## Creative Living

CLASSIFIED REAL ESTATE



## Garden walk will boost beautification

As days grow short with the passing of the summer solstice, beds of red, white and plak petunias blossom, peaking with color that soon will give way to the bitter blowing winds of winter. Why not fill your senses with summer, while storing memories for those long, cold Michigan nights?

Come, take a walk with the Redford Township Beautification Commission as it sponsors the fifth blennial garden walk 10 a.m. to 4 pm. Saturday, July 20.

Money ralsed on the walk will Jurther the work of the beautification and improve-

ment commission, replacing trees and shrubs, planting annual flowers and provid-ing cleanup throughout Reddord Township. "We have some wonderful gardens on the walk this year," said Irene O'Neil, chair-woman.

woman.

Towering plnk Trumpet Littes over six feet tall greet visitors to the back yard of Jerry and fulle filchardson, one of five private gardens on the walk.

In the Richardson back yard, a perennial garden, raised beds filled with eggplant, peppers, basil and thyme, along with five bushel baskets planted with tomatoes and other vegetables, tempt fellow gardeners into considering alternatives for their gar-

dens next year.
"Everything is early this year because of the extreme heat and all the rain," said Ju-lie Richardson as she guided visitors on a tour of their gardens.

IMPATIENS IN shades of pink, and white carpet, a shady, circular area beneath an 80-year-old Swamp Oak. Scarlet Monarda or Bee Balm, with feathery, spiked petals, stand in line like tin soldiers guarding the

"I call it my English garden atmosphere because of the way the plants are all close because of the way the plants are all close together," Richardson said. Irises, coral bells and daylilies vie for vis-

itors attention.

"Nineteen years ago in September, we moved in," Richardson sald. "We started slowly putting in flowers the next year. This spring, Jerry built the raised gardens. Jerry does most of the work."

Jerry Richardson retired in 1984 as a band director in the Redford school system. He now enjoys working in their gardens and playing trembone professionally in juzz bands about town.

A maenificent fragrance walts through

bands about town.

A magnificent fragrance waits through
the air from an oval rose bed, thriving in
mid-morning sun. Purple spikes of Morden's
pink rival the weeping branches of a dwarf
mulberry tree for attention while pastel

VISITORS TO the Richardson home also will be able to see the methods that go into a well-thought-out composting system such as the one in their back yard.

The four other gardens on the walk include a fily pond, water fountains, Japanese maples, contorted filbert, weeping beech, an attractive vegetable garden and a clematis-covered trellis entry way into a perennial garden.



Through the parrots, Christine Wong is trying to say, "if peo-ple pay more attention to the Earth, we can keep the Earth much longer." The watercolor and ink sells for \$280.



Christine Wong displays two of her works. On the left are Chinese characters in calligraphy, "Love Never Ends." Or the right is "Crown Imperial and Daffodils," created with wa-

tercolor and ink. They are priced at \$180 and \$380, respec-

## Artist builds bridge between East and West

By Linda Ann Chomin special writer

NELUENCED BY Eastern culture and philosophy, Livonia artist Christine Wong creates paintings using concepts vastly different from those employed by Western

from mose employees artists.
Her first one-person show, featuring more than 60 watercolors painted with Chinese techniques, is on exhibit through July 26 in the lobby of Livonia City Hall, Farmington Road at Five

"I use watercolor media but Chinese painting technique," Wong

said With ink, watercolor and a Chinese brush, Wong creates quet, delicate paintings using "Canons," or hasic principles, which have guided traditional Chinese painters since their publication around the year 500 These concepts of Chinese philosophy and painting technique shape Wong's watercolors in a harmony of mind and brush "Chinese philosophy and culture "Chinese philosophy and culture "Chinese philosophy and culture "Chinese philosophy and culture "Chinese philosophy and culture"

"Chinese phitosophy and culture is about 5,000 years old. Our feeling is behind the strokes. That brush becomes part of me; much free, much natural," Wang said.

'Chinese philosophy and culture is about 5,000 years old. Our feeling is behind the strokes. That brush becomes part of me; much free, much natural.'

— Christine Wong artist

WONG'S PAINTINGS form deep within her spirit, her heart, her mind. Ch'l, or spirit, is the key to creating a Chinese painting, il artists begin a painting with spirit, everything else follows, but if they miss focusing on spirit, nothing can save the painting from helessness, not embellishment or skill.

"I have to stand up to paint; I use my whole body. It's mental and body. I put my whole self into it." Wong said.

Wong was born in mainland
China. When she was 4.
Communists took over the
mainland. The Wong family fled to
Taiwan, where Christine lived until
coming to this country in 1971.

In second grade, Wong began training in Chinese painting technique through mandatory calligraphy lessons, taught in school.

"As a child, everybody has to do calligraphy, last like a pennanshib here. I use the same brush to write as to paint." Wong said.

