

# **Finding aid for the Paul Collins art reference collection 269**

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Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department

111 Library Street NE Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503 localhis@grpl.org URL: http://www.grpl.org 

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## **Summary Information**

Repository: Creator:	Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department Collins, Paul
Title:	Paul Collins art reference collection
ID:	269
Date [inclusive]:	1969-2010
Physical Description:	6 Linear Feet 12 total boxes
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	Paul Collins (b. 1936) is an American realist painter who resides in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The collection includes biographical information, newspaper clippings and photographs of Collins as well as exhibit catalogs, ephemera and books illustrated by Collins. Additionally, there are several original art works by Paul Collins in the Grand Rapids Public Library art holdings. This collection would be of particular interest to those researching African American artists.

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# **Biographical / Historical**

Paul Lamar Collins was born in Muskegon, Michigan in 1936 and raised in Ada, Michigan. He later graduated from Ottawa Hills High School in Grand Rapids. Paul began drawing as a youth and was influenced by the black poet and painter Randy Brown. Brown and Collins eventually went into the advertising business together, forming Ran-Col Associated, where Collins did sign painting. A self taught artist, his break through is said to have been when commissioned to paint the actor Steve McQueen by McQueen's wife, Neile Adams. Collins became known to the leaders of the Grand Rapids based Amway Corporation, Richard M. DeVos and Jay Van Andel. With their financial backing, he went to West Africa for two years in the early 1970s. The result was the exhibit Black Portrait of an African Journey, in which he depicted the people of Senegal.

In 1975 Collins became the first African American to paint the portrait of an American president. He created an eighteen foot mural depicting Gerald R. Ford's life, which was permanently installed at the Kent County International Airport in November 1976. Following this, Collins created a piece in the collaborative series, The Great Kings of Africa, which was used in the Budweiser ad campaigns of the Anheuser-Busch Company.

Collins completed the following commissioned collections of works including Black Portrait of an African Journey (Senegal and Gambia), Other Voices: A Native American Tableau (Pine Ridge and Rose Bud Reservation), Children of Harlem (Harlem, New York), Special Olympics (United States), Great Beautiful Black Women (United States), Famous Moments in the History of the United States of America, America At Work, Voices of Israel, Kenya in the Beginning, American Portrait of Japan, Who is Key West, Embargo of the Angels (Cuba), and Portraits of Promise.

Two commissions to create national symbols came to Collins in the 1980s. Coretta Scott King asked Collins to design the Martin Luther King, Jr. Non-Violent Peace Prize Medal and, in 1982, NASA selected Collins to design the logo for the space shuttle Challenger VII.

Collins has served and donated much of this time and his works to local charities, as well as to state, national and international endeavors, such as the United Negro College Fund, Cystic Fibrosis, Black History Month/Black Caucus Foundation in Lansing, Michigan, and the North American Indian Center.

Collins has a long list of exhibit credits and awards. His works hang in private and corporate collections, several in Michigan, but also throughout the world.

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# **Scope and Contents**

Paul Collins (b. 1936) is an American realist painter who resides in Grand Rapids, Michigan. This collection contains newspaper clippings and photographs of Collins as well as exhibit catalogs, ephemera and books illustrated by Collins. Additionally, the collection contains several original art works by Paul Collins which are housed in the Grand Rapids Public Library art holdings.

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# **Administrative Information**

## **Publication Statement**

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department

111 Library Street NE Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503 localhis@grpl.org URL: http://www.grpl.org

## **Existence and Location of Originals**

The majority of Collins' framed works were received by Library Administration or by Deed to the Ryerson Library Foundation. Some items are hung within the GRPL Main Library. Others may be hung elsewhere in the Library system or stored in the Archives and Special Collections.

Meijer Gifts: 1993.1.1-7 Dec. 22 Ryerson Library Foundation

1993.1.1 Holy Eagle. Print.

1993.1.2 Summerfest. Print.

1993.1.3 Children in Hand. Print.

1993.1.4 Ibraham's Afrique. Print. Boy with broken bicycle.

1993.1.5 American at Work Series. Print. Two men, one w cap left, one w hard hat right, working with a cable.

1993.1.6 American at Work Series. Print.

1993.1.7 West African Girl At Window. Oil on Masonite.

1993.2.1 Dec. 27 Ryerson Library Foundation

1993.2.1 Joan Oil on Masonite.

Three items from the "Voices of Israel" series Source of gift unknown

Voices of Israel. Light of the Torah Oil

Voices of Israel. Angel of Auschwitz Oil

Voices of Israel. Armoir Bersheva. Charcoal?

