

STREET SENSE

Healthy image is important

Dear Barbara, My four-year-old son stays in a private home while I work. The caregiver handed me a picture of my son standing in a pool in the back yard, naked, laughing, displaying himself.

I was alarmed that my son was outdoors naked. Also, that the caregiver deliberately brought out a camera to take such a picture.

Dear 32-year-old mother: Your letter is very interesting because it illustrates how different people can view the same scene and have opposing reactions to it.

To illustrate this point, I asked two mothers of young children how they would feel if the experience had happened to them. One responded that she would be comfortable taking her own pictures of her children naked. However, she is against anyone else doing it because, she said, "there are too many crazies out there." The other woman said she would be uncomfortable because of her mother-in-law's disapproval.

I cannot fully respond to your letter as I would like because you are unclear as to who the caregiver was. Was it a teenage girl? Was it a relative? Was it someone against whom you have hostile feelings?

The sentence that I like shows that your son was laughing and displaying himself. I like this happy picture because it is normal and natural for his age group. He has not yet been indoctrinated with shame, guilt and

criticisms, such as what a bad boy he is. What if there was no evil intent but normal healthy youthful exuberance?

You underline the word old three times. Have you forgotten what it was like to be young and happy and not have the fears of the world bearing heavily down?

I know that this last emphasis can be subjected to outraged criticism from my readers. If so, I apologize. It is based on my observations that many adults lose their childhood ability to play, and to have fun, and to that degree, diminish their mental health.

The same mother who said she would be comfortable taking her own pictures of her children naked but would be suspicious of others doing so has helped her children develop healthy body images. The family has a pool in the back yard and, at the age when it is appropriate for each, the four children cavort in and around it without clothes.

This mother hugs them and tickles them and plays with their toes. She enjoys the freedom they feel with their bodies. Thus, they are developing good feelings about their bodies. Mental health includes a healthy body image.

When I read your letter, my first thought was maybe they were just having fun. Need it be more complicated than that? Should your son grow up with a great pride in his body, it will give him more confi-



Barbara Schiff

dence than he would have if he has a terrible body image.

Confidence in one's body seems more important today than ever before. Many of our youngsters are turning to steroids and eating disorders to force their bodies into unrealistic media images. With self-love, it is less likely they will torture themselves into those ways.

Thank you for this most interesting letter.

Barbara Schiff, a trained therapist and experienced counselor, send it to Street Sense, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

Elwood has a gem of LP

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Prayer" (Agua Azul Records in Austin), features a cross section of folk bands ("The Major"), barebone rockers ("Drug on Wars") and soulful blues bordering on gospel ("The Distance").

The compact disc is also a cornucopia of instrumentation, including flute, cello, ebow guitar and accordion — hardly the stuff one pairs up with sparse, tumbleweeds sounds usually associated with Austin.

BACK IN Austin, Elwood has recently put together a five-member band. Prior commitments, however, have him touring with only one member. Galliger plays flute and percussion and provides harmonies.

"I've even pulled my sax out of the closet," Galliger said. Galliger and Elwood's musical careers have some parallels.

SHE STUDIED classical music while in college and also performed jazz. She grew tired of recitals, dropping out of music for a year. She landed in a bluegrass band, rediscovering the spontaneity of performing live music. She eventually found her way to Austin four years ago.

Then Galliger met up with Elwood at the Chicago House in Austin, a place where the singer made his debut.

ASIDE FROM being a meeting point, Austin proved creatively inspiring for Elwood.

He moved with his family from Pennsylvania to the epicenter of roots music 11 years ago. He spent



Michael Elwood

idle time doing Neil Young, Tom Waits and Jackson Browne covers at fraternity parties while attending the University of Texas. He has a bachelor's degree in Spanish.

At the time, people like Lucinda Williams and Christopher Cross were performing at Austin clubs. "It intimidated the hell out of me," Elwood said.

Enough to keep Elwood crafting songs instead of performing them in public. Then two years ago, he made his debut at the Chicago House in Austin. The response was overwhelming.