In China, calligraphy is a highly esteemed art that uses Chinese characters to depict words. The same techniques of brushwork apply to this art as apply to painting.

THE SECOND principal in Chinese painting deals with brush control. Unlike the Western brush position, placement of the fingers by traditional Chinese painters is similar to holding chopsticks.

Position, pressure, speed of stroke and loading the brush are practiced until they become instinctive. After loading her brush, Wong with a single stroke, can create a range of tones from dark to light.

dark to light.

Economy of line, brush control and use of white space are of importance in Wong's use of Chinese painting techniques.

"I like to leave whites for imagination," Wong said. "That's one of the concepts of Chinese.

painting, to leave space for the imagination." Instead of using a pencil, Wong sketches the initial composition with a brush dipped in plain water. "I don't set a boundary for my work. I let Imagination run. I don't limit myself with the pencil." Wong said. "Chinese philosophy, you don't see pencil marks."

IN 1965, Wong graduated from nursing college in Tapel, Taiwan, after which she studied painting with Chinese art professor David

Kwo, an internationally known

Kwo, an internationally known artist.

After marrying Robert, the couple moved to the United States, first to Wisconsin then to Ann Arbor, where Christine worked at University Hospital for 12 years. It was during this time she began to enjoy watercolors. Watercolor allowed Wong to blend Western and Chinese techniques.

"I learned from very viving

"I learned from very giving artists (in Ann Arbor). I learn th technique. They learn from my technique," Wong sald.

Wong strives to complete a painting during a single block of uninterrupted concentration. "I like to catch the freshness. We try

not to go back, so you carry the spirit of the art."

A delicate work in watercolor and ink, "Orchids" by Wong captures the fragility of the pinkish white blossoms as they gently drift across the paper.

Green sword-shaped foliage bends
in the wind against a

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Park," a watercolor and ink, is a landscape where coof greens and blues dominate. The 28- by 38-inch plece sells

Guy Warren

## og discovery kindles interest in plank toll road era

WHAT A find!

In the turnult of life, it's not earthshaking. But it's a historical treat.

"This is one of the most significant
inds we've ever had," said Ruth
Mochiman, Farmington Hills Historic District Commission charjewoman.

Thanks to Farmington Hills nurseryman Fred Steinkopf, 15 old logs
believed to be part of the base of a
plank toll road that goes back to
about 1850 have been saved from the
serap heap.

about 1850 have been saved from the scrap heap.
At least two experts authenticated the find as historic, Moehlman said, Oakland County excavators dug up the logs last month while working on a Sewer line project in the median of Grand River near the Boisford Inn Larry by the bendersteef is, the

Lugs have been donated to the Farmington Historical Museum, Livonia's Greenmead Historical Village, Farmington Hills' Heritage

Park, the Detroit Historical Museum and the Wisner Historic House in Pontiac: All plan to put the logs, each about eight feet long, on public display.

display

THE BOTSFORD Inn, a national historic site, was dubbed the Old Plank Road House during the 1850s while operated by John Claucherty (for whom the village of Clarenceville is name).

During this time, the hostelry also was known as the Sixteen Mile House, denoting its location at the Idit mile marker on the Detroit-to-Howell plank road.

Steinkopf spotted the logs while driving by the execution its Lf it is thain't been for his quick thinking and the Farmington Hills Department of Public Works' quick retrieval arrangements, the logs might



now be kindling. It's impossible to determine if the logs were originals on the 50-mile-long, Detroit-ol-lowell plank road, which opened in 1851, or added later as replacements. The planks themselves were three inches thick. "With stages now elippety-clopping along at the unbeard-of speeds of eight to 10 miles an bour, passengers could miraculously travel the distance in less than a half a day," writes Farmington Hills historian

This is one of the most significant finds we've ever had.'

Farmington Hills historian

Jean Pox in her 1986 book, "More Than A Tavern, 150 Years of Bots-tord Inn."

BY 1853, the plank road extended 70 miles, linking Detroit to Lansing, where the state capital had been moved six years before. Total cost of the road \$300,000 The journey between Detroit and Lansing now took day instead of, in many cases, a week.

Privately built plank toll roads, created by a legislative act in 1848,

-- Ruth Moehlman

came about as a way to counter the crisks of mudholes and ruts for star 1857 RFddGaffg Recame, rough and gecoaches and wagens Investors reaped any profits.

At toll gates erected every five miles, feet sanged from a half cent per mile for 20 sheep or swine to 1 cents per mile for a two-horse-drawn vehicle.

The Sixteen Mile House, near Tolligate No. 4 at laster Ruad and Grand River, served as a waystation. To pacify farmers, which poposed the osk-planked path, neither the farmers nor any of their workers were charged to get from one part of a farm to another.

"When new," Fox writes, "the plank road made a most excellent thoroughfare, but in a few years, the sun and weather warped the planks.