Voices of Israel. Abdullah Mohtar. Print.

Voices of Israel. Brigadier General Amira Dotan. Oil.

7/23/2009

Dog & Boy. 2007.013

No Strings [Hands reaching for multicolored balloons] Print. 2007.091

## **Immediate Source of Acquisition**

The Paul Collins art reference collection was originally created from miscellaneous vertical file materials, moved to the archives to physically protect the exhibit catalogs and the ephemera found

there. Following this, in 2004 & 2005, Paul Collins and his wife donated more reference items to the collection.

Accession #: 00.[590].1 ; 2004.004 ; 2005.025 Donor: Paul Collins and various sources

## **Processing Information**

In 2018 the unprocessed material in this collection was added and the collection, in it's entirety, was reprocessed. A new finding aid was written. The original finding aid and inventory lists can be found in the collection.

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

- African Americans -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids
- Artists -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids -- Biography
- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History

# **Collection Inventory**

## Exhibit catalogs and promotional material, 1970-2005

Date [inclusive]: 1970-2005

Title/Description	Instances	
Paul Collins biography by Barbara Johnson	Box 1	folder 1
Original finding aid and inventory lists, 2009 Date: 2009	Box 1	Folder 2
Biography, 1970 <u>Date</u> : 1970	Box 1	Folder 3
"Paul Collins, The Humanist Portrait", 1976 <u>Date</u> : 1976	Box 1	Folder 4
Exhibition Catalog <i>Great Beautiful Black Women</i> , 1978 <u>Date</u> : 1978	Box 1	Folder 5
Biography published by Johnson Products in conjunction with Great Beautiful Black Women, 1979	Box 1	Folder 6

Exhibition Catalog Images of Life: Drawings by Paul Collins, 1988	Box 1	Folder 7
Date: 1988		
"Portrait of an Artist" produced in conjunction with Other Voices	Box 1	Folder 8
Exhibit catalog America at Work, 1983 Date: 1983	Box 1	Folder 9
Exhibit catalog <i>The Voices of Israel</i> , 1988 Date: 1988	Box 1	Folder 10
Exhibit catalog American Portrait of Japan, 1992 Date: 1992	Box 1	folder 11
Exhibit catalog <i>Gerald R. Ford a man in perspective</i> , 1976 <u>Date</u> : 1976	Box 1	Folder 12
Exhibit catalog Other Voices	Box 1	folder 13
Festival of the Arts program, 2000 Date: 2000	Box 2	Folder 1
Why We Can't Wait, University of Michigan Symposium, 1998 Date: 1998	Box 2	Folder 2
<i>Visions</i> exhibit catalog, 1998 <u>Date</u> : 1998	Box 2	Folder 3
Japanese exhibit advertisement and exhibit description, 1997 Date: 1997	Box 2	Folder 4
Dennis Archer portrait memorabilia, 1995 Date: 1995	Box 2	Folder 5
"4 Artists", 1989 Date: 1989	Box 2	Folder 6
<i>The Voices of Israel</i> promotional material, 1989 <u>Date</u> : 1989	Box 2	Folder 7
Press releases for <i>The Voices of Israel</i> Washington D.C. tour, 1989	Box 2	folder 8
<u>Date</u> : 1989		
Press release by Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 1988 Date: 1988	Box 2	folder 9
"New Initiatives for the Arts Exhibitions", 1986	Box 2	folder 10

