

Westland Observer

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Thursday
February 18, 1999

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THE PAPER TODAY

Heroes honored: Cousins Scott Smith and William Marquardt didn't feel like heroes Jan. 19 when they pulled a helpless Westland woman from her burning apartment. /A3

OPINION

Pay hikes: The recent county pay raises merit another look at officials' compensation. /A12

COMMUNITY LIFE

On the job: Larry Chontos has cerebral palsy, but it hasn't keep him from working at the Canton's Builders Square II, where, thanks to Business Ventures, he's become the model of good work ethics. /B1

AT HOME

Dining elegance: The Cranbrook Museum is displaying the schools' dinnerware, designed by some of the famous architects, artists and craftsmen who've taught at the school. /D6

ENTERTAINMENT

Circus: Avant-garde Cirque Ingenieux raises spectacle to art. /E1

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Showing 'em off: Real estate professionals each have their own style when showing homes. /F1

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Wayne-Ford corner worst again

BY DARRELL CLEM
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Many drivers tighten their grip on the steering wheel and hope for the best as they approach the Wayne-Ford intersection.

Others, like Cheryl Sarnecky, try to avoid it altogether - and for good reason.

Year after year, Wayne and Ford ranks as Westland's worst intersection, and 1998 was no exception.

Westland police recorded 97 crashes at the beleaguered intersection in 1998 - an increase of seven accidents from the previous year.

"It just carries a lot of traffic," said Sgt. Peter Brokas, who heads the Westland Police Department's traffic bureau. "And there are a lot of driveways at that intersection."

That means more drivers darting in and out of traffic, and Wayne also curves slightly at Ford.

Combine all that with driver Ann Taylor's observation that "people are always blowing the light," and it becomes clear why the intersection gets no respect.

But Wayne-Ford isn't the only trouble spot for Westland motorists.

"Ford and Newburgh is not a good one, either," Brokas said.

Ford-Newburgh ranked No. 2 in 1998 for the most traffic crashes, passing two other intersections - Wayne/Cherry Hill and Warren/Newburgh - that were worse during the previous year.

Ford and Newburgh saw 80 accidents in 1998 - up from 69 in 1997.

More crashes

The intersection actually had an increase in crashes despite left-turn arrows that were meant to make it safer. Newburgh got the new signals in mid-1998, a year after Ford received them.

Brokas said left-turn arrows typically reduce serious injury accidents but

Map, A2; Community Voice, A12

can result in more fender-benders - at least temporarily.

The more time that traffic is backed up at an intersection, the more likely it is that some drivers will become involved in minor accidents, Brokas said.

However, time tends to ease fender-bender problems as drivers get used to new traffic patterns, like those at Ford and Newburgh.

"The drivers will become accustomed to this, and eventually the numbers

Please see WORST, A5



Figure skater Danielle Sepanski (left) receives a surprise hug from her father, Steve, and her mother, Shannon, at Detroit Metro Airport Monday after arriving home from Salt Lake City, Utah. Danielle and her brother, Steve, had just become the U.S. Pair Figure Skating National Champions. At left, the two arrived home with 14 bags of luggage. Leaving Metro Airport, above Tom Prince (right) wheels several bags. Danielle (center left), cousin Shannon Prince (behind) and Steve (center right) with their Uncle John Hartsell (not pictured) head to the cars. For more, see A4.

EMS rate hikes OK'd

The Westland City Council has approved higher rates for EMS services and an outside company to handle the fire department's billing duties.

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER
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Most Westland residents won't see higher out-of-pocket expenses despite the city's decision Tuesday to charge more for medical rescue services, officials said.

Residents who have insurance coverage or Medicare will continue to shell out the same co-pays they now face, Fire Chief Mark Neal said.

"It doesn't cost the patient one penny more for that (rate) change," he said.

The cost for higher medical rescue bills will be absorbed by insurance

Please see EMS, A6

Mobile home park draws complaints

BY DARRELL CLEM
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Residents of Westland Meadows, a mobile home park on the city's southeast side, are protesting a \$15 increase on the monthly rent they pay to use privately owned lots.

Residents face a March 1 increase even though they say their complaints about living conditions are ignored by management.

"The folks are quite upset," Marsha

Kelly said Tuesday as a group of Westland Meadows residents took their complaints to the Westland City Council.

"We would like to have some services for that proposed increase," Kelly said.

Richard Duhl, manager of operations, defended the way Westland Meadows is run and said residents simply don't want to pay higher rent.

"Every time we have an increase I run into this," he said. "Nobody likes increases. I don't like them myself. But

you can't buy a car this year for what you paid for it last year."

Jimmy Hayes said his lot rent has increased from \$215 a month to just under \$400 during the nine years he has lived at Westland Meadows, a mobile home park northeast of Van Born and Merriman.

"I'm charged \$10 a month to have a cat that doesn't even go out of my house," he said.

Duhl said lot rent ranges from \$355

Please see COMPLAINTS, A3

Car buffs steer toward Autorama

BY BETH SUNDRLA JACHMAN
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Daniel Greene of Westland has been a fan of cars since he was a kid and his dad would buy and sell Mustangs.

This weekend, Greene is exhibiting his 1988 Ford Mustang, Super Pro race car at the Big Kmart 47th annual Detroit Autorama at Cobo Center.

"I love to go fast," Greene said of his love of cars and racing. His car will make its second appearance at Detroit Autorama, which Greene calls "the elite" car show. "It's kind of a goal for most people interested in cars," he said.

Autorama participants send in an application and pictures of their vehicles including cars, trucks, vans

and motorcycles.

Last year was Greene's first exhibiting his race car and he won a trophy in the gas coupe sedan category.

Keith Dahlka of Westland is also hoping to win an award this year. He is showing his 1981 Harley Davidson motorcycle at Detroit Autorama for the first time this year, but he won an award at a Mount Clemens auto show.

He has developed an elaborate display with a cemetery theme. It includes tombstones, grave beds and a monster that looks like it is coming out of the ground, he said.

His motorcycle is a model FLT, a big touring bike,

Please see AUTORAMA, A3



Racy car: Daniel Greene of Westland will be displaying his 1988 Ford Mustang Super Pro at the Detroit Autorama.

STAFF PHOTO BY TOM HAWLEY

Thief takes money out of Sears safe

BY DARRELL CLEM
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A brazen thief Monday stole more than \$20,000 from a Sears safe at Westland Shopping Center, police officials said.

"Right now nobody knows who it is," police Lt. Marc Stobbe said.

The thief knew the combination of numbers needed to unlock the safe - and therefore didn't have to rely on force or threats against anyone else to commit the crime, police said.

But little else was clear Tuesday as Westland police began investigating the incident.

Authorities aren't sure whether the money was taken directly by an

Please see THIEF, A3

OBITUARIES

SHAWN R. SCHLUND

Funeral services for Shawn Schlund, 25, of Wayne were Feb. 15 in Uht Funeral Home with burial at Michigan Memorial Park in Flat Rock.

Mrs. Schlund, who died Feb. 12 in Wayne, was born July 21, 1973, in Southfield. She was a driver for the railroad.

Surviving are her son, Bryan Stone; daughter, Monica Stone; father, Robert Schlund; mother, Katherine (Brian) Kocsis of Westland; sister, Danielle; grandfather, Ralph Dunlap; grandparents, Edwin and Iris Schlund; great-grandmother, Rosa Dunlap; companion, Ken.

DORA J. BATES

Funeral services for Dora Bates, 83, of Westland were Feb. 15 in John N. Santeu & Son Funeral Home with burial at Grand Lawn Cemetery in Detroit. Officiating was the Rev. Charles Bugbee from Warrendale United Brethren in Christ Church.

Mrs. Bates, who died Feb. 12 in Westland, was born June 25, 1915, in Michigan City, Ind. She was a homemaker.

Surviving are her sons, Edward (Evelyn) Deis and James (Nancy); sisters, Martha and Grace; 11 grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.

Mrs. Bates was preceded in death by her husband, James; son, Harold (Leslie); and daughter, Patricia.

HELEN MAE MIZNER

Funeral services for Helen Miz-

er, 83, of Westland were Feb. 15 in Newburg United Methodist Church with burial at Roseland Park Cemetery. Officiating was the Rev. Thomas Badley. Arrangements were made by L.J. Griffin Funeral Home.

Mrs. Mizner, who died Feb. 11 in Wayne, was born Dec. 31, 1915, in Highland Park. She was a homemaker.

Surviving are her son, Harold (Bunny); daughters, Connie (Jack) Vincent and Barbara Robb; brother, Bob and James; eight grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

HARRIETTE L. JENSEN

Funeral arrangements for Harriette Jensen, 81, of Westland were handled by R.G. & G.R. Harris Funeral Home.

Mrs. Jensen, who died Feb. 12 in Angela Hospice, was born May 28, 1917, in Detroit. She was a waitress.

Surviving are her daughter, Joyce Hamble; stepsons, Everett Jr. and Bruce; stepdaughter, Barbara Drange; five grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren. Mrs. Jensen was preceded in death by her husband, Everett Sr. and daughter, Gloria Rhoads.

MEMORIALS MAY BE MADE TO ANGELA HOSPICE.

Memorials may be made to Angela Hospice.

PATRICIA M. KANOUSE

Funeral services for Patricia Kanouse, 66, of Westland were today, Feb. 18, in Uht Funeral Home with burial at Cadillac

Please see OBITUARIES, A8

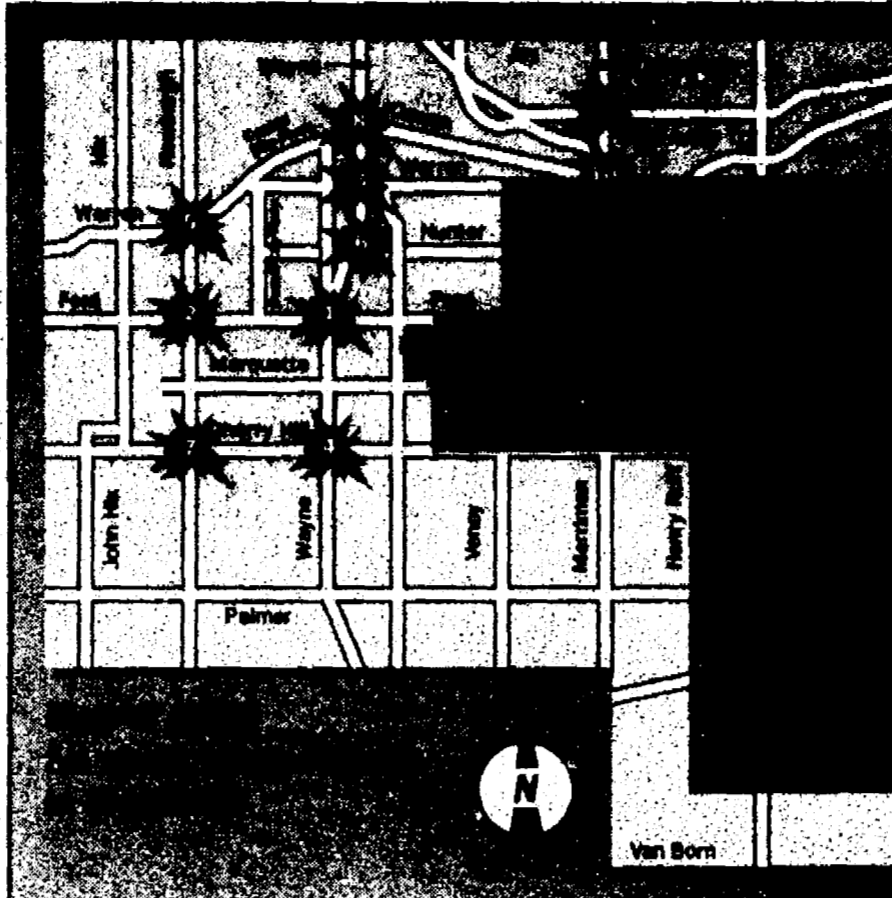


Table titled '10 Worst Intersections' with columns for Intersection, 1997 Accidents, 1998 Accidents, 1997 Fatalities, and 1998 Fatalities. Top intersections include Wayne/Cherry Hill and Merriman/Ann Arbor Tr.

Worst from page A1

should show some kind of decrease," Brokas said. Overall, Westland police recorded a one-year decrease in roadway crashes from 2,247 to 2,047, a new report shows.

However, Westland police recorded a significant decrease in injury accidents, which fell from 1,108 to 715 during the same period. Brokas termed that drop "very substantial."

Overall, Westland police recorded a one-year decrease in roadway crashes from 1997 to 1998, with the number of accidents dropping from 2,247 to 2,047.

injury accidents has declined at Merriman and Cherry Hill since left-turn arrows and right-turn lanes were added, Brokas said. "That intersection was apparently begging for it," he said.

usage statewide rose to 71 percent of motorists - an upward trend that Brokas partly attributed to more police enforcement. Brokas attributed fewer injury accidents to "better engineering and more enforcement."

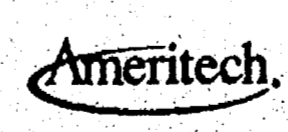
Improvement seen In particular, the number of injuries involving drinking dipped from 141 to 120 during the same period. Overall, drunken driving arrests rose from 262 to 369.



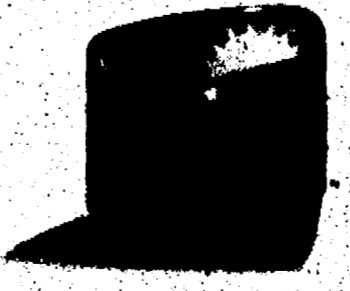
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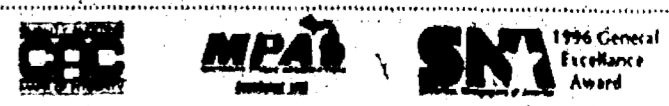
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STAFF PHOTO BY BRIAN MITCHELL

Car care: D.J. Davis of Westland will be showing his 1970 black Plymouth Cuda at the Detroit Autorama this weekend.

Autorama from page A1

which is not common, he said. He completely rebuilt it from the ground up and changed the color to magenta candy.

Before he bought it three years ago, it had been stored outside by the ocean in Florida — so it was in rough shape, Dahlka said.

Dahlka also owns a 1998 Harley Davidson FLTR.

His interest in motorcycles dates back to his youth. When he was 9 years old, a neighbor around the corner had a motorcycle.

From then on he told his parents he wanted a motorcycle. He got his first one at age 19. It was in pieces and he put the whole thing together. He has owned about 12 motorcycles over the years.

