

*Around town*

# Getting off to a fast party start

By Rick Kogan

## Two places for present buying

Naturally, we don't start shopping for Christmas gifts until Christmas Eve, but if we did start earlier, here are two of the places we'd go:

● From the moment we first discovered The Hologram Museum, 1134 W. Washington St. (312-226-1007) we have considered it not only a Chicago treasure but a mandatory holiday season stop. Every out-of-town friend who visits for the holidays is taken to the building and we have never had one who was not amazed and enchanted.

Though many of the art works that hang on the museum's walls are for sale—the current exhibit is an eye-popping "Artistic States of Light Energy & Matter"—there is a lower-priced, substantial, fascinating and playful selection of holograms and holographic gifts available. One year we bought a hologram of a man with a miner in his mouth; another year a hologram of Beethoven for a music-playing pal and a dozen holographic glasses for kids.

Loren Billings, who operates the place with passion, will be happy to clearly explain to visitors the process by which holograms are created. She also creates the most amazing Christmas tree in the city.

● TV Land is tucked into Hawthorn Center in Vernon Hills (708-367-1551) and is one of the most amazing stores you'll ever see.

Want coffee cups in the shape of the Three Stooges faces? What about a Barney Rubble magnet? Rocket J. Squirrel clocks? "Star Trek" figurines?

It's got 'em all. The store is the first of its kind in the

