate in your house.

It is important to fertilize your plants at least once a month and your local sources will have many suggestions on this subject.

A plant welcomes it if you take a fork and beginning at the edge of the pot ruffle up the soil with a stroke

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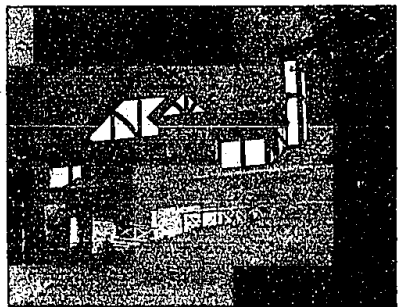
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