And his love for motorcycles hasn't faded. "If I was retired now that would probably be all I would do," he said of his motorcycle hobby.

Dahlka, who works for MSX International, a prototype shop, looks at the vehicles at Autorama with a trained eye and sees details the average person might not notice.

He likes to see what other people have done with their vehicles.

D.J. Davis of Westland also has a keen interest in Autorama because of the chance to talk to people who are interested in cars and also for information on where to get parts.

Davis owns a rare vehicle — a 1970 Plymouth Cuda — that is restored. He bought it three or four years ago in Arizona.

It took eight months to restore his car. Now

Davis drives it to several auto shows a year such as the Woodward Dream Cruise and the Westland Summer Festival auto show. But he only takes it out in nice weather.

"It's great to cruise around in," he said.

Meanwhile, Greene's car is strictly a race car, which he bought about three years ago.

The car carries the name of Greene's business on it — American Power Wash in Westland. When it isn't being exhibited at shows, the car is at the track, Greene said.

He takes his car out every weekend and spends evenings and weekends working on it.

He likes Autorama because it brings out the elite of muscle cars and race cars.

"All the other cars you see are different. You see a lot of unique cars there," Greene said.

Some of the cars are absolutely perfect, he said.

But his car is what he calls a "hands-on" car. "I let people sit in it all the time," he said.

Detroit Autorama is 4-11 p.m. Friday, Feb. 19; 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 20; 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 21. Tickets at the gate are \$12 for adults, \$5 for children under 12 and free for children under 3. Discount advance tickets are available at Kmart, Big Kmart and Super Kmart stores. All senior citizens and handicapped people are admitted at no charge from 9-11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 20, before the show opens to the public for the day.

For more information call (248) 650-5560.

Autorama offers variety of events

Hot Rod heaven comes to Cobo Center in Detroit when the 47th annual Big Kmart Detroit Autorama is held Friday, Feb. 19 through Sunday, Feb. 21.

Autorama is one of the oldest and biggest custom car shows in the country with 800 exhibits of hot rods, custom cars, trucks, vans and motorcycles of the past and present.

The headlining custom car at Autorama this year is Terry Cook's Zephyr '39, a purple hot rod car dubbed "Scrape."

This year, Autorama presents a Drag Racing All-Star Review headlined by John

Force and racing stars Tony Pedregon, Warren Johnson, Don Prudhomme, Ron Capps and Al Hoffman.

World Wrestling Federation women's wrestler "Sable" and tag team champion Owen Hart will also attend Autorama. "Tool Time girl" of TV's Home Improvement, Debbie Dunning and the Red Wings' Karen Newman will be available to sign autographs.

Sports stars Detroit Lions' Charlie Batch and Jason Hanson, Michigan State Spartan Sedrick Irvin and University of Michigan Wolverines Rick Leach and John Jansen will

visit Autorama.

Other features will include Winston Drag Racing champion Shirley Muldowney and CART driver Christian Fittipaldi; the Ride N Grind BMX Extreme Show and Lowrider Hydraulics Showdowns; the All American Motorcycle Show of 100 custom Harleys and other motorcycles; the Cavalcade of Kustoms featuring 16 custom cars of the 1950s; and the Lowrider Magazine Car and Truck of the year, the Ford Mustang "Reborn to Run" exhibit; the 11th annual Collector Car Corral and eighth annual Toy-a-Rama.

Men honored for woman's rescue

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER
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Cousins Scott Smith and William Marquardt didn't feel like heroes Jan. 19 when they pulled a helpless Westland woman from her burning apartment.

"It just seemed like the right thing to do," Smith, 28, said.

"It didn't seem like a big deal," Marquardt, 27, said.

But Westland police and fire officials said the two men risked their own lives to save a woman as she yelled out a window for help.

The woman suffered from muscular dystrophy and couldn't escape a first-floor fire at Hawthorne Club Apartments on Merriman south of Ann Arbor Trail, police Sgt. Michael Terry said.

"It was an inferno, for lack of a better word," he said.

Police said a 16-year-old West-

land boy intentionally started the 9:13 a.m. fire in an attempt to kill the woman, described as his girlfriend's mother. Police said the boy and the mother had argued.

Marquardt climbed through the window and began lifting the woman out as Smith stood outside and helped her escape the blaze.

"They really put their own lives in jeopardy when they did this," Police Chief Emery Price said.

City officials honored Smith, a Westland resident, and Marquardt, a Brooklyn resident, during a Tuesday night Westland City Council meeting.

"We felt they should be honored for their heroic actions," Terry said.

Smith and Marquardt, contractors with Adrian-based New View Resurfacing, had been working at Hawthorne Club when they heard the woman's screams.

Now their efforts have earned them some heroic praise, city plaques and, well, a little free press for a company run by other family members.

The woman they saved couldn't be at Tuesday's council meeting, but Terry said she is extremely grateful to Smith and Marquardt.

Meanwhile, the teenager accused of starting the fire was turned over to juvenile authorities for possible prosecution.

Police have said it's possible the boy could face trial as an adult. He could face charges as serious as arson and assault with intent to murder.

Police said the building where the woman lived sustained about \$20,000 to \$25,000 in damages.

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Complaints from page A1

to \$370.

Kelly said 300 people are so upset that they have signed petitions in an effort to draw attention to their problems.

Residents said they want 24-hour security, but Duhl said a pilot program several years ago was found to be unnecessary.

Residents also voiced frustrations over what they consider poor maintenance of park grounds, but Duhl defended Westland Meadows as being well-maintained. He said efforts to resurrect a residents' association have failed because not enough people are willing to become involved.

Duhl also blamed unkempt areas on residents themselves, saying some people don't seem to want to care for their lawns and flower beds.

"They are their own worst enemies," he said.

Some residents said little seems to be done about what they believe are "drug houses" and gang problems, but Duhl also denied those problems.

"I don't have gangs or a drug problem in the community," he said.

Some residents also said Westland police could do more to monitor alleged problems with drugs and gangs.

"Even to get a police car in there is really hard," Betty Caufield told the council. "Unless there's somebody with a gun in their hand or somebody laying there dead, you can forget about it."

Some residents complained that furniture has been left in front of some mobile homes for long periods following evictions.

"I have to give (evicted residents) an opportunity to pick up their personal belongings," Duhl said, adding that furniture remains outside no more than a few days.

City officials indicated that they have little discretion to become involved in disputes between residents and management — particularly those involving rent increases.

Planning Director Tod Kilroy told residents they may have one option — taking their complaints to a Lansing-based Mobile Home Commission.

Residents are vowing to keep attention focused on Westland Meadows. Some residents passed out announcements of a protest they are planning for 3 p.m. Monday outside of the park's clubhouse.

They also plan to meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 23, at a Knights of Columbus hall on Ford between Merriman and Henry Ruff in Garden City.

Thief from page A1

employee or, perhaps, by someone who was given the safe combination by a Sears worker.

The thief apparently entered the safe and took the money without being noticed, Stobbe said.

A police investigation is focusing partly on which employees knew the safe combination and whether they may have given it to someone else, Stobbe said.

The incident is believed to have occurred between 6 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Monday.

Anyone who has information is encouraged to call the Westland Police Department at (734) 722-

9600.

Or, anyone wanting to provide an anonymous tip in return for a possible cash reward should call Crime Stoppers of Michigan at (800) 831-3111.

Sears conducted an internal investigation before notifying Westland police on Tuesday, but the company wasn't able to learn the identity of the culprit.

Company officials also apparently wanted to make sure that the money hadn't simply been misplaced before they asked Westland police for help, Stobbe said.



Talking it up: Danielle Hartsell (above) watches the short and long programs with family and friends after arriving home Monday from the Nationals. Below, Danielle, (left to right) cousin Shannon Prince, her husband Tom and neighbor Lynne Dobney discuss and look at the gold medal Danielle had won.

Top: Danielle and Steve Hartsell show their medals.

Winning ways

Brother, sister return home as champs

BY TOM HAWLEY
STAFF WRITER

Holding back tears, Georgia Hartsell had an ABC television camera's focus on her, while her children, Danielle and Steve, performed their long program at the U.S. Pairs Championships in Salt Lake City, Utah.

It was not until the scores were shown that Mrs. Hartsell broke down into tears. "I couldn't believe they won," she said. "I felt finally they got what they deserved."

Danielle and Steve Hartsell of West-

*Danielle:
A DAY
IN THE
LIFE*

land are the first brother-sister pair to win the U.S. Pairs Championships since 1984 when Peter and Kitty Carruthers won the event. The Carruthers, who were being inducted into the Hall of Fame, were among the spectators to witness the brother-sister act from Westland.

The Hartsells won the event without a doubt, by taking all nine first-place votes from the judges for their long program and six firsts and three seconds for their short program.

"I was surprised we won," Danielle said after she finished her performance. Danielle, a senior at John Glenn High School, did not know how the second-place team and favorites to win Kyoko

Ina and John Zimmerman performed. "It was exciting after we won," said Danielle. "The media and spectators were all around us."

The next stop for the duo will be Halifax, Nova Scotia, in Canada for the Four Continents competition. After that they will represent the United States at the 1999 World Championships in Helsinki, Finland.

Photographer Tom Hawley will be documenting the life of Danielle Hartsell through her senior year of high school as she tries to balance her skating career, school, family and friends. The series will be published periodically through her senior year.



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Shipwreck festival set for this Saturday

A film by Westland resident Rudy Whitworth will be among the features at the 22nd annual Great Lakes Shipwreck Festival Saturday, Feb. 20.

This year's featured speakers include underwater explorer Gary Gentile and diving educator Lee Somers. The day begins

at 9 a.m. at Holiday Inn Fairlane with a two-hour demonstration given by the U.S. Navy SEALs, followed by a technical diving workshop at 11:30 a.m. A Great Lakes Shipwreck Film Show will be presented twice, at noon to 2:30 p.m. and 7-9:30 p.m. at the Ford World Headquarters. A

saltwater film show begins at 3 p.m. at Ford World Headquarters featuring "Shipwrecks of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia," Whitworth's "Curacao, An Overlooked Caribbean Wonder," and Tony Gramer with "Bahamas Fever." For more information, call (734) 769-2548.

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Engler wants to end college tuition tax credit

BY KEN ABRAMCZYK
STAFF WRITER
kabramczyk@oe.homecomm.net

Gov. John Engler wants to eliminate the Michigan college tuition tax credit for families, instead using that money to increase funds to universities and community colleges through tuition restraint incentive grants.

Engler proposed the repeal in his \$9 billion general fund budget, which was discussed Thursday during a meeting of the House and Senate Appropriations subcommittee. The credit's elimination would add \$34 million revenue to the state's coffers.

Engler proposed \$293 million for community colleges, a 4 percent increase. An additional \$4.2

million is provided in the budget for "tuition restraint" incentive grants to community colleges which limit tuition increases to 3 percent or less this year, but that money is contingent upon the tuition credit repeal by state lawmakers.

Schoolcraft College President Richard McDowell believes the incentive grants will help keep tuition increases down.

McDowell called the tuition tax credit "minimal" to Schoolcraft students, because many students are part time and Schoolcraft usually only increases tuition \$1 per credit hour a year.

Community colleges are funded with property taxes from their district, state money and student tuition. With increased

State Sen. Loren Bennett, R-Canton, who introduced and championed the tax credit only two years ago, said he was disappointed with the proposal and wondered whether it would lead to 6- or 8-percent tuition increases again.

funding from the state, that should keep, in theory, college tuition hikes down, McDowell said.

"If he has incentives to keep tuition increases down, the students will get the same increase," McDowell said. "They just won't go through the state to get it."

Bennett disappointed

State Sen. Loren Bennett, R-Canton, who introduced and

championed the tax credit only two years ago, said he was disappointed with the proposal and wondered whether it would lead to 6 or 8 percent tuition increases again. "To me, it's tantamount to a tax increase," Bennett said.

Engler's budget overview indicated the timing is "optimal" to repeal the credit.

"First, it is unlikely that any university would be able to qualify for the upcoming school year because of the remarkably low inflation rate," Engler stated in the overview. "Secondly, the establishment of the Michigan Merit Award (a scholarship program for students who pass the Michigan Educational Assessment Program tests) will contribute greatly towards making college more affordable for everyone."

"Finally, the tuition tax credit

has had only limited success in restraining tuition increases."

Community colleges will receive a 2.5 percent increase in funds for operations. Half of that increase will be distributed across the board, with the remaining distributed using a formula that accounts for enrollment changes and tax bases.

McDowell expects to tell a House subcommittee on community colleges this week that he is pleased with that increase. State lawmakers still need to discuss the budget, including capital outlay funds. Schoolcraft officials hope lawmakers earmark money for a proposed technical center during budget hearings.

Please see TUTION, A7

Dems want tobacco money for health programs

BY KEN ABRAMCZYK
STAFF WRITER
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Gov. John Engler wants to use \$9 billion reached in a settlement with tobacco companies to establish a scholarship program for students who pass tests administered under the Michigan Educational Assessment Program.

But some Democrats said some of that money should go to health programs, such as those aimed at curbing smoking among young people. The scholarships were discussed Thursday during a meeting of a subcommittee of House and Senate Appropriations members.

Under Engler's Michigan Merit Award, high school students who pass the reading, writing, math and science components of the MEAP high school tests would receive a \$2,500 scholarship that can be dedicated to college or technical training at a Michigan school of their choice. Beginning with the 1999-2000 school year, a \$500 allocation will be set aside for middle school students who pass

STATE LEGISLATURE

the MEAP tests.

Students in the class of 2004 could conceivably be eligible for a \$3,000 scholarship.

The award would be supported by proceeds from the settlement of a lawsuit between the states and the tobacco industry. The state is expected to receive a

payment of \$289 million in 2000, and annual payments ranging from \$320 to \$400 million, with the balance paid over 26 years.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services wants to collect a portion of the settlement as repayment for their share of Medicaid costs,

which could reduce Michigan's portion of the total settlement up to 55 percent. Engler called that "unjustifiable" since 40 states litigated suits against the tobacco industry without federal assistance.

