

Westland Observer

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IN THE PAPER TODAY

COUNTY NEWS

Impeachment vote: U.S. Rep. Lynn Rivers, D-Ann Arbor, voted against impeaching President Bill Clinton, but was not among the Democrats who went to the White House in a show of support of the president, calling the rally "inappropriate." /A5

COMMUNITY LIFE

Yule want to know: Read how Dec. 25 was picked as the day to celebrate Christ's birth. It's been celebrated on the 25th day of just about every month at different times in history. /B1

AT HOME

Muralist: Artist Jennifer Gushen's business, Faux Unique, provides elaborate murals for homes. The U-M grad loves the "endless possibilities" of blank walls and ceilings. Her work is detailed in today's At Home. /D4

ENTERTAINMENT

Movies: Meet Kent Culotta of Plymouth, one of the animators who worked on the animation for "The Prince of Egypt." /E1

Music: For the rock band Kiss, playing The Palace of Auburn Hills on New Year's Eve is all about loyalty. /E1

REAL ESTATE

Making a list: What would real estate professionals like for the holidays? /F1

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2 teens face murder charges

Two juveniles were arraigned in 22nd District Court on open murder charges Wednesday in connection with the death of a 14-year-old John Glenn High School student and Westland resident.

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM
STAFF WRITER

Two juveniles were arraigned on open murder charges Wednesday in connection with the Dec. 19 death of a 14-year-old John Glenn High School student and Westland resident.

Arraigned were Stephen Rains, 14, of Westland and Jason Blevins, 15, of Inkster in 22nd District Court in

Inkster. Both are being held on \$300,000 cash bond in the Wayne County Juvenile Detention Facility. A Jan. 4 preliminary exam date was set. Both could face life in prison if convicted and are being charged as adults.

Judge Sylvia James rejected both youths' attorneys' pleas to reduce the bond or consider a reduced charge of second-degree murder.

"The bond must be set (high) to convey the seriousness of the offense," James said.

"Someone is dead," she said. "(Firman) can't go home for Christmas."

Both youths are on probation, according to statements they made to the judge.

Family members of the youths declined comment after the arraignment.

The Inkster Police Department found Jeffrey Joseph Firman, a John Glenn High School freshman, dead Saturday afternoon on a school football field in Inkster. A Wayne County Medical Examiner's report revealed the likely cause of death was blunt force to the

head. Firman was discovered dead by Inkster Police at about 12:39 p.m. Saturday at Academy of Detroit school, a charter school at 28500 Avondale in Inkster, formerly called Cherry Hill High School. He had reportedly been beaten with a stick and kicked before being left behind by his attackers on the football field, where he passed out. Inkster Police detective Anthony Abdallah said police were unsure of a motive and were unsure how long Firman had been dead before they discovered him.

Please see MURDER, A2

Making Christmas bright



STAFF PHOTOS BY BRYAN MITCHELL



Holiday spirit: Wayne-Westland Credit Union employees dressed as elves and brought along Santa Claus to give out gifts to children at Jefferson-Barns Elementary school in the Wayne-Westland school district last week. Above, Sarah Johnson holds up her gift. At left, Santa helps amuse Corey Wright as Patricia Bennett watches. This is the fourth year the credit union has made Christmas merry for the children at Jefferson-Barns. A mitten tree is placed in the lobby of the credit union, and employees and members buy for the children named on the mittens.

Company promises to keep gate closed

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM
STAFF WRITER

Rumors surfaced last week that a local video distribution center was going to open up a gate that sparked a heated controversy four years ago.

But, as it turns out, the gate will remain closed, according to Technicolor Video Services officials. The videocassette and CD-ROM distribution facility is at 37000 Palmer in Westland.

Four years ago, residents and business owners living near Newburgh and Palmer finally saw an end to the public urination, drug abuse, littering and other disruptive activities that plagued them for an entire summer.

The source of those problems four years ago were temporary employees at Technicolor, according to residents. These employees had caused numerous problems, prompting the company to

close a gate along Palmer Road that had apparently encouraged the employees to roam freely through the neighborhoods. Some of those employees included work-released prisoners and other correctional facility inmates.

"We have no current plans to reopen the gate and would reopen it only out of necessity," said Pat Goss, director of human resources for Technicolor.

Please see GATE, A2

Police say club had sex shows

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM
STAFF WRITER

A Westland club that reportedly featured live sex shows was shut down Sunday morning following a raid by Westland Police officers.

The business is called "Peaches 'n' Cream" and is at 230 S. Venoy Road. About 59 people were arrested. Police have sent reports to the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, which will determine whether charges will be filed. Possible charges could include lewd conduct, gross indecency, loitering and selling liquor without a license.

Acting on an anonymous tip, Westland police officers and officers from the Metro Street Crime unit had been working undercover for about five weeks, gathering evidence about the inner workings of the club.

Westland Police Chief Emery Price said Peaches 'n' Cream was advertised on the Internet as a "swinger's club." It was located in a strip mall.

"We received information that they were operating on weekends," Westland Police Chief Emery Price said. They apparently were charging an undisclosed amount of money for admission and had been selling liquor without a license.

Acting on an anonymous tip, Westland police officers and officers from the Metro Street Crime unit had been working undercover for about five weeks, gathering evidence about the inner workings of the club.

"(Police) confirmed that there had been sexual acts going on in the dance floor area with a number of observers watching," Price said. Approximately 139 people were in the club when about 70 police officers raided the club and began the arrests at about 12:30 a.m. Sunday. The onlookers could face loitering or other charges.

About 64 people were identified and released, 59 were arrested and released pending issuance of warrants and another 16 were arrested as operators

Please see SEX, A2

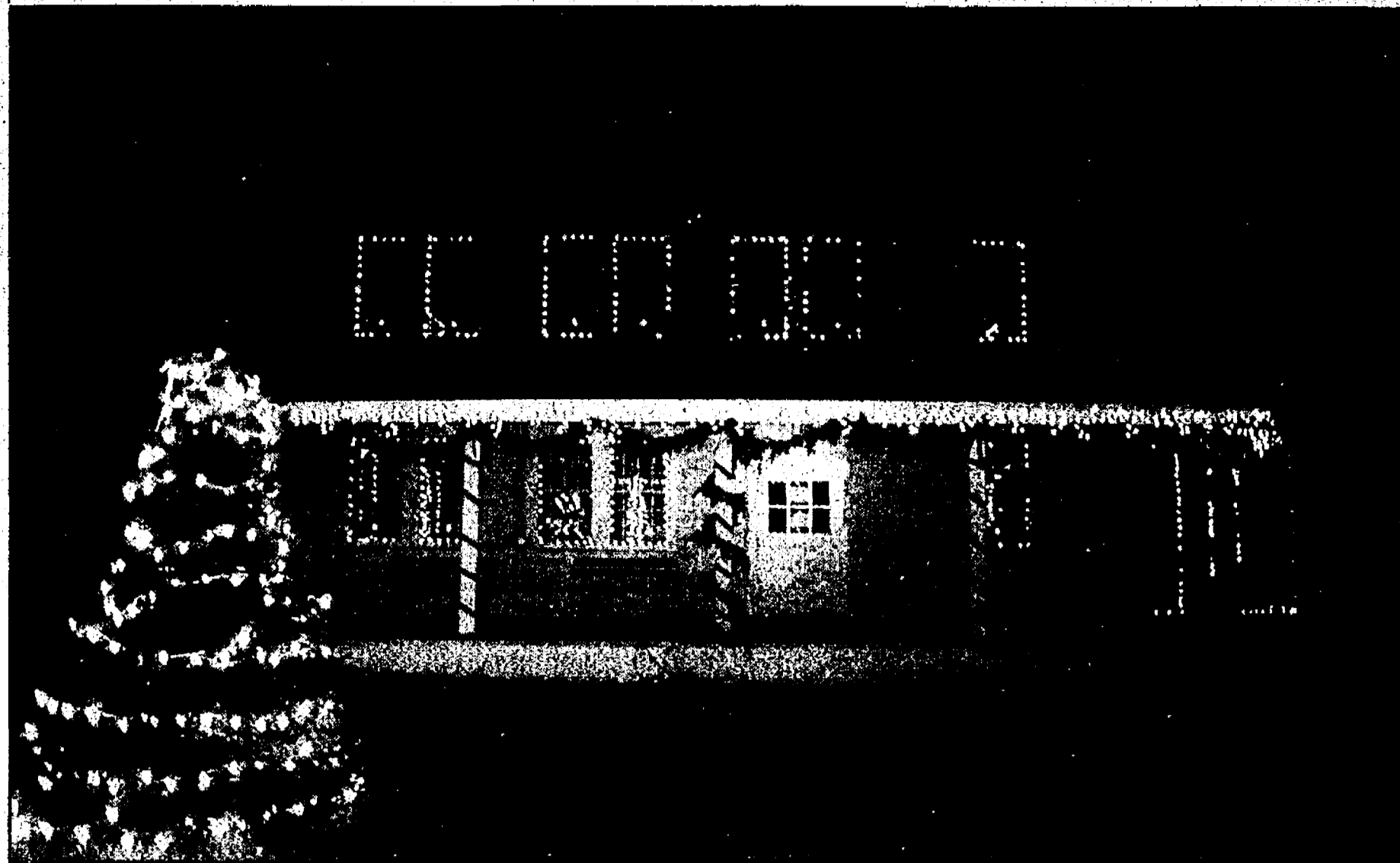
Happy holidays



Greetings: The staff of the Westland Observer wishes everyone a happy holiday season. Front row (from left) Tammie Graves, graphic artist; Kim Mortson, health and business reporter; second row, Susan Rosiek, managing editor of the Observer Newspapers; Ken Abramczyk, Wayne County reporter; Tom Hawley, Observer photographer; third row, Sue Mason, Wayne Community Life editor; Keely Wygonik, Taste, Entertainment and Arts & Leisure editor; Linda Chomin, arts reporter; back row, Helen Furcean, graphic arts coordinator; Ralph Echtenaw, Wayne County special projects editor; Darrell Clem, Westland reporter; Lisa Walker, Westland advertising representative; Barry Jensen, copy desk chief; Doug Funke, real estate reporter; Beth Sundrla Jachman, Westland community editor, and Hugh Gallagher, assistant managing editor, features.

STAFF PHOTO BY RANDY JACOBS

Holiday scene



Lighting up the night: It's a heart-warming scene as holiday lights sparkle on the Nankin Mills building in Westland. STAFF PHOTO BY BRYAN MITCHELL

Murder from page A1

The department apprehended Rains and Blevins Monday. Rains was arrested at his home, and Blevins' mother encouraged him to turn himself in.

Cheryl Loewe, assistant medical examiner with the Wayne County Medical Examiner's Office, said there was significant evidence of foul play. The death was ruled a homicide.

"(The injuries) were sustained by a forceful blow to the left side of the head," Loewe said. There was also bruising to the boy's left eye. She couldn't give an estimated time of death.

Loewe said routine blood tests were conducted to determine whether there was any drugs or alcohol in his bloodstream. Those results won't be available for up to a few weeks.

Funeral services were Tuesday at Santeiu & Son Funeral Home in Garden City. Firman's friend and classmate Gary Rickett, also of Westland, attended the funeral.

The two had known each other since sixth grade and were both freshmen at John Glenn.

"He was a pretty nice kid," said Rickett, 15. "He (hung out) in a little group that we all had."

But like many teenagers, Firman sometimes got into a little trouble.

"Occasionally he'd get suspended from school for starting fights," Rickett said. "He'd always talk his way out of trouble."

One of the teens' favorite hangouts was Skateland West, on Cherry Hill in Westland, he said. Rickett said news of Firman's death came as a shock. "I didn't really believe it," Rickett said. "I went and bought a newspaper to try and find out what happened."

Going to school and talking to his other friends won't be the same, he said.

"I'll miss talking to him and walking by him in the hallways."

Gate from page A1

"Four years ago, several neighbors asked that we close the Palmer Road entrance/exit to our facility," Goss said. "We responded by closing it."

Recently, however, road construction along Newburgh forced Technicolor to close its Newburgh gate and temporarily reopen the Palmer gate. With the recent completion of the Newburgh project, the Palmer gate was closed again.

However, a couple of scared residents attended Monday's Westland City Council meeting, prompting council to address the issue.

Idella Grims, who owns It's Yogurt at 1850 Newburgh, said the summer's events hurt her business. Some of Technicolor's temporary employees even urinated on her building, she said.

"(The temporary employees) exposed themselves in front of children," Grims said. "Business was not very good that summer."

Reopening the gate would cause the problems all over again.

"We're afraid opening the gate will allow other employees to inundate and walk through the neighborhood," Grims said.

Resident Jodee Maier helped spearhead the drive to close the gate four years ago.

"I didn't even feel safe in my own back yard," Maier said, referring to some employees who peeked over the fence and harassed her children.

She said Technicolor needs to adhere to a written agreement it signed with the residents.

"On that paper it does say that the gate will remain closed," Maier said.

The document, dated Oct. 21, 1994, was an open letter to residents. It was signed by Paul Scott, then senior vice president of operations and Angela Martin and Jodee Laber (now Maier), representatives of the Palmer-Newburgh Residents Association.

Recently, however, road construction along Newburgh forced Technicolor to close its Newburgh gate and temporarily reopen the Palmer gate. With the recent completion of the Newburgh project, the Palmer gate was closed again.

"In the spirit of building and maintaining a positive relationship with its residential neighbors in the Westland community, Technicolor Video Service will immediately commence the institution of certain policies at its Westland plant as described below," the letter stated.

One of those policies was "Keep the Palmer Road gate closed." The letter also stated that temporary employees would be relocated and the new workforce would not include halfway house residents, work-release program participants, prisoners, tethered parolees or correctional facility inmates.

But Westland City Council members and Westland police Chief Emery Price questioned whether the document is binding.

"I don't recall any signed agreement saying Technicolor would not use the gate," Price said.

Councilman Richard LeBlanc said the council should find out whether the document is legally binding or not, but that he supported keeping the gate closed.

"If the city attorney says it's not legally binding, then we have to make a decision. Until then, that gate has to remain closed," LeBlanc said. "Closing the gate created normalcy for the neighborhood again."

INFORMATION

Public Library of Westland

William P. Faust

Public Library of Westland

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Services: Book borrowing, audio/visual materials, computer services, children's services, genealogy, interlibrary loan, reference, special collections, study rooms.

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Registration: Call (734) 881-2300 for a copy.

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Sex from page A1

and employees. Twenty-eight vehicles were impounded under the state Forfeiture Act.

The business had been operating for about 5-6 weeks in Westland after having moved from another community. Price would not disclose the other community's name.

Those arrested could face possible charges for loitering, lewd conduct and gross indecency, depending on the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office's determination, Price said.

"Right now they're trying to get through all the paperwork," he said.

Peaches 'n' Cream patrons included married couples, unmarried couples and others of a variety of ages, according to Price.

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"Right now they're trying to get through all the paperwork," he said.

Peaches 'n' Cream patrons included married couples, unmarried couples and others of a variety of ages, according to Price.

Man arrested

A 43-year-old Westland man was charged with operating his vehicle under the influence of liquor early Friday morning, according to reports. The man struck a Detroit Edison utility pole on Michigan Avenue near I-275. Police found the man lying on the ground near his vehicle and allegedly intoxicated. The man, who had suffered injuries to mouth and nose, tried to fight with officers at the scene. Police later obtained a warrant to draw blood from the man while he was being treated at Annapolis Hospital.

HOLIDAYS CLOSINGS

The 19th District Court and Westland city offices will be closed today and Friday, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Schools: Schools in the Wayne-Westland and Livonia Public school districts are closed all week for the holidays.

Trash: The trash pickup schedule will be partially altered by the Christmas holiday. Today's trash pickup will be on schedule, while Friday's pickup will be Saturday.

The William P. Faust Public Library of Westland will be closed today and Friday.

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STAFF PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY



Goodfellow shoppers: Westland Goodfellow volunteer Jeannette Duncan (right) of Garden City, with the help of her grandson Louis Suvo, 9, of Garden City sorts through and separates the hats, gloves and scarves for the volunteers. The Westland Goodfellows have purchased toys and winter wear accessories for some 250 children, ages 12 and under. Also some of the winter scarves and hats were knitted by seniors from the center. Top left, Joe Suchan of Westland looks at hats and scarves for a 7-year-old girl. At far left, Dorothy Climie (left) of Westland and April Roderick (right) of Westland, volunteer shoppers for the Westland Goodfellows, pick out some items at the Friendship Center last week. At left, Westland Goodfellow volunteer and Westland City Councilman Richard LeBlanc (left) helps Kim Grant, 11, of Westland shop for a 2-year-old boy.

Dear Santa Claus...



The North Pole got plenty of mail this year, and much of it came from Observer readers. These letters were penned — and penciled and crayoned — by youngsters who answered our call for Letters to Santa. In response, Santa Claus said he appreciates the good wishes and hopes to fill many of the requests. He urges kids to keep being good and remember the milk and cookies. "Merry Christmas!" Santa added.

Dear Santa,
I miss you. I'm glad I'm going to see you. How do your reindeers fly? Are they magic?



Mrs. Santa, I missed you too. I missed the elves and the reindeer.
Here is my Christmas list
1. Fake robots (on TV)
2. Fake police kit (in magazine)
3. Set of cars
I was a good boy. I'm nice to my little brother.

Nicholas Brodersen

P.S. I will leave cookies on the kitchen table

Dear Santa,
I wanted to know if I was good this year? and I wanted to know if I will get a lot of presents this year? For a reminder my Christmas tree, house and my fireplace will be decorated

on Christmas night. On my mantelpiece you will see a plate with one or two cookies and a glass of milk on the plate. Santa I wanted to say happy Christmas to you and to all a good night.

Love,
Jennifer Lynn Galunas

Dear Santa,
My wish list:
Legos, punching bag, Cookie Cop, Buba



Love,
Joe Bastas,
Age 4

Dear Santa,
Do you like my picture this year? I hope that everyone's ready for Christmas. I'm letting my mom write this letter because I can't write good yet. I've been good this year and I even help my mom with my little brother and I started school this year. I love school. I would

like some Barbies and a Barbie playhouse. I want some clothes too. I want a Barbie tea set and anything else you want to leave me. Don't forget to eat your cookies this year either. Thank you very much
Your friend,
Kaitlin Ivy England



Dear Santa,
I would like a computer, Barbie Dream House and a couple of videos Dr. Dolittle and the Parent trap.
Thanks,
Jennifer Hartwig



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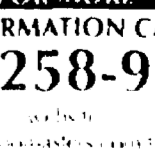
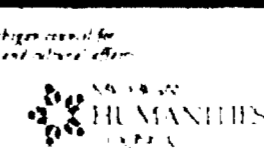
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Impeaching Clinton

Rivers opposed it, but calls Dems' bus visit 'inappropriate'

BY RENÉE SKOGLUND
STAFF WRITER

U.S. Rep. Lynn Rivers, D-Ann Arbor, is not against punishing President Bill Clinton; she is against impeaching him. "Impeachment is used to protect the country. It is not meant to punish the wrongdoer." Rivers said the impeachment criteria of high crimes and misdemeanors was not met during the historical vote in the House of Representatives Dec. 19 and Clinton should face consequences by trial in court of law, not in the Senate. She voted against all four Articles of Impeachment.

President Clinton was impeached on Article I (lying to a Federal grand jury) and Article III (obstruction of justice). A majority vote was not reached on Article II (lying in the Paula Jones civil suit) and Article IV (misuse of power).

Adhering to both the spirit and the law of the Constitution is paramount, said Rivers. "The system works because people have to tell the truth. But I also don't want us to diminish the Constitution. We can't make up our own responses to presidential misconduct. We have to operate under the framework of the Constitution."

Emotions must be held in check, she added. "No matter

how angry and disappointed we are, those emotions don't transcribe his transgressions into impeachable offenses."

Rivers also said there is a Catch-22 situation in trying Clinton while he remains in office. "Recognize that the President as the chief officer controls all federal prosecutors. If prosecution occurred in office, he would be in control of his own prosecution. We don't have a prosecutor who is not ultimately accountable to the president."

While most of the post-impeachment communication from Rivers' constituency (Canton, Plymouth, part of Livonia, Westland, Garden City, Inkster, part of Dearborn Heights and some downriver communities) has been against impeachment, there is a strong pro-impeachment minority. She acknowledges this minority

'The system works because people have to tell the truth. But I also don't want us to diminish the Constitution.'

Lynn Rivers
—U.S. representative



ty may be disappointed in her vote, but said it was a question of Constitutional law.

Rivers joined fellow Democrats who walked out of the House during the impeachment in protest over tabling the motion for censure for parliamentary reasons. However, she did not join Democrats who were bussed over to the White House in a show of support for President Clinton after the vote. "The rally was absolutely inappropriate. This wasn't a partisan fight."

She explained that rallies tra-

Please see RIVERS, A6

Year's end is a good time to look for tax deductions

This is Part Two in a special three part series of articles on year-end tax planning

BY GARY KLOTT

A year-end shopping spree for tax deductions may not be as much fun as holiday shopping at Tiffany's or F.A.O. Schwarz. But scavenging for last-minute ways to pick up extra deductions for your 1998 income tax return can pay big dividends next April 15.

And hunting for deductible expenses to pay won't take much time out of your holiday schedule. In most cases, you can pick up hundreds or thousands of dollars in extra deductions simply by writing a few checks.

The possibility of Congress enacting major tax legislation next year may provide extra incentive to chase after deductions this holiday season. Nailing down deductions this year could prove to be an especially valuable move if certain tax proposals become law.

