

# Ex-teacher, 54, paints bright future despite stroke

Special to The News

At age 54, ex-teacher, ex-salesman and ex-serviceman Harley Yocum has returned to school — this time to obtain a bachelor's degree in art at Mercy College of Detroit.

Art was always one of the Detroiters' interests, but one he never found time to pursue, said Yocum, who has a bachelor of arts in education from Wayne State University. After a stroke three years ago, he decided to enroll at Mercy as an art major.

"That stroke forced me to consider art as a rugged kind of therapy," he said.

Although he felt fortunate that he was right-handed and that the stroke affected only his left side, Yocum still found the physical effort taxing.

"AT TIMES, I breathed a little oath under my breath," he admitted. In the beginning, the neophyte artist wanted to sit right down at an easel and paint. But he discovered that he first had to learn to draw.

"I've come a long way in my art since I started at Mercy College," he said. "Lloyd Radell and his wife, Renee, have been tremendous. They both are excellent in their field and I have learned so much from them." Prof. Radell, a sculptor, is chairman of the college's art department, and Mrs. Radell is a painter and artist-in-residence.

If Yocum returns to teaching — he substituted in Detroit and western suburban schools for 10 years — he intends to give his students both exposure to and appreciation of art.

**THE STROKE'S** effects sometimes hamper Yocum in expressing his ideas. They also force him to go over printed material again and again, to master the content.

"This is a helluva lot more difficult than I thought it would be — me, the articulate salesman who was never at a loss for words," he said. Formerly he sold duplicating equipment and supplies and was sales promotion director and product specialist for a Chicago firm. He served in the Army both in World War II and the Korean conflict.

Whether or not he uses his art professionally once he has his degree, Yocum is sure of one thing: "I will have the satisfaction, if nothing else, of being able to use my artistic talents for my own enjoyment and fulfillment."

He lives within walking distance of Mercy College, where his wife, Pauline, is a faculty secretary. They have two children — a son, David, a student at Detroit Bible College, and a daughter, Mrs. Nancy Cascaden of Dearborn.



Harley Yocum of Detroit is back in college again at 54 to earn a bachelor's degree in art. Therapy for a stroke three years ago resulted in a fascinating hobby for the former salesman. He faces the future with confidence although he admits his ordeal has proved tougher than he thought it would be.

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