Please see MONEY, A7

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MIRACLE OF LIFE

New award honors paramedic of year

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER
dclem@ec.homecomm.net

Westland fire officials Tuesday unveiled a new Paramedic of the Year award and named it after former Chief Michael Reddy. Reddy in 1997 achieved an 18-year goal of bringing Advanced Life Support services to Westland. Firefighters, once trained only in Basic Life Support, are now highly trained paramedics. "We call him the father of ALS," Fire Chief Mark Neal said of Reddy as he unveiled the new award Tuesday during a Westland City Council meeting. Neal gave Reddy a special medal similar to medallions that each Paramedic of the Year will receive. Reddy also got a standing ovation from the audience. Reddy's son - also named Michael and also a career Westland firefighter - bestowed the first paramedic award on Sgt. Mark Wilhide. The younger Reddy read a long list of Wilhide's accomplishments, saying he is a medical

emergency services instructor who is involved with organizations such as the American Heart Association and the American Red Cross. Mayor Robert Thomas commended Wilhide for a career that the mayor said has "skyrocketed." The award is described in writing as being designed to honor a paramedic "who achieves the highest level of success in establishing, promoting or furthering improved emergency medical services." The award will coincide each year with the city's anniversary of Advanced Life Support, launched on Feb. 5, 1997. ALS raised Westland firefighters' expertise from the level of Basic Life Support to full-fledged paramedic status. Neal credited the program with saving countless lives, including 19 people who didn't even have pulses when paramedics arrived to administer treatment.

Boating courses offered

Safe boating courses are being offered by the United States Power Squadrons covering outboard, inboard and sail. An eight-week course will be held beginning at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 23, at the Wayne-Ford Civic League, 1661 N. Wayne Road, in Westland. A four-week course will be

held beginning at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 23, at the Wayne-Ford Civic League, 1661 N. Wayne Road, in Westland. Certificate may be used for boat insurance discount and to obtain a youth boating permit. For more information, call (313) 278-1734 or (313) 322-9917.

EMS from page A1

companies and Medicare, although residents without coverage will be billed the full, higher rates, Neal said. The tab for Advanced Life Support services provided by city paramedics will climb from \$400 to \$500 under the new rate plan. The bill for less-complicated Basic Life Support services will increase from \$100 to \$168 - the amount that officials say Medicare will cover. The new rates won approval in a unanimous vote of the seven-member Westland City Council. The new fees for paramedic services will be about average for what is charged in area communities, Neal said. Rates for basic medical services will remain lower than those of most cities, he said. "We're not going to gouge the citizens," Councilman Charles "Trav" Griffin said. In a much more controversial decision Tuesday, council members split 6-1 in approving a contract that gives the Westland Fire Department's billing duties to an outside company, Medaphis. However, the contract will become official only after City Attorney Angelo Plakas negotiates some language changes with Medaphis and signs the document. Some council members had many questions about the three-year contract, and they had little time to review it after receiving it in recent days. "We need to see it in final form before we vote on the contract," Councilman Glenn Anderson said. He cast the lone dissenting vote against the contract after a majority of his colleagues refused to postpone the issue until March 1. Some other council members voted for the contract only after they spent an hour discussing it

page by page, ensuring that Plakas knew what clauses they wanted changed. "I would not approve a contract ... that did not reflect the thinking of this council," Plakas said. Councilman Charles Pickering agreed with Anderson that council members should've been given more time to study the contract. However, the fire chief deemed the contract an emergency measure that needed council approval Tuesday. He said his department has been falling further and further behind in its billing, partly due to computer problems and staffing shortages. "We're falling behind as we speak," he said, adding later, "We're bleeding, and I need to put a Band-Aid on it, and I can't do it by myself." Troy McCormick, Medaphis' director of client development, confirmed Tuesday that he and Plakas already have reached an agreement on several disputed areas of the contract. McCormick said he is willing to address all council concerns. Councilwoman Justine Barns didn't see the need for a big fuss about the contract approval. "What we're looking for here is a quicker, faster product (for collecting bills)," she said. Still, Anderson had warned, "I think we're making a mistake without seeing it in the final form." Councilman Richard LeBlanc supported the contract after getting his questions answered, but he said he was surprised that city union employees didn't protest it. He said the pact amounts to the privatization of fire department billing services. In collecting medical bills, Medaphis is expected to boost the percentage of paid bills from the current 68 percent to 85 percent, raking in money that fire officials say their department simply doesn't have time to collect. Medaphis will receive 8 percent of the fees it collects, but the city still expects to see revenues increase by \$100,000 a year. The new fee structure for medical rescue runs is expected to bring in another \$150,000 to \$200,000.

Obituaries from page A2

Memorial Gardens West, Westland. Mrs. Kanouse, who died Feb. 14 in Westland, was born Aug. 23, 1933, in Washington, Pa. She was a homemaker. Surviving are her husband, James Sr.; sons, James Jr., Donald, Terry and Sean; three brothers; four sisters; and five grandchildren.

RUBY E. PREVOST
Funeral services for Ruby Prevost, 86, of Westland were Feb. 14 in Vermeulen Funeral Home in Westland with burial at Cadillac Memorial Gardens, West. Officiating was the Rev. William Lichty. Mrs. Prevost, who died Feb. 11 in Westland, was born Nov. 4, 1912, in Rome, Ga. She was a dietitian. Surviving are her son, Ronald (Lorraine) of West Bloomfield; brother, Al Broome of Inkster; and two grandchildren.

OTHA C. PHILLIPS
Funeral services for Otha Phillips, 89, of Westland were today, Feb. 18, in Uht Funeral Home with burial at Glenwood Cemetery in Wayne. Mrs. Phillips, who died Feb. 14 in Superior Township, was born July 3, 1909, in White Plains, Ky. She was a homemaker. Surviving are her son, Dennis (Sandra) Putman Jr.; daughters, Dortha (Floyd) LeSuer and Wanda (Edgar) Boice; 11 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild.

BERNADINE A. NEFF
Funeral services for Bernadine Neff, 77, of Westland were in Vermeulen Funeral Home in Westland. Mrs. Neff, who died Feb. 12 in Wayne, was born April 23, 1921, in Detroit. She was a homemaker. Surviving are her husband, Sylvan; son, John Neff of Garden City; daughter, Nadine Wells of Westland; brothers, Leon Pokryfke of Troy and Melvin Pokryfke of Myrtle Beach, S.C.; and five grandchildren.

JAMES C. PATTERSON
Funeral services for James Patterson, 65, of Westland were Feb. 16 in Sts. Simon & Jude Catholic Church in Westland with burial at Mt. Hope Memorial Gardens in Livonia. Officiating was the Rev. Gerard V. Bechar. Arrangements were made by John N. Santeiu & Son Funeral Home. Mr. Patterson, who died Feb. 13 in Wayne, was born July 22,

1933, in Detroit. He did meter testing. Surviving are his wife, Barbara; sons, Douglas (Laurie), David (Linda), Donald, Daniel and Dale (Amy); sister, Dolores Fortin; and eight grandchildren. Memorial contributions may be made to Karmanos Cancer Institute.

HERMAN M. MILLER
Funeral services for Herman Miller, 80, of Westland are today, Feb. 18, in Couture-Handler Funeral Home in Tecumseh with burial at Ridgeway Cemetery in Ridgeway. Mr. Miller, who died Feb. 15 in Ann Arbor, was born Jan. 26, 1919, in Macon Township. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II. He was retired from the Federal Mogul Co. in Northville. Mr. Miller lived in Britton for 44 years and Westland for 30 years. Surviving are his wife, Madeline; son, Ron (Alice) Miller of South Lyon; daughters, Kay (Ron) Leonard of Ypsilanti and Sue (Barry) Hiser of Belleville; stepdaughter, Diane (Dave) Cox of Garden City; brothers, Walter (Norma) Miller of Tecumseh and Fred (Alice) Miller of Manistowic; sisters, Louise (Louis) Vershum of Britton and Charlotte (James) Vershum of Manchester; eight grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; four step-grandchildren; and three step-great-grandchildren. Mr. Miller was preceded in death by his first wife, Lillian; grandson, Jeffrey; and stepson, David Marr. Memorial contributions may be made to Alzheimer's Association.

ALICE H. SILLS
Funeral services for Alice Sills, 72, of Westland were Feb. 6 in Vermeulen Funeral Home with burial at Glenwood Cemetery in Wayne. Officiating was the Rev. David Pace. Mrs. Sills, who died Feb. 3 in Garden City, was born Sept. 1, 1926, in Detroit. She was a homemaker. Surviving are her sons, George of Indianapolis, Ind., and Richard of Jackson, Mich.; daughters, Patricia (Kenneth) Gibbs of Westland, Frances McLemore of Lawton, Mich., and Betty Randell of Jackson; brother, William Klotz of Garden City; sister, Elizabeth Hartson of Lenox Township, Mich.; 13 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

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A Public Hearing will be held by the City of Westland Planning Commission at 7:30 p.m. in the City Hall at 36001 Ford Road, Westland, Michigan, on Tuesday, March 2, 1999.
You are invited to attend this meeting or write and express any views you may have pertaining to the above request for rezoning.
Additional information, if desired, may be obtained from the Planning Department at 467-3266.

ROBERT C. BOWERS, Chairman
WESTLAND PLANNING COMMISSION
Publish: February 18, 1999

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Most area reps support bill to drug test welfare recipients

BY TIM RICHARD
STAFF WRITER
trichard@oe.homecomm.net

Welfare recipients would have to be tested for drugs under two controversial state House-passed bills now before the Senate.

Final roll call was 69-36 with Republicans and some crossover Democrats supporting the measures Feb. 9.

"House Republicans demand that public assistance be used to feed children and not an adult's drug habit," said Speaker Chuck Perricone, R-Kalamazoo.

"Unconstitutional," replied Rep. Tom Kelly, D-Wayne. "The Fourth Amendment declares the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures. To require testing without just cause violates this right."

"All parents would be tested, not just those exhibiting signs of a substance abuse problem. It's a shame," Kelly said during a five-hour debate.

House Bills 4090 and 4091 give the state Family Independence Agency authority to run

three pilot sites to test welfare recipients for drug use. One test area would be urban, another rural, the third in Wayne County.

"If the assessment shows an addiction, then the recipient will be offered state-paid treatment," said the sponsor, Rep. Lauren Hager, R-Port Huron. "However, if the recipient refuses treatment or refuses to take the initial test, sanctions could be imposed to take away welfare benefits."

"It's tough love, and it's compassion in its purest form," said Hager, a former teacher serving

his first House term.

Rep. Ruth Ann Jamnick, D-Ypsilanti, criticized the majority for rejecting an amendment that would have required legislators and state officials to be tested, too. She said the test picks on the poor "and may only serve to push them down further."

The House Fiscal Agency said 175,000 tests a year would be given, and FIA estimated 15 percent of clients would require treatment. At an average cost of \$3,000, treatment would total \$78.7 million. FIA said it's unclear whether Medicaid would

reimburse the state.

In an unrecorded vote, the House gave two-thirds approval (74 votes) to immediate effect, meaning the bills would become law as soon as they are signed by the governor.

Here's how Observer area representatives voted:

Yes - Bob Brown, D-Dearborn Heights, Gerald Law, R-Plymouth, Bruce Patterson, R-Canton, Andrew Raczkowski, R-Farmington Hills, Laura Toy, R-Livonia.

No - Tom Kelly, D-Wayne, **Absent** - Eileen DeHart, D-Westland,

Gov. John Engler called for passage of the bills a year ago, and the Republican-controlled Senate replied, but the House balked. This year the bills are likely to be enacted.

Opposing the bills were the Center for Civil Justice, the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, the American Civil Liberties Union and the Michigan County Social Services Association.

Money

from page A5

State Sen. Robert Emerson, D-Flint, said the state was doing little in terms of smoking prevention.

"I'm appalled that we're now taking 100 percent of the tobacco money and putting it into scholarships, when we sued because they were destroying the health of the citizens of our state," Emerson said.

Budget Director Mary Lannoye responded that Engler supported the cigarette tax, which now placed Michigan among the leaders in that tax. "One of the advantages (of the tax) is it deters smoking in children," Lannoye said.

State Rep. Paul Tesanovich, D-L'Anse, who believed it should go to educating children about the dangers of smoking, said Engler's proposal was "disturbing" and "unacceptable." Lannoye said Engler was open to discussions on prevention programs.

Tuition

from page A5

University changes

Engler also wants to revise the funding system for universities, proposing \$58 million for universities, a 4 percent increase. The first \$21.6 million will be distributed across the board, while an additional \$14.5 million will be given to universities whose current state funding is below other universities offering similar degrees and programs.

The remaining \$22 million is contingent on the state House and Senate's repeal of the existing tax credit, and will be distributed to each university that restrains undergraduate resident tuition growth at or below 3 percent for the 1999-2000 school year.

Engler also proposed \$1.7 billion for universities, a 4.2 percent increase. For corrections, he proposed \$1.6 billion, an 8.65 percent increase.

That fact was not lost on some state lawmakers.

State Sen. John Schwarz, R-Battle Creek, said the 15 university presidents walk into meetings with pie charts and bar graphs, saying that their university "was the most poorest funded of all the universities."

"One of the most significant points of difference is how can you justify an 8 percent increase for corrections and only half that for some schools?" Schwarz asked.

With 265,000 students on campus, Michigan is known for its university system, he added. "I don't want Michigan to be known to have the highest population of inmates. I would rather be known as the state with the highest number of college graduates."

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Bridges nominated for place on national preservation list

BY KEN ABRAMCZYK
STAFF WRITER
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Two bridges in western Wayne County were nominated Feb. 5 with 124 other sites in Michigan by the State Historic Preservation Review Board to be placed on a national list of properties to encourage their preservation.

The Hines Drive bridge over Ann Arbor Road in Livonia, the Lilley Road bridge over the lower branch of the Rouge River in Canton and 14 other bridges in Wayne County will be considered by the National Register of Historic Places to be placed on an official list of properties considered worthy of preservation because of their importance in American history and culture.

The register is part of the National Parks Service under the U.S. Department of Interior. It is expected to respond in about 45 days, or about mid-April, to the nomination, said Robert Christensen, national register coordinator of the State Historical Preservation Office.

Normally, those nominations are approved by the register, Christensen said. "It's hard to envision that they would not."

Federal "enhancement" dollars are available for historic preservation projects.

State historic preservation

officials are considering the Hines Drive bridge because consultants hired by the Michigan Department of Transportation found the bridge was in good condition and represented a rigid frame construction bridge, commonly used over freeways and in Wayne County.

The Lilley Road bridge over the Rouge River's lower branch in Canton was cited for its "pony-truss" construction. It was originally constructed on Telegraph Road over the Rouge River in the 1920s, but it was sturdy enough to be relocated to Canton in 1933.

The register's criteria for evaluation include the structure or site's quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture. Structures reflect integrity of location, design setting, materials and workmanship.