Under one proposal, which was recently approved by the House, an estimated six million married couples who now itemize their deductions would no longer find benefit in itemizing.

The proposal would sharply increase the standard deduc-

tion for married couples in an effort to provide relief from the so-called "marriage penalty," which causes many two-earner couples to pay more tax than they would as single individuals.

Some Republicans are also pushing for an across-the-board cut in income tax rates. If tax rates were lowered, deductions would become less valuable.

Regardless of what happens on Capitol Hill, grabbing extra deductions for your 1998 return by prepaying some of next year's expenses isn't just a tactic to grab the tax savings a year sooner. In many cases, you have to take advantage of deductible opportunities when they arise because you may not get the chance later.

The reason is that most people aren't able to qualify for certain types of deductions every year. For example, most taxpayers aren't able to deduct job and investment expenses every year because such "miscellaneous" expenses are deductible only if you itemize and only to the extent they exceed two percent of adjusted gross income. So you have to take maximum advantage of the deductible opportunity in those years when you do qualify.

New law impact

If you're looking to reduce your adjusted gross income in order to meet the income-eligibility requirements for one of the new law tax breaks, such as the tax credits for families and college tuition, only a few types of personal deductions will help. Included are those for job-related moving expenses, contributions to deductible retirement accounts, alimony payments and student loan interest.

But itemized deductions — such as those for charitable contributions and state taxes — won't affect your adjusted gross income level.

Of course, itemized deductions are still worth pursuing since they will lower your tax bill.

Deduction shopping list

Here are some ways to earn extra deductions for your 1998 return.

Charity donations: If you plan to make a charitable donation in the near future, consider making it by Dec. 31 if you expect to be able to itemize deductions this year.

If your donation is going to be sizable, consider donating stocks, mutual fund shares or other assets that have gone

Please see TAXES, A7

Cold weather increases emergency calls to AAA

Cold air and snowy conditions across the state continue to cause an increase in emergency road service calls, according to AAA Michigan. Motorists are advised to use extra caution when they travel during cold weather.

As of last Tuesday, the Auto Club reported 2,600 road service calls handled, well above normal levels, with a 24-hour period normally averaging 1,500-2,000 calls.

To help motorists avoid unnecessary delays, AAA Michigan offers the following cold weather car care tips:

- Park your car in the garage. If you have no garage, or if it's full of lawn equipment or another car, put a tarpaulin over the car or put a plastic trash bag between the door (or window glass) and the frame.

- To avoid frozen door or door locks, buy a lubricant that is available in most auto supply stores.

- Heat your key (a pocket lighter works nicely), but remember to wear gloves or hold the key with pliers.

- Use a hair dryer, but make sure the extension cord is one graded for outdoor use and the wall socket is grounded.

- Fill a plastic jug or bag with hot water. Hold it against the door panel or lock area. But don't throw hot water on the car. It, too, will freeze.

- Keep your gas tank at least half full to avoid fuel-line freeze-up.

- Test your battery load strength to determine its cold weather cranking power.

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Airport officials expect heavy holiday traffic

Officials at Wayne County's Detroit Metropolitan Airport are forecasting above average passenger loads from now until the end of the holiday season.

While traffic will not match the numbers of travelers during the Thanksgiving weekend, flight loads are expected to be high and passengers are reminded to plan ahead and leave themselves plenty of time when traveling.

Heavy travel days are expected on some airlines today (Christmas Eve), Thursday, Jan. 31, and Sunday, Jan. 3.

Here is a list of travel tips from Detroit Metro officials:

■ Travelers are advised to plan on arriving at the airport two hours before a domestic flight and three hours before an international flight at peak times on the busiest days. Passengers can expect crowded curbside fronts, longer check-in lines and backups at the passenger screening checkpoints due to sheer number of passengers.

■ For up-to-the-minute parking information, call the airport's toll-free parking

hotline (featuring a live person, not a recording) at 1-800-642-1978. The airport also houses an overflow parking lot available throughout the holiday season.

■ Curb fronts are reserved for active loading and reloading only. Anyone picking up a friend or a relative should plan to park in a short-term lot and meet travelers at the gate. Motorists will not be allowed to wait at curbside. Unattended vehicles may be ticketed and towed.

■ Wrapped gifts should not be taken along, because security will ask that they be opened. Save on disappointments and delays by wrapping gifts only after you arrive at your destination.

■ Passengers 18 years of age and older should be prepared to present a valid photo identification at the check-in counters. Passengers without photo identification should call their airline for specific check-in instructions.

■ Remember to pack valuables such

as jewelry, cameras, medication, passports and money in carry-on luggage — however, try to keep carry-ons limited. Many airlines are limiting carry-on luggage on full flights.

■ For identification, have ID tags filled out, both on the inside and outside of your bags. Remember to remove hooks and straps to avoid damage and do not leave luggage unattended.

For airport information, tune to 920 AM within three or four miles of the airport.

County offices closed

All Wayne County offices will be closed today (Thursday) and Friday for the Christmas holiday.

Many county offices and departments will be closed through Monday, Jan. 4, except for those handling essential services, such as the Wayne County Sheriff's Department and the Department of Public Services road division for snow removal.

Some county offices will be open on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, including the county treasurer and the clerk's office, but only for limited services, such as marriage license applications, and for legal filings for Wayne County Circuit Court. Residents should call county offices first to check the holiday hours.

All offices will close again on Dec. 31 and Jan. 1.

County offices, including the county executive and county commissioners, will re-open Jan. 4.

Rivers

from page A5

ditionally follow political issues that have been worked "all the way through, after a long, hard-fought battle."

Rivers said she was uncomfortable with the "sports-like" atmosphere on the House floor throughout the impeachment proceedings, with the Republicans "hooting and cheering" during voting on the inquiry and the laughing on the House floor while voting on the Articles.

"It just felt wrong to me. This is about more than any other legislative fight we might have. This is about the Constitution. This is about the leadership of our country. I was unhappy with the way both sides have handled themselves throughout this."

Rivers said the origins of today's acute partisanship may reach through Watergate to the late 1940s, when the trend for greater political negativism in political campaigns began. The end result: "We demonize our opponents."

Moral relativism remains alive and well in the political arena, according to Rivers. "Every bad behavior can be explained away by the bad behavior of someone else."

When asked if speak-elect Bob Livingston, R-Louisiana, sudden pre-impeachment vote resignation over an extra-marital affair was an altruistic act for the good of the Republican party, Rivers offered little comment. However, she noted he resigned only after the affair had been disclosed.

She added: "Newt (Gingrich) didn't resign until after he was censured."

Rivers condemned the alleged arson of political signage at the campaign office of U.S. Rep. Joe Knollenberg (R-West Bloomfield) in Farmington Hills the night of Dec. 19.

"We vote. That's how we handle our differences."

Rivers forecasts further political polarization and negativity for the nation. "We have a system now people are withdrawing from," she said, adding that as "moderate voters pull away, extremists from both parties will develop louder voices."

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CLASS REUNIONS

As space permits, the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers print, without-charge, announcements of class reunions. Send the information to Reunions, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150. Please include the date of the reunion and the first and last name of at least one contact person, and a telephone number.

- BIRMINGHAM GROVES**
Class of 1969
A reunion is planned for July 17 and a reunion picnic for July 18. (248) 737-1398
- BISHOP BORGESS**
Class of 1989
A reunion is planned for August 1999. (313) 271-3050, Ext. 189 (days), (248) 552-8020 (days), or (248) 723-1907
- CHERRY HILL**
Class of 1983
Reunion and alumni family picnic is planned for August. (734) 729-6783
- GARDEN CITY WEST**
Class of 1968
A reunion is planned for September 1999. (517) 522-4893, (734) 213-4350 or (248) 486-5170
- HENRY FORD TRADE**
Class of 1949
A reunion is planned for June 1999. (313) 565-2392 or (734) 261-8546
- LADYWOOD**
Class of 1988
March 13 at the Italian-American Club of Livonia. (313) 255-8078
- LIVONIA BENTLEY**
Class of 1964
July 24 at the Holiday, Laurel Park, Livonia. (734) 416-5993 or Tink@mediaone.net
- LIVONIA FRANKLIN**
Class of 1979
Aug. 7 at the DoubleTree Suites, Southfield. (248) 366-9493, press #3
- MADISON**
Class of 1974
A reunion is planned for April 24. (810) 795-0266 or (248) 548-6044
- NORTH FARMINGTON**
Oct. 2 at the Double Tree Suites, Southfield. (248) 360-7004, press 2
- NORTHVILLE**
Class of 1979

- July 10 at Italian America Club, Livonia. (800) 677-7800 or by e-mail at reunions@taylorpub.com.
- OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL**
Class of 1980
A reunion is planned for Dec. 26. (202) 546-4377 or kbrady@erg.com; (734) 455-5475 or gearns@pccs.k12.mi.us; or ebdoherly@aol.com
- PLYMOUTH**
Class of 1969
Aug. 6-8 at the Novi Hilton Hotel, Novi. (248) 446-1028 or Karlancast@aol.com, or (734) 420-3811 or PHS1969@aol.com
- PLYMOUTH CANTON**
Class of 1979
Aug. 7 at the Holiday Inn-West in Livonia. (734) 397-8766 or www.reunion-works.com
- REDFORD UNION**
Class of 1979
Aug. 28 at the Novi Hilton Hotel, Novi. (313) 592-8537 or (734) 416-0807
- Class of 1949**
Is planning a reunion for September 1999. (313) 937-9329 or (734) 427-4208 or (248) 349-1331
- ROCHESTER ADAMS**
Class of 1979
Aug. 7 at the Somerset Inn, Troy. (248) 366-9493, press #6
- TRENTON**
Class of 1989
Aug. 28 at Arnaldo's Banquet Center, Riverview. (248) 360-7004, press 6
- WALLED LAKE CENTRAL**
Class of 1979
A reunion is planned for July 24. (248) 363-8211 or (248) 366-3337
- WALLED LAKE WESTERN**
Class of 1979
Aug. 14 at DoubleTree Guest Suites, Southfield. (248) 366-9493, press #1
- WATERFORD**
Class of 1979
Is planning a reunion. (248) 674-3946
- WAYNE**
Class of 1950
Is looking for classmates for its 50th class reunion. (734) 428-9379 or (734) 721-8036
- WAYNE MEMORIAL**
Class of 1983
Sept. 26 at Roma's of Garden City. (248) 360-7004, press 1



Wrapping it up: Above, wearing Santa hats (right to left), Julie Lucy of Detroit, Kyle Swider of Livonia, Kathy Storer of Garden City, Rebecca Killikevc of Southgate, Rita Ledesma of Wayne and Mary DuFore of Canton wrap the presents that were purchased for the families. Below, John Shanks, UPS center manager, stands among the many items collected.

Delivering holiday cheer

UPS workers 'adopt' families for holidays

BY MATT JACHMAN
STAFF WRITER
mjachman@oe.homecomm.net

Millions of us rely on United Parcel Service to get holiday packages to friends and loved ones. Millions more receive a gift or two via UPS as well.

But some western Wayne County families had an entire Christmas - gifts, food and all the trimmings, even a tree in a couple of cases - provided, and delivered, by employees at Livonia's UPS facility.

The nationwide annual UPS program of "adopting" families for the holidays was especially successful in Livonia this year, according to Linda Long, a UPS customer service representative.

"People had a little better year, and were able to do a little more, and I think it really made a difference," Long said.

Local UPS drivers, package sorters, clerks, maintenance



workers and others, for example, banded together and raised more than \$4,100 to buy food, grocery gift certificates and presents for three families, according to a flier updating employees on the efforts. They also donated 350 turkeys to two local food banks.

In Livonia's UPS business development office, where Long works, between 55 and 60 employees raised \$915 to adopt four local families facing hard times. They brought a complete Christmas to each, plus holiday baskets of canned food to another 12 families.

Other UPS departments - including human resources, accounting and industrial engineering - were involved in similar programs, Long said. As he does every year, UPS district manager Michael Clark adopted a family entirely on his own.

In business development, money came from fund-raisers

such as monthly dress-down days (\$2 per employee to go casual), barbecues and a Halloween breakfast. The food came from two December dress-down days that required canned goods instead of cash. Drivers also participated in the business development food drive.

The cash was bolstered by about \$300 in presents bought by the sister of one employee. The two were discussing the project over Thanksgiving dinner, and the sister suggested they go shopping that day, Long said.

The families helped were reached through the Family Resource Center in Westland. They submitted wish lists of clothing, toys and other gifts.

The gifts were packaged Friday and delivered that day and Monday. "We were able to meet all the wish-list items," and add a \$50 certificate from a grocery store for the four families, Long

said. All 16 got a turkey for their Christmas feasts.

"It's just amazing how generous people are. People really come together when people are in need," she said.

On Monday, Long helped deliver Christmas to a family of three that recently lost its home and is living in a motel. The young boy in the family had asked for a small Christmas tree, which was provided, along with the decorations.

"They were just so grateful," Long said.

Another family got a \$200 artificial tree, compliments of a Target store in Canton, Long said.

The business development department annually adopts needy families for Christmas, but the canned drive was extra this year, Long said. The group was doing so well with its fund-raising, members decided to expand the program, she said.

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A 'lot' of Charity

Local organizations benefit from the sales of older vehicles

BY PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER
pmurphy@oe.homecomm.net

How's this for a success story: A customer buys your product and — in a year or so — gives it back.

That's happened more than once at Charity Motors, the non-profit organization based in Detroit that gets most of its product — old cars — from Oakland County donors.

"We wouldn't call those old cars 'clunkers,'" said John Kruse, manager of the organization's lot on the south side of Eight Mile Road near Lahser. "Although that's what they are initially.

"After we work on those cars, they're 'transportation specials.'"

Charity Motors recently donated \$5,000 to each of 10 charitable organizations in Oakland County. Before the end of the year, it expects to make similar contributions to organizations in Detroit, Wayne and Macomb counties.

Those counties bring the total amount donated to charitable organizations to more than \$4 million since 1995, the year Charity Motors was organized, said spokesperson Rick Frazier, a Troy resident who

attended Oakland Community College before obtaining a business degree from Wayne State.

Radio commercials tell how Charity Motors works. People with clunkers — running or nonrunning — donate the vehicles and receive a tax deduction in exchange. Benevolence and good will are part of the equation, said Frazier, but so is the tax deduction.

In 1998, the organization will accept almost 11,000 vehicles (compared with 7,500 the previous year), Frazier predicted, including 1,000 or more in December, as the end of the tax year approaches.

While about 10 percent of those vehicles are sold for scrap, most are refurbished and sold as "transportation specials." The average transportation special sells for under \$400, according to Frazier, or at least 50 percent below blue book value.

Frazier quoted the most recent figures from accountants at Plante & Moran which he said show 75 percent of the proceeds go to charity, 14 percent to fund raising and 11 percent for administration.

Most of the proceeds from each car go to the charity selected by the donor, said Frazier. Some specify a Boy Scout Troop,

while others select organizations like the American Cancer Foundation or Catholic Social Services.

Charity Motors functions, in some respect, like the United Way, acknowledged Frazier. Rather than making a donation to a specific organization directly, a donor gives the car and stipulates the beneficiary.

Other organizations still accept vehicles, Frazier said. But Charity Motors — using the economy of scale — is the most efficient, he insisted. "We have the mechanics, we have the dealer licenses and we have the sales organization," he said.

That sales organization is very important, said Frazier. Charity Motors makes a significant contribution by providing inexpensive transportation to people who might not otherwise be able to afford one, he said.

"Some of our buyers (for lack of a reliable alternative) might not be able to get to a job otherwise," Frazier said, "some wouldn't be able to take their kids to the zoo or to the park."

Occasionally, a person who bought a transportation special — after establishing the work history and credit needed to buy a newer car — donated it back, Frazier said.

"They realize what having transportation means," he said. "But they also want that tax deduction."

To qualify for a tax deduction, the vehicle owner estimates the value of the vehicle and Charity Motors writes that amount on the letter of donation needed to satisfy the Internal Revenue Service, Frazier said. "We have blue books to help determine the value of the car," he said, "but the owner estimates the value, and we simply write it down."

"Most of the time, it works," Frazier said.

When asked about tax deductions for cars or other items donated to charity, a tax preparation specialist for H&R Block said determining the value of the item is crucial.

Donating a car to charity definitely entitles the donor to a tax deduction, said Carolyn D. Kelley, a tax preparation specialist for the H&R office in the Oakland Mall in Troy. "As long as the value of the item is reasonable, the IRS will allow the deduction," she said.

"But if somebody says their 1978 Chevy is worth a \$10,000 deduction," Kelley said, "he (or she) can expect to do some explaining."



STAFF PHOTO BY JIM JAGDFELD
Clunker check: Mechanic Willie Mines and John Kruse, Charity Motors administrator, look over a 1981 Pontiac Firebird at the lot near Eight Mile and Lahser.

Manager: Let the used car buyer beware

BY PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER
pmurphy@oe.homecomm.net

Charity Motors specializes in turning donated clunkers into "transportation specials," according to manager John Kruse, who oversees the nonprofit organization's car lot on Eight Mile near Lahser.

But Kruse is among the first to caution customers that used cars are a risky investment, subject to mechanical failure. "Cars can break down at any time," he said.

He and the mechanics working on the vehicles take pride in the product, Kruse

said. "But we get them running, we don't recondition them."

"There are no warranties or guarantees," he said. "As a matter of fact, we advise customers to bring a mechanic with them at the time of purchase — for their protection as well as our own."

Vehicles are sold "as is," Kruse emphasized.

No customer is stuck if the car he or she purchases dies two miles away from the car lot or simply quits the next day, Kruse said. "If that happens, we work with the customer and they're likely to get a different car."

But buying a "transportation special" is fraught with uncertainty, he acknowledged. A buyer is much better off if he or she is mechanical and can do some work on their own, Kruse said, "or if they have an uncle or neighbor who is mechanically inclined."

But the same principals hold true for used cars purchased at more traditional outlets, said Kruse. "A car can be running fine one minute, and blow a gasket the next."

"Anybody who buys a used car should be aware of that possibility," he said.

Buyer beware, the old axiom states.

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Ho, ho, ho

Santa shares 1998 message

Editor's note: Every year, along with the Christmas cards, we get a few of those "Christmas letters" from people telling us more than we want to know about their activities over the past year. Ordinarily, we wouldn't pass these missives on to our readers. But this year, one of them was from someone rather special.

Dear Friends,

Well, 1998 has been a busy year for the Claus Clan. Seems like every year my list of good little girls and boys keeps growing. We added an extra shift to the workshop in January just to get enough toys ready for this year's trip.

So far, we've managed to keep production on schedule, but it's getting harder and harder to find elves who are willing to work those long hours without a full benefits package.

It was a little tense around here for a couple of months, but after some negotiating things are getting back to normal. The elves seem satisfied with an extra week's vacation and a new 401(k) plan.

It didn't help matters when those protesters from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals showed up in March waving signs that said "Free the Reindeer." Donner and Blitzen had a talk with them and told them the reindeer didn't feel "enslaved," that they liked pulling the sleigh and delivering toys to boys and girls. Said it made them feel good about themselves.

The PETA people left after a couple of days, maybe because of that talk or maybe because we don't get too much TV coverage here at the North Pole. Before they left, though, one of them threw a can of red paint on my fur coat. It's a good thing they left after that. Old Vixen was so mad she was sharpening up her antlers and getting ready to go after them herself.

Speaking of the sleigh, Mrs. Claus bought me one of those computerized on-board navigation systems so I could find my way around better. I told her I didn't need it since I've been delivering toys for a few hundred years now and I've never gotten lost yet. But she said she'd feel more comfortable if I used it.

We installed it and took the sleigh for a test flight in March, but it just didn't work right. Every time Rudolph's nose lit up, the computer thought it was a red traffic light and brought the sleigh to a stop. Mrs. Claus finally agreed to get rid of the navigation system as long as I kept a cellular phone and a beeper on board. She's worried about sleighjacking.

When we got back to the workshop after the test sleigh ride, I had e-mail from some group called ASH. They said they were concerned about smoking and health and if I didn't dispose of that stump of a pipe that I had been seen with, I could no longer be a role model for children. They even threatened to start a "Santa is a smoker" campaign and get rid of me just like they got rid of Joe Camel.

There was another e-mail from the Center for Science in the Public Interest. They said that obesity was one of the leading causes of health problems and until I lost some weight, I was sending the wrong message to kids. They said that when kids left me cookies and whole milk on the mantel - especially milk that had been unrefrigerated for hours - I was just encouraging their unhealthy eating habits. They wanted to know what I was going to do about it.

I asked Mrs. Claus what she thought, and she told me to lose the pipe and while I was at it to lose some weight. She said I was so fat that every time I laughed my belly shook like a bowlful of jelly.

I told her I thought the extra pounds and the fur coat and the pipe made me look like a right jolly old elf, but Mrs. Claus said that I was out of touch with modern times, that jolly was out and good health and nutrition were in. I promised her I'd try to reform - right after Christmas.

Well, I have to go now. There's a sleigh full of toys waiting to be delivered and this fat, out-of-touch old elf doesn't intend to disappoint the kids. Happy Christmas to all!

Love,

Santa Claus

P.S. Since I won't start dieting until after the holidays, it's OK to leave out those treats!

Gospel meaning is timeless

A popular item among many Christian teens is a bracelet displaying the letters "WWJD" which stands for "What Would Jesus Do?"