"The Bond" flyer, 1985 <u>Date</u> : 1985	Box 2	Folder 11
East Congregation Church bulletin, 1983 Date: 1983	Box 2	Folder 12
Space Shuttle "Challenger" info cards and envelopes, 1983 Date: 1983	Box 2	Folder 13
Amway promotional packet, 1983 Date: 1983	Box 2	Folder 14
Exhibition of Paul Collins from the Collection of John Barfield, 1981	Box 2	Folder 15
Date: 1981 Gerald R. Ford mural press information, 1981 Date: 1981	Box 2	Folder 16
"Black Artist at Wounded Knee" exhibit at Ferris State, 1980 Date: 1980	Box 2	Folder 17
<i>Great Beautiful Black Women</i> exhibition kit, 1978 <u>Date</u> : 1978	Box 2	Folder 18
Gerald R. Ford mural unveiling, transcribed remarks, 1976 <u>Date</u> : 1976	Box 2	folder 19
<i>Great Kings of Africa</i> media information, 1981 <u>Date</u> : 1981	Box 2	folder 20
<i>Great Kings of Africa</i> advertisement, 1976 <u>Date</u> : 1976	Box 2	folder 21
<i>Other Voices</i> at Studio Museum in Harlem, 1976 <u>Date</u> : 1976	Box 2	folder 22
Exhibition at J.L. Hudson Gallery, 1973 Date: 1973	Box 2	folder 23
Ngozi Mfg. Co. promotional material, 1973 Date: 1973	Box 2	Folder 24
"Showdown at Wounded Knee" by Paul Collins, Ebony Magazine, 1973 <u>Date</u> : 1973	Box 2	folder 25
"Black Excellence" Push Expo '72 A Guide to Cultural Exhibits, 1972	Box 2	Folder 26

Black Portrait of an African Journey promotional material 1971, 1971	Box 2	Folder 27	
<u>Date</u> : 1971			
Opening address at exhibition in Dakar, 1970	Box 2	Folder 28	
<u>Date</u> : 1970			
Paul Collins bio from exhibit at The Art Center in Battle Creek, MI	Box 2	Folder 29	
"le senegal, perspective d'un artiste"	Box 2	Folder 30	
Press release from The Association for Promotion Tourism in Israel	Box 2	Folder 31	
Washington D.C. publicity tour schedule	Box 2	folder 32	
"Ibrahima's Afrique"	Box 2	folder 33	
Black Portrait of an African Journey exhibition program signed by Paul Collins	Box 2	Folder 34	
Buster Mathias, Sr. various materials	Box 2	Folder 35	

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# **Correspondence and Invitations, 1970-2005**

Date [inclusive]: 1970-2005

Title/Description	Instances		
"Celebrating Artists and their Art", benefit invitation, -2005 <u>Date</u> : -2005	Box 3	Folder 1	
"An Evening with Paul Collins" invitation, -2005 Date: -2005	Box 3	Folder 2	
Celebrity Cook-Off benefit, Spaulding for Children, -2003 <u>Date</u> : -2003	Box 3	Folder 3	
Letter from Marjorie Jacobson, Blue Cross Blue Shield, -2003 <u>Date</u> : -2003	Box 3	Folder 4	
"Everyday Celebrations" American Red Cross benefit, -2003 Date: -2003	Box 3	Folder 5	
Project Rehab's Black History luncheon, -2001 <u>Date</u> : -2001	Box 3	Folder 6	
World Visions exhibition, -1999	Box 3	Folder 7	

Correspondence and itineraries, Bosnia Herzegovina, -1998 Date: -1998	Box 3	Folder 8
Grand Rapids Ballet fundraiser, -1998 Date: -1998	Box 3	Folder 9
Letter from Mayor Moritsugu Tamada, City of Omihachiman, -1997	Box 3	Folder 10
Date: -1997		
Giants Award banquet program, -1997 Date: -1997	Box 3	Folder 11
75th Anniversary of the Idlewild Lot Owners Assoc., -1996 Date: -1996	Box 3	Folder 12
Invitation to American Indian Art Show & Auction, -1996 Date: -1996	Box 3	Folder 13
"Bridge to Understanding" Paul Collins and Nathan Margalit, -1991	Box 3	Folder 14
<u>Date</u> : -1991		
Letter from Gray Davis, Controller of the State of California, -1990	Box 3	Folder 15
Date: -1990		
A Kickoff Celebration, Spaulding for Children, -1990 <u>Date</u> : -1990	Box 3	Folder 16
Letter to Laura Williams from John Barfield , -1989 Date: -1989	Box 3	Folder 17
United Negro College Fund benefit ad, -1989 Date: -1989	Box 3	Folder 18
Voices of Israel opening reception	Box 3	Folder 19
Letter to Ambassador Thomas Pickering from Congressman Guy VanderJagt, -1987	Box 3	Folder 20
Date: -1987		
Letter from Louise Taylor, Cultural Attache, U.S. Embassy, -1987 Date: -1987	Box 3	Folder 21
Letter of Introduction to "Israel, People of the Holy Land" by Alexander Haig, Jr., -1986	Box 3	Folder 22
<u>Date</u> : -1986		
Letter from Ted Engstrom, Pres. World Vision, -1986	Box 3	Folder 23