MDOT began a bridge assessment and inventory of potential historical structures in 1994, updating an earlier 1985 survey, according to Margaret Barondess, cultural resource coordinator with the Michigan Department of Transportation.

MDOT hired two consulting firms to survey Michigan bridges for possible participation in the National Historic Places program. That recognition is limited to structures that are 50 years old.

Expansion at Metro

Competition expected to benefit customers

BY KEN ABRAMCZYK
STAFF WRITER
kabramczyk@oe.homecomm.net

Officials at Detroit Metro Airport hope six new gates will increase the presence of two airlines there and eventually result in more airline competition and lower fares for travelers.

Wayne County, Southwest Airlines and Spirit Airlines have reached an agreement to expand the concourse A area near the Smith Terminal, county and airline officials announced Monday at a press conference.

Construction will begin next month on the \$11 million project. Since that area is occupied by those two gates, the airport will actually experience a net gain of four gates when they open in August. Once completed, Detroit Metro will house 103 aircraft gates and allow Spirit, currently operating on three different concourses at borrowed gates, to consolidate its operations.

Southwest will operate four of the six new gates, Spirit will operate two.

County Executive Edward McNamara said many people believe Northwest dominates Metro because it flies 70 percent of the passengers, but actually every major U.S. carrier provides service there.

Northwest

"Northwest has 70 percent because they handle virtually all of the connecting traffic," McNamara said. "Our research indi-



Dave Katz
-airport director

'We believe in offering choices to the public. ... It's important because of what it will do for competition and what it would do for low fares.'

cates that 55 percent of the local traffic - that would be all passengers beginning or ending their trip in Detroit - fly carriers other than Northwest.

"We have always been interested in providing facilities for any airline wishing to provide service at Detroit Metro."

David Katz, airport director, said the expansion plan did not evolve from the customer complaints and dissatisfaction due to Northwest Airlines' long flight delays during the snowstorm in early January. Northwest uses Detroit as a hub.

"We worked on negotiations for the past eight months," Katz said. "We believe in offering choices to the public." Katz said county officials successfully negotiated with Northwest to use holding room space in the gate expansion area.

Northwest Airlines officials

could not be reached for comment for this story.

Katz compared the expansion to adding a "Flint Bishop Airport" in concourse A, as the two airlines now could conceivably add 40 new flights a day.

"It's important because of what it will do for competition and what it would do for low fares."

Carrier expand

Southwest Airlines will act as the construction manager. Spirit will make payments to Southwest for its share of construction costs. Wayne County will reimburse the airlines with revenue from passenger facility charges. Eventually, Wayne County will own the gates, and the airlines will lease the gates from Wayne County.

Bob Montgomery, director of properties for Southwest Airlines, said that airline was "not

prepared" to add flights. "The project will give us flexibility," Montgomery said.

"Since most of our flights are 'O and D' (origination and destination), I don't see us making a connecting flight at Metro," Montgomery said. "I think you will see us trying something with the timing of flights." Studies show the number of passengers varies depending on the time of the flight, which will give Southwest something to work with, Montgomery said.

Ned Homfeld, president and founder of Spirit Airlines, said the company plans to add more routes in 1999. "We've been utilizing gates by other concourses. That limits our ability to expand."

"If other carriers get out late, it hurts our reliability."

The expansion should be seen as "not only a victory for Detroit, but a victory for the flying public," Homfeld said.

Spirit has not owned a permanent gate since it inaugurated service from Metro in 1992, instead leasing it from other carriers. Spirit currently flies to 13 cities from Metro, including Atlantic City, Boston, Cleveland, Newark and New York City and several Florida cities.

Southwest flies to Chicago, Nashville and St. Louis, and has additional direct or connecting service to 37 cities.

Barton Malow of Detroit will be the builder, while Giffels, Hoyem and Basso of Troy will be the architectural firm for the project.

Parks program to focus on woodland creatures

How can you tell what an animal eats or whether or not it has good eyesight or hearing?

Learn about these and other "animal clues" 9:30-11:30 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 20, at the Nankin Mills Interpretive Center in Westland.

Participants can expect to unravel mysteries about woodland creatures. Topics include identification of skulls, animal eating habits and track identification. Best suited for ages eight and above, the fee is \$1 per person and advance registration is required.

The Nankin Mills Interpretive Center is on Hines Drive just

east of Ann Arbor Trail in Westland. Parking is available off Hines Drive and can be reached even if the road is barricaded for flooding.

Information, (734) 261-1990.

Classes and workshop offered by Schoolcraft College Continuing Education Services in March include:

Who's Watching Your Child? - Before you leave your child in the care of a baby sitter or child-care center, know how to conduct a thorough security investigation with easily obtained information. See demonstrations of the latest spy technology used to monitor your caregiver. The one-day class meets 7-9 p.m. Monday, March 1. The fee is \$29.

Law for the Layperson - Learn how the law affects your life in areas such as probate proceedings, consumer protection laws, durable powers of attorney, living wills, elder law issues, basic commercial law and simple trusts. Learn how to bring small claims court action, how to read a balance sheet and investment report, and how to prepare simple tax returns. The class begins Monday, March 1, and meets for four weeks 2-4 p.m. for a \$54 fee.

Self-Exploration Using Art - Use art activities to reach your deep inner knowledge and healing powers. Each of the five sessions will explore a different aspect of self-exploration. The first class meets 7-9 p.m. Tuesday, March 2. The fee is \$67.

Quality Standards - Construction - This one-day seminar provides an overview of the history and evolution of the ISO 9000 Quality Standard and how it applies to the construction industry. It meets 1-5 p.m.

Wednesday, March 3, for a fee of \$95.

Marketing Your Product or Service - Another one-day class in the Small Business Entrepreneur series, this class teaches how to develop products or services people want and how to price products competitively so that customers buy them. It meets 6:30-10 p.m. Wednesday, March 3, for a \$39 fee.

Computers Don't Byte -

Please see SC, All

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Madonna to offer new MBA program starting fall term

A master of business administration (MBA) degree, which awards certificates in functional, customer-driven areas, will be offered by Madonna University beginning the fall 1999 term.

The new degree was approved at a recent meeting of the University's board of trustees.

"This new MBA degree will enable students to develop a philosophy and vision within the context of a global economy, so they may take leadership roles in their organizations," said

John Sennett, chairman of Sennett Steel Corp. in Madison Heights, who serves as Madonna's board chairman.

"The program combines sound business theory with practical skills, giving students a broad understanding of business and how it relates to the social, political and economic forces facing today's managers," stated Tarik Daoud, president of Al Long Ford in Warren, and Madonna trustee.

Designed for both working pro-

fessionals and those who have recently earned a bachelor's degree, the 40-semester hour program covers all the functional areas of business.

Classes will be offered in the evenings and on weekends, with some courses delivered on-line. Included in the MBA program are certificates of completion in general business, nonprofit administration and two in quality management.

"While the MBA is a general business administration pro-

gram, we have incorporated the certificates of completion to allow students the opportunity to specialize in an area pertinent to their careers," explained Dr. Stuart Arends, dean of Madonna's School of Business.

Unique in its connection to an MBA degree is the nonprofit leadership certificate.

nonprofit courses focus on areas such as developing and deploying volunteers, establishing partnerships with board members, as well as managing,

funding and evaluating programs.

One of the two quality certificates awarded in the MBA program is offered jointly with the Association for Quality and Participation (AQP). Along with the MBA degree, students will earn an AQP certificate. The foundation and implementation of the quality improvement process is covered in second quality certificate.

The general business certificate allows students to develop a

specialization by taking courses in a specific business area such as international business, human resource administration, accounting and finance, and marketing.

For information about the master of business administration program, contact the School of Business at (734) 432-5356. For an application, contact the Office of Graduate Studies at (734) 432-5667 or e-mail muin-fo@mtp.munet.edu

CAPITOL CAPSULES

Health actions

The state Department of Consumer & Industry Services' disciplinary office reported these actions affecting professional licenses for the first half of January:

Nemer E. Hanna, 51, M.D., of Bloomfield Hills - license summarily suspended due to inability to practice.

Michael D. Ward, 48, M.D., of Novi - license summarily suspended due to inability to practice.

Marlene Chester, 47, R.N., of Rochester Hills - license summarily suspended due to technical violation of the Public Health Code.

Rosalind C. Johnson, 46, R.N., C.R.N.A., of Farmington Hills - CRNA certification suspended for 30 days and fine of \$500 for failure to meet continuing education requirements.

Joanne M. Nichols, 38, R.N., of Orion - license suspended for six months due to "negligence/incompetence."

Jacqueline E. Roggin, 57, R.Ph., West Bloomfield - reprimand for violation of general duty.

Michael S. Kahan, 33, D.V.M., of Farmington Hills - reprimand and fine of \$500 for technical violation of the Public Health Code.

Arab advice

Gov. Engler has appointed 25 persons to a new "Arab-American Advisory Board" which will "enhance the relationship between the Arab-American community and the Executive Office."

Area appointees include: Abe Munfakh, Plymouth, president of an architecture firm.

SC

from page A9

Overcome your fears of computers in a relaxed, nonthreatening environment while slowly getting to know what computers are about. The four-week class, which uses Windows 95 applications, meets at 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 3. The fee is \$108.

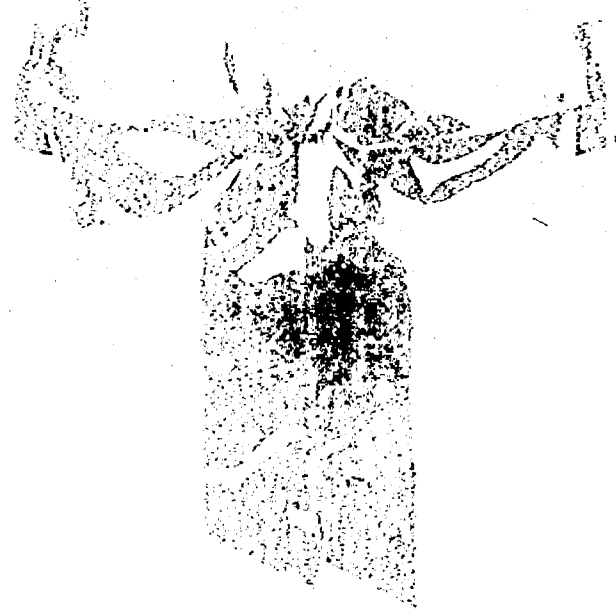
■ Floral Design I - This eight-week class will prepare you to make beautiful floral arrangements with spring and summer blooms. It is designed for the beginner who wants to learn the mechanics of wiring, flower arranging, design, corsages, dish gardens and specialty arrangements. The eight-week class meets 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 3, with a repeated session at 6:30 p.m. The fee is \$128.

■ Exploring the Art of Cooking II - Learn techniques to prepare more advanced soups, appetizers, entrees and international cuisine.

Beginners and experienced cooks welcome, but should possess a basic knowledge of cooking. Certified Master Chef Jeff Gabriel will share his recipes. The three-week class meets at 6 p.m. and begins Thursday, March 4. Fee is \$132.

■ For information on these or other CES classes, call 734-462-4448. Schoolcraft College is located at 18600 Haggerty Road, between Six Mile and Seven Mile, just west of I-275.

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Westland Observer

OPINION

A12(W)

36251 SCHOOLCRAFT, LIVONIA, MICHIGAN 48150

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1999

Accomplishments

Young folks make difference

Youth is wasted on the young – some older, maybe jealous types, like to say. But some young people in Westland have not only been enjoying their youth but making valuable contributions at the same time.

Some of the achievements are of a world-class variety. Others are acts of honesty or charity and others helped to preserve the safety of others. Here are some recent examples:

On Friday night, Westland ice skating duo Steve and Danielle Hartsell skated to their biggest triumph yet by winning the senior pairs title at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships held last week in Utah.

Now headed for the World Championships in Helsinki, Finland, next month, the Hartsells have steadily improved over their years of training.

And they've accomplished their skating feats while still in school. Steve is an Oakland University student, while Danielle is a Westland John Glenn senior.

Meanwhile, closer to home many young people have made contributions to Westland.

One young man, T.J. Gosselin, 9, found \$50 outside Westland City Hall in December. He

turned it in at city hall.

After no one claimed the money, Gosselin was rewarded for his honesty – he got the \$50 plus another \$50 donated by city officials.

Meanwhile, at St. Matthew Lutheran Church and School in Westland, the students worked together to not only reach their fundraising goal of \$1,000, but to double it to \$2,000 in an effort to help out with a planned church and school expansion.

And back in January, during the height of the challenging winter weather of the first two weeks of the year, two young boys voluntarily adopted a fire hydrant to keep it clear of snow and ice.

Seven-year-olds Dillon Bell and Shane Bright of Westland used shovels and gloved hands to keep snow cleared from a hydrant in their neighborhood. They did it, they said, in case someone in the neighborhood had a fire.

These are only a few examples of the accomplishments of young people in Westland. There are many more.

While many people hold a negative view of young people today, they need only take a closer look to find some outstanding young citizens right in their local community.

Rethink county pay raises

It's time to take another look at how Wayne County elected officials are given pay raises.

Currently, Wayne County elected officials receive pay increases based on the governor's salary and actions by state lawmakers on recommendations that come from the State Officers Compensation Commission. It's a convenient way to sidestep the accountability that ought to rest at the county level.

According to the county charter, the county executive receives 97 percent of the governor's salary. The prosecutor, sheriff, clerk, register of deeds and county commissioners, in turn, receive percentages based on the county executive's pay.

Those salaries are adjusted on Jan. 1 of each year that the governor is granted a salary adjustment, unless it is rejected by a two-thirds vote of the commission.

County Executive Edward McNamara will earn \$134,594 this year and \$146,707 in 2000, up from his 1998 salary of \$123,481. County Prosecutor John O'Hair's salary will receive the same percentage increases to \$132,036 in 2000, as the prosecutor's salary is 90 percent of the county executive. Wayne County Clerk Teola Hunter, Register of Deeds Forest Youngblood, Sheriff Robert Ficano and Treasurer Raymond Wojtowicz will receive 75 percent of McNamara's salary, bringing those salaries to \$110,030 in 2000.

These salaries are slightly higher but overall comparable to what elected officials in Oakland County receive.

Wayne County commissioners will be paid \$53,838 this year, and \$58,682 in 2000. Last year, they were paid a \$49,392 salary, adjusted to 40 percent of the county executive's salary.

The board chairman receives an additional \$12,000 more per year as the chairman, while two others are paid \$6,000 more annually in their leadership positions.

Six commission committee chairs receive an additional \$4,000 a year.