The idea of modeling your life after Christ has been around for awhile, going back about 30 years this side of the first Christmas. A noble goal, but always a challenge. Have you ever thought that it would be much easier to know What Would Jesus Do if Christ were born in our lifetime?

Certainly, it would be much easier to spread the Gospel in the 20th century with the advantage of the powerful mass media we enjoy - high-speed, full-color presses, satellites, telephone and cable TV with fiber optics, and the Internet.

Have you ever wondered if Jesus would use the Internet? What if you wandered into your favorite chat room and found Him there? With such a spur of the moment encounter, what would you talk about?

And what if Jesus had his own home page on the World Wide Web? What would he place on it? The Beatitudes, the Last Supper discourse, a transcript of His trial, a complete set of parables? Would more people read it online than have offline?

If news of the Star in the East reached us quicker, and if we could get a better view, would we follow the star like the shepherds or the kings?

Although it would be easier to spread the Gospel in this century we really don't have any assurance that the Good News would be accepted any more now than for any other point in time. If Christ were alive today, he certainly would be an outcomes-based person, more interested in acceptance of his creed than mere rapid distribution.

Are Christians in 1998 any more prepared than persons of any other era to accept Christ's teachings, such as:

- Admit that you are a sinner and ask forgiveness.
- Forgive those who have wronged you before seeking forgiveness for yourself.
- Love your neighbor as much as yourself.
- Love your enemy.
- Feed the hungry and clothe the naked.
- Be a humble servant.

Maybe God knew what He was doing after all when He selected Mary and Joseph, Bethlehem and Nazareth, and the world they lived in some 2,000 years ago. God must have known that for all our high-powered communication tools, humans today aren't better equipped to accept the challenge of Christmas.

And that's just as well. At least now when we fail, we don't have to look Christ straight in the eye and try to rationalize our shortcomings. Yes, it's probably easier and more comfortable for Christians to celebrate Christmas than to live through it.

ARKIE HUDKINS



LETTERS

Appoint judges

Occasionally we agree and this is one of those times.

Judge Myron Wahls saw an opportunity to pick up 200 grand for his kids just by running, being elected a foregone conclusion, and went for it.

After all, isn't that the name of the game now? Greed? Grab all you can when you can.

When a vacancy occurs, maybe some type of merit system should be involved in the filling of that vacancy, but the real problem exists at election time and here is where the Observer and all newspapers could help. We don't know between elections who we are responsible for putting in office therefore we vote in the dark for almost all of our judges.

It becomes a name recognition game.

I like to watch the rulings of the various judges, especially on major and/or controversial issues, however, 99 percent of the voters don't even know which judges in office are from their district since we don't replace all the judges at every level at every election.

I would love to have the Observer, as a community service, print the names of every court and which judges are serving in each of those courts that are dependent, in full or partially, for the voters. Then we know who to watch for future elections. This could be done for each of the cities that the Observer serves. It might be a help toward weeding out some of the incompetent.

You might even print a little history about them, i.e. the judge who, several years ago, sentenced a person who had a long record to only six months in jail for the crime of rape. I would even be willing to pay a little more for that particular issue, if expense is the problem.

I would hope this suggestion would be given serious consideration.

Charles K. Benton
Garden City

Movie offends

Having finally seen "Life Is Beautiful," I am writing this letter of anger and outrage to protest the film's attempt to romanticize the Holocaust. As well, I am disgusted by the widespread adulation and positive press that the film has received.

Unlike the movie, the Holocaust was not a romantic comedy. Life was not beautiful in the camps. Even Charlie Chaplin apologized in

the '60s for his 1940 "Great Dictator," noting that he never would have made it had he known the extent of Hitler's depravity.

Six million Jews were raped, tortured, brutalized and murdered. That's not funny!

The Holocaust in many ways is beyond comprehension hence most films trivialize the horror. In addition, since "Life is Beautiful" is so well-done, it engages our sentiments and attracts our sympathies while obscuring the ultimate abomination.

But no amount of slapstick comedy can make slave labor and murder attractive.

The film is so effective in its mission to disguise the tragedy and make six million deaths palatable that after two hours audiences are ready to accept the ridiculous. As the Allied forces approach, the Germans hurriedly destroy evidence before they flee. But, if "Life Is Beautiful" is to be believed, they had time to take our comedic hero, Guido, around the corner and execute him out of sight, no doubt to avoid offending audience sensibilities.

We need to confront reality rather than obscure it with romantic comedy and happy endings.

Dan Greenberg
Farmington Hills

Clinton must go

The liberal press insists that our country would be in for stress and turmoil should Clinton be impeached. On the contrary, impeachment of Bill Clinton would be the best thing that has happened to our 50 states in decades. The cleansing and upholding of the rule of law could set in motion the steps that need to be taken to strengthen the business community, return us to the family values and morality we used to cherish, and build our military once again to a formidable fighting force.

An added bonus would be the twofold we would get with Clinton's demise. No more Hillary Clinton! The transparent crusade for children's rights, 12-year-olds having equal family rights with parents, the warehousing of small children, the socialist gibberish of vilageization and globalization could be sent packing with the lady some call so bright that she didn't know that Bill Clinton might have dallied with Monica after 22 years of continuous marriage infidelity!

Neil Goodbred, Grumpy
Livonia

COMMUNITY VOICE

QUESTION:

What will you be leaving out for Santa Claus when he visits your house tonight?

We asked this question at the Laurel Park Place mall in Livonia.



"Some pictures that I drew of him. It has one heart with another heart inside it. Also, cookies and carrots for the reindeer."

Hannah Dillon
Plymouth Township



"Oreo cookies and a candy bar."

Kathryn Hawkes
Dearborn Heights



"A Smootchle Pooch stuffed animal."

Jacob Noel
Garden City



"Holly cookies and milk ... and carrots for the reindeer."

Robble Beattie
Westland

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— Philip Power

POINTS OF VIEW

Merger a shocker to Santa and his once-merry workforce

News release: North Pole, December 1998 - Gigantico Toys Inc. and Santa's Workshop confirmed their merger plans in a press conference yesterday.

Charge of Eliminating Human Resources fielded questions. Q. "Why is it necessary to cut so many jobs?"

GUEST COLUMNIST



FRANK COTE

mind. Won't closing these plants devastate these communities? It seems like you're pulling the rug out from under these people's lives.

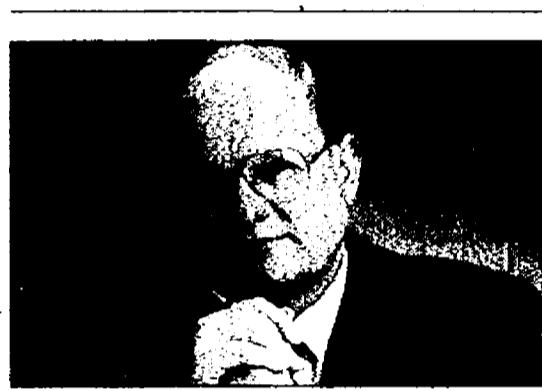
local mortuaries posted record profits as suicide levels skyrocketed." Q. "Gigantico posted record earnings last year, and paid stockholders a healthy dividend. Why the desperate need to raise profits?"

build a first-class worldwide corporation and all I got was fired, and this lousy T-shirt! I have time for just one more question.

Revenue sharing is one idea whose time has now expired

On no issue are Michigan lawmakers at each other's throats more ferociously than the annual local looting of the state treasury called "revenue sharing."

with no population increase. Besides, rural townships levy only a mill or two, often have volunteer fire departments, and find their wells and septic systems are adequate.



TIM RICHARD

Detroit for levying sky-high taxes. There's no way to reconcile the opposing views. How did we get into this mess?

ship wiped out a local tax, it should replace that money by sharing some of its own revenue. Thus, 14.5 percent of the SBT is allocated to counties, cities, townships and villages.

ship will see its share rise 34 percent over eight years; Eaton County's Carmel Township, 47 percent and Kalamo Township 55 percent;

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STAFF PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY

Audio-visual: Storyteller Linda Day relies on her voice and facial and hand gestures to tell her stories to luncheon goers at Schoolcraft College.

Storyteller's tales capture holiday spirit

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER
smason@oe.homecomm.net

Linda Day knows how to tell a good story. A professional storyteller, she can leave her audience laughing over childhood antics or in quiet contemplation over the moral of a story.

A popular closer for Schoolcraft College Women's Resource Center's fall luncheon series, Day chose to entertain her audience with the Richard Paul Evans story of "The Christmas Candle" and a lighthearted recounting of her sledding antics with her childhood friend, Corky - "His name was Carl, but his mom would say he was such a corker, so he was Corky McCray."

"When I come to the Women's Resource Center, it makes me go find a new book," said Day, launching into a story. Her voice alternating between the seemingly unpleasant Thomas and the old candlemaker, Day recounted Evans' morality tale about charity.

Thomas is headed home on a dark, bitterly cold Christmas Eve when he stops a candlemaker's shop for a candle for his tin lantern. He pushes aside a beggar at the door of the shop and entered, finding it filled with rows and rows of "beautiful Christmas candles."

"But Thomas had no use for them; he wanted just a plain old candle," she said. "All I need is illumination," Thomas told the candlemaker. "Ah, illumination is all you need, so maybe I can help you out," the candlemaker said, handing Thomas a candle.



Ho, ho, ho: Day's sledding antics as a child brought plenty of laughter from the audience.

"It is only 4 coppers, that is all, but perhaps you may find it costly," the candlemaker responded.

"Thomas threw down four coins and the candlemaker handed him the candle. With a peculiar smile, he told Thomas, 'Merry Christmas to you.'"

Strange encounters

On his way home, Thomas encountered three people. In the light of the candle, the first looked like his mother. Poorly clothed, he wrapped his cloak around her, but when she backed out of the light, he saw she was just a beggar woman.

The second was young man who looked like his brother in the light of the candle. In need of a place to stay, Thomas gave innkeeper six pence, his knapsack and pants to cover the one shilling cost of the room. And when the man left the circle of light, he saw that it wasn't his brother, but a young beggar man.

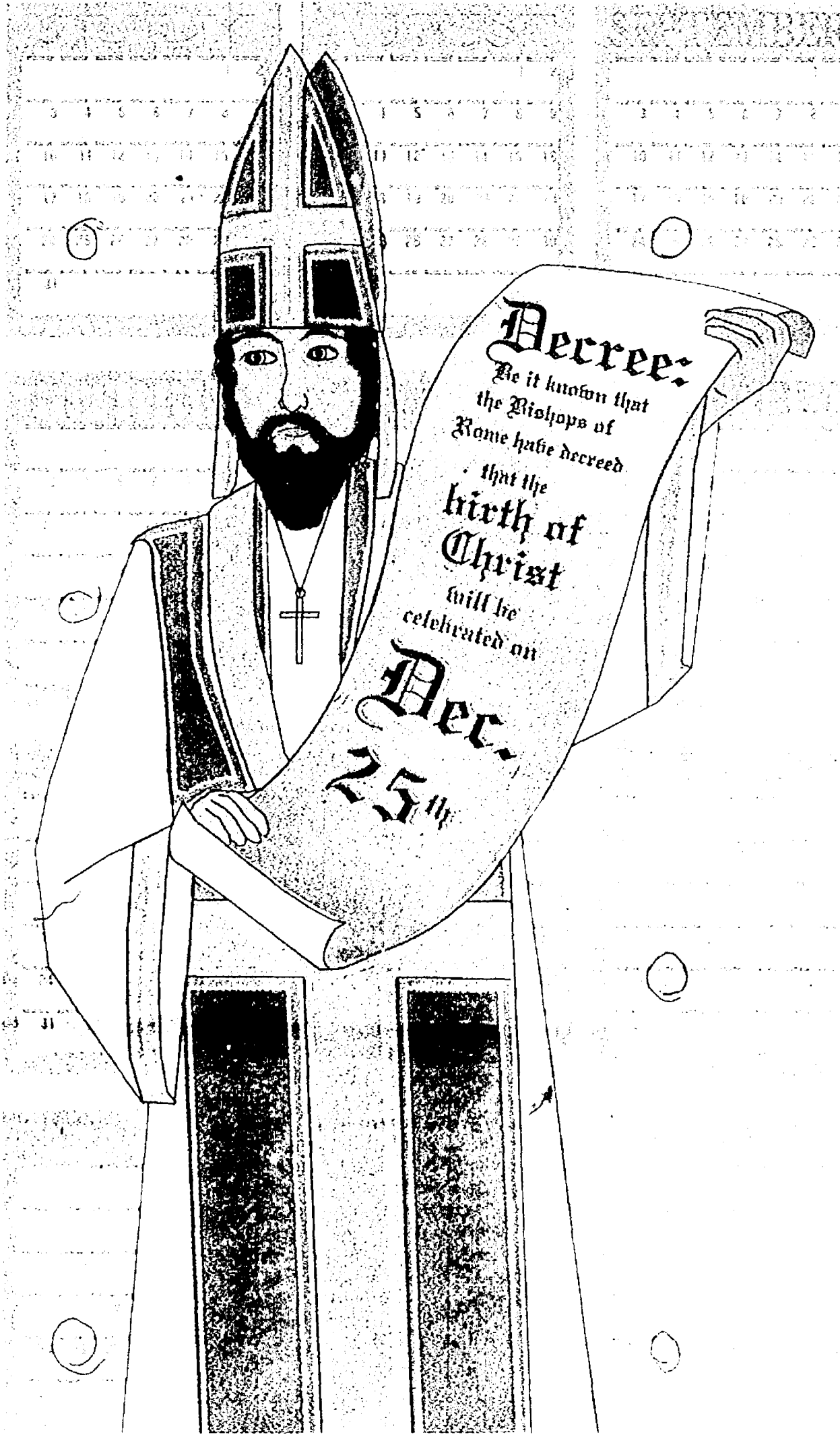
"What a peculiar night, what a strange night," Thomas thought as he walked to the house where he lived," said Day, her voice conveying the chilliness of the night.

A young girl ran up to him and asked if she could have something to eat. She was no older than his sister,

Please see STORIES, B2

Christmas Day

Who decided that Christ was born on Dec. 25



OK, it's Christmas Eve. The last batch of cookies has been baked, the last present wrapped and the last "some assembly required" toy put together.

The tinsel has been tossed on the Christmas tree with care, and the Nativity scene neatly arranged in a place of prominence beneath it. Time to sit back and savor the solitude before the hubbub of Christmas Day.

How about an eggnog to soothe the soul and while you're sipping, how about an imponderable: Whose bright idea was it anyway to celebrate Christ's birth on Dec. 25?

Apparently, no one, except maybe the man himself, can say for sure whether Jesus was really born on Dec. 25. Fact is, it was chosen because it already was a pagan holiday in ancient times.

Around the third century, there was an attempt to fix the Christ's birthday by tying it to a festival of the Nativity kept in Rome in the time of Bishop Telesphorus (between A.D. 127 and 139). It seems some Christmas observances of the Roman church can be attributed to the bishop.

There's also a story of Christians being massacred in the catacombs on the day of the Nativity between A.D. 161 and 180, but again, the exact year isn't known, and similar events supposedly happened in A.D. 300 at Nicomedia during the reign of Diocletian. However, neither story appears to be a reliable measure of the day Christ was born.

Many questions

While it was believed the birth of Christ did take place on the 25th of the month, which month is uncertain and the date's been assigned to every month at one time or another.

During the time of Clement of Alexandria (before 220) five dates in three different months of the Egyptian year were said to be the Nativity

and one corresponds to the Dec. 25 date.

And in the third century, it was a common belief that Christ was born on the winter solstice, based on an interpretation of some prophetic Scriptures and an idea that the Annunciation and the Crucifixion both occurred on the same day - March 25.

Another third century set of writings, The Apostolic Constitutions, indicate the Apostles ordained that the feast be kept on the 25th day of the ninth month which, at that time,

meant December.

The works of John Selden, published in 1661, suggested that in the early Christian ages, the winter solstice fell on the 8th of the Kalends of January - Dec. 25 - although it isn't accepted universally by modern-day students, who put the 8th of Kalends somewhere between the end of July and the end of October.

The Roman church finally settled on Dec. 25 as the birthday of Jesus Christ after the great persecution that took place around A.D. 310, which connects the visitation of the

wise men from the East, being celebrated 12 days later. Although questioned for several generations by the Eastern church, the Roman day became universal in the fifth century.

That acceptance coincided with a decline in heathen worship and the adaptation of harmless activities to enrich Christian symbolism.

They included Saturnalia, the great Roman holiday in remembrance of the supposed "Golden Age;" Sigillaria, the Feast of Dolls, in which dolls and other toys, mostly earthenware, were given to children; and Brumalia or Dies Natalis Invicti Solis - the Birthday of the Unconquered Sun, when the days became longer after the solstice.

Finally, there was Kalende Januarii, the New Year's Day, when everyone exchanged gifts and which also tied in with Juvenilia, the special festival of childhood and youth.

All of these days seemed to easily come together into one big Christian celebration and their ancient significance crossed over into the light of the Gospel. But the year of Christ's birth raises questions just as does the day. It, too, is not a definite.

The 753rd year A.U.C. (Anno Urbis Condita - from the building of the city, for example, Rome) is agreed upon as the traditional date. But that's too late, if you look at the Gospel of Matthew, which says that

"Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king." Herod died in A.U.C. 750.

Matthew's writings also suggest that some time must have elapsed between the birth of Christ and the death of Herod to have been for a visit from the wise men, the retreat to Egypt and the Slaughter of the Innocents.

The Gospel of Luke raises still another matter. It is not clear whether Tiberius Caesar's 15th year

Please see DEC. 25, B2

Chrismon tree becomes part of celebration

When members of New Life Lutheran Church gather for Christmas Eve services this evening, decorating the chapel will be a special Christmas tree.

The tree is decorated with handmade white and gold Chrismon ornaments.

Thirteen members of the congregation - Beverly Conklin, Jan Stutzman, Arlene McGarry, Sharon Messmer, Irene Ford, Barbara Becker, Jeanette Burman, Maureen Kall, Jane Allen, Mary Berends, Nicole Berends, Kathy Stutzman and Karen Rickerman - made more than 50 ornaments for the tree.

"It was my dream," said Jan Stutzman of Garden City, who organized the creative effort. "I've always had one before and it's just not Christmas without a Chrismon tree."

A Chrismon - a combination of parts of two words, Christ and monogram - is a monogram of Christ. Many of the designs come from the earliest Christians, which used them to identify themselves to one another, to designate the meeting places of the church and to sometimes show nonbelievers where they stood.

The ornaments also are always done in white and gold. White is the liturgical color for Christmas and refers to the Lord's purity and perfection. Gold relates to His majesty and glory.

Please see CHRISMONS, B2



Gather around: Sue Stutzman (right), holding her grandson Evan, 3, is joined by the Rev. Ken Roberts (from left) Kathy Stutzman, Jeanette Burman and Barbara Becker around New Life Lutheran's Chrismon tree

STAFF PHOTO BY PAUL HURSHMAN

Then there were ...



Five generations: The photographer said didn't have to tell Beth Kirby (from left), 84, of Redford, to smile. She had more than enough reason with the birth of Scott Russell Meinke July 18. His arrival made her a great-great-grandmother. Joining her for a family photograph were grandmother Kathy Cardinal, 39, of Taylor, mother Beth Melton, 19, of Taylor, holding Scott, and great-grandmother Sherry Fordham, 61, of Taylor.

Chrismons from page B1

Working from patterns developed by members of the Lutheran Church of the Ascension in Danville, Va., Stutzman created kits containing primarily gold and pearl beads and assorted gauges of fine gold wire, bought at stores locally and by mail order. Old jewelry provided some of the hard-to-find pieces.

Designs on New Life's tree include the Latin cross with and without the Alpha and Omega, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet and a symbol of the Savior's divinity; the Cross of Victory, representing a world united in Christ and the triumph of the Lord over earthly sin, and Chi Rho, the first letters of Christ in the Greek alphabet or the Latin phrase Christus Rex for Christ the King, to name a few.

"We tested the patterns and then prepared kits for those who wanted to work at home," said Stutzman who spearheaded the project. "Most of the time we met in homes of our members. It gave us a chance to get to know each other better."

The group started making the ornaments in the fall of 1997. Stutzman found the work "an exciting experience," and that members who had never done something like that before were "off and running once they got one ornament under their belt."

"They'd finish one and want to do more," Stutzman said. "They'd say, 'Give me a harder one to do.' And those who did them have gone out and got their own materials to make more."

A new congregation in the Plymouth area, New Life Lutheran Church is conducting services temporarily in the chapel at Our Lady of Providence Center, 16115 Beck, between Five Mile and Six Mile, Northville Township.

Stutzman's idea was to collect the Chrismons for a tree when the congregation finds a permanent home, but opted for a small tree in the chapel. The Rev. Ken Roberts dedicated the tree at worship services on Dec. 13. There wasn't a dry eye in the place, she said.

"With the enthusiasm for the

project, Stutzman expects that they'll keep needing a bigger tree each year.

"Some day, we'll have a building with a big high ceiling and huge tree," she said. "Our church is small and we are very grateful to be able to worship at Our Lady of Providence. They have been very nice to us. But our problem there is visibility; we have trouble letting people know we are a congregation."

"We pray for some kind of a permanent site that would allow us space to have everything in one place."

In addition to the Chrismon tree, Christmas Eve at New Life Lutheran will feature harpist and vocalist D.I. Turner leading the special instrumental music at the candlelight Communion service. The special music, featuring flute, piano and guitar, will begin at 6:45 p.m., with worship at 7 p.m.

