

Local volunteers aid Festival of Trees

BY MARY RODRIGUE
STAFF WRITER

Chris Berry of Farmington Hills has a personal reason for volunteering with the Festival of Trees, the biggest annual fundraiser for Children's Hospital of Michigan.

When Berry's son, Brian, was five months old, he was diagnosed with a tumor in his adrenal gland. Two years of chemotherapy at Children's Hospital followed.

Today, Brian is a healthy 29-year-old actor/designer who is married and lives in Connecticut.

Children's Hospital was a great help," said his mom, Chris. "This is my way of saying 'Thank You.'"

This year, Berry is co-chairwoman of the Festival of Trees Gift Shop, along with Judy Kramer of Bloomfield Hills and Judy Shynow of Birmingham.

Last Friday, the women and dozens of other volunteers were transforming a Cobo Hall ballroom into a Christmas wonderland.

Festival of Trees is a public display of more than 100 professionally designed holiday trees, charming vignettes, gingerbread houses, and holiday wreaths.

Select items were auctioned at the preview party last Saturday, and others will be available for sale during Festival of Trees.

Honorary chair for the 2001 Festival of Trees is Jack Kraus-

la, chairman and CEO of Decision Consultants, Inc., an information technology services company based in Southfield.

A family affair

Over the years, Chris Berry has tapped her sisters, Elaine Grohman of Farmington Hills and Judy Petrere of Canton Township to help out. This year for the first time, Elaine's daughter, also named Elaine, a student in early childhood education at Madonna University in Livonia, came downtown to help out at Festival of Trees.

"I've been coming since 1991," said Judy Petrere. "It's a worthwhile charity event."

The senior Elaine Grohman has been pitching in alongside her sister Chris year after year. Across the ballroom, Barb Derby of Farmington was putting homemade ornaments on her tree, which featured an old-fashioned Christmas theme.

"I began decorating wreaths 14 years ago. I was anxious to do a tree. It just blossomed from there," said Derby, owner of the The Decorative Painting Studio in Farmington.

"I've been here since the beginning," she added.

This year her tree features wooden candy canes, giant glittery snowflakes, and tiny wooden candle holders - a total of 33 different old fashioned toys.

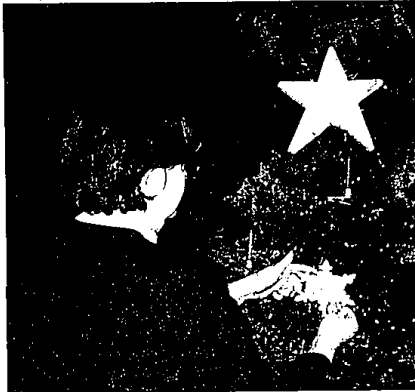
Derby also was among 13 artists who painted a quilt that

will be raffled during the festival.

Since its inception in 1985, Festival of Trees has attracted more than 400,000 visitors from all over Michigan, Ohio and Canada, and has raised more than \$8.5 million for Children's

Hospital of Michigan.

It is open now through Sunday, Nov. 25 (including Thanksgiving Day). For more information, call Festival of Trees at (313) 966-TREE or visit the Festival of Trees Web site at www.fot.org.



Old fashioned tree: Barb Derby, owner of the Decorative Painting Studio in the Grand River/Haisted Plaza, is a longtime Festival of Trees volunteer who has contributed trees and wreaths for 14 years.



Stringing Lights: Elaine Grohman, of Farmington Hills, a student at Madonna University, decorates a tree in the Festival of Trees gift shop. Her mom and two aunts also volunteer with Festival of Trees.

Holiday Brass sets concerts

In what has become an annual tradition for music lovers, Detroit Chamber Winds and Strings presents *Holiday Brass* in three performances.

On Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 1-2, a holiday

sing-along will begin 45 minutes prior to each concert. The Saturday concert at 8

p.m. will be at First Presbyterian Church at 1669 W. Maple in Birmingham.

The Sunday show is at 3 p.m. at Christ Church at 61 Grosse Pointe Blvd. in Grosse Pointe.

Then at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 11, the Chamber Winds come to the Costick Activities Center, 28600 W. 11 Mile, east of Middlebelt, in Farmington Hills.

A wonderful evening of the holiday's best music is planned. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$12 for senior citizens and \$10 for students. Tickets will be available at the door, and in advance at the Costick Center. For more information, call (248) 473-1857.

Included in the Dec. 1-2 performances is Jean Joseph Maurer's *Premiere Suite des Symphonies*, best known today as the theme music to Masterpiece Theater, the traditional *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen*, a brass arrangement of George Gershwin's *Preludes*, a Biblical Sonata by Friedrich Kuhlau, and seasonal music arranged for trombones.

Tickets to these two shows are \$22 and \$18 for students and seniors over 60. Tickets will be available at the door or by calling (248) 552-2095. The Dec. 1 show is sponsored by Henry Ford Health System and Health Alliance Plan; the Dec. 2 show by Butzel Long.

Celebrating its 20th anniversary season, Detroit Chamber Winds and Strings is an ensemble of musicians drawn primarily from the Detroit Symphony and Michigan Opera Theater orchestras, and has become nationally recognized for its performances, recordings and educational programs.



Robbo: The performer and his fans. He's coming to Adat Shalom.

Adat Shalom Synagogue will present a family concert, Robbo, Great Songs for Kids, at 1 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 2.

Robbo is Robb Zelonky, a writer and performer of original songs for children. In Robbo's concerts throughout the country, imagination and humor run rampant. Whether he is actively engaging the children with his silly songs or gently teaching them lessons about life, Robbo's music is fun and entertaining, with a dash of learning.

The concert's finale will feature second-grade students from Adat Shalom's Beth Achim religious school and from Hillel Day School. There is no charge for the concert, which is made possible in part by the Sol and Diane Colton Music Endowment. It is open to the community.

The concert will be preceded by a lunch. There is a \$5 fee for adults and \$5 for kids for lunch. Chairing the afternoon are Alicia Schwartz and Sheila Tyner.

Adat Shalom is at 29901 Middlebelt in Farmington Hills. For more information, call 861-5100.

You can hear a sample of Robbo's music at www.blanketkid.com.

and can be imprinted with a personal message for an additional charge. Cards can be purchased through CLF's Web site at www.leukemia.michigan.org. CLF is at 29777 Telegraph Rd., suite 1651, Southfield.

Children's Leukemia Foundation of Michigan is offering five cards in its holiday collection showcasing the talents of patients and caregivers.

Cards are packaged in quantities of 20 cards and envelopes,

and can be imprinted with a personal message for an additional charge. Cards can be purchased through CLF's Web site at www.leukemia.michigan.org. CLF is at 29777 Telegraph Rd., suite 1651, Southfield.

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☒ Turkey

☒ Stuffing

☒ Bankers dressed up as giant cookies



Bank One is proud to be a sponsor of America's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

This Thanksgiving, the Bank One family is fully committed to bringing Detroit's families together. Our dedication to the community has never been stronger. So, please come and celebrate with us as we kick off the holiday season at the 75th Annual America's Thanksgiving Day Parade. This exciting family event starts at 10 a.m. Look for our float representing the children's classic, *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*. And beforehand, at 9 a.m., there's "The Big Balloon" pre-parade festivity, also sponsored by Bank One. Hope to see you there!

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