We do not object to pay increases for county officials, but they should be tied to the rate of inflation and not what happens to salaries at the state level.

One local commissioner summed up her support of the pay increases by noting that the percentages were recommended by the state. How convenient. But don't expect the county board to listen if the state recommends how Wayne County should spend money in other areas.

One newly elected commissioner called the increases outrageous and this time we agree.

Elected officials will receive 18 percent over two years after the Wayne County Commission failed to reject the increases.

The motion to reject the raises failed by one vote on Feb. 4.

The motion was supported, 9-6. But it failed because the county charter requires a two-thirds vote or 10 commissioners to deny the raises.

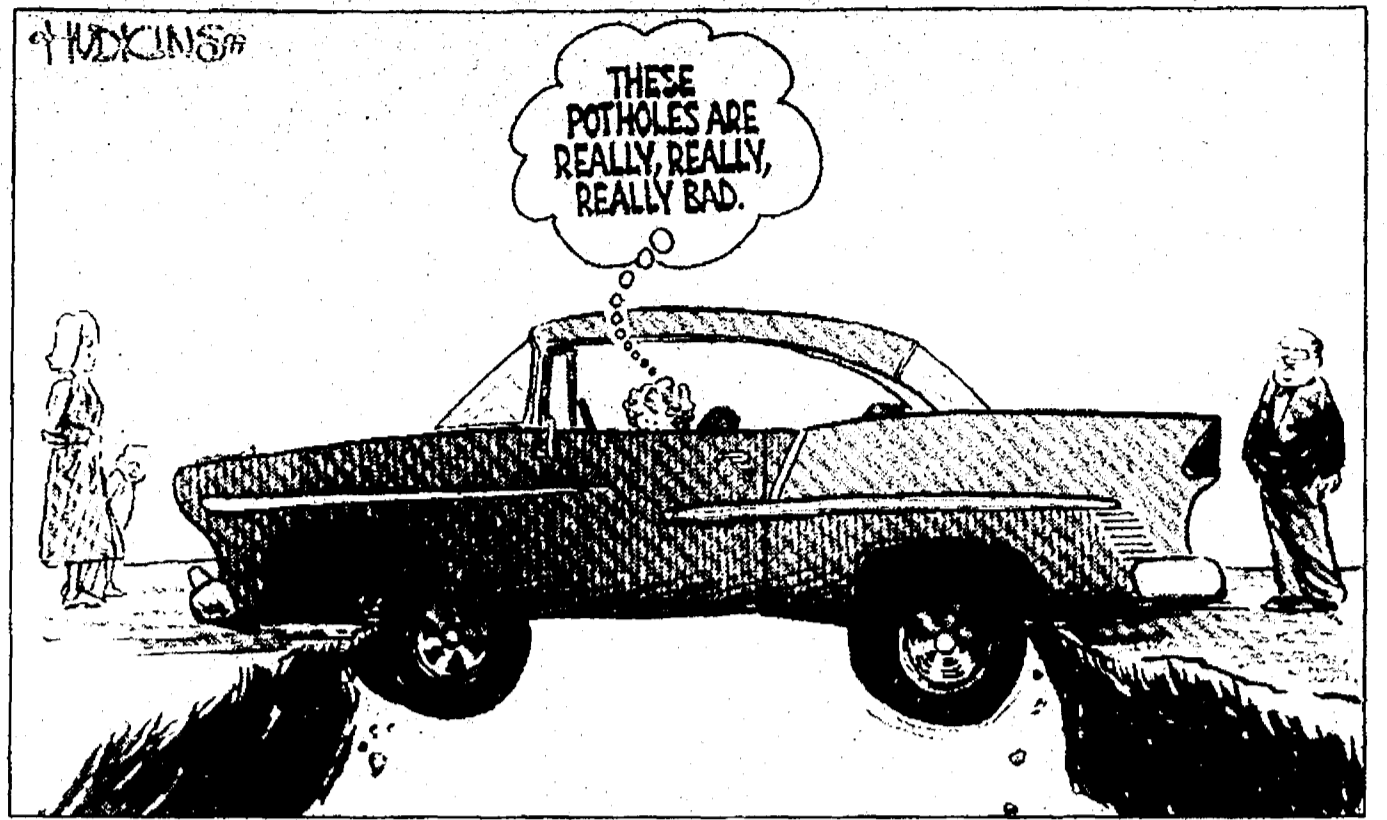
One local commissioner summed up her support of the pay increases by noting that the percentages were recommended by the state. How convenient. But don't expect the county board to listen if the state recommends how Wayne County should spend money in other areas.

Commissioners who supported the motion to reject the raises were Lyn Bankes, R-Livonia, Kathleen Husk, R-Redford, and John Sullivan, D-Wayne, who also represents Canton, along with Edna Bell, D-Detroit, Edward Boike, D-Taylor, Susan Hubbard, D-Dearborn, Joe Palamara, D-Wyandotte, Bernard Parker, D-Detroit, and Jewel Ware, D-Detroit.

Commissioners who opposed the motion – and supported the raises – were Chairman Ricardo Solomon, D-Detroit, Vice Chair Kay Beard, D-Westland, Robert Blackwell, D-Detroit, Chris Cavanagh, D-Detroit, George Cushingberry, D-Detroit, and Ilona Varga, D-Detroit.

Two years ago, a few commissioners sought to tie the commission's raise to the rate of inflation. The idea didn't get off the ground. It's time to try again.

ARKIE HUDKINS



LETTERS

Road to nowhere

Fifty years ago, I purchased a new home in Nankin Township, with hopes that the area would develop into a nice area to live.

After living in the township for 10 years, I had decided to move, because the area was going nowhere.

After moving back to this area, I'm starting to see a go nowhere situation again, with the recent decision not to put up a new city hall and recreation center.

People of Westland: Your city will be what you the people put into it.

Let's face facts – this city needs a new city hall no matter how you cut it.

As for the recreation center, you will also need this for future use.

It was said that the library was a bad idea, but believe me it's being used by a lot of people which I see go in and out every day.

I suggest that some people take a ride around other cities and see how they are improving.

Are we going to be called a going nowhere city?

N.A. Wayne
Westland

Made in USA

Recently, while browsing at a local junk shop, someone handed me an object and asked if I thought it was an antique. I examined it carefully and responded: "Yes, definitely an antique."

How did I know? Because it was engraved as follows: "Made in USA." A phrase seldom seen these days.

I have concluded that the presence of "Made in USA" on an object means that it was made prior to 1970. The appearance of "Made in Japan" indicates manufacture between 1970 and 1990. And, "Made in China" means it was produced after 1990.

Are there political and economic consequences to these junk shop rules of thumb for dating objects? Wall Street doesn't think so.

But, I think there is. You can feel it at ground level in the economy – in the junk shops.

Walter Warren
Westland

Coverage earns merit badge

I would like to commend the Observer on your Jan. 24 coverage of the events at Nankin Mills Interpretive Center. There are many great programs available due to the passing of the parks millage. It is truly wonderful to have available these park programs. They will enrich our children with the wonders of

nature within our own community.

My Junior Girl Scout troop has earned two badges through workshops at Nankin Mills, and we are on the calendar for two more in the very near future. Due to these workshops and the Observer coverage, our troop is not only able to earn badges that are difficult to complete in a short period of time, but their families and friends now have knowledge of interesting trails to hike near home. Many of our girls have gotten on the mailing list and participate in other activities at the center on their own. Thank you for your continued coverage.

Roxanne Hundsrucker
Livonia

What about the perpetrators?

Tim Richard's article, "Counselors and parents should warn collegians of dangers," managed to ruffle a few feminist feathers, especially his question, "Didn't anyone ever tell A.C. that it's dangerous, even foolish, to drink when you are underage and away from home with guys who were previously strangers?" Of course, parents warn their children to be careful! Most girls and women live in fear. They are told over and over again that they must lock their doors, not go out at night alone, not trust strangers, and so on. But all this fear that we pump into our young women and all the precautions they take will not end the violence that is done to them. Not until we stop blaming the victim and start putting the blame where it belongs – on the perpetrators of the crimes. They are the ones who need serious counseling. The question Mr. Richard should ask is, "Didn't anyone ever tell our young men that it's wrong to drug young women and rape them?"

Tracey Martin, president
Western Wayne County Chapter
National Organization for Women

Opinions are to be shared: We welcome your ideas, as do your neighbors. That's why we offer this space on a weekly basis for opinions in your own words. We will help by editing for clarity and brevity. To assure authenticity, we ask that you sign your letter and provide a daytime contact telephone number. No anonymous letters will be published.

The week prior to an election, this newspaper will not publish letters that discuss new issues, since last-minute attacks don't allow a chance for rebuttal. Responses to already published issues will be accepted.

Letters should be mailed to: Editor, The Westland Observer, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150; faxed to (734) 591-7279; or e-mailed with your name, city of residence and phone number to: bjachman@oe.homecomm.net

COMMUNITY VOICE

QUESTION:

What do you consider the worst intersection in Westland?

We asked this question at the Westland public library.



"I try to avoid Wayne and Ford Road. That has to be about the worst one."

Cheryl Samecky



"Ford and Wayne. It takes forever to get through it."

Wayne Taylor



"Ford and Wayne because of the volume (of traffic), and people are always blowing the light."

Ann Taylor



"Venoy and Palmer. I've seen a lot of bad accidents there."

Robert Battista

Westland Observer

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— Philip Power

POINTS OF VIEW

School administration shares Sassafras blame

An open letter to the Wayne-Westland school board: With respect to Sassafras Trails, I believe some severe censuring should be placed on the Wayne-Westland schools Superintendent Gregory Baracy and former Assistant Superintendent Patricia Brand. Their names appear on the sale agreements for Wilson School and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources easement.

On Feb. 10, a public hearing was held by a Wayne County Drain commissioner to abandon and vacate the Perrin Drain flowing in Sassafras Trails.

The hearing upheld their letter of Oct. 28, 1998, which disavowed their earlier letter of Feb. 19, 1998, declaring the Perrin Drain to be a natural water course. (A natural water course cannot be destroyed per the drain code.) No public hearing was ever held in a timely manner despite my

many letters of request. The drain was legally vacated six months after the fact.

The entire Sassafras fiasco would never have occurred if the school administration had dealt with the community in good faith and had not duped the elected school board and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Consider the following:

■ A Sept. 2, 1994, letter regarding DNR parcel review statement describing Sassafras Trails to include a creek along with other criteria which allowed their purchase for \$520,000.

■ A Feb. 19, 1998, Wayne County drain letter declaring Perrin Drain to be a natural water course.

■ An Oct. 28, 1998, Wayne County drain letter disavowing letter of Feb. 19, 1998, as a "mistake."

■ A copy of a plat map circa 1925, shows listed lot numbers throughout Sassafras Trails including the area

GUEST COLUMNIST



CHARLES W. JOHNSON

within the Wilson School area.

■ A copy of the Westland 1998 tax assessment roll indicates lot numbers within the Wilson School area were never legally separated from Maplewood Subdivision. (Therefore, no legal requirement existed to sell, as a unit, the six rows of lots within the demarcated Wilson School area.)

■ A copy of an Aug. 18, 1997, school board resolution to sell certain

surplus real property known as Wilson School has no mention of acreage nor lot numbers. The school board was denied knowledge that actual land being sold included a valuable portion of Sassafras Trails.

■ A copy of the March 23, 1998, warranty deed conveyed to Wildwood Association displays lot numbers from a plat map which were denied to the school board. It includes lot numbers 567 through 631 in the forest which should have been included with the DNR purchase. The school board never had the legal definition of property being sold.

■ A copy of the Sept. 22, 1997, easement lists lot numbers of property being offered to the DNR for development rights purchase, but the listed lot numbers do not include the southernmost two rows of lots 567 through 631 which included large trees and the drain which DNR anticipated they were buying. The DNR does not

make surveys of property they purchase according to Dave Yankee, of the DNR Department of Purchases. They had no way to know they were not receiving all of the property of Sassafras Trails. It is clear to me that someone in the school administration also knew that the DNR does not make their own surveys.

It is very clear that the glitches in the DNR contract, which delayed acceptance of the \$520,000 check from the DNR, were merely contrived to allow the switch in closing the sale of Wilson School before the DNR had any ownership in Sassafras. The community's four-year struggle to find money to preserve the 10,000-year-old forest of Sassafras was lost, not only in a bait-and-switch deal, but also by willfully deceiving our elected school board and the state of Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Charles W. Johnson is a resident of Wayne.

Governor's improving on land preservation concerns

Many environmentalists gasped with delight last month when Gov. John Engler, in his State of the State speech, actually used the words "urban sprawl." In his first eight years, he didn't seem to know the meaning of the term that summarizes how we're eating up open space far faster than our population is growing.

Could it be true? Did a thunderbolt come from Heaven, as it did to St. Paul on the road to Damascus, and convert Engler? Did he suddenly become a believer in preserving our woods and fields and wetlands?

Not quite. Here is the complete quote, with emphasis added: "As we work together to implement Clean Michigan, save farmland and reduce urban sprawl..."

The operative words are "save farmland." Farmers are in agribusiness. Their voices are louder, believe

me, than environmentalists'.

The Detroit papers missed the Feb. 11 exchange between Engler's budget director, Mary Lannoye, and Sen. George McManus, R-Traverse City. You don't see McManus' name much in these papers because he focuses with laser precision on agribusiness issues the way Detroit legislators focus solely on "urban" issues.

McManus first complimented Lannoye on putting some money in the budget for the bovine tuberculosis problem in northeast lower Michigan. Then he moved to what was really bugging him:

"The agricultural economy is the lowest it has been since 1929. I hear complaints from farmers that they're selling land to pay their mortgages. I hope agriculture is higher on your priority list next year."

Lannoye nodded: Message received. The same day, Senate Majority



TIM RICHARD

Leader Dan DeGrow, R-Port Huron, announced formation of a Senate task force on agriculture preservation to "examine the status and future of Michigan's second largest industry." Heading it will be McManus, of course, and a member will be Dianne Byrum, D-Onondaga.

There follows a set of "fact sheets" noting the aging of the farm population. In the middle is a significant

environmental fact: "Michigan is losing approximately 118 acres of farmland per day."

That number means little to us suburban computer hackers, so let's explore it. In 5.4 days, Michigan loses a square mile of land. That we can understand. In a year, we lose 67 square miles of land. That's almost two entire townships.

In a decade, we lose 670 square miles, or 18 townships, or more than an average-sized county. That's really a lot of farmland. And it doesn't count woodlands, wetlands and prairies.