Churchgoers should follow the luminaries and signs to the chapel. For more information, call the Rev. Ken Roberts at (734) 459-8181.

Stories from page B1

but Thomas thought, "No, I'll not let the light shine on her, I know what will happen."

When Thomas arrives at his home, his family is happy to see him, but ask what has happened to all of his things. He tells them he gave them all away and about the "good advice" the old man gave him.

"The candlemaker said if I took the candle it would be costly," he told his family," Day said, adding that "we can see what the old man meant, if we think about it deeply. We all come from one great family."

On the lighter side, Day pointed out that no one had told the Livonia resident that girls "couldn't have boys as friends," recounting a winter escapade with Corky, the friend she did a lot with, especially in the winter.

As 9-year-olds, they decided to take on the big boys and successfully sled down the 17th Street Hill across Spring Garden Road, over the knoll and right up to the front door of Capital Hill Grade School.

They wanted to be the champs, but needed a Red Flyer sled, so Day started lobbying for it well before Christmas, leaving little notes - "Red Flyer sled" - on her mother's pillow and in her father's lunch box and even telling her grandparents.

"When I walked into the living room on Christmas Day, I knew the sled would be there," said Day. "I called Corky and he said 'Yep, I knew it would be there.'"

Wax is wax is wax

The duo parlayed 37 cents into a quarter bar of paraffin to wax the runners of the sled like the older boys did, but it didn't go far, so using a knife, they removed the paraffin from the tops of her mother's jars of homemade jelly.

"We ran it up and down the runner, up and down the runner," said Day, "It was a little sticky, but it still wasn't

Luncheons to resume on Jan. 22

College's luncheon series will resume on Jan. 22, with the first luncheon on the guest list. The series will be "Flowers and a Feast," a look at how flowers relate to the seasons of life.

On Friday, Feb. 19, Shelly Shecker, romance novelist and author of "Timeless" and "The Forbidden Touch," will introduce luncheon goers to the realm of romance writing. Closing out the series on Friday, April 19, will be ragtime piano player Bob Milne. The live musical performance will be a first for the series. The luncheons are held in

the Waterman Campus Center of Schoelkopf College, Haggerty Road south of Seven Mile Road. Doors open at 11:30 a.m., with lunch - salad, bread and rolls, gourmet entree, vegetable, dessert and beverage - served at 11:45 a.m.

Tickets are \$14 per luncheon date. Prepaid registration is required and can be completed by sending a check, payable to Schoelkopf College, to the Women's Resource Center, 18600 Haggerty Road, Livonia 48152-2698.

For more information, call the resource center at (734) 462-4443.

enough."

They needed more, so they used their mothers' "candles for dress up," and when that wasn't enough, they opted for birthday candles.

"When my mom asked where all the little strings came from, I said 'I don't know,'" Day said.

The preparations done, they waited for the big snow storm that closed school for the day and sent the sledders scurrying to the top of the 17th Street Hill. Day and Corky carted the Red Flyer up the hill and waited in the bushes until the older boys had all taken a few turns.

Day had a plan. Starting at the Wilsons' driveway, Corky would run with the sled to the top of the hill, throw it down and climb on. Day would give him a big push and hop on top for their ride into "sledding history."

When it was time, they stepped out of their hiding place and ran to the top of the hill, where Day gave

McCray gave him a push and climbed on.

"We must have been going 70, 80 miles per hour, I think. The wind was blowing our hair back," Day said. "I thought, 'This is gonna be a great day, we're making sledding history.'"

A third of the way down the hill, they screeched to a halt. Day asked what happened, but all Corky could do is roll over and repeat, "The sled, the sled."

"I looked and there was no sled under Corky," Day said. "His jacket was split open, its buttons gone, and his T-shirt was up under his arms. White stripes from the ice and red stripes from the snow marked his bare chest."

The sled, Day discovered was still at the top of the hill, buried in four feet of snow.

"When I gave Corky that mighty shove, I buried the sled," said Day, her voice tinged with the sound of triumph. "And that was the day Linda Day rode Corky McCray into sledding history."

Dec. 25 from page B1

is counted from A.U.C. 765, when he was connected with Augustus in the Empire, or from the death of Augustus in A.U.C. 767. The real meaning of his remark about the census isn't known (Luke 3:1), and his information about the Nativity places it around A.U.C. 749 to 753.

Matthew's account of the "Star in the East" and then over Bethlehem has been called an atmospheric meteor and at best suggested to astronomers that someone born in Judea at that time was destined for greatness.

Nowhere does it say that

Christ was born exactly at the time the "star" appeared, but it is safe to say His birth took place some time between the middle of A.U.C. 747 and the end of A.U.C. 749, for example 7 B.C. and 5 B.C.

The aforementioned March 25 date was the pagan festival of spring. The church adopted it as the date of Mary's visit by the angel Gabriel, and added nine months to it to come up with Dec. 25 as the day of Jesus' birth.

Thus, Christ Mass, later called Christmas, was first celebrated

on Dec. 25 in the year 354, according to several sources.

Had enough? Thought so. We'll save the stuff about the Christmas tree, mistletoe, holly and the Star of Bethlehem for another time. Better get some sleep. Before you know it, the kids'll be up.

Oh, and before you turn in ... have a happy, joyous and safe Christmas.

- Compiled by Sue Mason; information courtesy of the www.christmas.com Web site.

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CALENDAR

UPCOMING EVENTS

TREE OF MEMORIES
Angels from Community Hospice Home Care Services can be inscribed for a donation to be placed on a remembrance tree in the front lobby of the Westland library through today, Thursday, Dec. 24. To obtain an angel or more information, call (734) 522-4244.

AT THE LIBRARY

FRIENDS OF LIBRARY
The Friends of the William P. Faust Public Library meet 7 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month at the library, 6123 Central City Parkway. Call (734) 326-6123. Meetings last about one hour and are open to the public. The Friends also hold a Friends Shop Book Sale during regular library hours at the library.

WESTLAND CENTER

WALKERS CLUB
The Westland Walkers meet the second Wednesday of each month, except during the summer. Westland Center opens its doors to walkers beginning at 7 a.m. through Arcade 2 by Olga's Kitchen. Mall walking ends at 10 a.m.

RECREATION

RECREATION AND FUN
A recreational get-together for teens and adults who are disabled is the second Friday of each month at the Westland Bailey Center. Call (734) 722-7620.

FIGURE SKATING
The Westland Figure Skating Club has formed an adult introductory precision team. The team is for those who want to have fun with other skating adults and get exercise. Practices are 6-6:50 a.m. Saturdays. All levels are welcome. Call (734) 722-1091.

SCHOOLS

MCKINLEY COOPERATIVE
McKinley Cooperative Preschool, housed in Good Shepherd Reformed Church, Wayne Road at Hunter, is holding registration. Morning and afternoon classes are available. Call (734) 729-7222.

SUBURBAN CHILDREN'S
Suburban Children's Co-op Nursery has openings in all classes 18 months through 5 years old. Located in Livonia bordering Westland. Call Michelle at (734) 421-6196.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM
The Wayne-Westland Community School District has ongoing registration for the preschool programs at Stottleymer Early Childhood and Family Development Center, on Marquette between Wayne and Wildwood. Programs include an Early Intervention Program, Head Start, Kids/Plus Preschool, a Pre-Primary Impaired program and Sparkey Preschool. Registration is 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Call (734) 695-2660.

CHURCH PRESCHOOL
The Westland Free Methodist Preschool has openings for 3- and 4-year-olds in the morning and afternoon sessions. The younger pupils attend Tuesdays and Thursdays, other pupils on Mondays and Wednesdays. A Friday enrichment class is also available. The preschool is at 1421 S. Venoy, West-

land. Call (734) 728-3559.

GARDEN CITY CO-OP
The Garden City Co-op nursery has openings for preschool classes for ages 18 months through 4 years. Tots class meets on Wednesday mornings and 3- and 4-year-olds meets Mondays and Thursdays. Parental involvement is required. Call Kelli at (734) 513-7708.

ST. MEL PRESCHOOL
St. Mel Preschool, 7506 Inkster Road, north of Warren Avenue in Dearborn Heights, has morning and afternoon classes for both 3- and 4-year-olds. Registration has begun. Call (313) 274-6270.

YWCA READINESS
The YWCA of Western Wayne County Early Childhood School Readiness Program is available to 4- and 5-year-old children. The YWCA is at 26279 Michigan in Inkster. Call (313) 561-4110.

CHARTER SCHOOL
The Academy of Detroit-Westland, an entrepreneurial and business charter school, serves kindergarten through seventh grade. The school emphasizes a basic education with business and entrepreneurial skills. The school offers a foreign language class, music and art, a dress code and a computer lab with access to the Internet. Call (734) 722-1465 or (248) 569-7787.

LITTLE LAMBS
Little Lambs Preschool, on Farmington Road south of West Chicago in Livonia, is accepting registration for the 1998-99 school year. Classes meet Monday-Wednesday-Friday afternoons and Tuesday-Thursday mornings for 3- to 5-year-olds. Little Lambs is a nonprofit, nondiscriminatory preschool. Call (248) 471-2077.

FRANKLIN PTSA
The Franklin High PTSA is seeking members. Membership is open to those who care about the schools and community, and members aren't required to have a student in the school. Price is \$3 for students, \$5 for adults. Checks should be made payable to Franklin PTSA and sent to 31000 Joy in Livonia 48150.

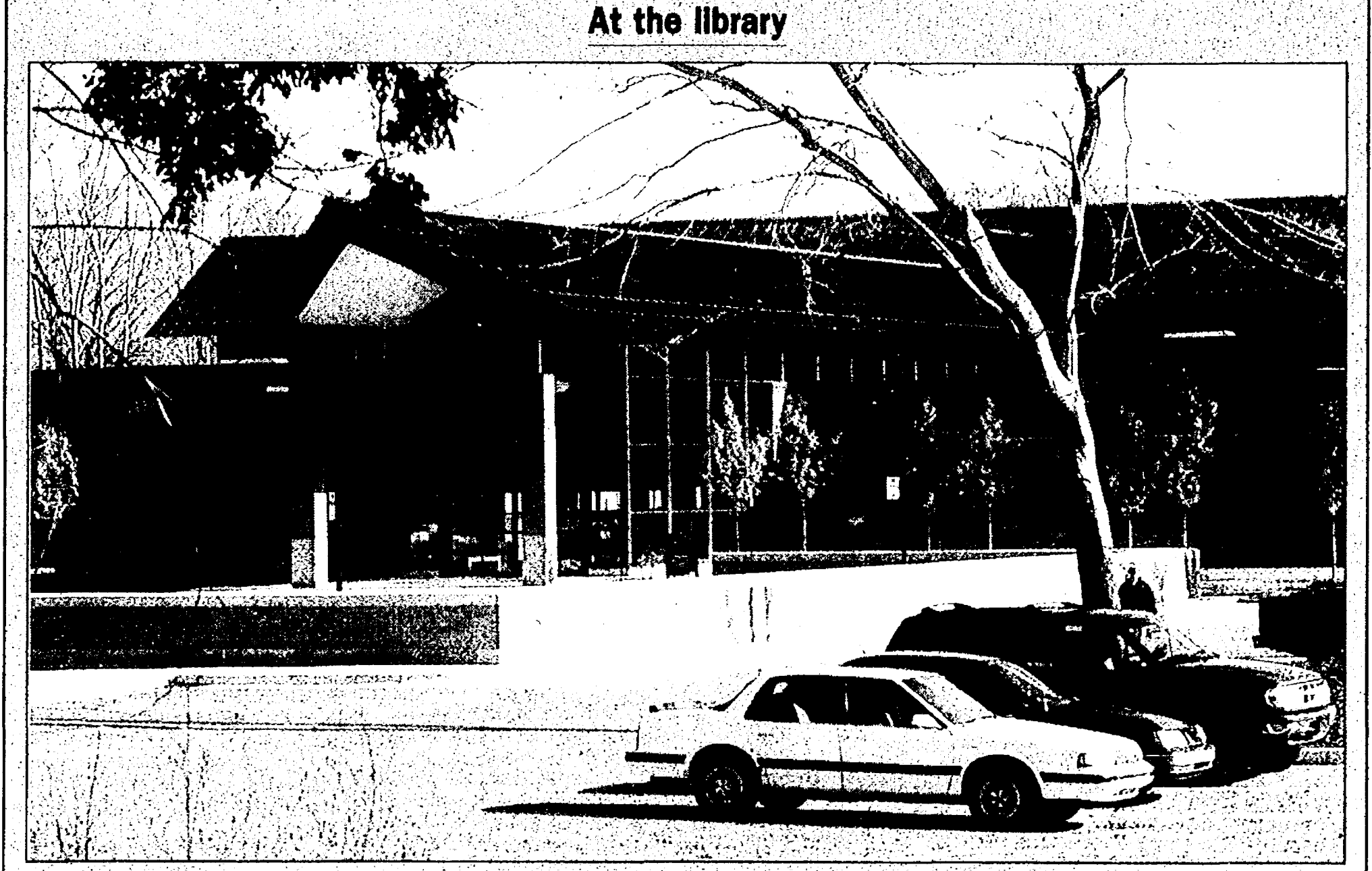
TUTORIAL PROGRAM
A free tutoring program for students is offered at the Salvation Army Wayne-Westland Corps Community Center, 2300 Venoy in Westland. The program, 4-5:30 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, is for students ages 9 and older in Wayne, Westland and Romulus. For information on participating or volunteering, call Leau'Rette Douglas, (734) 722-3660.

MOM'S MORNING OUT
Children, ages newborn to 6, and their mothers are invited to a "Mom's Morning Out" 9-11:30 a.m. every Thursday at Newburg United Methodist Church, on Ann Arbor Trail between Wayne and Newburgh. Children are grouped together by ages in rooms with two caregivers per room. This program is an optional co-op, with parents working once each month. Call (734) 422-0149.

LIVONIA COOPERATIVE
Livonia Cooperative Nursery, a preschool at 9601 W. Chicago, has openings for 3- and 4-year-olds. To enroll, call Donna at (734) 266-8185.

HISTORY ON VIEW

WESTLAND MUSEUM
The Westland Historical Museum has a display of dolls from around the world and a display of toys



At the library

Teen Net meeting: At 4 p.m. Monday, Dec. 28, the library's teen advisory group meets to discuss the types of music, books and programs they would like to see at the library. Community Meeting Room A. Also planned at the library beginning in January are programs for children. The Children's Department is preparing for the winter session of storytimes. Toddler tales, a session of developmentally appropriate storytimes for children 18-36 months old, includes movement, singing and stories. Choose one: 1:30 p.m. Tuesdays or 10:30 a.m. Wednesdays. Also planned are Just for Me Preschool Time, a session of thematic storytimes for 3- to 5-year-olds. Choose one: 1:30 p.m. Tuesdays or 10:30 a.m. Wednesdays. Registration for storytimes is required. You may register by telephone or in person at the Children's Desk. Session I: Weeks of Jan. 4 through Feb. 22. Tuesdays, Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26, Feb. 2, 9, 16, 23. Wednesdays, Jan. 6, 13, 20, 27, Feb. 3, 10, 17, 24. Registration began Dec. 1. Session II: Weeks of March 1 through April 26. Registration begins Feb. 1.

for boys. The museum is open 1-4 p.m. Saturdays (except during the holiday weekends) at 857 N. Wayne Road between Marquette and Cherry Hill. Call (734) 326-1110.

FRIENDS MEET
Friends of the Westland Historical Museum meet 7 p.m. on the second Tuesdays of January, March, May, July, September and November at the Westland Meeting House, 37091 Marquette between Newburgh and Wayne roads. Call President Jim Franklin at (734) 721-0136. Everyone is welcome.

FOR SENIORS

SENIOR CHOIR
A Friendship senior choir, under the direction of Robert Cassidy, has been started at the Westland Senior Resources Department Friendship Center, 1119 N. Newburgh, Westland. Those who enjoy singing are invited to join. The choir meets at 9 a.m. Thursdays.

EXERCISE
Musical Chairs is a new program from Jazzercise designed for exercisers older than 40. The program provides a low to moderate workout geared for the older adult which improves strength, flexibility, balance, posture, coordination and cardiovascular endurance. It incorporates

resistance exercises using rubber tubing and light weights with walking and jogging patterns. Wear loose-fitting clothing and comfortable shoes. Light weights and an exercise mat are suggested. Robert Cassidy is the certified Jazzercise instructor. Sign up at the front desk at the Westland Friendship Center or call (734) 722-7632.

TRAVEL GROUP
The Travel Group meets 12:45 p.m. every Friday in the Westland Friendship Center, 1119 N. Newburgh, unless a trip or program is planned. Programs include speakers, films, celebration of birthdays and weekly door prizes. There is a \$3 membership fee for residents, \$12.50 for non-residents. Call (734) 722-7632.

CARD GROUP
The Friday Variety Card Group at the Westland Friendship Center meets at 2 p.m. People play euchre, pinochle, bridge, Uno, rummy and poker. Light refreshments are served. Call (734) 722-7632 for information or just show up to play cards. The Friendship Center is at 1119 N. Newburgh.

MONTHLY MEAL/DANCE
The Wayne Ford Civic League schedules its senior meal for people 50 and older 11:45 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the first Sunday of each month at the league hall, on Wayne Road two blocks

south of Ford. Cost is \$5 for members and \$7 for non-members. The meal includes beer, beverages, dancing to Big Band music and door prizes. Call (734) 728-5010.

WORK REFERRAL
Information Center Inc. refers workers to seniors who need help. The program is for people interested in providing transportation, yardwork, housework, etc. Workers can specify the type of work they are willing to do and the communities they want to serve. Call (734) 422-1052.

DYER CENTER
The Wayne-Westland School District's Dyer Senior Adult Center has activities Monday through Thursday at the center, on Marquette between Wayne and Newburgh roads. Mondays, Senior Chorus at 1:30 p.m.; Tuesdays, arts, crafts and needlework at 9:30 a.m.; Wednesdays, Kitchen Band, 10 a.m., bingo at 1 p.m.; Thursdays, ceramics, arts, crafts at 9:30 a.m.; a Hawaiian dance exercise class will be 1 p.m. every Wednesday in the Senior Resources Department (Friendship Center), 1119 Newburgh, Hall A. Instructor is Kammo Oris. Sign up at the front desk or call (734) 722-7632.

CLUBS IN ACTION

CHADD
CHADD of Northwest Wayne County meets the first Thursday of the month throughout the school year at the Livonia Civic Center Library, 32777 Five Mile. CHADD is a nonprofit, parent-based, volunteer organization whose aim is to better the lives of individuals with attention difficulties. Call (313) 438-3099.

T.O.P.S.
Take Off Pounds Sensibly No. M128, a support group for sensible weight loss, meets at 6:30 p.m. Tuesdays at Good Shepherd Reformed Church, Wayne Road and Hunter in Westland. Call Jackie at (734) 722-7225.

T.O.P.S.
Take Off Pounds Sensibly No. M153 meets weekly. Weigh-in is 6-7:15 p.m., meeting is 7:30-8:30 p.m. Wednesdays, at the Med-Max building, 35600 Central City Parkway, Westland. Call Suzanne at (734) 728-8437.

PUBLIC SPEAKING
The Westland Easy Talkers Toastmasters Club No. 6694 (formerly Holy Smokemasters) urges people who want to learn the art of public speaking to attend the club's weekly meetings at 6 p.m. each Thursday at Denny's Restaurant, 7725 N. Wayne Road next to Westland Shopping Center. Call John Elbe at (734) 326-5419.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
Alcoholics Anonymous meetings are 8:30-9:30 p.m. Sundays and Wednesdays at Garden City Hospital (north entrance), 5254 Inkster Road in Garden City. Call Woody, (734) 776-3415.

BINGO

DEMS' BINGO
The 13th Congressional District Democratic Party sponsors bingo games at 6:30 p.m. Thursdays in the M.J. Hall, 35412 Michigan, next to the Farmer Jack Supermarket in Wayne. Call 421-1517.

MORE DEMS' BINGO
The 13th Congressional District Democratic Party holds bingo games at 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays in the Cherry Hill Hall, on the southwest corner of Cherry Hill and Venoy. Call 421-1517.

ST. MEL CHURCH
Bingo games are held at 6:45 p.m. Fridays in St. Mel Church's activities building, on Inkster Road north of Warren Road. Doors open at 4 p.m. Food is available.

WFCL BINGO
The Finesse Girls Travel Softball Boosters hold bingo games at 6:30-9:45 p.m. every Monday to raise money for the girls' softball program. The bingo games are at the Wayne Ford Civic League hall on Wayne Road, two blocks south of Ford.

MORE BINGO
The Metro Wayne Democratic Club sponsors bingo games at 6:30 p.m. Thursdays at the Joy Manor Bingo Hall, on the south side of Joy, east of Middlebelt. Proceeds are used by the club to sponsor Little League baseball teams, the Salvation Army and School for the Blind. Call 422-5025 or 729-8681.

SHAMROCK BINGO
There will be bingo at 11 a.m. Wednesdays at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 35100 Van Born, east of Wayne Road, Wayne. Doors open at 9 a.m. Food available. Proceeds go to charity. Call 728-3020.

SMOKELESS BINGO
"Smokeless" bingo meets at 6:30 p.m. Tuesdays at St. Simon and Jude Parish Hall, 32500 Palmer, east of Venoy, Westland. Offered are three jackpots of \$400, \$300 and \$200.