"I NEVER thought I'd be a performer," Elwood said. "It's a notion

I didn't even entertain until a couple of years ago. I know I could write songs. I just wrote and wrote. . . I thought it (the music industry) was all flash. I didn't know there was a market out for well-crafted songs."

Elwood refers to his songs as "head cartoons." One number, "The Major," is an example of his ability to craft poignant short stories.

In the acoustic ballad, Elwood searches the soul of a World War II bomber whose son follows his dad's footsteps in the military. Except instead of the glory he derived from war, his son is killed.

But within the confines of a three-minute song, Elwood carefully whittles the character while singing disdainfully. "Now two times a year, he heads up for Las Vegas/With his wife and his whiskey in the old Winnebago. He's looking for something he hasn't found yet/He's running from something he'll never forget."

"Scarecrow's Prayer" marks the evolving process of Elwood's songwriting. He said he always writes a notebook and pen handy when on the road, jotting ideas or images.

As any artist will confess, the first release is a lifeline in the making. The follow-up usually only involves a year. Elwood said he's looking to release a live album, recording numbers on this current tour (including his stop at Birmingham Unitarian Church).

In his repertoire are 25-27 songs along with a couple of covers, including Tom Waits' (who is one of Elwood's influences) "Heart of Saturday Night." "I definitely tell a story. I have a story to tell."

MOVING PICTURES

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add dimension to these characters — like the irritating habit Turner has of losing his keys early in the film — don't add up to much.

WHEN HENRY decides that his daughter doesn't belong at a fancy school for girls, he dashes off to a little white chapel where she is being indoctrinated. The climax of "The Graduate" comes to mind immediately, but minus the emotion. The scene just fizzles.

In the 1990s, Nichols has at least some of the answers. He basically knows where Henry starts and where he ends up, right down to knocking the fat and cholesterol from his diet.

It was natural for Dustin Hoffman in the late 1960s to crash Katharine Ross' wedding and steal her away to

a new life filled with countless question marks.

In the 1990s, Nichols has at least some of the answers. He basically knows where Henry starts and where he ends up, right down to knocking the fat and cholesterol from his diet.

If the film went on just five minutes longer, Henry would complete his Hyde to Jekyll transformation into sensitive New Age male by starting a compost pile in the back yard.

SCREEN SCENE

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performance artist (and here director) Laurie Anderson delivers a surprisingly straight-ahead concert film, with versions of "O Superman" and "Sharkey's Night." With appearances by Adrian Belew and William S. Burroughs. As part of a series titled "Personal Favorites," hosted by WBET disc jockey Dave Dixon.

MAPLE THEATRE, 4135 W. Maple, Birmingham. 856-9090 (\$6-\$3.50 twilight) Call for show times "Everybody's Fine" (Italian - 1991) Marcello Mastroianni stars as an elderly man who takes a road trip to reunite with his five children spread out over the country. A bittersweet film from Giuseppe Tornatore, the director of "Cinema Paradiso."

MICHIGAN THEATRE, 16301 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor Call 963-8690

for information (\$5-\$3.50 students and senior citizens)

"Everybody's Fine" (Italy - 1991), through July 23 (call for show times) Marcello Mastroianni stars as an elderly man who takes a road trip to reunite with his five children spread out over the country. A bittersweet film from Giuseppe Tornatore, the director of "Cinema Paradiso."

"Hollywood Mavericks" (USA - 1990), 7:30 p.m. July 15 and 9:30 p.m. July 16 The art of making movies is discussed by major directors, including Martin Scorsese, Peter Bogdanovich, David Lynch, and Paul Schrader.

"8 1/2" (Italy - 1963), 9:15 p.m. July 17 and 7 p.m. July 18. Marcello Mastroianni stars as a filmmaker trying to launch a new film project amidst constant frustrations and visions. Federico Fellini's highly personal

film is still among the greatest ever made, shown here in widest screen.

"Truly, Madly, Deeply" (Britain - 1991), through July 25 (call for show times) A British turn on "Ghost" about a widow about to embark on a new romance who is visited by the vision of her dead husband.

STAR JOHN R. 32289 John R. (at 14 Mile), Madison Heights, (46 general, \$3.75 before 6 p.m.)