Meanwhile, Ladbroke DRC, the state's premier thoroughbred horse track, has shut down as gamblers get sucked in by casinos. That puts a dent in horse raising and the feed business.

DeGrow and McManus go on: "Michigan's apple industry was recently hit hard by competition from cheap imports from China."

Now, any nutritionist, home ec teacher or your mother can tell you that locally grown food tastes better and is better for you than food from thousands of miles away.

So the Michigan Senate and the Engler administration are getting the message: Development isn't all good.

Engler has wised up to the need to curb development in order to protect agribusiness. In his catechism, it's known as "imperfect contrition" — doing the right thing because you fear damnation and loss of campaign contributors. "Perfect contrition" would mean doing the right thing because the Creator says so and it benefits your neighbor (Luke 10: 29-37).

Engler isn't fully there on the environmental issue, but he's improving.

Tim Richard reports on the local implications of state and regional events. His voice mail number is (734) 953-2047, Ext. 1881.

Spending on prisons defies the logic of crime statistics

If you want to know what a politician's real priorities are, forget the window dressing contained in the State of the (you fill in the blank) Speech. Instead, look to the budget when it's finally submitted.

Gov. John Engler provides an instructive example.

In his widely praised State of the State speech at the end of January, the governor made education his top priority, arguing that Michigan had to be a "smart state" to succeed in the economic competition of the future and proposing all manner of innovations in education.

His budget, unveiled last week, had a distinctly different emphasis. In it, Engler recommended giving state prisons a budget hike nearly four times bigger than the one for public universities.

Engler called on the Legislature to increase appropriations to the Department of Corrections by \$110 million, more than 8 percent, much of the money going to open 4,712 new prison beds. Fifteen public universities would be guaranteed increases of \$24 million — a 1.5 percent increase — while another seven schools would divvy up an extra \$14 million from a new funding formula.

If adopted, Engler's proposed budget would put total state spending on prisons at nearly \$1.57 billion, nearly equal to the \$1.63 billion he wants to spend on higher education. If past priorities are any guide to the future, the Engler budget for 2000 will be the first in Michigan history to spend more money to warehouse criminals than to educate young people.

I don't get it. Or, more accurately, I didn't get it until I read a series of articles recently published in the Atlantic Monthly magazine written by Eric Schlosser.

Taking his text from the famous warning about the "military-industrial complex" in President Eisenhower's 1961 farewell address, Schlosser suggests the real reason behind the enormous increase in prison spending nationwide is the workings of the "prison-industrial complex" — a set of bureaucratic, political and economic interests that encourage increased spending on imprisonment, regardless of the actual need. "Not a conspiracy, the prison-industrial complex is a confluence of special interests that has given prison construction in the United States a seemingly unstoppable momentum."

Schlosser cites these components:



PHILIP POWER

■ Politicians, both liberal and conservative, who regularly pander to a public fearful of crime by voting for new prisons. If you can get them to stand still for a moment, ask your state representative and senator under what circumstances they would vote against prison construction and staffing and for more money for colleges and universities. Don't hold your breath.

■ Poor rural areas, where prisons have become the main engine of economic growth. There are legislators from northern Michigan and the UP who never met a prison they — and their unemployed constituents — didn't like.

■ Private companies riding the current fad for privatization, that regard the \$1.57 billion spent in Michigan on prisons not as a burden on our taxes but as a lucrative market.

■ State government bureaucrats, in charge of ever-increasing pots of money and power.

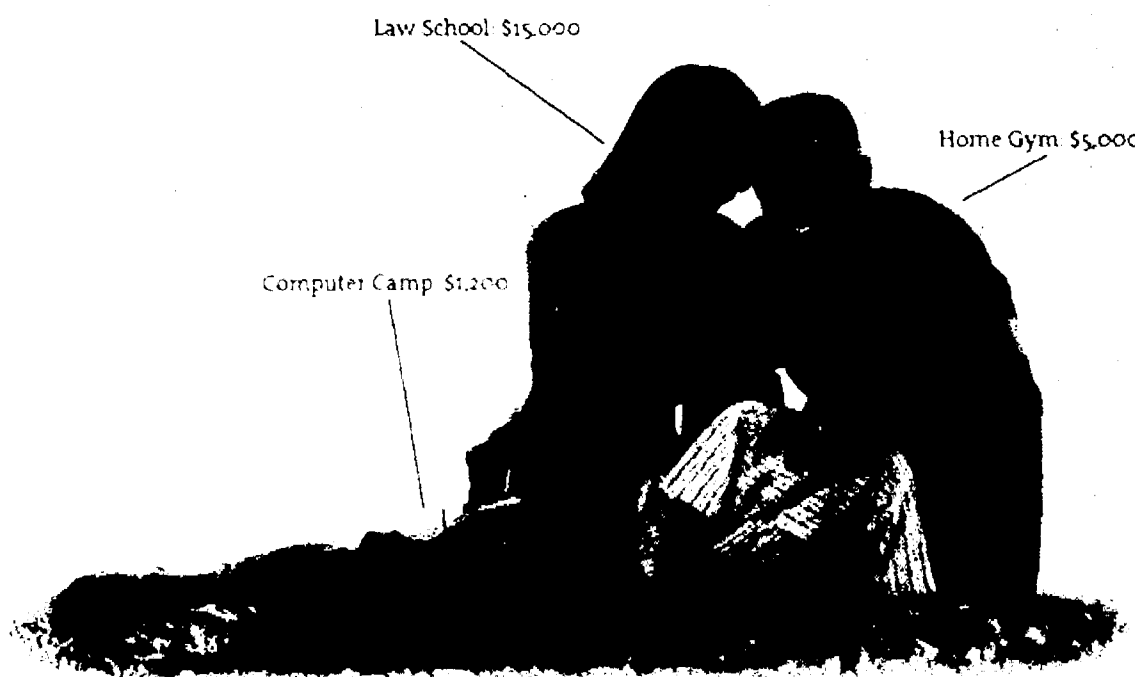
The data are clear. Nationwide since 1991, the rate of violent crime in America has fallen by about 20 percent, while the number of people in prison has risen by 50 percent.

The logic is unstoppable. If crime is going up, we need to build more prisons. But if crime is going down, it's because we have built more prisons. And, most certainly, building yet more prisons will drive the crime rate down even more.

When the Legislature finally passes the Engler budget, you'll see that growth in state spending on prisons easily will surpass spending on colleges and universities. You may not like it, but at least you'll understand why.

Phil Power is chairman of HomeTown Communications Network Inc., the company that owns this newspaper. He welcomes your comments, either by voice mail at (734) 953-2047, Ext. 1880, or by e-mail: ppower@oconline.com

In life, the things that count can really add up.



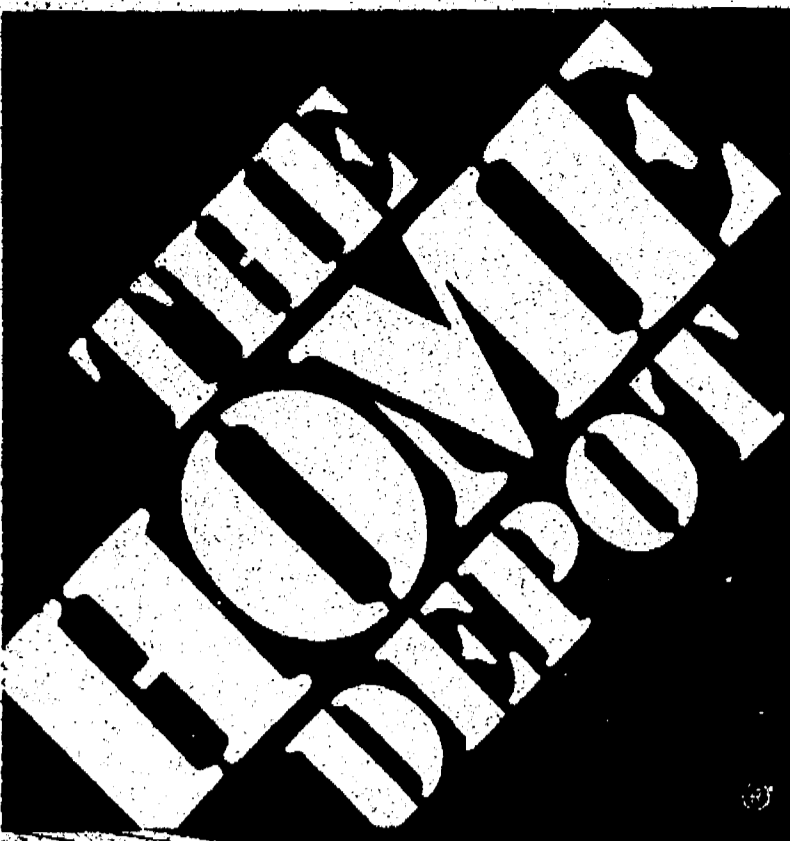
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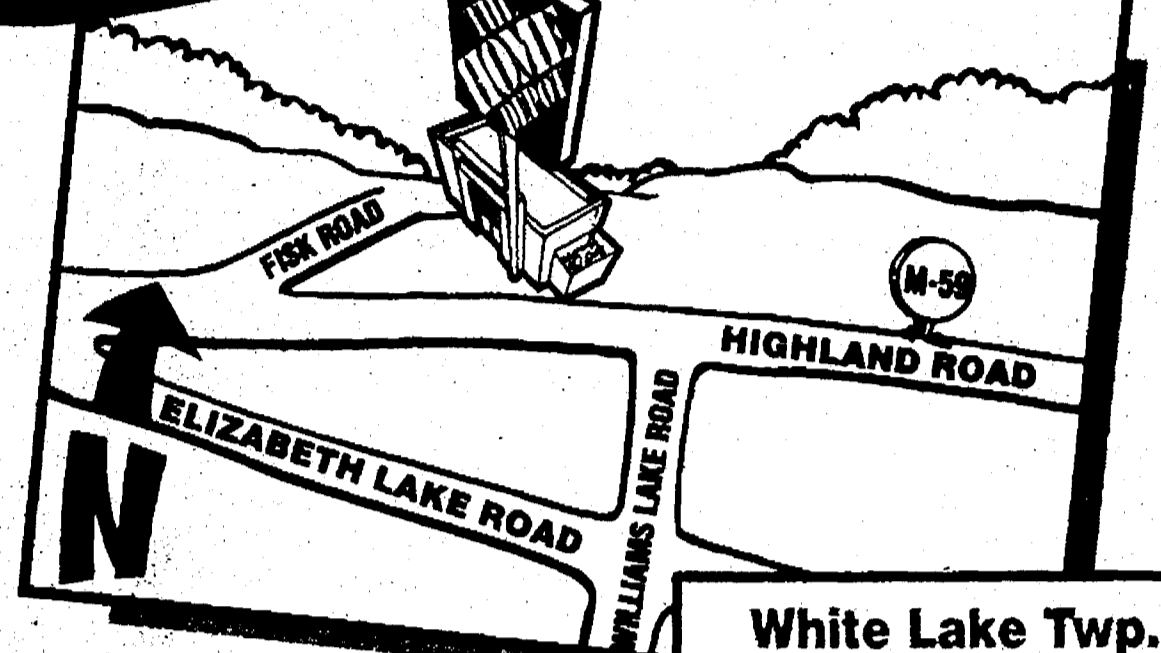
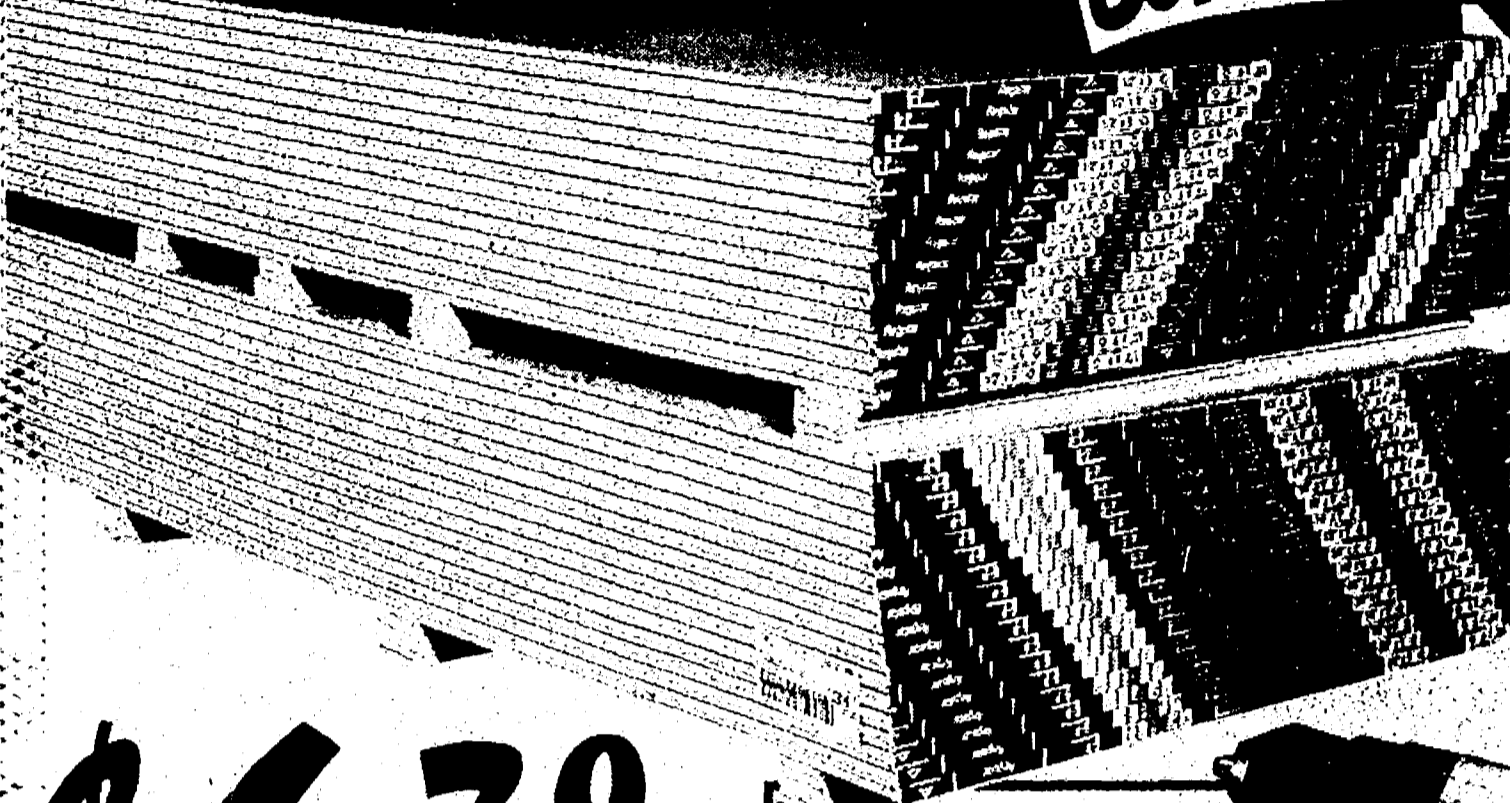
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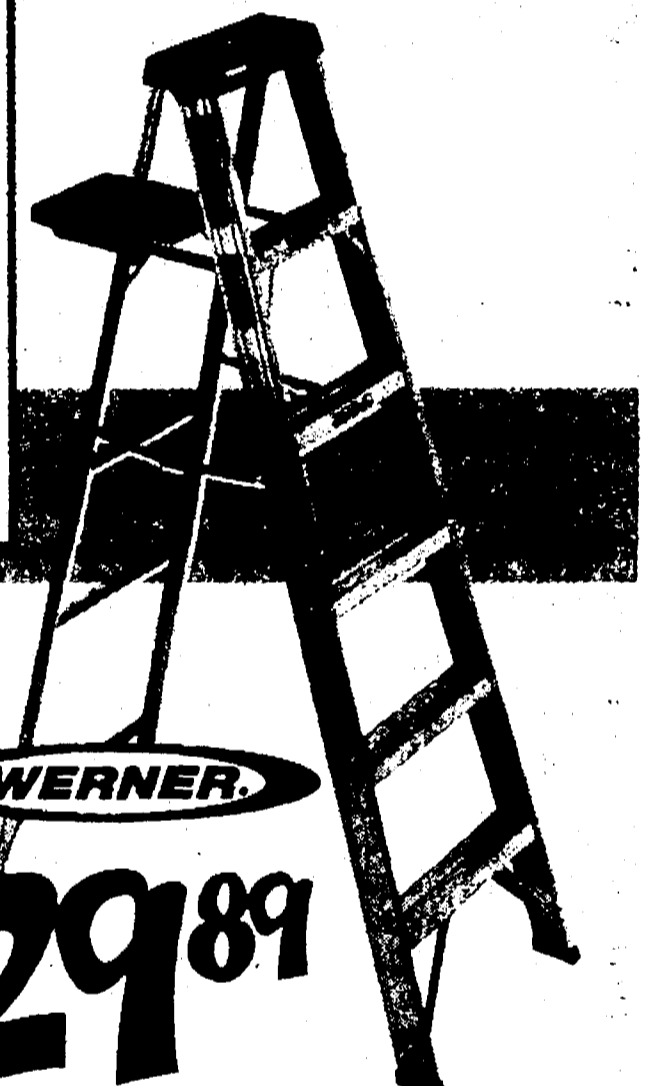
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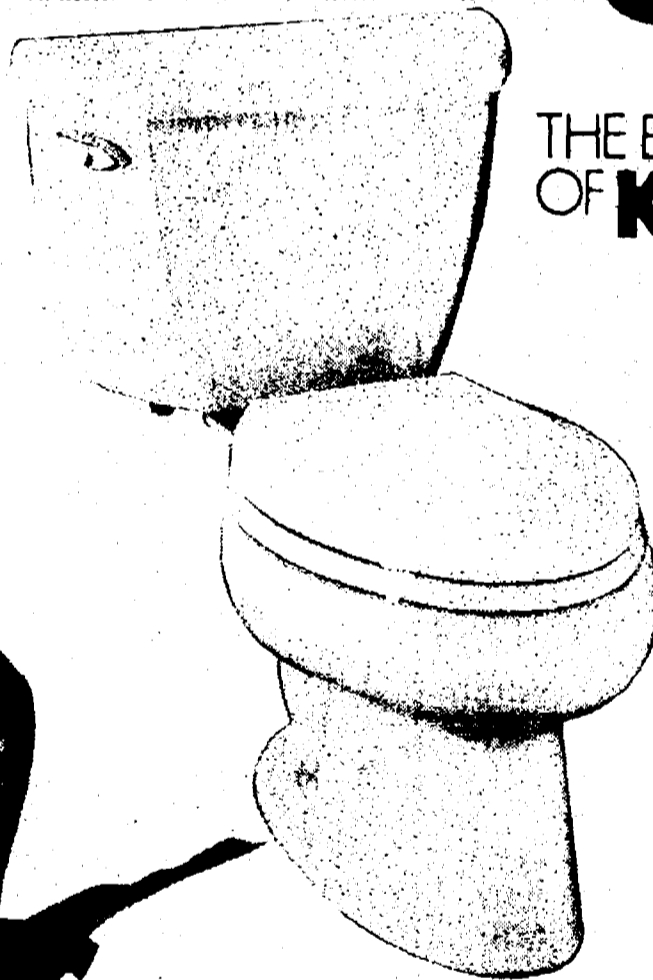
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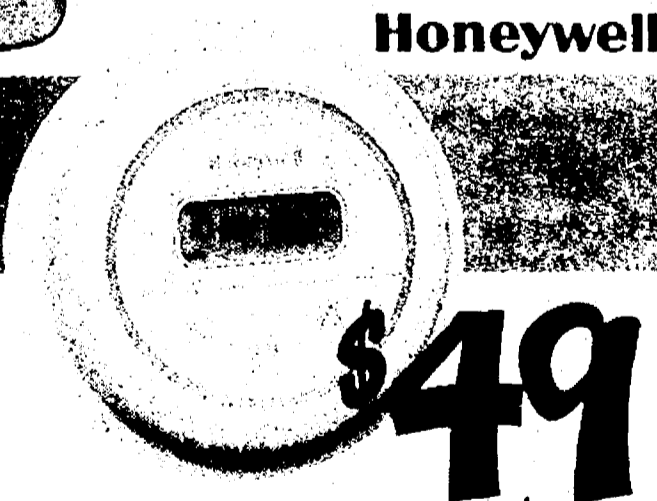
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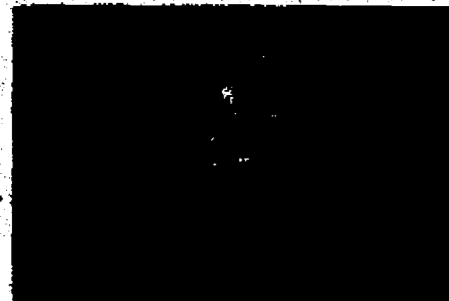
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HOOKEE ON HISTORY



