



MUSEUM CENTER OF NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE—When opened in June, Traverse City's new art-related museum will encompass 40,000 square feet and serve six counties. Summer theater presentations are also planned at the facility.

prints were made, as well as by sealskin stencil techniques. Some of the first prints imported into the United States are in the Northwestern Michigan College Collections, said Jenneman.

With their intimate knowledge of animals and the hunt for food, strong images of their prey and Native peoples hunting and fishing are depicted in the arresting works which line the college's library walls. Stone, ivory and even whale vertebra are used in the sculpture, which have an abstract quality all their own. The individual styles of the artists are readily identifiable by those who take the time to observe closely the distinctions in form and rendering.

"When Inuit art is sold in the gift shop, the proceeds will be used to continue to build the collection," Jenneman stated. "We feel it's of both cultural and anthropological importance to keep traditions of the Inuit alive through art."

The new museum center boasts both a large auditorium and a mini-theater, which will be used for intimate shows. "We can accommodate video artists in the mini-theater, which will have audio-visual facilities," Jenneman explained. "Most planetarium or 'sky' shows will be adaptable to that space, because they were planned for a flat-screen environment," he said.

"Visiting artists will be able to tape videos and discussions about their work which will be of educational and cultural importance," he added.

Citing a need to build new audiences, Jenneman is candid about the museum's mission. "We need to get people in the door. After all, here in Traverse City we'll be competing with the bay!"

Jenneman, who came to Traverse City from Erie, Pennsylvania, where he was director of a museum of history, was formerly assistant director at Alpena's Jesse Besser Museum.

He is a Wisconsin native whose formal training at the University of Wisconsin was in the physical sciences. "I'm trained in physics, chemistry and astronomy," he laughs. "I don't have the traditional academic approach to museums."

His different perspective and enlightened approach may well be what the museum center needs to make it more than a college resource.

an art experience for regional residents, and an educational and cultural opportunity for school children. It has the potential to be a significant tourism destination -- not just seasonably, but year around.

With visual and performing arts, it promises a great deal.

And the opening date?

"If all goes well, we hope June 15," Jenneman says cautiously. If it does, the 40,000 sq. foot building of creamy stone will inaugurate a series of art exhibitions and summer theater. Dale Chihuly, a major glass artist, will be featured, followed by a retrospective exhibition of Carol Wald, which is now on view at the Butler Museum in Youngstown, Ohio. Wald, a graphically oriented artist, is a nationally known illustrator working with "found" images, as well as her own.

Jenneman expects the museum to be open seven days a week in summer, from 10-5 daily and from 10-9 when there is a performance.

Telephone 616-922-1055 for further information.

Dorothy Webster, a former newspaper and magazine publisher, is an artist/photographer living in Northern Michigan. She frequents out of way spots researching lighthouses and old general stores to paint and photograph. Her Native American heritage adds another dimension to her interest.



INUIT ART—The museum's "Drummer," stone and antler figure by Davle Atchetalak, illustrates the Inuit sculpture and carving tradition.

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