



photos by RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Brenda Dishner, a service representative for Michigan Bell, savors the view of Michigan's wine country. Her table companion was Mary Kellogg, an assistant manager for Michigan Bell.

## Riding the rails

Looking out the front of the Clipper's first dining car, passengers get a glorious view of a diesel locomotive painted in the colors of the Santa Fe Railroad.



The Michigan Star Clipper's three dining cars recreate an era of grace and style when the privileged celebrated in elegance aboard such luxurious trains.

### To dine on the Clipper

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A group of neighbors from South Bend, Ind., came for a Saturday afternoon, said they liked the AmTrak so well they wanted to try the Clipper. Ditter, for many of the other passengers who had recently ridden AmTrak or snow trains in Canada and just wanted to repeat an enjoyable experience.

The largest group was Michigan Bell employees who got their tickets because they were the top service sales people that month in the Lansing area. Most had never had dinner on a train before.

Among those employees was Donald Wals, who told his friend about his first train ride, a field trip for first graders. Wals was a resident of Livonia and attended the former Cooper Elementary School at the time. The train he rode went from the Plymouth Station, now used as a hobby shop, to Michigan Central Station in Detroit.

The Michigan Star Clipper's three cars were part of the "Keystone Train," a one of a kind train built in 1956 by the Budd Company for prestigious passenger service on the Pennsylvania Railroad.

AFTER 20 YEARS in mothballs, the cars were reconstructed

by Trains Unlimited Inc. to recreate an era of grace and style when the privileged celebrated in elegance aboard such luxurious trains.

The Clipper is owned by Marj and Jack Haley, of Waterloo, Iowa. The family also owns The Iowa Star Clipper and The Newport Star Clipper in Rhode Island. In 1987 The Iowa Star Clipper was given that state's premier tourist award and named the "Tourism Attraction of the Year."

The Michigan Star Clipper departs Paw Paw at 7 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday year-round. The dinner train cost is \$39.95 per person. Gratuity and drinks are additional.

"Expanded noon departures are scheduled," said Rick Slimian, who grew up in Franklin Village and graduated from Birmingham Groves High School. Slimian is now a student at Western Michigan University and director of marketing for the Clipper.

"The Clipper is available for private charters, group tours and corporate functions," he said.

For reservations call The Clipper Dinner Train, (800) 432-1243.

## Boyhood love becomes avocation

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One train set is the "magic train," a 1950 Magna-Traction Lionel that sold for \$80 and is now worth between \$2,500 and \$3,000. The magic occurs when the seven-car train enters the tunnel. The entire train disappears into the tunnel and makes a quick loop on a lower track, before exiting the tunnel.

Kughn doesn't hazard a guess as to how much his collection is worth or how many pieces are in it. The main train room — 40 by 35 feet — is now upon row of floor to ceiling shelving, packed with model trains.

SCATTERED throughout Carall is Lionel memorabilia — an almost billboard size promotion for Lionel in which the train moves and the engine light is on; the wooden mold used to manufacture that sign and the actual Lionel model, a little

girl's electric Lionel enamel two-burner stove and oven, even "The Arrival of the Santa Fe," a sculpture done especially for Kughn by Don Pollard.

But Kughn became Mr. Collector with the purchase of Lionel, he became the ultimate collector with the purchase of the famed Madison Hardware in New York.

Carall is Kughn's private museum although he does share it with the public, but not necessarily along the lines of say a Greenfield Village or Detroit Historical Museum. Not just anyone can walk through the front doors and see Kughn's collection.

CARALL, equipped with a bar and food service, is rented out for private functions like the Governor's pre-Detroit Grand Prix party, business meetings, black tie dinners like those given by Ford and Renault or club meetings.

Kughn will decide what he will keep for private collection and what will be sold to collectors.

But not just the hardware's contents were brought to Michigan.

"I even brought the front and back doors and the shelves," Kughn said. "I documented everything with photographs, so if I want to re-create it here, I can."

Those who have had the opportunity to visit Carall "just love the building," Kughn said.

So, if you're looking for a Christmas present that has staying power, forget the teddy bear or Game Boy, pick a Lionel train. It's outlasted video games and televisions and if Dick Kughn has his way, it will outlast today's high tech toys.

Why? "People love the closeness of family and they're getting back to it with toy trains."



ART EMANUEL/staff photographer

Dick Kughn really doesn't need a railroad oil can to keep one of "thousands and thousands and thousands" of Lionel trains in running condition, but he does take good care of his collection at Carall in Detroit.