

# It's crystal clear that club's agenda sparkles

By Marie McGee  
staff writer

**C**HINATOWN starring Jack Nicholson is a movie which holds a special sparkle for a little-known group called the Fenton Finders of Michigan.

It should be noted that the organization isn't really interested in movies and has absolutely no connection with the Michigan city of that name.

What the Finders would like to see put on the map, so to speak, is another Fenton — Fenton glass.

The Fenton Finders is a club of people who collect glassware manufactured since 1906 by the Fenton Art Glass Co. from its plant in Williamstown, W. Va.

THE FINDERS, who meet once a

month in Livonia, are borrowing the name "Chinatown" to title their special display of "China Yellow" glassware which will be shown at the national glass collectors convention held in August.

The convention is held each year in Marietta, Ohio, across the river from Williamstown, where the Fenton Art Glass Co. has been located for the past 80 years. The company is the oldest and largest such glass company in the country.

The Finders are part of a nationwide wide chain of clubs, but so far the only unit in Michigan. The club meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at Riley Middle School in Livonia, drawing members from Livonia, Redford, Farmington Hills, Novi, Pontiac and Ferndale.

Their meetings are colorful, to say the least. Each month, a different display of Fenton glass is presented for club members to view and discuss.

The meeting provides an opportunity to keep updated on a hobby that is fun but relatively expensive, depending on the degree of addition of the individual collector.

AN IMPORTANT part of each meeting is the segment that deals with warnings of fake reproductions for such places as Taiwan that can fool even the most discerning eye.

While these look-alikes are nice pieces of glass, they are not made by the Fenton Art Glass Co. and therefore are not as valuable.

Livonia resident Dorothy Frazee, president of the Michigan club, said the club favors "China Yellow" for its convention display because the glassware is old and very rare.

There are also enough pieces among the 20 members of the club to have an interesting table display, she said.

At the convention, to be held in August, each club will have a display named after a movie title. The Fenton glass company will make a special piece of glass for the club with the best display.

THE MICHIGAN CLUB won a first prize at the convention several years. One member, Martha Rice of Farmington Hills, has been a prize-

winner several times for her collection of a pattern called Lincoln Inn, which includes a complete line of dinner service as well as complementary art glass pieces.

Rice is founder of the Michigan club and the sister-in-law of Ferill Jean and Otis Rice, who founded the national organization in Appleton, Wis. in 1976.

Being a member of Fenton Finders is more than just being a member of a glass collectors organization. "It's like being part of the Fenton family," she said. "They are real friendly, down-home kind of folks."

THAT FEELING of closeness is reinforced, she said, at the convention where club members "do business" but also have a lot of fun. A tour of the Fenton factory is available and members can learn more the lines of glassware that are constantly being added.

FENTON is probably best known for creating carnival glass in 1907, Frazee explained. Fenton was fol-

lowed shortly thereafter by several other glass companies, including Northwood Glass Co. and Imperial Glass Co.

Carnival glass is a pressed glass coated with a sodium solution and when it's fired, picks up the exterior luster. It was produced until the 1920s. It came in a variety of colors with the most popular being marigold, green, blue and purple.

No one is sure where the name carnival glass came from, Frazee said. "Some say it was because they gave it away at carnivals. Others say it was because the iridescent glass itself was colorful like a carnival."

All Frazee knows is that when she growing up, "you saw it everywhere — in everyone's house. I hated it."

Now, of course, it's a different story.

Fenton Finders of Michigan meet at 7 p.m. the fourth Tuesday of each month at Riley Middle School, 15555 Henry Road. For more information, call 427-6929 or 421-2685. New members are welcome.

## Physicians honored HAVEN gets grant

Dr. Shek-Chyen Chen was among the 89 physicians who graduated from medical school 50 years ago and were honored by the Michigan State Medical Society early this month.

The Farmington resident was honored for his outstanding contributions in a special reception and ceremonies before the 503 assembled delegates attending the 121st annual

Michigan State Medical Society House of Delegates session.

The honored doctors collectively represent some 4,450 years of medical service to Michigan residents. Beginning their careers during the height of the depression, they assumed key roles in a medical generation distinguished for its unprecedented achievements in advancing and promoting human health.

The Skillman Foundation has awarded a \$20,000 grant to HAVEN (Help Against Violent Encounters Now), Oakland County's domestic violence shelter and sexual assault counseling center. The grant provides partial funding for "helping kids protect themselves," HAVEN's sexual abuse prevention project which contains components for children of all ages, from preschool

through college.

The Skillman Foundation, located in Detroit, directs its funding toward program needs in the areas of child and youth welfare, basic human needs, cultural arts, education and health care.

Since its founding in 1960 by the late Rose P. Skillman, the foundation has awarded grants totaling more than \$28 million.

## Rummage for sale

A rummage sale to benefit Waldorf Kinder House will run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, May 17, in the preschool at 25205 Code Road, in Southfield. The school is north of 10 Mile

Road, west of Lahser.

The school houses both a nursery and kindergarten for children from 3-5 years.

## Detroit library serves the deaf

Three telecommunications devices for the deaf are now installed in the Detroit Public Library, 5201 Woodward Ave., and in the Downtown Library, 121 Gratiot, behind Hudson's, Detroit.

These TDD machines enable hearing-impaired individuals to communicate over the telephone.

The service includes access to out-

of-state telephone books, stock quotations, the foreign language collection, out-of-town newspapers and the library's community information and referral service.

Michigan Bell Co. is the local supplier of TDD machines. For information on obtaining one, call Michigan Bell at 1-800-483-3141, a TDD line, or 1-800-482-8254, a voice line.

## Reserved seats only for 'South Pacific'

Tickets for 'South Pacific,' the most ambitious production ever staged by Farmington area musicals, are on sale now. Reserved seats only are sold for the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical that will be produced Thursday through Saturday, June 19-21, with a matinee set for Sunday, June 22, in Harrison High School's auditorium.

The full Broadway production closes the 20th anniversary season for the Farmington Community Band and the Farmington Musical, and the 5th anniversary season for Farmington Community Chorus.

The cast is made up of about 50 singers and dancers from the musical and chorus, backed up by a pit of other 100 persons from the three groups involved in the necessary committees.

Tickets are \$4, or \$2 for students and seniors, sold on a first-come-first-served basis. Reservations are made by sending a check, made payable to Farmington Community Band, mailed to: South Pacific, Farmington Community Band, P. O. Box 3091, Farmington Hills 48018-8091.

## Volunteer honored

Dorothy Sauter has been named "Volunteer of the Month" for her work in Farmington Community Center.

Sauter has been involved in center activities for the past five years. She serves on the center's "Volunteer Guild" board of directors, was one of a committee who helped get the center's fund-raising cookbook published and has given time to the silent and live auctions that are staged as fundraisers for the center.

She has been on the committees for the center's Arts and Craft Show and its "Luncheons with Santa." She helps prepare for the Farmington Community Center's Men's Club luncheons and has helped with numerous mailings.

Sauter and her husband, Ernest have lived in Farmington for 25 years. The couple have one son.



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