



**Creative clay: Debbie Liberman, left, has found her latest love is a 16th-century Japanese technique known as raku. Far left, Liberman crafts hand-built and wheel-thrown vessels, bowls, platters and jewelry from clay.**

STAFF PHOTOS BY JIM JACOBEL

# Artist creates variety and beauty out of clay

**BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN**  
SPECIAL WRITER

Black and metallic interminglings of raku, highly textured stoneware and delicate porcelain document Debbie Liberman's 10-year love affair with clay.

Through Sept. 29, the Southfield ceramist displays a variety of innovative wares in a one-person exhibition hosted by the Livonia Arts Commission in the circular showcases on the second floor of the Livonia Civic Center Library, Farmington Road and Five Mile.

Primarily hand-built with some wheel thrown, Liberman's pottery ranges from whimsical turtle and fish dishes, earrings and lapel pins to exquisitely textured platters. Cactuses and coyotes cover the interior of one bowl while abstract patterns and shapes take form in a wallhanging.

"One of the first things that attracted me to Debbie's work was the designs," said arts commissioner Lee Alanskas, who produces the monthly showcase exhibits. "It was not the ordinary type of

pottery. Upon closer inspection, I noticed the textures and color. They're quite appealing."

Texture plays on the surfaces of the pottery, creating interesting patterns. Liberman uses everyday items like a meat tenderizer or old lace to decorate the interiors and exteriors. Circular and diamond-shaped cutouts were formed with a kitchen utensil used to cut fancy hors d'oeuvres.

By day, Liberman manages the fashion department of Kmart in Taylor but at night she takes pleasure from creating ceramics.

During the 16 years she has worked for Kmart Fashions, company transfers have taken Liberman away from home for extended periods. When Liberman was transferred to Saginaw 10 years ago, she took a pottery class at Delta College in Bay City. Away from her family and friends for the first time, the clay helped ease the loneliness.

"I was away from home with ceramic on my hands. I get a lot of satisfaction from the results. Working with clay is a multi-step process," Liberman said. "I'm

never get attached to anything until it's totally finished," Liberman said.

For instant gratification, she has found her latest love in raku, a 16th-century Japanese technique. A clay piece still glowing with heat is placed with combustible materials, creating particular colors, textures and metallic oxides.

For the last eight years, Liberman has continued to study ceramics at Schoolcraft College in Livonia.

"I never know if I will end with what I preplanned. In pottery, you

Library hours are 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday to Thursday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

# Redford Secretary of State office moves to Livonia Mall

Workers in Redford's Secretary of State office have moved to Livonia Mall.

And it's one of the few Secretary of State offices in a major mall.

"Most of the others are in strip malls," said branch manager Joe Hayes. "This means we have plenty of parking."

A grand opening for the office, between Crowley's and Arbor Drugs where Ya-Ya's Chicken once was, will be before the end of the year.

The Redford Secretary of State

office, at Inkster and Six Mile, closed for good at 5 p.m. Sept. 14 after six years. The move was made when the lease expired in Redford, Hayes said.

The same employees began work in the Livonia office, Seven Mile and Middlebelt, at 9 a.m. Friday, Sept. 17.

The hours in the Livonia office will be the same as they were in Redford: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday; and 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesday. The office is closed Saturdays.

The Secretary of State office renews drivers licenses, sells license

plates and provides watercraft registrations. The office also offers mechanic certification tests.

Out of 180 Secretary of State offices, 61 provide mechanic certification. Other area offices with mechanic certification are Southfield and Taylor.

The Secretary of State office in Livonia Mall also answers telephone for nine Secretary of State offices.

Livonia has three Secretary of State offices, one on Plymouth near Levan and another at Seven Mile and Newburgh.

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