

## ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS



LINDA ANN CHROMIN

### Dance teachers chill out at rink

If you're a skater looking for the right moves, a summer dance intensive just might be the answer. At least Tim Smola, a Garden City dancer and director of dance at the Icebox arena in Brownstown, thinks so.

Smola began teaching the art of dance to skaters last summer after one of the parents of a skating student at the Icebox saw him teach a swing dance class. Smola's been showing skaters at the Ice arena how to create the lyrical and flowing movements of dancers ever since.

His summer dance intensive, for skaters and non-skaters alike, will be held Wednesdays and Thursdays in July at the Icebox, 21902 Telegraph, in Brownstown. To register or for more information, call (734) 268-7024. Students will learn ballet, jazz and hip hop as well as condition and strengthen their muscles in classes with Smola and Garden City dance teacher

Tamara Nastev. "Kids want something fun," said Smola. "They don't want something with a lot of discipline. They want something they can enjoy doing." An array of classes will expand students' knowledge of skating-related areas as well.

On July 6, physical therapist Jon Notto will give a 6:30-7:30 p.m. lecture for skaters, parents and coaches on how to prevent injuries that occur on and off the ice as well as what to do if an injury occurs. Costume designer George Bacon will show how to design a costume for competition 6:30-7:30 p.m. Thursday, July 27. If you'd rather not make your own, Be's Costume of Garden City will be on hand from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday-Thursday, July 26-27 with skating dresses and accessories, leotards and tights.

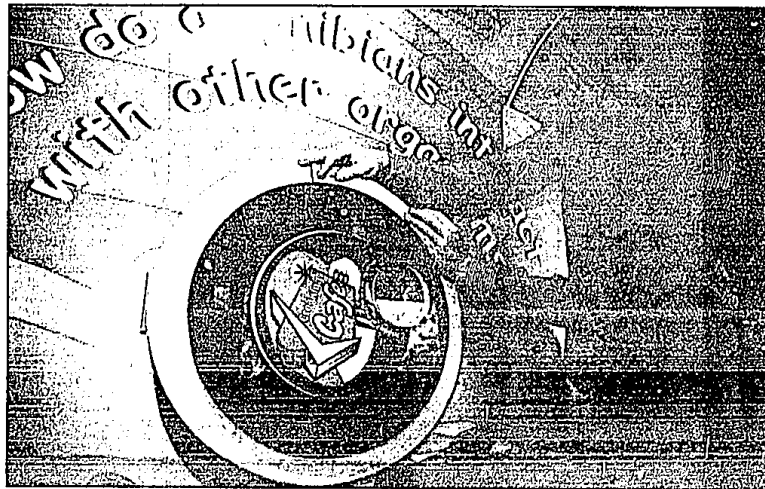
Smola, in his ballet classes, will work on the artistic quality of the programs with which skaters compete: the movement of their arms, how the music is filtered through their body and shows in the movements. A certified masseuse, Smola is trained in the physiology of the body which gives him an understanding of how the body works. He'll also pass on the enthusiasm he first experienced for dance during a class in his senior year at Wayne Memorial High School in Westland.

"I'm teaching them to use dance as a vehicle of expression," said Smola. "I tell them they're trying to interpret a story. Everything has to be very clear and precise. The challenge has been to get them to accept dance. They don't understand the two go hand in hand. Movement is movement whether it's dance, gymnastics or skating."

Smola, who earned his bachelor of fine arts degree in dance from the University of Michigan in 1999, should know. He's been a member of Peter Sparling's profession dance company for the last four years. Previously, Smola danced with the Plymouth Canton Ballet Company for six years. He currently is an instructor at Robert Lee School of Dance in Garden City. He'll teach jazz and hip hop at Enstrom Michigan University in Ypsilanti next winter.

Nastev is looking forward to teaching a jazz class during the summer intensive at the Icebox. An active member of the Coaches' Council of America and a former member of the Downriver Ballet Company under Enid Ricardeau, Nastev finds it "interesting to teach dance to ice skaters." She started teaching ballet to skaters at the Icebox last summer.