#### Date: -1986

"Kendall Paints the Town" benefit gala, -1985 <u>Date</u> : -1985	Box 3	Folder 24	
Letter from Henry Brown at Anheuser-Busch, -1985 <u>Date</u> : -1985	Box 3	Folder 25	
Telegram from Coretta Scott King, -1984 <u>Date</u> : -1984	Box 3	Folder 26	
Afro American Lay Catholic Scholarship Fund benefit, -1984 <u>Date</u> : -1984	Box 3	Folder 27	
"Summer in the City", St. Jude's Radiothon - Paul Collins as Johnny Mathis, -1984	Box 3	Folder 28	
<u>Date</u> : -1984			
"Spokes O' The Wheel," Grand Rapids Rotary dinner - Paul Collins, speaker, -1984	Box 3	Folder 29	
<u>Date</u> : -1984			
Letter from Cynthia Clair, Arts Council of Greater Grand Rapids, -1984	Box 3	Folder 30	
<u>Date</u> : -1984			
"A Soldier's Play" program, Paul Collins cover design, -1984 <u>Date</u> : -1984	Box 3	Folder 31	
"Salute to Paul Collins" Scholarship Fund benefit, -1984 <u>Date</u> : -1984	Box 3	Folder 32	
America at Work invitation	Box 3	Folder 33	
Letter from Paul Collins as President of the Greater Grand Rapids Fund, Board of Directors, -1983	Box 3	Folder 34	
<u>Date</u> : -1983			
Ferris State College reception invitation, -1983	Box 3	Folder 35	
<u>Date</u> : -1983			
Ferris State Omicron Delta Kappa Initiation Banquet, -1983 <u>Date</u> : -1983	Box 3	Folder 36	
Kendall School of Design Commencement program, -1983 <u>Date</u> : -1983	Box 3	Folder 37	
Great Beautiful Black Women presented at Prospect House in Celebration of it's Third Annual Debutante's Ball	Box 3	Folder 38	
Letter from Don Williams, Grand Rapids Job Corps Center, -1982	Box 3	Folder 39	

#### Date: -1982

Letter from Joe Daverman, Pine Rest Foundation, -1982 <u>Date</u> : -1982	Box 3	Folder 40	
Letter from Diane Gunn, Kendall School of Design, -1982 <u>Date</u> : -1982	Box 3	Folder 41	
Letter from Hal Sawyer, U.S. House of Representatives, -1982 <u>Date</u> : -1982	Box 3	Folder 42	
Letter from Charles T. Fridsma, Pine Rest Christian Hospital, -1982	Box 3	Folder 43	
<u>Date</u> : -1982			
Letter from Gerald R. Ford, -1981 <u>Date</u> : -1981	Box 3	Folder 44	
Gerald R. Ford Commemorative Poster Committee memorandum and flyers for poster sale, -1981 <u>Date</u> : -1981	Box 3	Folder 45	
Letters from Dacho Dachoff, -1980 <u>Date</u> : -1980	Box 3	Folder 46	
Letter from Coretta Scott King, -1980 <u>Date</u> : -1980	Box 3	Folder 47	
Rosa Parks benefit program, -1979 <u>Date</u> : -1979	Box 3	Folder 48	
Telegram from John H. Johnson, Ebony Magazine, -1978 <u>Date</u> : -1978	Box 3	Folder 49	
Letter from Ronley Williams at Anheuser-Busch, -1978 Date: -1978	Box 3	Folder 50	
Special Olympics materials, includes correspondence from Sargent and Eunice Kennedy Shriver, -1977 <u>Date</u> : -1977	Box 3	Folder 51	
Invitation to Gerald R. Ford mural preview, -1976 Date: -1976	Box 3	Folder 52	
Letter from William Cosher at Budweiser, -1976 <u>Date</u> : -1976	Box 3	Folder 53	
Invitation to Paul Collins American Indian Collection	Box 3	Folder 54	
Invitation to <i>Black Portrait of An African Journey</i> at J.L. Hudson Co., Detroit	Box 3	Folder 55	