K OF C BINGO
Pope John XXIII Assembly of the Knights of Columbus Council 1536 hosts bingo games at 6:45 p.m. Thursdays. The games are in the Livonia Elks Lodge, 31117 Plymouth Road, one block east of Merriman, Livonia. Call 425-2246.

CALENDAR FOR

The Observer Newspapers welcome Calendar items. Items should be from non-profit community groups or individuals announcing a community program or event. Please type or print the information below and mail your item to The Calendar, Westland Observer, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150, or by fax to 734-591-7279. Deadline for Calendar items is noon Friday for the following Thursday's paper. Call 953-2104 if you have any questions.

Event: _____

Date and Time: _____

Location: _____

Telephone: _____

Additional Info.: _____

Use additional sheet if necessary

WEDDINGS AND ENGAGEMENTS

Fricke-Pigula

Rochelle M. Pigula and Kevin C. Fricke were married Sept. 5 at St. Agatha Catholic Church in Redford. The Rev. Thomas Slowinski officiated.

The bride is the daughter of Robert and Patricia Pigula of Farmington Hills. The groom is the son of Frank and Marge Fricke of Livonia.

The bride received a business administration and liberal arts associate degree from Oakland Community College. She is co-founder of Internet Real Estate.

The groom received his bachelor of arts degree in radio/television/film from Wayne State University. He is employed as a television weather anchor at an ABC-TV affiliate in Madison, Wis.

The bride asked Diane Williams to serve as her matron of honor with Lynn Williams and Theresa Pigula as bridesmaids.

The groom asked Scott MacKinnon to serve as best man with



Bryan Wheeler and Gary Fricke as groomsmen.

The couple received guests at Southfield Manor in Southfield before leaving on a one-week cruise of the southern Caribbean. They are making their home in Madison, Wis.

Brownies brighten others' holiday

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO
STAFF WRITER
cfuoco@oe.homecomm.net

Brownies from Bentley Elementary School in Canton Township made the holidays a little happier for seven less fortunate children.

For a second year, the girls of Troop 645 donated clothing, toys, books and other gifts to children whose families have sought help through Starfish Family Services' Safe Stay residence.

"That is fairly unusual; usually an individual Brownie Girl Scout buys a gift item for one child," said Charlotte Luttrell, public relations manager of the Huron Valley Girl Scout Council. "You wouldn't normally see four Brownies buying for one. That's a little bit beyond the average gift."

"Adopting families and buying gifts for children at holiday time is a common way for Brownie Girl Scouts to do a service project for the community. The one thing about Girl Scouting is that the girls are encouraged to look outward during the holidays."

Because of confidentiality laws, the girls were not given the children's full names, just the first names, ages and clothing sizes, according to Troop 645 leader Christina Bergmans.

Prior to picking names, the Brownies learned about Starfish Family Services and Safe Stay, a 24-hour residential crisis and



STAFF PHOTO BY PAUL HURSCHEMANN

Holiday cheer: Canton Brownie Troop 645 members Emma Williams, 6, (from left), Courtney Stevens, 8, Linsey Cerilli, 6, and Laura Morgan, 6, show off the Christmas gifts they purchased for needy families. School.

Daigle-Markell

Philip and Susan Daigle of Berkley announce the engagement of their daughter, Elizabeth Anne, to Kevin Ryan Markell, the son of Jack Markell of Livonia and the late Kathleen Markell.

The bride-to-be is a graduate of Berkley High School and

Michigan State University. She is employed by the University of Michigan Hospital.

Her fiancé is a graduate of Detroit Catholic Central High School in Redford and Michigan State University. He will begin working at the Ford Motor Co. in Dearborn in January.

An August wedding is planned in the Rose Garden at Greenfield Village in Dearborn.



Doyle-Tullio

John and Mary Doyle of Livonia announce the engagement of their daughter, Mary Katherine, to Michael Patrick Tullio, the son of Antonio and Mary Tullio, also of Livonia.

The bride-to-be is a graduate of Ladywood High School and Madonna University. She is employed as a sixth grade teacher in the Livonia Public Schools.

Her fiancé is a graduate of Livonia Stevenson High School. He is employed by National Computer Resources Inc. in Wixom as a network specialist.

A June wedding is planned at St. Aidan Catholic Church in Livonia.

Craig-Barker-Cook

Michael Jeffrey Craig of Glasgow Village, Mo., and Diana Barker-Cook of Westland were married Oct. 24 at First Free Will Baptist Church of Plymouth. The Rev. Milford Byrd officiated.

The bride is the daughter of June Best of St. Petersburg, Fla. The groom is the son of the late Earl and Virginia Craig.

The bride is a graduate of Torrey Air Force Base High School in Spain. Formerly a secretary for Realty World of Canton, she now works as a secretary for a Christian hospital in Glasgow Village, Mo.

The groom is a graduate of Riverview High School in Kansas City, Mo. He is employed as a bio-medical engineer.

The bride asked Lana Olson and Samantha Craig to be her attendants. The groom asked Jim Chuhran and Sean Craig to be his attendants.

After greeting guests at First Free Will Baptist Church's reception hall, the couple left for a honeymoon in Branson, Mo. They are making their home in Glasgow Village.

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OBSERVER SPORTS SCENE

Blackburn plays for U.S.

Michigan State University sophomore goaltender Joe Blackburn (Livonia Churchill) has been named to the Team USA, which will compete Dec. 26-Jan. 5 at the IIHF World Junior Championships in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Blackburn leads the Central Collegiate Hockey Association in goals-against average (1.39). He owns a 10-3-2 record with a .925 save percentage.

Blackburn is also joined on the U.S. Junior Team by forward David Legwand, and defensemen Paul Mara and Nikos Tselios — all from the Plymouth Whalers of the Ontario Hockey League.

Canada, meanwhile, will be represented by the Whalers' Harold Druken.

FOX Sports Detroit will air the Dec. 31 U.S.-Canada preliminary round game (tape-delayed at 4 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 2).

Brzezinski award winner

Boston College senior offensive guard Doug Brzezinski (Livonia/Redford Catholic Central) was recently named winner of the annual Varsity Club Trophy (Thomas F. Scanlan Award).

Brzezinski won BC football's highest honor, which is presented annually to the senior player who best exemplifies the ideals of Tom Scanlan '20, one of the most beloved football alumni, scholar, athlete, friend, gentleman and ambassador of goodwill at Boston College.

Considered to be a sure choice in the upcoming NFL Draft, the 6-foot-5, 305-pound Brzezinski is a two-time first-team All-Big East selection and is the major reason the Eagles finished with 4,527 total yards on the year. He was voted the team's co-captain prior to the season.

Mercy softball clinic

The second annual Farmington Hills Mercy High School softball clinic will be from 9-10:30 a.m. (grades 4-6) and 10:45-12:15 p.m. (grades 7-12) Saturday Jan. 9, 16, 23, 30; Feb. 13 and 20 at the school's gym.

The cost is \$25 for six sessions or \$5 per session. Attendance is limited to 30 per session.

For more information, call Fred Marinucci at (313) 531-5819 or Jack Falvo at (248) 471-1748.

Collegiate note

Bowling Green State University sophomore **Yalonda Holt** (Wayne Memorial) is averaging 7.0 points and 4.1 rebounds per game for the women's basketball team.

Holt, a 5-foot-10 guard-forward, also leads the Lady Falcons (4-5) in three-point accuracy (.438). She has appeared in all nine games with one start.

For the record

Livonia Churchill's Adam Rourke should have been listed as the first goal scorer in Wednesday's 4-3 non-league hockey victory over defending state Class A champion Trenton (Sunday, Dec. 20 edition).

Redford Catholic Central's Ryan Meekins, a senior captain and second-team All-Observer selection a year ago, should have been listed as a key returner for the boys swim squad (Thursday, Dec. 17 edition).

Meekins was a Catholic League champion in the 100-yard freestyle (48.43) and ranked third in the area in the 200 freestyle (1:45.85). He was also a member of CC's 200 medley and 400 freestyle relay teams, which placed 13th in each event at last year's state Class A meet.

Drop-in basketball

The City of Plymouth Recreation Division will hold open gym for basketball from 6:45-9:45 p.m. Mondays at Central Middle School.

The cost is \$4 per person for the full 3-hour session. City of Plymouth residents will receive a \$1 discount with identification.

For more information, call (734) 465-6620.

To submit items for the Observer Sports Scene, write to: Brad Emmons, 36251 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia, MI 48150; or send via fax to (734) 591-7279.

Salem edges Spartans in relays

BY C.J. RISAK
STAFF WRITER
cjrisk@oe.homecomm.net

As veteran Plymouth Salem swim coach Chuck Olson said, "That's why we have this meet — so you can learn from it."

Olson was talking about the Western Lakes Activities Association Relays, the annual league get-together that Salem hosts. While it may provide a look at what each team has to offer, it usually has little bearing on the WLAA Meet at the end of the season.

Example: Livonia Stevenson won last year's relays, and Plymouth Canton won the two previous two years. The WLAA champion at season's end each time, however, was Salem.

What the Rocks learned during those relays meets was that mistakes can kill a team's chances. Certainly Salem had the firepower and depth to win the relays the past three years, but didn't. Why?

Disqualifications, usually for leaving the starting blocks early. If a

BOYS SWIMMING

team has a first- or second-place finisher DQed and scores no points, in a meet that totals just 10 races, it's chances of winning are mortally wounded.

The Rocks didn't make that kind of mistake last Saturday and the result was a good one — for them. They won three relays and captured the first-place trophy.

"We were just a bit stronger at the end than anyone else," said Olson. "And no one got DQed."

Any explanation for that? "We didn't really do anything different," the Salem coach replied, adding in jest, "This year we decided not to emphasize starts and it worked out well."

Maybe not practicing something is an answer, but don't count on it. Olson doesn't.

If the Rocks had an added incentive, it was that no current team member had ever won this thing. "The seniors had never won it," Olson

said. "I didn't even know it. They told me afterwards."

What the relay results told was that this, indeed, would be a much closer race for the WLAA title. Salem's margin of victory last Saturday was slim — in fact, 20 points was all that separated first and third. The Rocks' total was 244; Stevenson was right behind with 233, and Canton wasn't much further back with 224. North Farmington, too, cleared 200 points, scoring 207 (see meet results).

"This is the first time in many years it's been this close," said Stevenson coach Doug Buckler. "I thought the meet went well. The whole league swam pretty darn good. We had one first and four seconds."

Canton's improvement certainly concerned Buckler. "Canton has depth and is much better this year, even though they graduated some good talent."

But, Buckler noted: "Chuck (Olson) is still the team to beat. (Salem's) won it six times in a row. But we've got four teams, along with Northville,

that will be right in there for the league title."

Salem won the 400-yard freestyle, the 400 individual medley and the 200 medley relays, and finished second in the 200 backstroke, 500 crescendo free and 200 free relays.

One relay meet record was set: Canton's Justin Allen, Aaron Reeder, Trey Gercak and Don LeClair won the 200 back relay in 1:45.69, shattering the previous mark of 1:47.32 set by Livonia Churchill in 1994.

Andrew Locke, Brian Mertens, Jim Peace and Dan Jones combined to win the 400 free relay for Salem (3:32.75), and Eric Lynn, Aaron Shelton, Kevin Crabill and Paul Perez teamed for a first in the 400 individual medley relay (4:02.90).

Matt Casillas, Jason Rebarchik, Mark Witthoff and Locke were winners for the Rocks in the 200 medley relay (1:47.05). Point of interest: Locke was the only swimmer on two winning relays for Salem, a tribute to the team's depth — which has always

Please see WLAA RELAYS, C2

PREP BASKETBALL

Crestwood overcomes late surge by Trojans

BY RICHARD L. SHOOK
STAFF WRITER

If Livonia Clarenceville had played the first 16 minutes like it played the last 16 Tuesday night it wouldn't be 1-3 right now.

But the Trojans didn't, so previously winless Dearborn Heights Crestwood was able to pile up enough of a first-half lead to claim a 64-60 victory.

"We've got to have a sustained effort," Coach Bill Dyer of improved but still 1-3 Clarenceville said. "We've got to have 32 minutes of consistent effort a night, or close to it."

"The key is we've got to come out ready. We've got good players. But they don't know how to come out and get started."

"We're young. We don't quite know how to do it yet."

There's a reason Crestwood hadn't won in three starts, even if the bigger Chargers play in the Michigan Mega Conference Gold Division and the Trojans compete in the Metro Conference.

If Clarenceville had started the game playing the same kind of in-your-shorts, floor-burn defense it displayed in the final two quarters the result would have been more lop-sided the other way.

Trailing 42-24 at the half, Clarenceville came out in a full-court trapping defense. Crestwood broke it four times in the first two minutes to take a 51-28 lead.

It would have been easy for the Trojans to slink home at that point, but they didn't.

"We felt we weren't aggressive enough in the first half," Dyer said. "We wanted to get up the floor and play a little. We wanted to make them make mistakes."



STAFF PHOTO BY TOM HAWLEY

Scrambling: Livonia Clarenceville's Steve Shaw (left) and Rick Burack (right) go to the floor in an attempt to keep the ball away from Chris Gascon of Dearborn Heights Crestwood during Tuesday night's non-league encounter.

Corey McKendry hit a three-pointer to trigger a 10-point run that got Livonia thinking that maybe it could do the unthinkable.

Dearborn Heights made a free throw with 2:20 to play, making it 52-38, but Clarenceville closed the quarter with seven unanswered points to cut the margin to a workable 52-45 entering the final eight minutes of play.

Rick Burack had six of his 16 points in the third quarter while McKendry scored all five of his and Scott Wion had five of his 16.

Rick Murphy knocked down three straight triples on three trips down the floor for Clarenceville to sliced the deficit to 60-58 with 2:12 to play.

A free throw by Brian Stefanski made it 61-58 with 2:04 left and Joe Keough drilled two left-handed free

throws with 1:22 left to cut it to 61-60.

"We made a couple of mental mistakes," Dyer said of what happened next.

Joe Fodera made a free throw with 34 seconds to play and Jason Trybuski made a layup off a steal by Matt Behrens with 10 seconds to play to seal the decision.

"We've got ability," Dyer said. "We just have to stay committed. We have athletic kids. We have to take it to somebody."

Murphy ended up with 11 points while Scott Carr and Keough also had five points. Seven Trojans scored.

Behrens and Fodera paced Crestwood with a dozen points apiece. Trybuski and Kyle Steger scored eight each and Geoff Ploch had seven as 11 Chargers scored.

Crestwood came out like it wanted to apply a knockout punch early, playing much more aggressively and taking an 8-1 lead after scoring the first six points of the game.

But Clarenceville scored eight in a row to take a 9-8 lead. It trailed, 14-11, after the first quarter and Crestwood shredded both the half-court press and the Trojans' regular defense for a 28-13 second quarter.

"Twenty-eight points," Dyer said. "That's twice too much. Our goal is to give up 50 points a game. We do that, we'll win."

"We've got tough kids. They want to win. They're not going to quit against anybody."

They just need to learn that every two floor burns you get in the first half saves you one in the second.

Friedrichs named Churchill boys soccer coach

BY BRAD EMONS
STAFF WRITER
bemons@oe.homecomm.net

Livonia Churchill's new varsity boys soccer coach arrived just in time for Christmas.

Earlier this week, Churchill athletic director Marc Hage named 24-year-old Reid Friedrichs to succeed Chad Campau.

Campau, who remains the Churchill varsity girls soccer coach, resigned from the boys position last fall after going 48-19-18 in four years.

The Chargers are coming off an 11-6-3 season.

"We're very excited about Reid and he's excited to get going," Hage said. "He has a very nice background, but more importantly we feel he has the integrity and the maturity like another one of our young coaches — John Filiatraut — our varsity football coach who has also done an excellent job

bringing enthusiasm and stability to the program."

Hage served on the selection committee along with Churchill assistant principal Dan Willenborg and varsity baseball coach Herb Osterland.

Friedrichs, recently hired into the Livonia Public Schools as a science teacher at Churchill, has quite an impressive playing background.

A 1992 graduate of Ann Arbor Pioneer, Friedrichs was a two-time All-State goalkeeper who later went on to star at Michigan State.

At MSU, Friedrichs posted the NCAA's lowest goals against average as a junior (1995). As a senior (1996), he was named Big Ten Player of the Year and was selected to play in the Umbro College All-Star Game. Friedrichs is a two-time All-Big Ten selection (1995-96).

Most recently he has been a player-coach and captain for the Mid-Michigan Bucks of the U.S. Inter-Regional Soccer League.

Friedrichs also spent a year as an assistant at Alma College and has worked numerous area youth camps, including several for the Detroit Rockers.

"As a new coach I'm going to have to establish my way and my personality according to the rules we set forth," said Friedrichs, who will serve as Churchill's JV girls coach this spring. "I'm very excited because the school has a great soccer tradition and is known as a great soccer program. I'm proud, happy and honored to be named."

Friedrichs also said he hopes to retain Louie Kise as the JV boys coach.

"My job is to create a good atmosphere so we can be successful on and off the field," Friedrichs said. "Hopefully, with the knowledge I've acquired as a player, I can bring something back to the game."

"And being a keeper, I feel I understand the field aspect of the game. It's kind of a bonus and I believe it's an advantage."

OUTDOOR CALENDAR

SHOWS

CAMPER, TRAVEL & RV
The 16th annual Pontiac Silverdome Camper, Travel & RV Show will be held Jan. 27-31 at the Silverdome.

BOAT, SPORT AND FISHING
The 16th annual Pontiac Silverdome Boat, Sport & Fishing Show will be held Feb. 17-21 at the Silverdome.

CLASSES

FLY TYING
Paint Creek Outfitters in Rochester offers a variety of fly tying classes for beginners and advanced tyers. Call (248) 650-0440 for more information or to make a reservation for an upcoming class.

ACTIVITIES

GANATCHIO TRAIL
Come and explore the Ganatchio Trail, which runs from Windsor to Tecumseh parallel to the Lake St. Clair shore, during this program, which begins at 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 27. The event is sponsored by the Southeast Michigan Group Sierra Club. Participants should meet at the tourist information center on Route 3, south of the bridge in Windsor. Call (313) 581-7579 for more information.

SEASON/DATES

BASS
Largemouth and smallmouth bass season closes Dec. 31.

DEER
The second archery season runs through Jan. 3. A special firearms antlerless-only deer season runs through Jan. 3 on private land only in much of the Lower Peninsula. Check the DNR's Hunting and Trapping Guide for exact locations of the late hunt.

GOOSE
There will be a special late Canada goose season Jan. 9-Feb. 7 in the southern Michigan Goose Management Unit. Check the 1998-99 Michigan Waterfowl Hunting Guide for specific

boundaries.

GROUSE
A special late season runs through Jan. 1 in the Lower Peninsula.

RABBIT/HARE
Rabbit/hare season run through March 31 statewide.

SQUIRREL
Squirrel season runs through Jan. 1 statewide.

CLUBS

SOLAR
The School for Outdoor Leadership, Adventure and Recreation (SOLAR), a non-profit organization interested in promoting the appreciation of outdoor activities, meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month at the Colony Hall in Southfield. Call (248) 988-6658 for more information.

METRO-WEST STEELHEADERS
Metro-West Steelheaders meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month in the cafeteria at Garden City High School. Call Dominic Liparoto at (248) 476-5027 for more information.

MICHIGAN FLY FISHING
The Michigan Fly Fishing Club meets at 7 p.m. the first and third Wednesdays of each month at Livonia Clarenceville Junior High School. Call (810) 478-1494 for more information.

FOUR SEASONS
The Four Seasons Fishing Club meets 7:30 - 9:30 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month at the Livonia Civic Park Senior Center. Refreshments will be served and visitors are welcome. For information call Jim Kudej at (734) 591-0843.

FISHING BUDDIES
Fishing Buddies Fishing Club meets monthly in Rochester Hills. The meetings are open to all anglers. Call (248) 656-0556 for more information.

BASS ASSOCIATION
The Downriver Bass Association, a non-tournament bass club, meets at 6:30 p.m. the fourth Tuesday of every month at the Gander Mountain in Taylor. Call (734) 676-2863 for more information.

MEETINGS

NRC
The monthly meeting of the state Natural Resource Commission will be Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 13-14, at the Lansing Center (Wednesday) and the Steven T. Mason Building (Thursday) in Lansing. Persons who wish to address the commission or persons with disabilities needing accommodations should contact Teresa Golden at (517) 373-2352 one week in advance.

ARCHERY

JUNIOR ARCHERS
A weekly program for junior archers begins at 9 a.m. Saturdays at Detroit Archers in West Bloomfield. Call (248) 661-9610 or (313) 835-2110 for more information.

METROPARKS

METROPARK REQUIREMENTS
Most Metropark programs are free while some require a nominal fee. Advanced registration and a motor vehicle permit are required for all programs. Call the respective parks toll free at the following numbers: Stony Creek, (800) 477-7756; Indian Springs, (800) 477-3192; Kensington, (800) 477-3178.

THE FUNNY FARM
This one-hour program for ages 3 and older includes farm stories, activities, live critters and much more and begins at 2 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 29, at the Kensington Farm Center.

BIRD COUNT
Help census the park's bird population during this program, which begins at 8 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 2, at Kensington.

CHICKADEE IN THE HAND
Learn all about chickadees during this program, which begins at 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 2, at Stony Creek.

TEA TRACKIN'
Learn about animals and their tracks, then track up a t-shirt during this program, which begins at 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 3,

at Kensington.

1998 PERMITS
The 1998 Huron-Clinton Metroparks annual vehicle entry permits and boat launching permits are on sale at all Metropark offices. Vehicle entry permits are \$15 (\$8 for senior citizens). The annual boat launching permit are \$18 (\$9 for senior citizens). Call (800) 47-PARKS for more information.

