

Laser discs are ready to fly

By Todd Schnelder
staff writer

Take the super high fidelity and durability of a compact disc, add hit movies and the wide selection typical of videotapes, throw in a dash of user-friendly educational opportunity and you've got one man's recipe for the future of home electronics.

Laser discs.

This high-tech amalgam of Amaretto's two favorite home entertainment mediums in the 1980s — videotapes and compact discs — is ready to take the world by storm, according to John O'Brien.

And if it does, O'Brien will be there leading the charge.

O'Brien is the chairman and president of LaserLand, an 18-month-old Colorado-based company, which is betting the shiny, eight-, 12- and 20-inch disc will be the next step in the audio/video revolution.

The town recently to demonstrate the product at LaserLand's Novi store, one of eight North American outlets.

"This technology is going to change forever the way human beings see, hear and learn," O'Brien said.

A TALL order for something designed — at least in its initial incarnation — to improve weekend television playtime.

But consider the advantages laser discs and laser disc players hold

over their tape counterparts, and maybe, just maybe, O'Brien isn't far off the mark.

So, just what is this marvel?

Without dazzling you with a lot of technological mumbo jumbo, a laser disc is essentially a compact disc with pictures. Using the same basic idea behind the musical compact disc, laser discs contain the same types of movies, commentaries and how-to programs (i.e. Jane Fonda's aerobic workouts) traditionally available on videotape.

The difference in the two products is picture, sound, durability and price. Laser discs win on all four counts.

A laser disc — played through a player, conventional television, stereo amplifier and speakers — will give you a high-resolution picture (about twice as sharp as broadcast television), a digitally recorded sound track (the same as a compact disc player).

It is scratch resistant and should last, oh, about 600 years, according to O'Brien.

about one-third of that.

Of course, laser disc technology is not without its drawbacks.

The players sell for \$800-\$900, about three times the price of an inexpensive VCR. The players, though, can handle conventional, audio-only compact discs in addition to laser discs, eliminating the need for both machines.

O'Brien said he sees the price "probably coming down in the next two or three years."

THE DISCS can't be used for home recording, which isn't a great loss, O'Brien said. "Only about eight percent of the VCR-owning public uses the machine to record off of home TV," he said.

Disc rental isn't part of O'Brien's operating plan, although with discount pricing, some discs can be bought for as low as \$8.

And movie watchers will have to get up at least once during a film to change sides.

BUT O'BRIEN claims the pluses far outweigh the minuses.

"Yes, CDs revolutionized the music industry. But what laser discs will do is make audio-only products obsolete."

DINING & ENTERTAINMENT

On the Town

ART EMANUELE/staff photographer

John O'Brien, chairman and president of LaserLand, predicts laser discs are the wave of the future.

ALL AROUND THE TOWN..... ALL AROUND THE CLOCK

All Time Limousine

24 HOURS A DAY
7 DAYS A WEEK

services, inc.

For All Occasions

Airport Transportation Service

Corporate Accounts Welcome
Weddings, Concerts, Proms, Etc.

Call All Time Any Time

Kenneth Abrahams

LINCOLNS &

EXCALIBER

646-3303

Mr. Z's STEAKHOUSE

27331 5 Mile (Corner of Inkster) PH. 537-5600

SHOW TIME BILL KAHLER

JUNE SPECIAL

Mr. Z's Famous Sauted Baby Frog Legs

Includes soup, salad and potato

\$6.95

\$6.95

Best Spare Ribs in Town

CANADIAN BABY BACK SPARE RIBS

Includes soup, salad and potato

\$15.95

FAMILY STYLE DINNER

Birmingham VILLAGE FAIR

Pugh Shows

June 2-5

DOWNTOWN BIRMINGHAM IN SHAIN PARK

Hours

Thurs., June 2	2-10	Bargain Days	Thursday & Friday 2-6
Fri., June 3	2-11		*\$1 per person, per day for all rides
Sat., June 4	11-11		Sunday 1-9
Sun., June 5	1-9		*\$1 per person for all rides

FOOD CONCESSIONS ARE OPEN FOR LUNCH

Sponsored by Birmingham-Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce

AMERICAN FURNITURE, ANTIQUE GUNS, LITHOGRAPHS AND AMERICAN WATERCOLORS TO BE FEATURED IN THE JUNE SALE AT STALKER GALLERY

The American furniture includes an important sausages turned spitback arm chair circa 1700, a blanket chest, sawbuck table, a work table, Williamsburg chair, a pier dining table, etc. Other furniture includes two art deco sideboards, empire croch mahogany armoire, an important heavily carved mahogany cabinet, Eastlake period cylinder secretary desk and a contemporary dining suite by Henredon, and an antique gun collection.

Important lithographs by Chagall, Picasso etchings by Louis Icart, fine watercolors by the American artists Thomas Moran, Malcolm Morley and G.H. Story, etc.

Additional items include sterling silver, oriental export and Imari porcelain, oriental carpets, art glass by Gallé, Daum Nancy and more.

PREVIEW: Tuesday, May 31, 1988 noon to 8 p.m.

Wednesday, June 1, 1988 noon to 8 p.m.

Thursday, June 2, 1988 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

AUCTION: THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 2 7:00 p.m.

Stalker Gallery, Inc.

APPRAISERS - AUCTIONEERS

2975 W. Maple Road at Cooldige • Troy
313/288-3820

Meet eight of Detroit's most eligible bachelors.



Single, clean-cut male. Looking for lifelong friend to play frisbee with.



Playful, loving, outgoing type. Needs friend to deliver morning paper and slippers to.



Quiet, yet understanding. In search of someone with good, strong legs to rub up against.



Good natured male. Family man. Great with kids.



Attractive, middle-aged companion. Knows every trick in the book. Ready to settle down.



Energetic, mischievous male. Has lots of love to give, but no one to give it to.



Fine, upstanding individual. Tired of singles scene. Wants long-term relationship.



Single, independent male. Likes seafood, birdwatching. Desperately needs someone to share it all with.

They're handsome, faithful, and fun to be with. But right now, they're lonely. These are just eight of the hundreds of perfectly healthy animals waiting at the Michigan Humane Society (MHS) for that certain special someone to go home with. Someone, we hope, just like you.

Because you can provide what we can't: a permanent home. One that will be filled with all the love and attention they deserve.

But if you're already spoken for, there is another way you can help. Your donation to the MHS, no matter how big or small, will help us give these animals the best care possible and the chance for us to find them a proper home.

So, share your love with those who need it most: the bachelors and bachelorettes at the Michigan Humane Society.

Here is my gift of \$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 Other _____

Please make check payable to: Michigan Humane Society, 101 Chrysler Drive, Detroit, Michigan 48211.

Or charge my: VISA MasterCard

Card Number: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

The Michigan Humane Society is a non-profit organization funded by private contributions. All contributions are tax deductible. MHS-2284

MICHIGAN HUMANE SOCIETY