"Drowning by Numbers" (Britain - 1988), starting July 19 (call for show times) Three women, all with the same name, plan copy-cat murders of their husbands. Another abrasive film from director Peter Greenaway, completed a few years ago but released here after the success of his "The Cook, the Thief, His Wife, and Her Lover." — John Monaghan

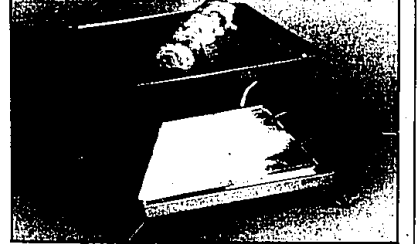
social eyes Denise Lucas

Our intrepid Street Scene reporter is always looking for the unusual and welcomes comments and suggestions from readers and entrepreneurs. Send those to this column in care of this newspaper, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150, or call 953-2131.



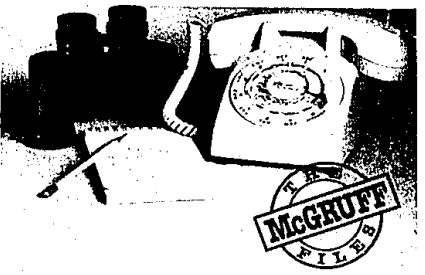
Time on your hands

Revising a classic idea, men's traditional pocket watch and knife sets are back in timely fashion. Select from three distinctive styles . . . a traditional hunt scene in raised relief, the black neo-classic style and the streamlined engraving of the art deco look. The quartz movement watch and matching pocket knife are connected by distinctive gold-filled chains. Available at Meyer Jewelers in Summit Place Mall, Waterford. Priced \$100-150.



Flaming feasts

High technology and earth-safe items are popping up everywhere including summertime backyard barbecues. From Sharper Image in Novi and Troy, the Pyromid Portable Stove enables you to cook a complete meal without an air-polluting charcoal starter or using flammable propane gas. The charcoal briquets heat the grill to 1,110 degrees, making it possible not only to barbecue, but stir fry, roast, bake and boil foods. The unusual inverted pyramid shape reflects heat from the interior walls, maintaining a 400-degree oven for several hours (using the included hood). The folding steel stove replicates in its own compact carry tote with a cool down time of only five minutes. Priced at \$70. Mmmmmmm, great cookout discovery . . . jumbo chicken kabobs (\$4.49 each) and beef kabobs (\$3.99 each) ready for the grill, available at Diamond Market on 12 Mile Road in Southfield.



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The case of The Stanton Park Stand-off. When crack moved into a row house on a quiet block of Stanton Park in Washington, D.C., folks decided to serve an eviction notice.

They met with police to find out what they could do to keep drugs out of their neighborhood.

The cops told them to keep an eye out — to let police know whenever something suspicious happened. They began to notice faces. They wrote down license

numbers of strange cars. They noted the times of odd behavior.

They worked with each other. They worked with the police. Armed with field glasses, note pads and telephones, folks kept track of the neighborhood.

Within one month, enough evidence had been gathered. Police moved in. Crack moved out.

Citizen participation beat crime in D.C. It can do the same for you. For more success stories,

write The McGruff Files, 1 Prevention Way, Washington, D.C. 20539-0001.

Police become even more responsive when their people are their partners. Together we can help...



TAKE A BITE OUT OF CRIME

HUDSON'S IN COOPERATION WITH Observer & Eccentric NEWSPAPERS PRESENTS Children's Concert Series Gates open one hour before concert begins. Saturday, July 20 at 11:00 AM (recommended for all ages) Eric Nagler (as seen on "The Elephant Show" and "Sesame Street") Pavilion \$7, Lawn \$5 Order Tickets Now For: July 27 — Shari Lewis A live musical performance with Lampchop and other friends 11:00 am and 2:00 p.m. OAKLAND UNIVERSITY Meadow Brook Music Festival TICKETS AVAILABLE AT ALL TICKETMASTER OUTLETS INCLUDING HUDSON'S HARMONY HOUSE AND SOUND WAREHOUSE STORES OR CALL MEADOW BROOK FESTIVAL BOX OFFICE (313) 377-2010