OAKLAND COUNTY PARKS

COUNTY PARK REQUIREMENTS
Advanced registration is required for all nature programs at Oakland County Parks. Call (810) 625-6473 to register or for more information.

MOVIE MATINEE
Enjoy some popcorn and the photography of some of Michigan's best film makers during this program, which begins at 1 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 2, at Independence Oaks.

STATE PARKS

STATE PARK REQUIREMENTS
Maybury State Park, Proud Lake Recreation Area, Bald Mountain Recreation Area, Highland Recreation Area, and Island Lake Recreation Area offer nature interpretive programs throughout the year. A state park motor vehicle permit is required for entry into all state parks and state recreation areas. For registration and additional information on the programs at Maybury call (810) 349-8390. For programs at Bald Mountain call (810) 693-6767. For programs at Proud Lake and Highland call (810) 685-2433. For programs at Island Lake call (810) 229-7067.

SPORTS ROUNDUP

AREA PLAYERS AT OLL SUMMIT
The 14th annual United Lakes Invitational featuring 1000 players from 100 teams will be held at the OLL Summit at the OLL Clubhouse in OLL, Michigan, from Jan. 2-5.

Defending OLLA hockey champion will be the OLLA Hockey Club. The OLLA Hockey Club is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. OLL champions play against NBLU.

The association game is at 1:30 p.m. Sunday followed by the championship game at 5 p.m.

Tickets cost \$22.50, \$16, \$12 and \$6 per day and are on sale at the Joe Louis Arena Box Office and all TicketMaster locations or by calling TicketMaster at (248) 645-6666. The Joe Louis Box Office is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

Area players to watch include senior Jeff Kozakowski of Garden City, one of the top defensemen for MSU, and senior Bobby Hayes of Westland John Glenn, one of the Wolverines' top forwards and an assistant captain. Senior right winger Dale Rominski (Farmington/Birmingham Brother Rice) is also one of the Wolverines' assistant captains.

Redford St. Agatha graduate Jarrett Weinberger is a sophomore center with Tech and Bill Trainor (Canton/Dearborn Divine Child) is a sophomore left winger for the Wolverines.

LIEBERMAN-CLINE HOOP CAMP
The first annual Regal by Buick Nancy Lieberman-Cline basketball camp for girls of all

ages will be Friday through Sunday, Jan. 9-11 at Oakland County.

Qualified participants and all payments should be made by Jan. 8. For more information call Nancy Lieberman-Cline at (248) 377-8666.

The schedule is as follows:
Day 1 — 8:30-12:00 p.m., Friday, Jan. 9 (grades 1-12);
Day 2 — 8:30 a.m. - noon (grades 1-4) and 12:30-4 p.m. (grades 7-12), Saturday, Jan. 9;
Day 3 — (same schedule), Sunday, Jan. 10.

For more information, call Marcus Jackson at the OU Athletic Department at (248) 370-4050; the hotline at (313) 438-3959; or Dennis Sampier at (248) 377-8666.

MERCY NEEDS HOOP COACHES
Farmington Hills Mercy is seeking for coaches in the following positions: girls varsity basketball and freshman basketball.

For more information, call athletic director Nancy Malinowski at (248) 476-2836.

CYO OFFICIALS WANTED
The Catholic Youth Organization is developing a program to train and certify high school seniors (17 years-old) as registered sport officials earning minimum of \$20 per contest.

Clinic training dates and sites will be established in areas of interest. Umpiring schedules will be worked around high school sports games and practices.

For more information, call Marge Chewing at (313) 963-7172, Ext. 149.




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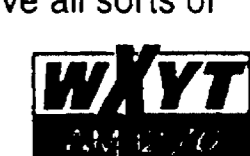
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TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

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PARENT'S NAME _____

AREA COLLEGIATE BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

Schoolcraft wins Lake Michigan, Ocelots run overall record to 8-0

Unbeaten Schoolcraft College used a balanced scoring attack to offset the 29-point performance of Lake Michigan's Jamalia Butler en route to a 105-82 men's basketball victory Saturday at SC.

The Ocelots improved to 8-0 with its second victory of the year over Lake Michigan, which dropped to 2-6.

The Ocelots led 54-31 at halftime and 61-33 early in the second half when the Lake Michigan's Dylan Fox went down with a neck injury. The game was suspended for nearly 20 minutes waiting for EMS personnel to arrive.

Fox was later treated and released from St. Mary Hospital.

Five Ocelots scored in double figures led by 6-foot-8 Matt Bauman (Livonia Franklin), who tallied 15.

Mike Murray and Derek McKelvey contributed 13 and 12, respectively, while Dave McGlowen and Lamar Bigby each added 11. Mike Peek had nine.

Butler, a 6-7 sophomore from Benton Harbor, scored a game-high 33. Bill Powers and John Gill contributed 19 and 13, respectively.

The Ocelots return to action Saturday for the Schoolcraft Tournament. See Week Ahead.

Madonna's women's basketball team salvaged a split out of its trip to the Kalamazoo College-hosted Micro Vane, Inc. Holiday Classic last weekend, losing to the host Hornets 64-61 Friday then beating Concordia College in the consolation game, 87-73 Saturday.

Madonna's Miko Massey and Mike Maryanski were both named to the all-tournament team. Massey, a freshman guard from Walled Lake Western HS, was named Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference player of the week after averaging 20.3 points for the Crusaders in a three-game span. For the season, Massey is averaging a team-best 18.0 points per game.

The split left Madonna with a 4-11 record. Friday against Kalamazoo, the Crusaders led 26-25 at halftime, but the Hornets' superior shooting spelled the difference. They made 25-of-52 floor shots (48.1 percent), including 9-of-22 three-pointers (40.9 percent); Madonna was 20-of-49 (40.8 percent) from the field, hitting 8-of-22

throws (36.4 percent).

Madonna's 19 points paced the Crusaders; Mark Mitchell had 12 points and four steals; Massey totaled 13 points, four assists and four steals; and Nick Hurley (Plymouth Canton) finished with eight points, seven rebounds, four assists and four steals.

Kalamazoo got 22 points from Joe Grant and 15 from Joe Wicklander.

Madonna's shooting improved significantly against WHAC foe Concordia, and it showed in Saturday's win. The Crusaders hit 25-of-50 from the floor (50 percent); the Cardinals made 26-of-80 (45.3 percent).

Led by Massey and Hurley, each scoring 25 points, Madonna pulled away from its 38-31 halftime lead to win going away. Hurley, in particular, enjoyed a spectacular game. He sank 7-of-8 shots from the field and 11-of-12 free throws, grabbed six rebounds, dished out three assists and made eight steals.

Maryanski had 13 points, eight boards and two blocked shots.

Concordia, which slipped to 3-13, got 17 points from Ken Flowers and 12 from Derrick Nelson.

Lady Ocelots stop Lansing

A suffocating man-to-man defense carried Schoolcraft College to a 56-51 women's basketball victory Saturday at Lansing Community College.

"We won the game with our defense," Schoolcraft first-year coach Karen Lafata said. "We held them to 18 points in the first half."

"We went straight man-to-man and our pressure on the ball was really intense."

The Lady Ocelots, who improved to 6-3 overall, got 14 points, including a pair of threes, along with six rebounds from Antone Watson (Detroit Henry Ford).

Stacey Cavin (Dearborn Heights Crestwood) added 12 points and 12 rebounds, while Jackie Kocis (Lake Shore) and Jamie Lewandowski (Warren Fitzgerald) each added 11 points. Samantha Thiesen (Warren Woods Tower) grabbed 11 rebounds.

Mahlia Smith led Lansing (6-4) with 14 points.

Schoolcraft shot 20-of-63 from the floor (32 percent) and outrebounded Lansing, 45-33. They also hit 14-of-24 free throws and committed 20 turnovers.

Lansing had 21 turnovers, made 19-of-53 shots from the field (35 percent) and connected on 11-of-18 free throws.

"We seemed to struggle when we had the lead," Lafata said. "But we hung on to win. It was a good team effort."

The Lady Ocelots return to action this weekend in their own

WOMEN'S WRAP

tournament. See Week Ahead.

Madonna stumbles

At least there was something good to come out of the weekend for Madonna University's women's basketball team.

The Lady Crusaders were jolted twice at their Holiday Hoops Tournament, getting upended by Kalamazoo College 93-84 Friday and then losing the consolation game to St. Francis (Ind.) 123-111 Saturday. The two losses left Madonna with a 9-4 mark.

The good news was the selection of sophomore forward Kathy Panganis as Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference player of the week. The Allen Park HS graduate averaged 18 points and 10.7 rebounds in three games last week for Madonna; for the season, she's averaging 11.8 points and 5.7 rebounds.

Indiana-South Bend (8-5), which upset St. Francis 94-58 in the other opening-round game, ended up as tournament champion with an 84-73 triumph over Kalamazoo Saturday. The Titans' Amie Burger was named tournament MVP after scoring 47 points and making eight steals in her team's two victories.

In Madonna's loss to Kalamazoo (4-4), the Crusaders had a 40-37 halftime lead but fell prey to the Hornets' 20-of-34 shooting spree in the second half (58.8 percent).

Much of the damage was done by a pair of local standouts: senior guard Kelly LaCrosse, a Farmington Harrison graduate, blistered Madonna with 32 points (including 4-of-6 on three-pointers), seven rebounds and five steals, and sophomore forward MaryJane Valade, from Farmington Mercy, scored 19 points, grabbed 12 boards and dished out seven assists. Both were named to the all-tournament team.

Jennifer Stefanski also had 15 points for Kalamazoo.

Madonna got 17 points, five assists and two steals from Katie Cushman; 17 points from Chris Dietrich; 16 points and nine boards from Panganis; and 12 points from Lori Enfield.

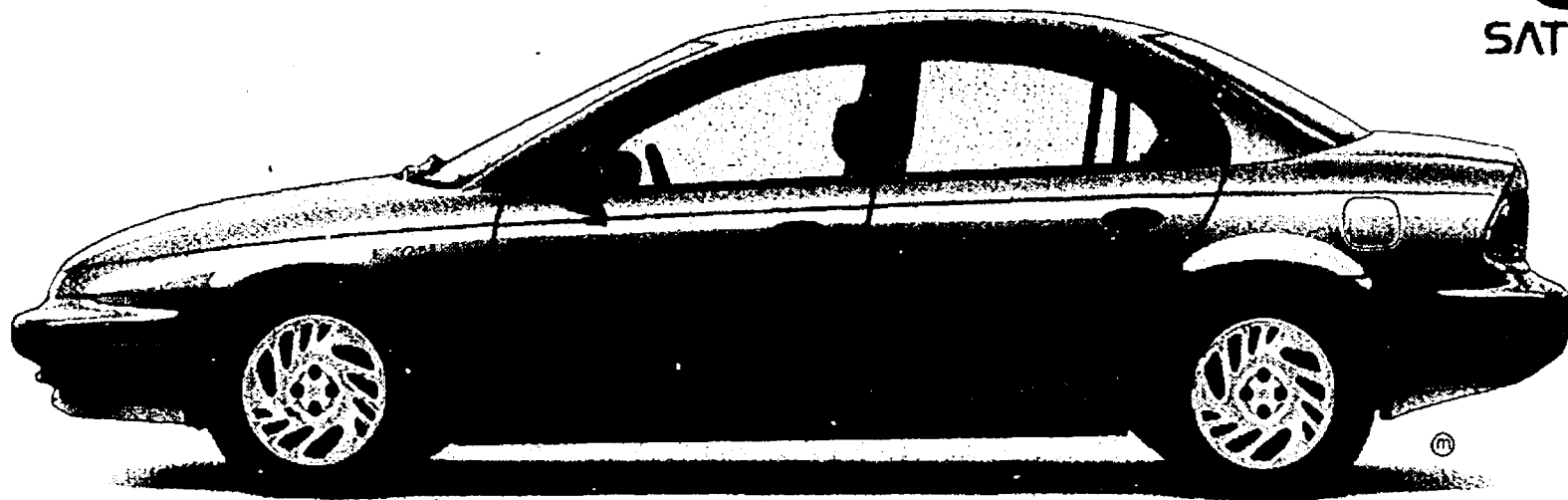
In Saturday's consolation game, St. Francis played with a vengeance and Madonna did nothing to prevent it. The Cugars rolled to a 66-52 half-time lead and never let up; for the game, they converted 44-of-83 floor shots (53 percent) and 30-of-36 free throws (85.7 percent).

Six players scored in double figures for St. Francis (10-3): Brenda Schlegel led with 31 points, followed by Shannon Dunbar with 17.

Madonna got 29 points and six assists from Dietrich; 22 points, seven rebounds and three steals from Panganis; 18 points, 10 assists and two steals from Cushman; 13 points from Kristi Fiorenzi (Plymouth Canton); and 10 points from Jennifer Jacek.

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WEEK AHEAD

BOYS BASKETBALL

- Monday, Dec. 28
 - PCA at Lenawee Tourney, TBA (Roundball Classic at U-D Jesuit)
 - Redford CC vs. Cin. Hughes, 1:45 p.m.
 - Borgess vs. Douglas, 4 p.m.
 - Salem vs. Det. Northern, 8 p.m. (Riverview Gab. Richard Tourney)
 - St. Agatha vs. Tay. Kennedy, 6 p.m.
 - Grosse Ile vs. Riv. Richard, 7:30 p.m. (Traverse City Central Tourney)
 - Sag. Arthur Hill vs. Holland, 6 p.m.
 - Canton vs. T.C. Central, 8 p.m.
- Tuesday, Dec. 29
 - T.C. Central Tourney, 6 & 7:30 p.m.
 - PCA at Lenawee Tourney, TBA.
- Wednesday, Dec. 30
 - Riv. Richard Tourney, 6 & 7:30 p.m. (Superintendent's Classic at Cobo)
 - Wayne vs. Det. Cass Tech, 8 p.m.

MEN'S COLLEGE HOOPS

- Saturday, Dec. 26
 - (Schoolcraft Christmas Tournament)
 - Conestoga vs. Waubensee, 5 p.m.
 - Schoolcraft vs. St. Clair (Ont.), 7 p.m.
- Sunday, Dec. 27
 - Schoolcraft Tourney, 3 & 7 p.m.
- Saturday, Jan. 2
 - Flint Mott at Schoolcraft, 3 p.m.
 - Oakland CC at Delta, 3 p.m.

WOMEN'S COLLEGE HOOPS

- Saturday, Dec. 26
 - (Schoolcraft Christmas Tourney)
 - Schoolcraft vs. Elgin (Ill.), 1 p.m.
 - Lakeland vs. Kennedy (Ill.), 3 p.m.
- Sunday, Dec. 27
 - Schoolcraft Tourney, 1 & 5 p.m.
- Tuesday, Dec. 29
 - (Taylor, Ind. Univ. Tournament)
 - Madonna vs. Ohio Dominican, 8 p.m.
- Wednesday, Dec. 30
 - Taylor Univ. Tourney, 1 & 3 p.m.
- Saturday, Jan. 2
 - Flint Mott at Schoolcraft, 1 p.m.
 - Oakland CC at Delta, 1 p.m.

PREP HOCKEY

- Sunday, Dec. 27
 - (U-D Jesuit Tourney at City Arena)
 - Red. Unified vs. S. Lyon, 4 p.m.
 - U-D Jesuit vs. Lansing CC, 6:30 p.m.
- Monday, Dec. 28
 - U-D Tourney at City Arena, 6 & 8 p.m.
- Wednesday, Dec. 30
 - Churchill at G.P. South, 7:25 p.m.

ONTARIO HOCKEY LEAGUE

- Sunday, Dec. 27
 - Whalers at Brampton, 6:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, Dec. 29
 - Ply. Whalers vs. London at Compuware Arena, 3 p.m.
- Wednesday, Dec. 30
 - Whalers at Owen Sound, 7:30 p.m.
- Friday, Jan. 1
 - Whalers at Belleville, 2 p.m.
- Saturday, Jan. 2
 - Whalers at Barrie, 7 p.m.
- Sunday, Jan. 3
 - Whalers at Oshawa, 6:30 p.m.

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

- Saturday, Dec. 26
 - Portage Northern Tourney, TBA.
- Tuesday, Dec. 29
 - Bedford Tournament, 8:30 a.m.
 - W. Bloomfield Inv., 8:30 a.m.
- Wednesday, Dec. 30
 - UM Dearborn Tourney, 9 a.m.
- Saturday, Jan. 2
 - W.L. Central Invitational, 9 a.m.

PREP WRESTLING

- Wednesday, Dec. 30
 - Salem Invitational, 9 a.m.

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THE WEEKEND

FRIDAY



To most people, Joe (left) is a myth and a legend. To his only friend, Jill (Charlize Theron, center) he is a protector and companion. Zoologist Gregg O'Hara (Bill Paxton, right) thinks he's the most amazing creature on the planet in "Mighty Joe Young," opening today at metro-Detroit movie theaters.

SATURDAY



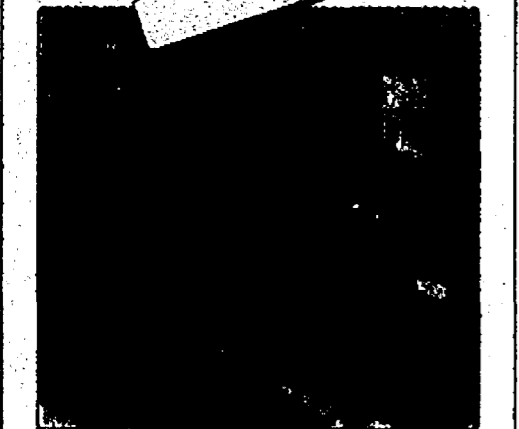
Booth Colman leads a cast of 35 in Meadow Brook Theatre's annual holiday spectacular, "A Christmas Carol," at the theater on the campus of Oakland University. Tickets \$25 for 2 p.m. show, \$36 for 6:30 p.m., call (248) 377-3300.

SUNDAY



See Santa Claus before he leaves town at the "Radio City Christmas Spectacular starring the Rockettes," at the Fox Theatre, 2111 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Performances 1 p.m., 4:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Tickets \$10 to \$52.50, call (248) 433-1515.

HOT



You'll find collectible dolls, bears, and toy trains at Toy & Hobby Expo '98, Saturday-Sunday, Dec. 26-27 at the Novi Expo Center, 1-96 at Novi Road. Call (248) 348-5600 for more information.



Duty first: Pharaoh Seti (Patrick Stewart, center) lectures Rameses (Ralph Fiennes, left) and Moses (Val Kilmer) for their irresponsible behavior as the Queen (Helen Mirren, far left) and the court magicians Hotep (Steve Martin) and Huy (Martin Short) look on in "The Prince of Egypt."

'The Prince of Egypt'

Animator enjoys developing characters

BY KEELY WYGONIK
STAFF WRITER
kwygonik@oe.homecomm.net

Animators draw characters, but to be really good, they have to know something about acting too.

"An animator is an actor with a pencil," said Kurt Culotta, one of 350 animators who worked on "The Prince of Egypt," the story of Moses, now playing at metro-Detroit movie theaters. "It helps to feel the characters when you're drawing them."

Culotta worked on the character Pharaoh Seti for whom Patrick Stewart of Star Trek fame gives voice, but he is proudest of two minor characters he designed himself—a young Hebrew girl and her grandmother.

"They first appear in the Exodus scene," said Culotta. "The grandmother slips, and the little girl

takes her by the hand and says, 'come on, let's go.' You see them crossing the Red Sea. The little girl is afraid, and the grandmother takes her by the hand. When they cross the sea, you see them hugging each other."

A 1978 graduate of Plymouth Salem High School, Culotta grew up in Plymouth and dreamed of one day becoming an animator. "I can't remember not drawing," he said. "My earliest memories are of drawing. I've wanted to be an animator since I was 9. I always watched Disney cartoons and the Disney show every Sunday night."

He earned a bachelor of fine arts degree from Michigan State University and worked for an adver-



"An animator is an actor with a pencil."

Kurt Culotta
Animator

of 1995 he began working at DreamWorks Pictures in Glendale, Calif., which produced "The Prince of Egypt."

"For a long time I worked as a clean-up artist," he said. "That's the person who cleans up the drawing, puts in buttons and other details. An animator figures out the motions."

Before beginning work on "The Prince of Egypt," he attended an

tising agency before deciding to move to California to follow his dream.

Culotta enrolled in the UCLA graduate film program and majored in animation. Before finishing the program he got a job, and one job led to another. In September

extensive training program at DreamWorks that included acting and drawing classes. "I didn't quite have the tools an actor has," said Culotta. "It helps to try and understand motivations of actors. The class helped me understand how to look for more subtle ways of expressing emotion. Sometimes in trying to figure out the acting we will act out the scene and watch it on videotape. Sometimes real actors do it, it helps, it might add some natural elements. You find yourself saying 'I didn't realize I breathe that way or had that expression on my face.'"

Because he didn't know any little girls, Culotta watched the movie "Annie" to see how little girls ran. This attention to detail is what makes "The Prince of

Please see ANIMATOR, E3

POPULAR MUSIC

ROCK 'N' ROLL ALL NIGHT

Loyalty brings Kiss to The Palace New Year's Eve

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO
STAFF WRITER
cfuoco@oe.homecomm.net

For the rock band Kiss, playing The Palace of Auburn Hills on New Year's Eve is all about loyalty.

