

Food lover serves up delectable writings

"Just Before Dark: Collected Nonfiction" by Jim Harrison. (318 pp., Clark City Press, \$24.95).

Though I hope to do so some time, I've never met Michigan writer Jim Harrison.

A bit reclusive, he spends most of his days with his wife and family on their Leelanau County farm, or hiked up in a small, wilderness cabin he owns near Grand Marais. When he does venture out, I understand it's usually on hunting or fishing expeditions with a few close friends.

I feel, though, as if I've caught a significant glimpse of Harrison in a very real sense, after reading "Just Before Dark," a recently published, absolutely delicious collection of 46

articles, columns and personal essays he's put together over the last quarter-century.

Most of the pieces have appeared previously in publications as diverse as Sports Illustrated, The New York Times Book Review, Antaeus, Automobile Magazine, Rolling Stone and many others. Some, however, are appearing for the first time in "Just Before Dark."

Though Harrison, 53, is primarily a poet and novelist (e.g., "Letters to Vesenin," "Dalva," "The Woman Lit by Fireflies") these highly readable, witty, and thoughtful pieces make you wish a collection of his nonfiction had appeared much earlier. At any rate, one hopes it won't be another 25 years before another is brought out.



book break
Victoria Diaz

At the risk of inferring that this is simplistic work — it isn't! — I'd like to emphasize that "Just Before Dark" seems especially well-suited for summertime reading.

DIVIDED INTO three sections, "Food," "Travel and Sport" and "Literary Matters," the book can be read section-by-section, beginning-to-end, of course. Or pick it up

and start with any piece in the middle. If you'd prefer. Or skip around to your heart's content. Any way you approach it, you'll be rewarded.

Harrison, in addition to his writing talents, is also one of the most knowledgeable amateur naturalists around, and his marked appreciation for the great outdoors is quickly evident here — another facet of the collection that makes for especially appealing summertime reading. (You'll be interested to read of this environmentalist's views on hunting and fishing.)

Also very dear to the heart and soul of Jim Harrison: food, food and more food. And then some more food. And almost anything that has to do with food: hunting

for it, shopping for it, planning meals, cooking meals, serving meals, talking about meals. And, of course, eating meals.

And writing of them: "I eye the miniature Lake Superior brook trout I have grilled over an oak fire, the sliced tomatoes, fresh corn, and wild leeks vinaigrette."

"Small portions are for small and inactive people," contends the burly writer, who averages about 10-12 miles of hiking per day. "Life is too short for me to approach a meal with the mincing steps of a Japanese prostitute."

WHAT ELSE would you care to read about? Chances are good you might just find it in this varied col-

lection.

How about "Ice Fishing, the Moronic sport?" Or dreams? Or writing (a particularly intriguing piece, "From the 'Dalva' Notebook, 1965-67," was written in connection with his acclaimed 1988 novel)? Or Hemingway and the Nick Adams stories? Or Jack Nicholson, a close friend of Harrison's? Author Tom McGuane, another friend? Fellow gourmand, Orson Welles' Bar pool?

How about a few hundred well-chosen words on revenge? "... at a certain point, there is a baffling stupidity to anger," Harrison writes. "Years ago, when I learned that my sister's first husband had

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Artist's paintings span cultures

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predominately white background, tinged with blue. The 24-by-36 inch painting is priced at \$250.

"Yosemite National Park" is a watercolor landscape where cool greens prevail. An expressionistic painting with forboding rock-shaped mountains, formed with a sparseness of line, lurk in great contrast to the delicacy of a light blue sky. The 28-by-36 inch work is \$350.

WONG VOLUNTEERS much time to demonstrate Chinese painting and calligraphy, and to speak about Chinese culture at schools, churches and social groups.

"America is great country. I try to give myself back to the community in my way, like a bridge. I want to be a bridge of two cultures of different human beings," Wong said.

Along with Christine's watercolors there are an additional 12 pieces in the show done by the Wong children, Joyce, 17 and Andrew, 14. At age 8, Andrew rendered a badger with the sensitivity and strength of an artist, far beyond his years. With motherly pride and love, Christine informs "these works not for

sale."

The last 14 years, Wong has worked as office coordinator in her husband's dental office. Robert offers Christine the support necessary to pursue her art. "He helps me a lot. He's very supportive," Wong said. "He tells me, this is your dream. Pursue your dream."

Christine's work can also be viewed at the office of Dr. Robert K. Wong. For information, call the office: 425-7888.

"I enjoy the creation of the God and the world. (In my paintings), the bird, the clown, the fish, they're all smiling. I try to make the world a little more pleasurable," Wong said.

Christine's art celebrates life, love and nature, bridging the vast expanse between East and West.

"Art's just like love, there's no boundary."

Livonia City Hall is at 33000 Civic Center Drive. Viewing hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and Tuesday to 9:30 p.m. Christine will be there on Tuesday evenings if people would like to learn more about her paintings.

Redford gardens attract spotlight

Continued from Page 1

The gardens orchestrated by the Rev. Ron Babich on the grounds of St. Hilary Church feature the tranquility of mature evergreens, water displays and statuary.

"There will be two hostesses at each garden to answer any questions," said Kathleen Stoner, walk co-chairwoman.

The Redford Township Beautification Commission is an all-volunteer group. This spring, it replaced all the dead trees along Beech-Daly Road with the help of local Cub Scout and Boy Scout troops. In return, the children earned certificates for community service.

"The children are fun to work with," O'Neill said.

Together, the volunteers planted 45 flats of flowers around the town hall, library, police station and court house.

EVERY CHRISTMAS, the beautification commission puts up

decorations consisting of evergreen roping and lights. They also were instrumental in obtaining the returnable bottle bill for Michigan several years ago.

"All funds from the walk will be used to keep the township beautiful," Stoner said.

Tickets for the garden walk are \$4. They are available during regular business hours at the Redford Township Hall, 15145 Beech-Daly Road.

Tickets can also be purchased on the day of the walk at each of the five host gardens. By calling 533-3689 on July 20, garden lovers will be directed to the one nearest them for tickets.

For more information, call Irene O'Neill at 533-3689, Kathleen Stoner at 532-4841 or the Redford Township Hall at 531-3110.



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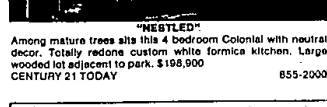
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