Invitation to <i>Black Portrait of An African Journey</i> at Morgan State College	Box 3	Folder 56	
Letter from Mara Scudder, Assoc. Producer WLS-TV Chicago, -1971	Box 3	Folder 57	
<u>Date</u> : -1971			
Letter from Alan W. Lukens, U.S. Embassy, Dakar, Senegal, -1970	Box 3	Folder 58	
<u>Date</u> : -1970			
Ad for <i>Great Beautiful Black Women</i> at The Detroit Historical Society Museum	Box 3	Folder 59	
Invitation to guest appearance by Paul Collins, -0000	Box 3	Folder 60	
<u>Date</u> : -0000			
YMCA fundraising letter signed by Paul Collins, -0000	Box 3	Folder 61	
<u>Date</u> : -0000			

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# Books, magazines and newspaper articles, (1969-2006)

Date [bulk]: 1969-2006

Title/Description	Instances	
<i>Africa for the Africans</i> by G. Mennen Williams, book jacket artwork by Paul Collins	Box 4	folder 1
My Motivational Organizer fine arts by Paul Collins	Box 4	folder 2
<i>In Our Hands</i> report the Binsfield Children's Commission, cover art by Paul Collins	Box 4	folder 3
<i>The Paradox of Loyalty</i> , edited by Julianne Malveaux and Reginna A. Green, cover art by Paul Collins	Box 4	folder 4
Inspirational Body of Work, The Fine Art of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan	Box 4	folder 5
The Underground Railroad, Bringing Slaves North to Freedom, by Judy Monroe, cover art by Paul Collins	Box 4	folder 6
The Story of Harriet Tubman, by Rachel A. Koestler-Grack, includes Paul Collins, "Harriet Tubman's Underground Railroad"	Box 4	folder 7
Passages to Freedom: The Underground Railroad in History and Memory, edited by David W. Blight, cover art by Paul Collins	Box 4	folder 8
Harriet Tubman, Conductor to Freedom, by Nick Healy, includes Paul Collins, "Harriet Tubman's Underground Railroad"	Box 4	folder 9
Grand Rapids Magazine, 2004-01	Box 5	Folder 1

Date: 2004-01

Key Wester, 2004-04	Box 5	Folder 2	
<u>Date</u> : 2004-04			
Sol Y Son, 2003-12	Box 5	Folder 3	
<u>Date</u> : 2003-12			
Ebony, 2002-02	Box 5	Folder 4	
<u>Date</u> : 2002-02			
African Americans You Need to Know, 2002	Box 5	Folder 5	
<u>Date</u> : 2002			
Messenger, 2002-08	Box 5	Folder 6	
<u>Date</u> : 2002-08			
Equality, 2001-07	Box 5	Folder 7	
<u>Date</u> : 2001-07			
Take Pride! Community Magazine, 2000-10-16	Box 5	Folder 8	
<u>Date</u> : 2000-10-16			
Michigan Bar Journal, 2000-02	Box 5	Folder 9	
<u>Date</u> : 2000-02			
African American Magazine, 2000-02	Box 5	Folder 10	
<u>Date</u> : 2000-02			
Davenport University Annual Report, -2000	Box 5	Folder 11	
<u>Date</u> : -2000			
<i>Customs</i> - The Newsletter of the Key West Art & Historical Society, 2000-10	Box 5	Folder 12	
<u>Date</u> : 2000-10			
The New Crisis, 1999-07	Box 5	Folder 13	
Date: 1999-07			
Grand Rapids Parent, 1998-05	Box 5	Folder 14	
<u>Date</u> : 1998-05			
Take Pride! Community Magazine, 1998-01	Box 5	Folder 15	
<u>Date</u> : 1998-01			
Amagram, 1997-04	Box 5	Folder 16	
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<u>Date</u> : 1997-12			
Take Pride! Community Magazine, 1997-10	Box 5	Folder 18	