"Detroit really took us to heart earlier than any other city; even before New York. And we're very serious about stuff like loyalty and not forgetting our friends," said bassist Gene Simmons, who affectionately calls himself "Uncle Gene."

"We never turn our backs on people and places that were there for us. We will be there for them. Things like loyalty are very important words for us. We have a song called 'Detroit Rock City.' We don't have one called 'New York Rock City.'"

New York, he said, turned its back on rock 'n' roll, instead opting to support "disco bands," he said.

"Name a major rock band that came out of New York. There's the New York Dolls, they never made it. The Ramones, they never made it. Nobody

But there's a lot of disco bands, a lot of R&B and this and that," he said.

"Out of Detroit there was Grand Funk Railroad, Ted Nugent, Bob Seger, some very important stuff, real meat and potatoes kind of music. Detroit's a city that was more about content than style. Style, it's OK to have, but style is like a dog chasing its own tail. It moves, but it goes nowhere fast."

Simmons said when Kiss plays live, the band makes it feel like the first time for everyone. Kiss's 1998-1999 jaunt, "The Psycho Circus 3-D Tour," is the first 3-D concert. Simmons swims over the audience, Peter Criss taunts fans with drumsticks, guitarist Ace Frehley pokes his instrument at the audience, and rhythm guitarist Paul Stanley spits guitar picks from in-between his red-painted lips. It's true, in-your-face rock 'n' roll.

And what would a Kiss show be without Stanley's trademark screeching.

"We don't (care) about the Rock 'n'

Please see KISS, E3



Ringling In New Year: Kiss - Ace Frehley, Peter Criss, Gene Simmons, and Paul Stanley - brings its "Psycho Circus 3-D Tour" to The Palace of Auburn Hills.

You'd be a blockhead to miss 'Charlie Brown' musical

"You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown," continues through Sunday, Dec. 27, at the Fisher Theatre in Detroit. Tickets \$26.50 to \$49, call (248) 645-6666.

BY JON KATZ
SPECIAL WRITER

The word went out: "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" was being souped up for a Broadway run. But nobody expected their stroke of casting genius: Bill Gates as Charlie Brown! The program claims that Anthony Rapp, not His Microsoftness, plays Charlie Brown, but have you ever seen them in the same room together? Just look at this guy and tell me I'm wrong.



On stage: Kristin Chenoweth (Sally, left to right), B.D. Wong (Linus), Anthony Rapp (Charlie Brown), Stanley Wayne Mathis (Schroeder), Roger Bart (Snoopy), and Ilana Levine (Lucy) in a scene from "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown."

Anyway, the 1967 off-Broadway "Peanuts" musical has, indeed, been refitted. And as one who has played both Linus and Snoopy locally, I heartily congratulate the production team for their loving and true-to-the-original expansion. Whether you have or haven't seen it before, or even been in it, "Charlie Brown" is an evening of pure "Happiness" so right for the season.

With the blessings of "Peanuts" creator Charles Schulz, director Michael Mayer incorporated 26 newer "strips" and kept only 13 from the original. The show, after all, is presented in part as a live version of the famed comic strip, with Schulz's words of wisdom dished out like so many peas on a spoon (Lucy: "My Aunt Marian was

right. Never try to discuss marriage with a musician"). The new material works wondrously with the old. Charlie's still heartsick over his slim chances with that red-haired girl ("I think I'll flap my arms and fly to the moon"). But Linus ("M. Butterfly" Tony-winner B.D. Wong) gets a fresh line to explain his blue cloth dancing partner ("Sucking your thumb without a blanket is like eating a cone without ice cream").

voice, she takes full advantage of a newly-extended rabbit-chasing bit with Snoopy, complete with musical spy themes from "Peter Gunn" to "Peer Gynt."

Rapp, Wong and Ilana Levine as Lucy are each so true to the author's intent. We're all holding the string with Rapp when that kite crashes. And who amongst us can help sighing when Linus disarms his super-crab sister with "You have a little brother who loves you?"

But - and you all knew this was coming - it's the Snoopster who dances off with most of the marbles. As a dog, Roger Bart is "de man." Whether it's atop a hydraulic doghouse-er, Sopwith Camel-dodging the Red Baron, or singing and dancing for his supper in the show-stopping "Supertime" (which has been totally redone as "Joe Cool" choreographed by Bob Fosse), Bart gets four barks.

It's questionable if this delightfully and appropriately small production will be supported by Broadway crowds paying Broadway prices for Broadway spectacles. But right here, right now, and with just a few performances left, you'd be a blockhead to miss it.

Kiss from page E1

Roll Hall of Fame. We just plan to be in the city that rock 'n' rolls. Before there was the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame, we were playing Cleveland. This feels to us like being home," Stanley told out a sold-out Gund Arena in Cleveland on Sunday, Dec. 6.

■ 'The thing that infuriates me is a lot of bands get up on stage and charge full price while giving you very little. We give you what you want.'

Gene Simmons
Kiss

"I used to sit in a parked car at night. Sometimes I could hear this (Cleveland) radio station, WMMS. I would be in New York City and I knew something magical was happening there. I knew I would always be here. You're making my dream come true."

Swinging in the New Year

Not everyone is into explosions, fireworks, blood and 3-D effects. So don't fret, there's plenty of other opportunities to ring in the New Year.

The tour is living up to Simmons' expectations. "Not only is it cool, it's also very expensive, which is why other bands are cowards. They talk the talk, but they really don't walk the walk. Every band says we care about our fans, but they don't put their money where their mouth is," Simmons said.

Swing is the thing in several area clubs. "Al Capone's New Year's Eve Party," at the 24 Karat Club in Westland, includes a performance by Swing Syndicate, buffet dinner and champagne toast at midnight for \$10-\$15.

The cost is reflected in the ticket prices - \$75 and \$100.

The Velvet Lounge in Pontiac is celebrating the repeal of prohibition with a complimentary toast at midnight and a performance by Superdot as part of the "Speakeasy New Year's Eve" event. Every year Pontiac drops a giant ball at midnight and The Velvet Lounge is offering a penthouse view of it.

"I don't necessarily buy the idea that ticket prices have to be low. Bands should charge whatever they think they should charge. People have the ability to make the decision whether they want to get it or not," Simmons said.

For those with more discriminating tastes, The Detroit Symphony Orchestra is once again hosting its "New Year's Eve Gala" with performances by the

orchestra with conductor Neeme Jarvi and violinist Alexander Markov at 9 p.m.

The evening also includes dinner catered by Matt Prentice. Once the big and little hands strike midnight, there's dancing on the stage with the Keith Saxton Orchestra.

Jazz fans get multiple choices this holiday. David Sanborn is bringing his show to the intimate State Theatre in Detroit twice on New Year's Eve. Rachelle Ferrell plays the Music Hall, and in Oakland County, Alexander Zonjic, host of the WVMV morning show, will serenade diners at Baci in Pontiac, while Shahida Nurullah visits Edison's in Birmingham.

Families might want to check into the "New Year Jubilee" in Ypsilanti, or the alcohol-free "First Night" in Birmingham.

If disposable income isn't a problem, blues man Bugs Bedow is reprising his Blue Year's Eve Party at the Kingsley Inn in Bloomfield Hills.

Redford resident B.B. Queen, a veteran of the "Jenny Jones

Show," is performing at Memphis Smoke in Royal Oak. The Witch Doctors are part of the New Year's Eve party at Karl's Cabin in Plymouth, where a special holiday menu will be available.

Sink that darn film

The creative minds at the Arbor Brewing Company in Ann Arbor are hoping to sink the "Titanic" obsession with its anti-Titanic costume party.

"There was a couple here for Halloween who had the greatest Titanic ghost costumes. They were all blue and had icicles hanging out of their hair. They're coming back so they can get double use out of their costumes," said Rene Greff, the owner of Arbor Brewing Company.

Greff and her husband are renting their costumes from Fantasy Attic in Ann Arbor.

"They've got some of the Titanic costumes. The dress that she wore with the blue hope diamond. That's what I'm wearing. My husband's going to dress up as the captain, she said.

"Some people are doing like deck hands and more just traditional 1920s formal wear. Some people are doing the Irish peasant class. Our daytime dishwasher always does all the major decorations for our party. He's been working for months on stuff like building little life rafts, and he's got all these plans for making the brewery look underwater. It's going to be really fun."

Animator from page E1

Egypt" different from other animated films you may have seen.

Under the direction of supervising animator Kristof Serrand, Culotta also worked on the animation for Pharaoh Seti who is the father of Rameses and Moses. In film versions, Pharaoh seems very stern and unapproachable. In "The Prince of Egypt," he is a fatherly figure who disciplines his sons yet forgives their pranks.

"I think 'The Prince of Egypt' is special because it's a little different from other animated films," said Culotta. "They tried to tell a story with more complex emotions. If the film was made earlier, they might have made Moses the hero and Rameses the villain. Even though you care more for Moses, you realize that Rameses still loves his brother and wants to be with him. You feel sorry for him. They're complex emotions, it's not just black and white."

Culotta is busy at work on his next project for DreamWorks - "El Dorado," a comedy adventure

about two con men aboard Cortes' ship and the adventures they have.

He lives two miles from work and likes his new office with a view of a manmade waterfall. "DreamWorks has been wonderful, they spoil us rotten," he said.

His advice to anyone dreaming of being an animator is to "just draw and draw from life. So you really know how things are put together go outside and draw people, life drawing classes are essential. The best animators draw all the time."

He'll be spending Christmas in California and will then fly to Massachusetts to be with his brother Mark and his family. His parents John and Lynn still live in Plymouth.

"The last time I was home was two years ago," he said. "I miss the seasons. I like snow, and I love fall, but I've become acclimated to California."

Ultimately, Culotta said he would like to do his own short animated films. He'd also like to do a children's book.

Stagecrafters draws on community for help

Stagecrafters in Royal Oak is holding a contest for a new logo. Submissions should be post-marked no later than Jan. 15 and contain the following elements:

Stagecrafters name, the worlds "Baldwin Theatre" are optional, Royal Oak, Michigan, 2-part design: a) logo with the word "Stagecrafters" and b) with "Baldwin Theatre."

Submit your designs on 8.5 by 11-inch paper. Designs can be

submitted in black and white or color. Include your name on a separate sheet of paper, but in the same envelope as the design.

Mail your entry to Cate Foltin, Executive Director, Stagecrafters, 415 South Lafayette, Royal Oak, MI 48067.

For a background packet on Stagecrafters and the history of the Baldwin Theatre, call (248) 541-8027.

The Award Package for the winning logo design includes - Logo unveiled at opening of upcoming Stagecrafters Main Stage production, media coverage, pair of 99-00 Main Stage season tickets, pair of 99-00 2nd Stage season tickets, Plaque with winning design permanently displayed in vestibule of the theater, Stadium jacket with logo and set of four coffee mugs with logo.

"The Board of Directors of Stagecrafters is looking for a new corporate image that meets our image today and where we are headed in the future," said Foltin. "This logo (which may or may not include type-face) has to be attractive, immediately recognizable, or easily identifiable, present a positive image for Stagecrafters, translate well into black and white, and say something unique about the organization."

The contest is open to all members of Stagecrafters as well as members of the community. All submissions will be confidential. The membership of Stagecrafters will vote on the winner in an upcoming newsletter.

Stagecrafters mailed approximately 1,000 Gala-in-a-Boxes, a small cd-size box promising a party inside. It's a fund-raiser for the Stagecrafters Building Restoration Fund.

If you haven't received a Gala-in-a-Box and would like to make a contribution to Stagecrafters, call (248) 541-8027.

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Mon. Dec. 28	8pm	Sat. Jan. 2	6pm & 9pm

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Ark concert showcases Irish music, song, dance

Crossroads Ceilidh, an evening of Celtic music and dance, 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 30 at the Ark, 316 Main St., downtown Ann Arbor. Tickets \$10, call (734) 761-1451.

BY KEELY WYGONIK
STAFF WRITER
kwygonik@oe.homecomm.net



Fiddler: Look for Jeremy Kittle, U.S. National Scottish Junior Fiddle Champion, at the Crossroads Ceilidh.

Growing up in County Clare, Ireland, Mick Gavin liked hanging around the old-timers who showed him how to play the fiddle. Sometimes they'd take him with them on trips to perform in other parts of the country.

"I guess I'm doing that now," said Gavin of Redford who is presenting Crossroads Ceilidh, an evening of Celtic music and dance Wednesday, Dec. 30, at the Ark in downtown Ann Arbor. "I love to see the kids playing. The funny thing about the music is you can't create good students — if they want to play, they'll find you."

The concert will feature a variety of Irish musicians and dancers including U.S. National Scottish Junior Fiddle Champion Jeremy Kittle, champion Irish dancers, Paul Cusak of Plymouth, who will soon be joining the cast of Riverdance, Mike Belvitch and Pat Quinn.

Glengary Road will perform the music of Cape Breton Island, and Charlie Wilkie, Dawn Hudek, Gavin, Terence McKinney and others will perform traditional Irish music and songs.

"The Ark is a well-known folk

venue," said Gavin explaining why he chose the site. "There are quite a few talented young people around, unfortunately, the clubs around Detroit are not into promoting the kids and their music, they have lost the art these kids are finding."

Kittle, 14, has been playing classical violin since he was 5. "He called me, he got my name from the Ark and was looking for someone to teach him the fiddle," said Gavin. "He had a lot of background and also plays with the Saline Fiddler's Philharmonic."

With Gavin's help, Kittle learned how to play the fiddle, and has been the Great Lakes Scottish Fiddle Junior Champion

for the past two years. At the Ceilidh he will be performing alongside Gavin's son, Sean, who plays flute, and Tyler Duncan on uilleann pipes.

"Tyler went to see 'Riverdance' and wanted to play pipes. He told his parents, and they found a set of pipes for him. He's really good on them. He's going to Ireland this summer with his parents and to study pipes for a year."

Sean Gavin, 12, has been playing the flute for about nine months. "I've been listening to Irish music ever since I was a little kid, I just like everything about it," he said. "I think the concert's gonna be great. A lot of people have CDs of Celtic music, and enjoy listening to it."

Cusak, 18, a senior at Catholic Central High School is also looking forward to the concert. This has been a great year. In April he won the All-World Dancing Championships in Ireland. In July he tried out for, and was asked to join the Riverdance tour, a dream come true.

"I'll be attending a workshop on Feb. 28, and joining the tour this summer after I graduate. I'll tour for a year and see what happens," said Cusak. "Riverdance has put Irish dancing on the map. It's probably the most popular dance show in the world."

Cusak said he would like to attend college and major in political science. He hopes to get a law degree and may even run for

political office some day. "I haven't planned out my whole life yet," he said. "As far as Riverdance goes, Cusak says, "I will be getting paid for something I really like to do." He has been dancing since he was five years old. To get ready for "Riverdance" he's practicing as if he were preparing for a dance competition.

In March he performed at the St. Patrick's Day Fest at the Hellenic Cultural Center in Westland, which Gavin also organized.

"He gives us an opportunity to put forth our talent," said Cusak. "I enjoy dancing to his music and band. It's a lot of fun."

The concert will be very laid-back. "It won't be organized," said Gavin. "If anyone in the audience wants to come up and sing or dance, they're welcome to."



Award-winning dancer: Paul Cusak, the first American male ever to win the All-Ireland senior Dance competition in 1997, and 1998 All-World Championship winner, will be participating in the Crossroads Ceilidh.

Youth theater tracks vanishing amphibians

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER
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Amphibians rarely come up in conversations, but the Detroit Zoo plans to change that with three new plays it's commissioned the Mosaic Youth Theatre to present Dec. 28-30 in the Wildlife Interpretive Gallery.

The productions run in conjunction with the Smithsonian's traveling exhibition, "Vanishing Amphibians," on display in the Wildlife Interpretive Gallery at the zoo.

Where's Kermit? is just one of the subjects the youth theater addresses in the trilogy of short plays. A search for the Budweiser frogs further enlightens audiences about the decline of amphibian populations over the last 50 years. For some species, however, it's too late. An increase in UV-B rays resulting from ozone layer depletion, the effects of pesticides, fertilizers and herbicides, and the introduction of predators and competitors has led to their demise. Zoo director Ron Kagan said, that's why a National Amphibian Conservation Center, one of two large-scale exhibits, is scheduled to open in the next two years at the zoo.

"We talked about funny ideas and came up with an Amphibian TV network," said Annette Madias, a Farmington Hills resident and managing director of Mosaic Youth Theatre. "What a fun place to work. The kids

"AM-TV: All Amphibians, All the Time"

What: The Mosaic Youth Theatre presents three short plays dealing with the plight of amphibians, held in conjunction with the Smithsonian traveling exhibition, "Vanishing Amphibians" which continues to Jan. 10.

When: 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Monday-Wednesday, Dec. 28-30.

Where: The Wildlife Interpretive Gallery at the Detroit Zoo, Woodward Avenue and 10 Mile Road, Royal Oak.

Cost: Free with zoo admission of \$7.50 adults, \$5.50 for seniors/students, and \$4.50 children ages 2-12.

would come back to say 'I got to feed the animals or I went behind the scenes.'"

Gerry Craig, Wildlife Interpretive Gallery curator, was looking for creative ways to relay scientific facts when she commissioned the youth theater to write the plays about the disappearing amphibians.

"It was great," said Craig. "There's a news reporter who tries to do an interview with Kermit the Frog and he's vanished, as have the Budweiser frogs. When they first brought back a draft, we decided what points were important — to understand metamorphosis and what is an amphibian. Amphibians always live near water, not necessarily in it. They have soft moist skins that need water and lay their eggs in water. What we didn't realize was how much Kermit was going to get their attention."

Madias, youth theater founder

received the 1998 Governor's Award for Arts and Culture in November and will perform at one of the Inaugural events in Lansing. Spurling created Mosaic as a multi-cultural arts organization whose mission is "to develop young theater artists through comprehensive theatrical training and to provide high quality performances for audiences of all ages."

"We try to work that mosaic of racial and economic diversity by bringing in kids who in their everyday life might not come into contact with each other," said Madias. "We've seen what happens when the city and the suburbs come together — black and white and Latino."

The Youth Ensemble consists of 105 students who auditioned in September for the 10 months of free theatrical training offered by Mosaic. There is also a 16-member National Touring Company, and the eight member Next Stage Company, comprised of youth ages 17 to 23 who are paid "so they're able to go to college and have Next Stage as a

part-time job."

Craig originally approached the multi-cultural youth theater to collaborate on a production to celebrate the International Year of the Coral Reef in 1997. The youth theater had held a benefit at the Detroit Artists Market where Craig was then executive director.

"We were looking for someone to collaborate with, to bring these issues to the forefront, the plight of amphibians vanishing worldwide," said Craig. "I see a lot of groups perform. We were

looking for the right flavor and style to appeal to zoo audiences. The Mosaic Youth Theatre has a high energy, hip, engaging style that appeals to teens as well as kids."

Craig plans to expand the performing arts at the theater in the Wildlife Interpretive Gallery. Craig already has booked a variety of entertainment from chamber music concerts to puppet shows since the gallery opened in the renovated old bird house in 1996.



On the trail: Brian McIntosh, an actor with the Mosaic Youth Theatre, is a detective on the case of the "Vanishing Amphibians," at the Detroit Zoo.

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MOVIES

'Shakespeare in Love' a treat for the heart

BY VICTORIA DIAZ SPECIAL WRITER

Young Will Shakespeare is suffering from a rather stubborn case of writer's block. Then, one evening, he spies a beautiful stranger across a crowded room and falls hopelessly, helplessly, maddeningly in love at first sight. This passion inspires him to sit right down and write one of the most enduring love stories of all time, "Romeo and Juliet."

then, but since most of us turn a little goofy in the heat of passion, anyway, this only makes him appear more human.

By all means, begin with Joseph Fiennes, who plays the young, smitten Bard of Avon with a kind of feverish intensity that seems just right, though you might expect it to grow tedious or to edge over-the-top. His dashing but slightly-grubby Shakespeare even seems to be just a bit of a ding-a-ling now and

cooly-calculating suitor, Lord Wessex. Ben Affleck, looking luscious as a gypsy fiddler, appears as the popular Elizabethan thespian, Ned Alleyn, and the sad-eyed Geoffrey Rush makes his mark as the sad-eyed and grimy theater owner, Philip Henslowe. True to the era, just about every other character in this movie looks unwashed.

It's almost impossible to emphasize how important the settings, costumes, lighting, makeup, and all other peripherals are in this movie. So central are they that one seriously hesitates even to refer to them as "peripherals."

Production designer Martin Childs, costumer Sandy Powell, and hair/makeup designer Lisa Westcott obviously believe that God is in the details. Some of the shots are so beautiful that they look as if they have been designed by Caravaggio. And we are provided with a look at everything from the jewel-encrusted clothing to the sops in the teeming streets to the theaters, the pubs, the churches, brothels, markets, and country



LAURIE SPARRAM/MIRAMAX FILMS

Drama: Gwyneth Paltrow and Joseph Fiennes in 'Shakespeare in Love.'

houses. You'll even get a peek at the toothbrushes of the day. In every direction, "Shake-

peare in Love" is a feast for the eyes, and a treat for the heart. Please enjoy.

GUIDE TO THE MOVIES

A large grid of movie listings under the heading 'GUIDE TO THE MOVIES'. Each cell lists a movie title (e.g., 'Psycho', 'Jack Frost', 'The Waterboy'), a rating (e.g., R, PG, G), and the name of the theater. It also includes phone numbers and showtimes. Some listings mention 'NP Denotes No Pass' or 'VISA & MASTERCARD Accepted'.



