

ETCETERA

Year 2000 mementos are turning into collectibles

BY BRADLEY FOSS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Remember Y2K? Better yet, do you want to remember Y2K?

A casual survey of consumers suggests that knickknacks with the year 2000 theme are more likely to be tucked away in a drawer than thrown out like an old newspaper (unless, of course, that newspaper happens to be dated Jan. 1, 2000).

Champagne flutes, glass paperweights, wool hats and even sterling silver pie cutters emblazoned with the words "Year 2000" made popular gifts at home and in the workplace over the holiday season.

Although the much-anticipated rollover came and went without apocalyptic consequence, the year 2000 reference on gifts seems to have given them keepsake status.

Penny Rebert, a judicial clerk in Carlisle, Pa., said that at first, she had no desire to save the commemorative champagne flutes she received from a secretary at work.

Ultimately, though, junking a present — and the only Y2K memento she had — did not seem in keeping with the spirit of the occasion.

"I guess I'll probably keep them because they're kitschy and cute," Rebert said. "But they'll probably sit in the attic."

Brad Adams, a San Francisco-based district manager for data storage equipment maker EMC Corp., spent more than \$1,000 in Y2K-themed gifts, giving \$50 crystal champagne flutes with hand-painted EMC logos to 25 of his best clients.

"I also bought four just for keepsakes," he said.

Others harbor hopes that their millennial mementos will be worth more money as collectibles in the future. In anticipation of such interest, the U.S. Postal Service last week issued 120 million "Baby New Year" stamps, nearly double the number usually sold as commemoratives.

Also, several Web sites hawking already popular items such

as Beanie Babies, Furby's and all things Pokemon have invoked the year 2000 in their sales pitches.

The Internet remains a busy place for buyers and sellers of Y2K trinkets. Specialized e-commerce Web sites cropped up over the past year, and eBay remains a thriving marketplace for such goods.

"I am happy to report that no overstock exists. My eBay customers cleaned me out," said Elise James, an Internet merchant from River Edge, N.J., who sold "Millennium Angel" pins for \$1.99 to customers in Florida, Michigan, Montana and California.

For her part, James is keeping year 2000 ales she and her husband bought on their honeymoon in London; a champagne bottle "stashed as a memory"; the Jan. 1 edition of *The New York Times* and a Y2K blown-glass Christmas tree ornament.

But although Rhonda Adragna admits she plans to hold on to a pair of \$50 Waterford crystal champagne flutes, she has no plans to put them in storage.

Adragna, who runs the Millenniumgift.com Web site out of her home in Half Moon Bay, Calif., said her children regularly drink Coca Cola out of them. "When I buy things, I use them," she said.

Antique-doll collector and dealer Joan Kindler of White-stone, N.Y., said even mint-condition dolls from the year 2000 will fizzle in value in the long run.

"Things that people are likely to throw away" are more likely to fetch high prices at auctions in the future, Kindler said. She cites the wildly popular Cabbage Patch Dolls from the early 1980s as proof. "You cannot give them away today," Kindler said.

Still, she said, she'll probably ignore the laws of supply and demand just this once: "I might go scour the stores for the half-price sales."

Interested in writing for etCetera?
An interest meeting will be held at 3:30 p.m. Jan. 11 in RH 333. No experience required.





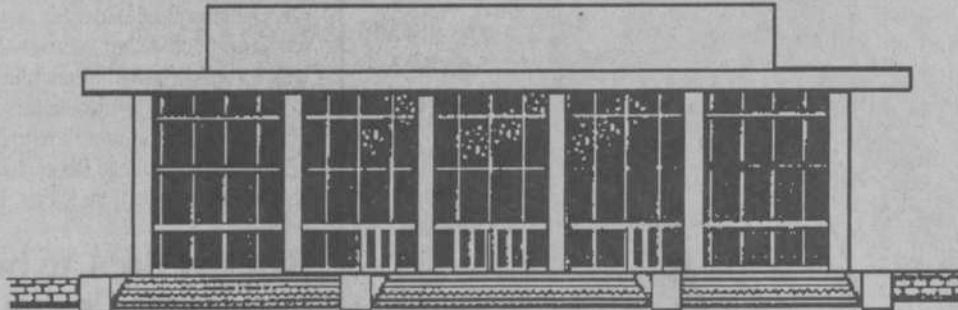
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The tour will last approximately one hour. The first part of the tour will include many of the library departments, such as Reference, Science Reference, Education, Government Documents, and Circulation. The second part of the tour will focus on the electronic resources available at the Thomas Cooper Library. USCAN, Internet, and CD-ROM databases will be demonstrated.

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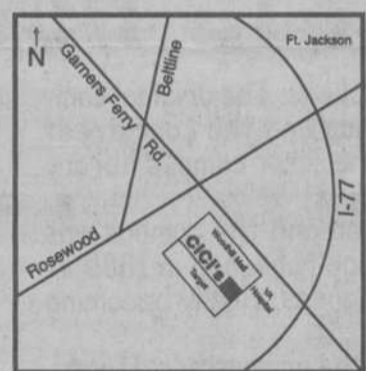


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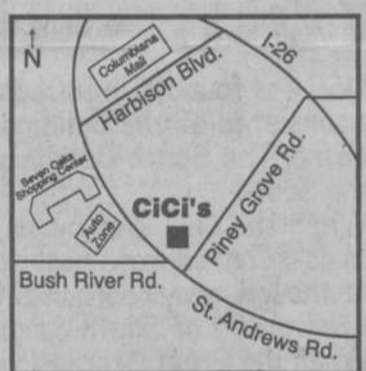
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