"It'll be fun and energetic," said Nastev who has taught at the Robert Lee School of Dance in Garden City for 13 years. "It's a challenge to choreograph steps they would use on ice. They have similar steps as we do. It's interesting to see ballet steps on ice."



**Croaking Cafe:** This rococo toad (top) is hardly a handsome fellow except in the eyes of another toad. Glen Board (left) demonstrates an interactive learning activity on a mural designed by Exhibit Works of Livonia.

### Amphibians make new conservation center home

By LINDA ANN CHROMIN  
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Ron Kagan looked every bit the proud papa as he introduced the Detroit Zoo's newest addition—the National Amphibian Conservation Center.

The zoo director and his staff were expecting 500 amphibians to move into the \$6 million facility before opening day, Saturday, June 24. Eventually 1,000 amphibians of 60-100 different species will call the 12,000-square-foot Amphibiville home.

Standing in front of a mural designed by Exhibit Works of Livonia, Kagan spoke about the center's importance as a resource for the conservation and propagation of rare and endangered species of frogs, salamanders, newts and caecilians. The back to back mural focuses on causes of the worldwide decline of amphibians—habitat destruction, pesticides and agricultural chemicals, and increased amounts of UV radiation reaching the earth through holes in the ozone layer. Hardest hit are the tropical

forests disappearing at the rate of approximately 400-500 yards every second. If the pace continues, scientists estimate the delicate environment will be completely destroyed by 2020.

Three years ago a group of international experts from the conservation community met to develop a place where they could study at one resource center," said Kagan, during a media tour of the amphibian center. "Finally instead of hundreds of splintered efforts it will be a centralized focus for amphibian conservation and research."

Designed by architects Jones & Jones of Seattle, the center will equally divide its attention between breeding, conservation and non-invasive research and the exhibition of Amphibia such as the South American rococo toad. It's easy to see by looking at the huge, less-than-handsome toad why the educational aspect of the center is critical to altering perceptions. The zoo's already won the respect of its peers. It was recently awarded two American Zoo and Aquari-

Please See CONSERVATION



DETROIT ZOOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

Colorful frog: This painted mantella frog is one of the frogs featured at the center.

## SPECIAL EVENT

**Birthday celebration: Guest conductor Emil de Cou leads the Detroit Symphony Orchestra in a concert to celebrate Livonia's 50th birthday.**



PHOTO BY LISA KOKLES

### Concert celebrates history of supporting the arts

By LINDA ANN CHROMIN  
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It should come as no surprise that one of the many birthday celebrations for Livonia's 50th involves the arts. The city is literally a cultural haven for groups such as the Livonia Symphony Orchestra, Livonia Civic Chorus, Livonia Civic Ballet, and the Livonia Artists Club.

On Tuesday, June 27, many of the members of these local arts organizations along with the rest of the public will assemble on the south lawn of Livonia City Hall to hear a concert by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. And as they say, rain or

shine the show will go on.

"It's a spectacular way to celebrate Livonia's 50th birthday," said Livonia Mayor Jack Kirksey. "It's an outstanding opportunity to hear an hour and 11 minutes of the Detroit Symphony without breaks and we're always looking for opportunities to showcase Livonia. I sometimes think we're one of Michigan's best-kept secrets. We're always looking for cultural and fine arts opportunities. The arts are an important part of Livonia's history. When we talk about quality of life it goes beyond public safety. A part

What: The Detroit Symphony Orchestra helps celebrate the City of Livonia's 50th birthday with a concert of Tchaikovsky, Gershwin and Ellington  
When: 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 27

Where: On the steps of Livonia City Hall, 33000 Civic Center Drive, east of Farmington Road. Concert-goers are encouraged to park off-site. Beginning at 6 p.m., shuttle service will be available from Ford Field on the southeast corner of Farmington and Lyndon.

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