Heartwarming comedy: In the 1996 holiday release 'The Preacher's Wife,' Whitney Houston (left) stars as the gospel-singing wife of the Rev. Henry Biggs (Courtney B. Vance, center) and daughter of Marguerite Coleman (Jennifer Lewis, right). Justin Pierre Edmund (front, left) stars as the Biggs' son Jeremiah, and Darvel Davis Jr. (right) is his best friend, Hakim.

Readers share memories of favorite holiday movies

By KEELY WYGNONIK STAFF WRITER kwygnonik@oe.homecomm.net

"It's a Wonderful Life." This is the season when we look for a "Miracle on 34th Street" and giggle at the memory of "Christmas Vacation."

We asked readers to share memories of their favorite holiday movies. Get out your pencil and paper, it's not too late to rent a video to enjoy with your family and friends. Check your local TV listings, too, to see what holiday movies will be aired.

Emmett Hynes of Livonia remembers gathering around the TV with his family to watch "March of the Wooden Soldiers," or "Babes in Toyland" with Laurel and Hardy. "A few years ago my sister gave me a Christmas gift of this tape," said Hynes about "Babes in Toyland." "To this day, I still watch this movie and I become a kid just for one hour."

My favorite holiday movie is "A Christmas Story," wrote Cindy Koene of West Bloomfield. "It is the story of a young boy, Ralphie, who wants a Red Rider BB gun for Christmas. Yet, each time he requests it, he receives the same answer, 'You'll shoot your eye out!' However, it is more than just a young boy's yearning for a coveted toy. It is a humorous tale of a family during the holidays."

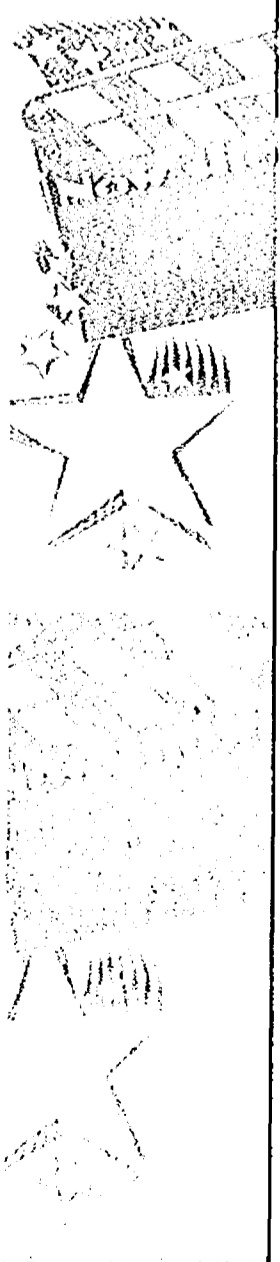
"Just thinking about the 'Leg Lamp,' the 'Stuck Tongue,' and the 'Bumpus Hounds' brings a smile to my face. I usually watch it every year during the holiday season. It is usually shown on your regular television stations and is also available on tape. So if the holidays are dragging you down, rent this video, lighten up, and laugh. The holidays are to be

- Here are some all-time holiday favorites picked by the people who recently presented The Festival of Trees at Cobo Center in Detroit.
- All I Want For Christmas (1991)
- The Bishop's Wife (1947)
- A Christmas Carol (1938)
- A Christmas Carol (1951)
- Christmas In Connecticut (1945)
- Christmas In Connecticut (1992)
- A Christmas Story (1983)
- Christmas Vacation (1988)
- Ernest Saves Christmas (1989)
- Home Alone (1990)
- Home Alone 2: Lost in New York (1992)
- Miracle on 34th Street (1947)
- Miracle on 34th Street (1994)

"I always used to watch it with my mom at Christmas. She passed away four years ago," wrote Allen. "It is still hard for me to think of how much I miss her. We would bake her Christmas 'S' cookies and make her pinulata, an Italian sweet that is made with fried dough balls mixed with honey, chopped almonds, and chocolate."

"In-between, we would sip eggnog, watch 'White Christmas'—singing along with all the songs. This year, I had my children watch it with me. Initially, I cried remembering all the good times passed and how much I miss my mom. Now, though, I'm glad I have this holiday movie to watch and share with my children. I pointed out to my daughter that she shares the name of one of the actresses, 'Vera' (Veronica) Allen. She thought that was pretty cool."

"I can remember only two movies that we saw—Mr. Magoo and Li'l Abner. Not holiday movies by any stretch of the



COMING ATTRACTIONS



DARRAN QUERT IMAGES

Adventure drama: "Mighty Joe Young," an awesome 15-foot gorilla from Africa, is brought to a California animal preserve for his own safety, but threatened and confused in his new confines, the gorilla escapes, leaving a trail of destruction along Hollywood Boulevard.

Scheduled to open Wednesday, Dec. 25

"MIGHTY JOE YOUNG"
An update of the classic 1949 RKO adventure film in which a zoologist stumbles upon a 15-foot gorilla while exploring in Central Africa. Stars Bill Paxton, Charlize Theron.

"PATCH ADAMS"
True story of a misfit physician whose unconventional approach to healing causes headaches for the medical establishment. Stars Robin Williams.

"DANCING AT LUGHNASA"
Exclusively at the Landmark Maple Art Theatre. The film adaptation of Brian Friel's 1991 Tony Award-winning play about five lonely sisters living a hard-scrabble life in rural Ireland whose world is shaken when their brother, a priest, returns from Africa a broken man. Stars Meryl Streep.

"DOWN THE DELTA"
An emotional and riveting story where big city meets small town, young meet old, parents reconnect with children, and life for everyone becomes something unexpected.

"THE FACULTY"
Science fiction thriller that blends teenage angst, cutting-edge comedy and out of this world special effects as the students of Herrington High School struggle to save the world from alien

domination.

"SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE"
Witty and fast moving comedy set in 1593 that follows the trials and tribulations of Will Shakespeare, a struggling young playwright who's suffering from a terrible bout of writer's block until he falls in love. Stars Joseph Fiennes, Gwyneth Paltrow, Geoffrey Rush.

"LITTLE VOICE"
Magical musical comedy about the power and perils of expression. Based on one of London's most acclaimed hit plays, the story follows an aging but on-the-prowl widow who never shuts up and her reticent daughter, dubbed Little Voice or "LV" who barely speaks but she does sing. Stars Michael Caine. Scheduled to open Friday, January 8

"A CIVIL ACTION"
True story about an attorney willing to risk everything to represent several families who seemingly lost their children to leukemia because of a nearby toxic waste dump. Stars John Travolta, Robert Duvall. Scheduled to open Friday, January 15

THE THIN RED LINE
The story of an American rifle company during several months of one of the fiercest struggles of the twentieth century - the Battle of Guadalcanal. Stars Sean Penn, George Clooney, Woody Harrelson, and John Travolta.

'Little Voice' marvelous entertainment

BY BOB THOMAS
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

The transformation is miraculous. One minute the fragile waif is so painfully introverted that she fits her nickname of Little Voice. Then she struts onstage with the confidence of a Vegas headliner and belts out tunes in the styles of Judy Garland and Shirley Bassey.

This stunning scene is the high point of a marvelous British import, "Little Voice." And don't complain about a reviewer giving away a vital plot point; Little Voice's performance comes as no surprise, except in the polish of her delivery.

The story takes place in a seedy resort town in the north of England. The only entertainment can be found in a rundown nightclub, where the smarmy owner-emcee (Jim Broadbent) tells unfunny jokes and introduces failed rock groups and antiquated vaudeville acts.

Little Voice (Jane Horrocks) lives with her mother Mari (Brenda Blethyn), a motormouth

harridan desperately fighting against age with booze and an occasional fling. No wonder the daughter is painfully withdrawn; she is constantly bombarded with belittling attacks. As a result, she spends most of the time in her attic bedroom.

The girl's only solace comes from playing the old 78s that she enjoyed listening to with her late father. The records feature the big-voiced female singers of another era.

A shy young electrician's helper (Ewan MacGregor) makes a repair call to the house and is intrigued by Little Voice. Until now his only after-hours interest has been his collection of homing pigeons.

Whenever Ray Say (Michael Caine) comes to town, Mari lights up. She has had a long-running romance with Say, a once-successful manager of musical acts. Now his clients are deserting him and his debts are rising.

Say hears Little Voice singing in her room and figures he has discovered his gold mine. He

bristles with confidence that he can turn the mousy recluse into a superstar - if he can only get her on the stage.

"Little Voice" was first written as a London play by Jim Cartwright, who designed it for the mimicry genius of Jane Horrocks. So unerring are her reproductions of Garland, Bassey, Monroe, Dietrich and Merman that a note at the end of the film assures us there were no tricks, and that Horrocks herself sang

the songs, on camera with no lip-synch.

Michael Caine is in peak form and back in his "Alfie" mode, playing a man of outward charm and cold heart. Brenda Blethyn, Oscar-nominated for "Secrets and Lies," is scorching as the ruthless mother.

The Miramax release was written and directed by Mark Herman and produced by Elizabeth Karlsen. Rated R for language and sexual innuendo.

BBSO presents jazzy concert

Jazz Up Your Holidays with the Birmingham-Bloomfield Symphony Orchestra 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 27 at Temple Beth El, 14 Mile Road at Telegraph in Bloomfield Hills.

Saxophonist Larry Nozero & Friends will join the BBSO for the concert which includes classics, jazz and Motown. Tickets are \$20 adults, \$15 students, call (248) 645-2276.

Nozero will perform selections from his new CD, "Warm." The program also includes "The Gaddy" by Shostakovich, Ravel's "La Valse," Norris' "The Magic of

Motown," and Tzyzik's "The Essential Ellington."

Nozero's career has encompassed many musical styles from quartets to big bands. In 1997 he received special recognition for being inducted into the "Legends of Jazz International Hall of Fame," along with the "Spirit of Detroit Award" for his achievement, leadership and dedication to improving the quality of life.

He has toured with Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughn, Dizzy Gillespie, Stan Getz, Sergio Mendez, Stan Kenton and Henry Mancini.

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SHOWCASE WESTLAND	STAR GRATIOT AT 15 MI.	STAR SOUTHFIELD
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Welcome the new year at Boulders

BY KERLY WYGONIK
STAFF WRITER
kwygonik@oe.homecomm.net

Live music, thick deli sandwiches, ribs, pizza, burgers, South of the "Boulder" specialties including grilled fajitas, burrito and Chicken Quesadilla, salads, homemade soups, and specials such as prime rib, meatloaf and coconut shrimp are some of the items you'll find on the menu at Boulders Restaurant & Lounge in Plymouth. All entrees are served with soup or salad and fresh vegetable, choice of potato and hearty baked French role from Breadsmith Bakery in Plymouth.

Sandwiches are prepared with fresh hearth baked bread from Breadsmith Bakery, and served with a pickle and steak fries.

"It's a nice place for people to come listen to music, and we have good food," said Dave Daugherty of Canton who owns the restaurant with his wife, Michelle.

Chris Pounds, a graduate of the award-winning culinary arts program at Schoolcraft College in Livonia, is in charge of the

Boulders Restaurant & Lounge
Where: 1020 W. Ann Arbor Road, Plymouth (734) 459-4190
Open: 11 a.m. to 2 a.m. Monday-Saturday, noon to midnight, Sunday. Open Dec. 24 until 9 p.m. Closed Dec. 25
Menu: Deli sandwiches, burgers, ribs, Mexican dishes, soups, salads, pizza, and weekly specials such as prime rib, coconut shrimp, and meatloaf.
Reservations: Recommended for parties of 8 or more
Cost: Reasonable, lunches \$5.95 to \$11.95, dinner \$7.95 to \$15.95
Credit cards: All majors accepted
Carry-out: Available
Entertainment: Karaoke beginning 9:30 p.m. Wednesday; Easy Listening Favorites 6-10 p.m. Thursday; 9:30 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. Friday-Saturday, variety of live music including R&B, Swing and Reggae.
New Year's Eve: Live music beginning at 6:30 p.m. Dinner service 5-11 p.m. Appetizer menu, sandwiches and pizza 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. Party favors, champagne toast at midnight. Call for information.

kitchen. "We will be upgrading our menu with more entrees," he said. Pounds makes fresh soups every day. He even cuts the steaks. The new menu will feature chicken fettuccine, prime rib, and a couple of seafood dishes. "We're changing our specials to see what people want," said Dave.

He and Michelle met at a restaurant in Ann Arbor. They both managed restaurants and

dreamed of some day owning their own. On Sept. 2 they purchased the former Mr. B's.

"We cleaned it up a lot," said Dave. He made the new tabletops, and pictures he took in Boulder, Colo. decorate the walls. The chairs, ceiling tiles and ventilation system are also new.

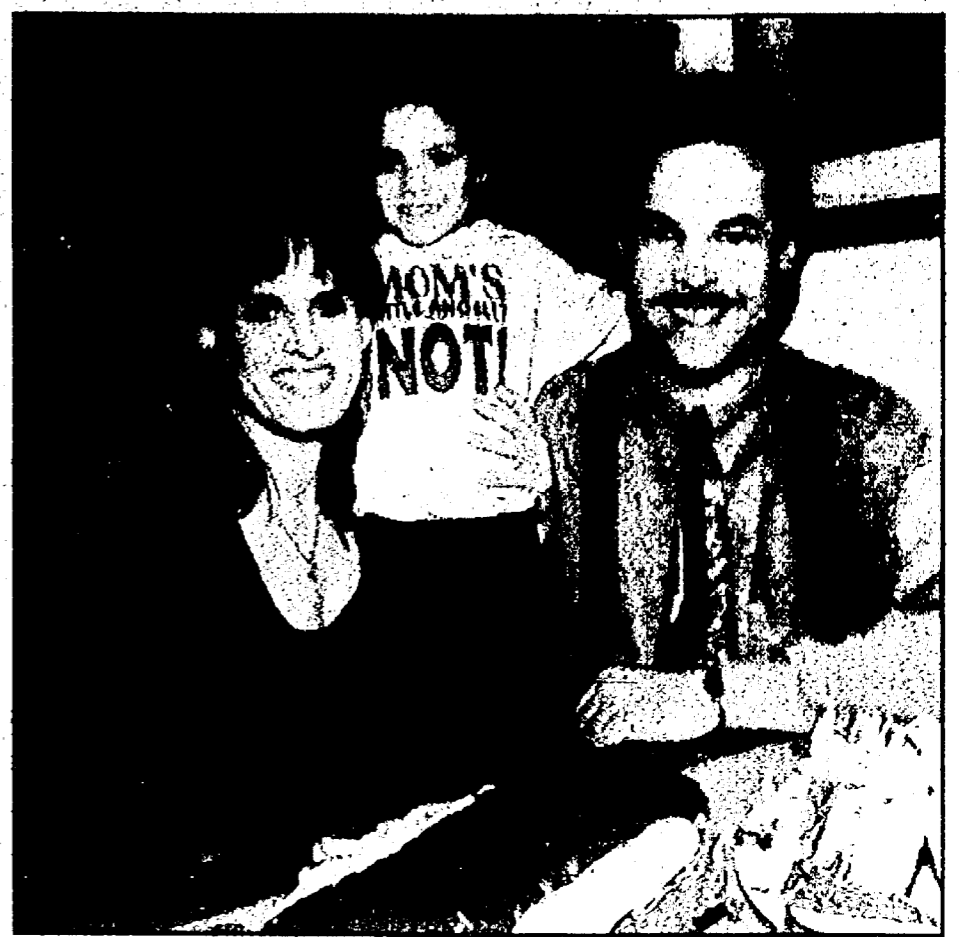
The parents of four children, Dave and Michelle wanted to create a homey atmosphere for

their customers. They make a point to greet customers, and make them feel welcome. "I just like people," said Michelle.

If you're not in the mood for a big dinner or lunch, there are lots of appetizers to choose from including the Rocky Mountain Hot Spot Platter - chicken strips, Buffalo wings, potato skins and Mozzarella cheese sticks; Spinach Artichoke Dip, and Nacho Supreme. If you're in a hurry for lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday-Friday, order the Soup & Half Sandwich Express - Soup of the Day with Chef's choice half sandwich.

Watch the game on one of the two big screen TVs. There's also an area near the bar with dart boards and video games.

Boulders is serving dinner on New Year's Eve from 5 to 11 p.m. The special menu includes Prime Rib, \$12.95; lobster tail, \$17.95; Prime Rib and lobster tail, \$25.95; Top Sirloin and lobster tail, \$23.95; Chicken Fettuccine Alfredo, \$10.95; Shrimp Fettuccine Alfredo, \$12.95; full slab ribs, \$15.95; Cajun Catfish, \$13.95, served with salad, choice of potato, vegetable and roll.



STAFF PHOTO BY PAUL HURSCHEMANN

New restaurant: Michelle (left), Sabrina and Dave Daugherty in the dining room at Boulders, which is known for its Boulder Back Ribs and deli sandwiches.

There will also be a variety of desserts and appetizers to choose from.

Since opening in September, Dave and Michelle have been

trying to get the word out. "A lot of people don't even know we're here," said Michele. They're planning a grand opening in January.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

■ **Water Club Grill** - 39500 Ann Arbor Road, Plymouth, (734) 454-0666.

New Year's Eve Gala Celebration, Prime Rib and Seafood Buffet, 6 p.m. (first seating, \$26.95 per person). Second seating 9 p.m., includes buffet, DJ, dancing until 1 a.m., party favors, and a champagne toast at midnight. The cost is \$35.95 per person. Cash bar, tax and tip not included. Water Club Grill will also be serving dinner in the main dining rooms 4 p.m. to midnight from their regular menu. Call for reservations/information.

■ **Andiamo West** - 6676 Telegraph Road, Bloomfield Hills, (248) 865-9300.

Gala New Year's Eve party in lower-level banquet facility beginning 8 p.m. at \$125 per person including tax and gratuity featuring open bar, six-course dinner, champagne at midnight, favors, band, special snack at 12:30 a.m. and breakfast at 2:00 p.m. Tickets must be purchased in advance for round tables seating 10, minimum of four guests.

■ **Big Rock Chop & Brew House** - 245 S. Eton, Birmingham (248) 647-7774.

A la carte menu including appetizers, soup, salad, main courses (ranging \$19-30), vegetable accompaniments and dessert. With any entree, one-half pound Alaskan King Crab Legs or lobster tail can be added for an additional charge. For reservations 10 p.m. or later, enjoy the music of Reggie Brax-

ton on the Stone Terrace and ring in the New Year with champagne toast and party favors at no additional charge. Big Rock's fabulous upper level Got Rocks lounge is first come, first served, but be advised, it was packed last year at midnight.

■ **Cafe Bon Homme** - 844 Penniman, Plymouth (734) 453-6260. From 5 p.m. to midnight an all a la carte menu has eight entree selections ranging \$29-33 and includes seafood, duck, lamb veal, and steak and Wellington of beef.

■ **Cafe Cortina** - 30715 W. 10 Mile Rd., Farmington Hills (248) 474-3033 Early diners can choose from the open menu beginning at 4:30 p.m. Starting at 9:30 p.m.

there's a special package, \$85 per person including antipasto, pappardelle with pomodoro and basil, winter salad, choice of entree from among salmon, veal medallions, filet mignon or French-cut veal chop, and completed with Napoleon dessert. Also included are DJ dancing to top 40s, party hats and champagne at midnight.

Cafe Cortina is also offering a Christmas Eve Dinner with live holiday music, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 24. The cost is \$65 per person. Entree choices include Rack of Lamb with roasted peppers and garlic, Filet of Sole "Meuniere" or Veal Medallions "Limone" Imported Artichokes. Call for information/reservations.

■ **Diamond Jim Brady's Bistro** - 26053 Town Center, Novi (248) 380-8460

Want dinner with quiet jazz music? That's on tap at Diamond Jim's between 4 p.m. and midnight. Five special entrees accompanied by a salad range \$15-19. Start with an appetizer at \$8 and add dessert for \$7.

■ **Excalibur** - 28875 Franklin Road, (corner of 12 Mile Road and Northwestern Highway), Southfield (248) 358-3355. New Year's Eve party (reserved seating by prepaid tickets only) with dancing and entertainment by The Warren Commission begins 9:30 p.m. at \$100 per person (not including liquor, tax or gratuity). Menu

includes appetizer medley, mixed salad and choice of an entree from 2-pound lobster, veal porterhouse, sauteed chicken breast, swordfish or filet mignon, completing with dessert medley.

At the banquet center between 8 p.m. and 2 a.m. at \$125 per person, same as restaurant menu but dancing and entertainment by The Jerry Ross Band.

■ **Fox & Hounds** - 1560 North Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills, (248) 644-4800.

Regular menu selections with entrees ranging \$18-25 will be offered. Reservations 10 p.m.

and later will have party favors and midnight champagne toast. Pub entertainment throughout the evening.

■ **Opus One** - 565 East Larned Street, Detroit (313) 961-7766. Two seating periods 5 or 5:30 and 7:30 or 8 includes offerings from the regular menu. A 9:30 or 10 p.m. seating at \$75 per person includes a four-course dinner from a special expanded menu. Also, at this time, you can listen and dance to the smooth sounds of B&B. Price includes party favors, but not beverage, tax or gratuity.

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- Chicken Cordon Bleu/Boned Breast Filled w/Ham & Swiss Cheese
- Grilled Shrimp Kabobs
- Stuffed Haddock (Spinach, Shrimp & Crab)
- Sauteed Lake Perch
- Chicken Neptune/Boneless Chicken Breast w/Crabmeat Stuffing
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