VIRGINIA BAILEY PARKER

America's favorite game with a twist

Remember the movie, "A League of Their Own"? It featured the Rockford Peaches, a team in the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (AAGPBL), which operated from 1943-54. Philip Wrigley, the chewing gum magnate and owner of the Chicago Cubs, formed the Midwestern league to temporarily fill the gap in men's baseball during World War II.

When a part of history like this is taken to the silver screen, events become larger than life; it seems the stories belong to people far removed from us.

Not so. Recently, I had the pleasure of meeting Betty Yahr. She played in the league in 1946. I found out about her while standing in the kitchen of fellow Historic District Commissioner Terry Bennett. Something nestled among family snapshots on her refrigerator caught my attention.

"What's this?" I asked.
"Oh, that's my Aunt Betty's baseball card from when she played for the Rockford Peaches," Bennett replied nonchalantly.

The next thing I knew, Bennett placed a phone call, and I had an interview arranged.

Yahr got into baseball as a kid, growing up in Ann Arbor. There wasn't a school sports program for girls then, so she played sandlot baseball with the boys.

Later, she played in a recreation league (her mother lied about Yahr's age to get her on the team at age 12) and then on major, state-champ, amateur softball teams. It was while playing for a Flint team that her talent was noticed and a tryout was arranged for the AAGPBL.

Accuracy and movies

I was interested in finding out what movieland had portrayed accurately, like sliding into home plate in skirts.

"There was some padding in the shorts underneath, but not much, believe me," Yahr said. "We got a lot of leg burns."

Did the players mind having to forgo standard baseball pants?

"No," she said. "You just wanted to play ball; you didn't care what you were wearing."

The women's league began with a fast version of softball that, over the years, developed into a hybrid of soft and hardball. They started with a standard softball and gradually converted to a hardball slightly bigger than the official men's size. The diamonds were somewhat smaller, and, in time, they added sidearm and overhand pitches to underhand.

Their mitts were much smaller, "not like the big leagues today," Yahr said, adding, "If they can't catch them in those, they're not ballplayers, in my opinion!"

Like any major leaguer, Yahr played double-headers and night games. She also threw right but batted left. "You're closer to first base, and you can beat out a bunt."

At 75, the mischievous glint of a competitor still flashes in her eye. And yes, they really did attend etiquette classes. They were taught how to walk, they couldn't wear slacks, and makeup lessons were part of the program.

Helena Rubenstein came in person for that.

They were also told to wipe off their silverware, "which I still do today. It's a good lesson, in case you want to look well someday," Yahr said.

The teams traveled with chaperones. "We had to be ladies at all times, even when you were going back from the ballpark to where you stayed."

Breaking the rules

Even though managers kept tabs on the players, girls sometimes broke the rules. Yahr recalled how teammates occasionally slipped away to a country bar outside Rockford. Those who were caught got the ultimatum: Abide by

Please see PARKER, B2



STAFF PHOTO BY PAUL HURCHMANN

BY DIANE GALE ANDREASSI
SPECIAL WRITER

Developmentally disabled, frail and suffering from cerebral palsy, Larry Chontos appeared to most people unable to work.

He continues to prove everyone wrong nearly 10 years after he became involved with Business Ventures Corp., a nonprofit job training and placement organization for the mentally disabled. In fact, he remains one of the company's best success stories.

The 41-year-old Garden City resident has worked at Builders Square II store in Canton for more than six years. Store managers not only depend on him to show up everyday and work hard, but they also use him

as an example of good work ethics for other employees, said Leanne Booth, the assistant manager.

As maintenance supervisor, overseeing only himself, Chontos cleans the restrooms and break rooms among a variety of other odd jobs at the Ford and Lilley store.

"He will come looking for us to see what needs to be done," Booth said. "We don't have to tell him anything. I often kid with the other adults and say, 'Take Larry's lead. He comes in every day and he knows what to do without being told.'"

There's an easy rapport between Chontos and his co-workers and listening to banter among them emphasizes a mutual affection. In fact, Chontos said, the best part of his

Monday-through-Friday job is the people.

"I like the people I work with," he said.

Success at work

Chontos' story is one of many that come from Business Ventures, a private company that rents space in Bryant Center in Livonia. Every client comes with different needs and experience. Some have already gone through a special education program and others have led sheltered lives, protected by their parents, said program director George Lyons. Many have Down syndrome, mental retardation, cerebral palsy or a combination of problems.

Job coaches work on their social

skills, help them understand what's expected from an employee, and in some cases, teach appropriate public behavior. The crew is trained while cleaning churches and rooms at the Comfort Inn in Livonia. Training often takes years.

At the Comfort Inn, coaches like Carol Budzinski not only guide them as they fold bed sheets, but more importantly, show them how to act with other employees and what not to do or say.

"The biggest challenge is behavior problems," Budzinski said. "It takes a lot of patience, but it's great to see their accomplishments, even the smallest things means a lot. And that's your reward."

Please see WORKERS, B5

Hi ho, hi ho



STAFF PHOTOS BY BRIAN MITCHELL

Good example: At the Builders Square II store in Canton, Larry Chontos (at left) serves as an example of a good work ethic for other employees. Steve Woodbeck (top photo) hones his work skills while making beds at the Comfort Inn in Livonia.

Handicapped find niche in workplace

Venturing into the workforce

Business Ventures Corp. got its start in 1986, and its first job training program was delivering the Livonia Observer. Since then, the number of mentally handicapped people who have been helped and the number of companies that have gotten involved has grown.

People hear about the program through word-of-mouth or through agency referrals.

The federal- and state-funded

Wayne Community Living Services, a county agency that provides for mentally handicapped people, contracts with Business Ventures for services.

Business Ventures pays the mentally handicapped people at least a minimum wage while they're being trained, while the companies where they work pay Business Ventures for the work completed during the training program.

After the client completes training, they are placed in a job. Once they know their responsibilities, their affiliation with Business Ventures is phased out. However, if the client needs assistance in any way, they are encouraged to call Business Ventures for help.

Business Ventures Corp. is based at the Bryant Center, 18000 Merriam, Livonia. For more information, call (734) 422-8130.



On the job: Job coach Carol Budzinski watches as Danielle Gentry of Redford cleans a bathroom at the Comfort Inn.



STAFF PHOTO BY JIM JAGWELD

In key: Mike Koontz uses an electronic tuning device to do a final tuning of a Gibson Les Paul Standard Gold Top guitar in his Ferndale shop.

He's strumming for success

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

Shy and modest, guitar repairman Mike Koontz doesn't like to brag about his work. Bespectacled and sporting a mustache, Koontz stands in his Ferndale shop and shrugs off any sort of compliments.

Sure, he's worked for a few, you know, sort of well-known musicians - Kiss bassist Gene Simmons and Sponge guitarist Mike Cross - but nobody that big, he says in his "gee whiz" tone. Amongst a smattering of black and white autographed band photos lies a glistening gold record awarded to Koontz from Detroit rockers Sponge.

"I've been having him work on my guitars pretty much since I started working in the music business 10 years ago," said Cross, an Oakland County resident. "We make it a point to bring all our work to him."

Chris Flanagan, a Bishop Foley High School graduate who grew up in Troy, calls Koontz "a magician."

"He's a consummate perfectionist; there's

nobody better. All he's ever done for me is a fret job and he does it perfectly every single time," said Flanagan, who co-owns Street Corner Music in Beverly Hills, and plays with the local surf band The Volcanos.

But to Koontz, owner of Koontz Guitar Repair in Ferndale, all those comments are unnecessary.

"They all lie," Koontz said with a shy smile. "I just try and bend over backward and try and give them what they want. I try and do the best that I can."

His best has pushed Koontz to the forefront of the trade.

Koontz spent the first 12 years of his life in what was then the "rural area" of Seven Mile and Middlebelt roads in Livonia. His family moved to Redford where he graduated from Thurston High School in 1968. He honed his guitar chops playing in garage bands during his years at Thurston.