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Metropolitan Foundation News, 1997-07 Date: 1997-07	Box 5	Folder 19	
Profiles of Key West, by Alma H. Bond, 1996	Box 6	Folder 1	
<u>Date</u> : 1996			
Ebony, 1995-02	Box 6	Folder 2	
Date: 1995-02			
Ebony, 1994-02	Box 6	Folder 3	
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Grand Rapids Parent, 1991-01	Box 6	Folder 4	
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Grand Rapids Magazine, 1990-09	Box 6	Folder 5	
<u>Date</u> : 1990-09			
Preview, 1989-09	Box 6	Folder 6	
Date: 1989-09			
Insight, 1989-05-01	Box 6	Folder 7	
Date: 1989-05-01			
Metropolitan Parent, 1988-09	Box 6	Folder 8	
Date: 1988-09			
The Circle - The News Magazine of Omicron Delta Kappa, 1984	Box 6	Folder 9	
<u>Date</u> : 1984			
<i>The Crucible</i> - The Voice of the Aluminum and Brass Casting Industry, 1983-11	Box 6	Folder 10	
<u>Date</u> : 1983-11			
Anagram, 1983-09	Box 6	Folder 11	
<u>Date</u> : 1983-09			
Newsweek, 1983-06-13	Box 6	Folder 12	
Date: 1983-06-13			
People, 1983-06-20	Box 6	Folder 13	
<u>Date</u> : 1983-06-20			
NASA Facts, 1983-05	Box 6	Folder 14	
<u>Date</u> : 1983-05			
Jet, (1978-1983)	Box 6	Folder 15	
Date [bulk]: 1978-1983			
West Michigan Magazine, 1983-07	Box 6	Folder 16	
0 0 - /			

## Date: 1983-07

River Valley Elementary Roadrunners , 1982-03 Date: 1982-03	Box 6	Folder 17
Palette Talk #47, 1981 Date: 1981	Box 6	Folder 18
Congressional Record, 1977-01-27 Date: 1977-01-27	Box 6	Folder 19
<i>Michigan Travelog</i> , 1977-03 <u>Date</u> : 1977-03	Box 6	Folder 20
Newsweek, 1976-10-11 Date: 1976-10-11	Box 6	Folder 21
Grand Rapids Magazine, 1976-12 Date: 1976-12	Box 6	Folder 22
<i>American Artist</i> , 1976-04 <u>Date</u> : 1976-04	Box 6	Folder 23
<i>Accent</i> , 1976-01 <u>Date</u> : 1976-01	Box 6	Folder 24
Gospel Films 35th Anniversary Million Dollar Drive	Box 6	Folder 25
Literature and Language textbook excerpt	Box 6	Folder 26
Newspaper articles - various, 1980 Date: 1980	Box 7	Folder 1-7
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<i>North Kent Advance</i> article, 1987 <u>Date</u> : 1987	Box 8	Folder 34
Grand Rapids Press article, 1986 Date: 1986	Box 8	Folder 35
Grand Rapids Press article, 1985 Date: 1985	Box 8	Folder 36
Newspaper articles - various, 1984 Date: 1984	Box 8	Folder 37-39
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Newspaper articles - various, 1982 Date: 1982	Box 8	Folder 58-62
Newspaper articles - various, 1981 Date: 1981	Box 8	Folder 63-76
<i>Grand Rapids Press</i> article, 2007-12-01 <u>Date</u> : 2007-12-01	Box 9	Folder 1
Paradise this Week articles, (1995-2005) Date [bulk]: 1995-2005	Box 9	Folder 2
<i>Grand Rapids Press</i> article, 2005-04-19 <u>Date</u> : 2005-04-19	Box 9	Folder 3
Newspaper articles - various, (2000-2004) <u>Date [bulk]</u> : 2000-2004	Box 9	Folder 4
<i>Detroit News</i> article, 2003-09-28 <u>Date</u> : 2003-09-28	Box 9	Folder 5
Grand Rapids Press articles, (2002-2003) Date [bulk]: 2002-2003	Box 9	Folder 6
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