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TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY NATIONAL BANK

Computerized grocery shopping

Safeway testing new service

Associated Press

AUSTIN — Safeway stores in Austin are test marketing a new computerized shopping service, housed in a refrigerator-sized machine and featuring an electronically operated catalog of 3,000 brand-name items.

Touch the television-like screen, and a young woman named Debbie appears, smiles warmly, and introduces herself and the Touch-n-Save shopping network that she describes as "the first automated discount warehouse right here at your fingertips."

The screen then shows a "warehouse directory" listing 24 departments from home appliances, cookware and telephones to camping equipment, luggage and watches.

Safeway officials hope Touch-n-Save will be another merchandising vehicle that will bring more customers to its stores.

There also are weekly specials and clearance sales.

Touch the screen again directly over the particular department, and all the items for sale in that department appear.

There are easy instructions every step of the way. Finally, the customer inserts a Visa or MasterCard to complete the transaction.

Postage paid envelopes are available on a shelf just below the screen if a customer wants to pay by check or money order.

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Save will be another merchandising vehicle that will bring more customers to its stores.

Dennis Green, district manager for Safeway stores in south Austin and San Marcos, said the electronic shopping network offers a way to build on the one-stop shopping concept that large grocery chains have been fostering in recent years.

"More people work, more women and mothers work, and they don't have as much time as they need to shop," Green said.

Safeway bought the Touch-n-Save

equipment from CompuSave Corp., a California company that manufactures the machines.

All the products such as General Electric appliances, Seiko watches, Panasonic televisions, and Samsonite luggage are being sold through the CompuSave warehouse and distribution system; and Safeway gets a share of the profits.

An electronic message running across the front of the machine says savings can range from 25 to 50 percent off retail prices.

"Electronic shopping means low overhead, and that means big savings," Debbie says on videotape. "We rush purchases right to your door by UPS."

For now, Safeway is trying out the shopping machines in its Austin and Little Rock, Ark., stores.

Sculptor turns ordinary items into art

Associated Press

GREENVILLE — Ordinary fabrics, laundry starch and aluminum wire may seem unusual mediums for an artist, but Waynette Davis uses household items to fashion her fiber sculptures.

Davis once used the more traditional medium of paint on canvas, but eventually she found the two-dimensional boundaries too restrictive.

"I became so involved in the technical part of creating — the mechanics — that I couldn't express my ideas naturally or let them change as I worked," she said. "I began experimenting with other materials, using small boxes and creating an environment inside, almost like miniatures."

Two years ago she turned to fiber sculptures, fragile shells of starch-stiffened fabric supported inside by skeletons of aluminum wire mounted in concrete bases.

Both in line and texture her work often reveals her affinity for plants and trees, and she uses a unique photographic process to transfer the image of bark to certain areas of fabric.

"I photograph tree bark and then make an 8-by-10 positive print," she said. "Then I coat the fabric with watercolor and gum bichromate, put

the material and the positive between two plates of glass, leave this in the sun for about 10 minutes, and the fabric picks up the pattern.

"I've always sewn, so I've been drawn to fabrics," said the Houston native. "Even the starching process

"I never wanted to be a sculptor in the beginning. I thought sculpture had to be heavy handed. Working with hammers, nails and welding seemed so masculine, but these pieces are lighter, more feminine. —sculptor Waynette Davis"

seems natural. It's like washing clothes when I dip the fabrics."

Six of her works were displayed this summer at Conduit gallery in Dallas. Four were as tall as Mrs. Davis. Like the rest of her creations, they deal with the theme of life and death, birth and growth, struggle and resurrection.

An earlier piece, "Ascension" is

eight feet tall and resembles a dead tree at the base, with the coloration and texture of ancient bark. As the viewer's eye moves upward, however, he becomes aware that the object is gradually changing into something living, topped with almost feather-like leaves.

All of her sculptures are titled, a point she considers important. "Titles give the viewer a handle," she said. "I don't like to see a piece labeled 'Untitled.' It's like being introduced to someone without giving a name."

With a title as a starting point, art can reach out to viewers through their senses, said Davis. "I try to create a sensitivity in texture that people will respond to it bodily, without thinking... like children do. Children don't analyze. They just feel."

"I hope people can feel what I do when I see trees — the whole regenerative process," she said. "Because I believe in something higher than ourselves, I believe art must express this concept. To me art is not just decorative, not just self-expression for the sake of self-expression. It's a means to an end — it has to have a message."

But she says, she doesn't want to judge another artist's work.

"I don't want to have a censored

view," she said. "If an artist is expressing himself through a piece of work, then at least that's honest."

She says the inspiration for much of her work comes during her morning jogging sessions.

"You get to the point where you're physically too tired from running to worry about little things, and then ideas just come," she said. "Of course I'm running through a beautiful wooded area, too, which helps."

Davis, who holds both bachelor's and master's degrees in fine arts, is not the only artist in her family. Her husband, Lee Baxter Davis, teaches drawing and printmaking at East Texas State University. He works primarily in pen and ink and watercolors, and he exhibits frequently.

"We have a similar philosophy about what art should be, but images, tools and techniques differ," she said. "We feed each other a lot of ideas. I don't think I'd be an artist if I didn't have a husband who is so supportive."

Since both parents are working artists, one might expect the Davis children, Nathan and Anya, to follow in the same line.

"No, they've gone completely the other way," said their mother, laughing. "They don't care a thing about it."

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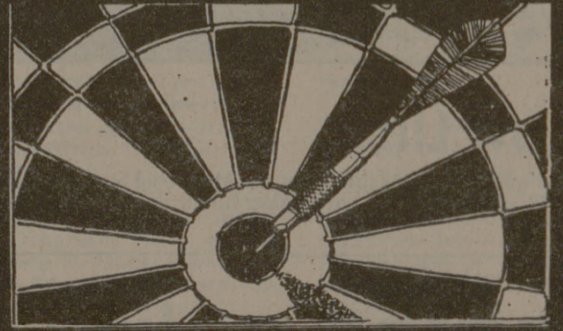
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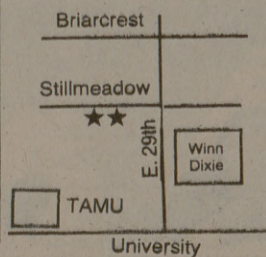
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