"It was not very good; the rest of the guys were better than me," said Koontz, who lives in Warren with his wife and family. "The more I

Please see GUITARS, B2

WEDDINGS AND ENGAGEMENTS

Griggs-Sintay

Bill and Julie Griggs of Napa, Calif., announce the engagement of their daughter, Gina, to Brian Sintay, the son of Larry and Ellen Sintay of Livonia.

The bride-to-be is attending the University of Nevada-Las Vegas School of Nursing.

Her fiancé is a graduate of Michigan State University. He is employed as a writer by the Walt Disney Co. in Burbank, Calif.

A May 2000 wedding is planned in Los Angeles, Calif.



Long-Minard

Dan and Nancy Long of Redford announce the engagement of their daughter, Emily Grace, to Matthew James Minard, the son of Don and Annette Minard of Northville.

The bride-to-be is a 1996 graduate of Redford Thurston High School and is pursuing a degree through the honors nursing program at the University of Michigan.

Her fiancé is a 1996 graduate of Northville High School. He expects to graduate from University of Michigan in the spring with a dual degree in mathematics and English prior to enrollment in the U-M Master's Program.



A May wedding is planned at Ward Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Northville.

Lawler-Peters

Phil and Debbie Lawler of Plymouth announce the engagement of their daughter, Emily Suzanne, to Bradley John Peters, the son of Lee and Sharon Peters of Newark, N.Y.

The bride-to-be is a 1996 graduate of Ann Arbor Greenhills School and is pursuing a bachelor's degree in marketing at the Madonna University College of Business. She is employed by the City of Plymouth as the election clerk.

Her fiancé is a 1994 graduate of Newark High School and is a culinary arts student at Schoolcraft College. He is employed by Too Chez Restaurant in Novi.

A May wedding is planned at



Ward Presbyterian Church in Northville.

Schwendimann-Cothran

Dr. and Mrs. Gary Schwendimann of Hohenwald, Tenn., announce the engagement of their daughter, Heidi Jolee, to Russell Scott Cothran, the son of Connie Mack and Linda Cothran of Livonia.

The bride-to-be is a graduate of David Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn. She is employed in the business office at Baptist Hospital.

Her fiancé is a graduate of Livonia Bentley High School and the Specs Howard School of Broadcasting. He is employed at Music City Record in Nashville as a promotional director.

A March wedding is planned



at Wightman Chapel in Nashville.

Daniels-Robbins

Pete and Jerri Lynn Daniels of Brighton announce the engagement of their daughter, Kimberly Lynn, to Jason Allen Sobieski, the son of David and Pamela Sobieski of Milford.

The bride-to-be is a 1991 graduate of Garden City High School and a 1996 graduate of the University of Michigan with a bachelor of arts degree in English. She is currently employed by Charlick and Springstead Dental Associates in Brighton.

Her fiancé is a 1992 graduate of Detroit Catholic Central High School and is attending Eastern Michigan University. He is employed by United Parcel Ser-



vice in Livonia. An April wedding in Livonia is being planned.

Bazakis-Parker

Andrew Michael Bazakin and Christy Anne Parker were married at Nativity of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church in Plymouth Township by the Rev. Michael Varlamos.

The bride is the daughter of Susan Parker of Canton and David and Marilyn Parker of Petersburg, Mich. The groom is the son of James and Marisa Bazakis of Canton.

The bride is a 1989 graduate of Plymouth Canton High School graduate, a 1993 graduate of Grand Valley State University with a bachelor of science degree in therapeutic recreation and a 1997 graduate of Grand Valley State with a master's degree in public administration. She is employed as program coordinator for St. John's Adult Day Services.

The groom is a 1989 graduate of Plymouth Salem High School, a 1993 graduate of the University of Michigan with a bachelor of science degree in psychology and a 1997 graduate of Michigan State University with a medical degree. He is a resident physician in the department of emergency medicine of the University of Rochester/Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester, N.Y.



The bride asked Rebecca Brunink to serve as matron of honor with Jamie Parker as the maid of honor and Christy Chaffin and Cynthia Long as the bridesmaids.

George Merigas served as best man with Adam Kettering, Erick Krueger, David Weil and Bryant Parker as groomsmen.

The couple received guests at a reception at Laurel Manor in Livonia before leaving on a wedding trip to Ocho Rios, Jamaica. They are making their home in Rochester, N.Y.

Wisnieski-Brown

William and Judith Wisnieski of Dearborn Heights announce the engagement of their daughter, Malissa Marie, to Allen K. Brown, the son of Claude and Evelyn Brown of Romulus.

The bride-to-be is a graduate of Paradise Valley High School in Scottsdale, Ariz. She is employed as an account manager.

Her fiancé is a graduate of Romulus High School. He is a professional wrestler who competes at the Wayne Ford Civic League in Westland.

A May wedding is planned.



Sheldon-Smith

James and Claudia Sheldon of Livonia announce the engagement of their daughter, Dawn Marie, to Brian Walker Smith, the son of Robert and Betty Smith of South Lyon.

The bride-to-be is a 1993 graduate of Livonia Franklin High School. She is attending Oakland Community College.

Her fiancé is a 1989 graduate of South Lyon High School. He is employed by Brighton Ford.

An April wedding is planned at First Baptist Church in South Lyon.



ANNIVERSARIES

Flamme

Albert and Patricia Flamme of Livonia are celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary.

The couple exchanged vows on Feb. 7, 1959.

The couple has three children - Dennis, Lynda and Lisa - and five grandchildren - Jaclyn, Matthew, Mark, Madison and Mason.

He retired from Ford Motor Co. after working for 37 years as an electrical engineer. He currently is employed by Valeo International. He also taught trigonometry at Schoolcraft College for 35 years.

A registered nurse, she



resigned from her position to raise their three children.

Their interests include world travel, fine dining, theater and golf.

Green

Thomas and Evelyn Green celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Feb. 14.

Lifelong residents of Livonia, they renewed their vows before their family and friends at St. Edith Church, then gathered for brunch at the Holiday Inn-West.

The couple exchanged vows on Feb. 12, 1949, in Livonia. She is the former Evelyn Gardner.

They have three children - Dorothy Sims, Patricia Betancourt and Mary Cover - eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

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THE Observer & Eccentric **METRO PARENT**

Workers from page B1

Standing at a cart filled with shampoos and soaps, Theresa Butcher carefully chooses before she stocks each room on the second floor. The worst part about the job, Butcher said, is getting up in the morning. The best part is that it gives her a chance to get away from home for awhile.

Clients like Butcher will stay at this paid training program on a daily basis until their coaches believe they are ready for a job, often at grocery stores, fast food restaurants and at car dealerships where they wash cars. They're paid the going rate. Lyons commends Kroger in

Livonia and McDonald's stores for placing the most graduates.

"Basically, we're giving them a life," Lyons said. "We try to tap into the potential of the person. We try to see where their interests lie."

Another Business Ventures graduate, a Plymouth resident with Down syndrome, was in her 20s and lived with her parents when she became involved.

"When she came to us, she was very, very shy and bashful," Lyons said. "She had minimal experience away from mom and dad."

After 18 months training, the woman landed a job at McDonald's and has been there for six

years. "She's being integrated into the community," Lyons said. "Before her life was at home and now she is with other people. This was the next step to get out into the world and start to experience life, like the rest of us."

"Twenty years ago many of these people would have been in institutions and taken care of and that was their lives."

Big transformation

Karen Ajlouny has undergone an equally big transformation. Talking with her in the halls at the Comfort Inn, it's hard to imagine that this outgoing, congenial woman was extremely

fearful and had low self-esteem when she began with Business Ventures.

Taking a break from washing a shower stall, Ajlouny grinned widely as Lyons said, "Now she does very well. She's come a long way, especially with confidence."

The trend for the last two decades has been to bring mentally disabled people, like Chontos, Butcher and Ajlouny, out of the hospital setting and into communities by placing them in group homes and finding them jobs. Suddenly, their tremendous potential was unveiled.

"Little by little, you expose them to more and more," Lyons said.

However, not everyone placed by Business Ventures is successful. Some are fired and "maybe there'll be another job for them," Lyons said. And sometimes the likelihood of keeping a job is slim, because the client lacks skills or motivation. Other times,

there are chronic behavioral problems that are unacceptable in a work setting, like inappropriate staring or temper tantrums.

While strides have been made in understanding what mentally handicapped people are capable of, recent public funding cuts have put a crimp in the program, Lyons said. Another big problem for the agency has been finding transportation for their clients to and from work. Buses often aren't practical, taxis can be too expensive, and public service transportation, like dial-a-ride, won't go outside their specific communities.

"A couple of people recently lost their jobs because of transportation problems," Lyons said. "They simply can't get to work."

Every client is different - some develop quickly and others take a long time to train. But, the point, Lyons said, is to give them a chance.



STAFF PHOTO BY BRYAN MITCHELL

Finishing touches: Julie Jure of Garden City finishes putting cases on pillows as part of her job at the Comfort Inn in Livonia.

Methodist Home Society is looking for volunteers

Methodist Children's Home Society in Redford is looking for people to help serve families in foster care and adoption services.

Volunteers are needed 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday to transport children and families to appointments, assist

with clerical work, man the switchboard, and help with holiday preparations.

People interested in volunteering can call Elizabeth McCann at (313) 531-9465. Methodist Children's Home Society is at 26645 W. Six Mile, west of Beech Daly, Redford.

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RELIGIOUS NEWS

Listings for the Religious News should be submitted in writing no later than noon Friday for the next Thursday's issue. They can be mailed to 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150, or by fax at (734) 591-7279. For more information, call (734) 953-2131.

STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

The congregation of Merriman Road Baptist Church is being charged to pray to grow by The Rev. Wayne Parker, pastor. Established in 1953, the church has kicked off its Stewardship Campaign aimed at the expansion of its facilities at 2055 Merriman Road, Garden City. The campaign, which started at worship services on Feb. 7, includes an eight-week emphasis on prayer, vision, faith, hope, miracles, giving and commitment.

FISH FRY

St. Edith Parish will have Lenten fish fries 4:30-7 p.m. Fridays, Feb. 19, March 5, 12, 19 and 26 and April 2, at the church, 16089 Newburgh, Livonia. The menu will include baked and fried fish, shrimp, pierogi, french fries, macaroni and cheese, salad bar, desserts, coffee, tea and pop. For more information, call the church at (734) 464-1222.

TLC STORYTIME

For children and their parents, there will be a TLC Storytime on Saturday, Feb. 20, at Timothy Lutheran Church, 8820 Wayne Road, south of Joy, Livonia. There will be crafts, Christian stories, snacks and prizes. The books chosen are for children age 3-10. For more information, call the church at (734) 427-2290.

BETHANY SUBURBAN WEST

Bethany Suburban West, a Catholic organization which provides spiritual, social and support assistance for divorced and separated Christians, will have a dance 8:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 20, at St. Kenneth Catholic Church, Haggerty Road south of Plymouth Road, Plymouth Township. The charge will be \$8 and will include refreshments.

It also will offer a divorce recovery class 7-9 p.m. Sundays, Feb. 21-April 18 (except Easter), at St. Kenneth's. The facilitator will be Marie Petricca from Catholic Social Services. The charge is \$40 for the eight ses-

sions. Preregistration and payment are required. For more information, call Rose at (734) 464-3325 or Nita at (734) 261-9123.

LENTEEN RETREAT

Madonna University will hold a Lenten retreat 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 20, at the campus Residence Hall and Chapel, Levan north of Schoolcraft Road, Livonia. The Rev. Frank Grispingo will be the facilitator.

The retreat will focus on the theme of "The Millennium Theme: To the Father, Through the Son, in the Holy Spirit." Activities will include prayer, conferences, small group sharing/quiet reflection, reconciliation and a liturgy.

The retreat costs \$12 and includes lunch and refreshments. For reservations or more information, call Deacon Gene Desjarlais in the campus ministry office at (734) 432-5419.

Grispingo is a member of the university's religious studies and campus ministries departments' faculty. He holds a master of arts degree from the University of Detroit and received his master of divinity degree from Marist Seminary.

He has taught at the Marist Seminary, served as an advocate for those seeking annulments, worked as the administrator at a retreat house in Massachusetts, and was a presenter at marriage encounter weekends. He also served as a chaplain at the Newman Center at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire.

CHURCH MISSION

The Catholic Parish of the Divine Savior, 39375 Joy, Westland, will have a mission Saturday-Wednesday, Feb. 20-24. The Rev. Daniel Havron, coordinator of Evangelization for the Archdiocese of Detroit, will conduct the mission.

Havron will speak at the weekend liturgies and at a Vespers service at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 21. The theme will be "God First Loved Us." At 7:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 22, the topic will be "Our Response to God's Love," while the topic will be "Repentance and Changing Our Lives" 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 23. At 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 24, there will be a Eucharistic liturgy and a message of "Go and

Missionary to speak at Christ Our Savior

Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church will have Dr. Roy Kaiser speak on "God's Transforming Power" at worship services Sunday, Feb. 21, at its Livonia and Canton campuses.

Kaiser will speak 8:30 and 11 a.m. at Christ Our Savior-Livonia, 14175 Farmington Road, and 9:30 a.m. at Christ Our Savior-Canton, 46001 Warren Road.

Kaiser and his wife, Eileen, served as English teaching missionaries at the Concordia Gospel Ministry Center in Thailand. He is a nationally recognized school principal who has been involved in education in the Detroit area since 1955.

The Kaisers will set up display in the church lobbies to familiarize the congregations with their work in Thailand.

A nursery will be available for young children during the service at the Canton church. Sunday School and adult Bible class will be at 10:45



Dr. Roy Kaiser

a.m. A staffed nursery will be available for both services and the 9:45 a.m. education hour at the Livonia church.

For more information, call the church office at (734) 522-6830 or the Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church Web site at www.ccaa.edu/~lcmcos.

Make Disciples." Baby-sitting will be available and coffee and tea will be served after the services. For more information, call the church, at (734) 455-3620.

LENTEEN PROGRAM

Newburgh United Methodist Church will have a Lenten dinner and program Sunday, Feb. 21, at the church, 36500 Ann Arbor Trail, Livonia. The potluck turkey dinner (there is a small cost for meat, coffee and milk) will be 6 p.m., followed by a performance by the University of Michigan Choral Ensemble at 7:15 p.m. For more information, call the church at (734) 422-0149.

LENTEEN SERVICES

Lola Park Lutheran Church will have midweek Lenten services 10 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays at the church,

14750 Kinloch, Redford. The Rev. Gregory Gibbons will preach on the general theme of "Only Jesus." Each service will be followed by a fellowship time, featuring light refreshments. For more information, call the church at (313) 532-8655.

REDFORD CLERGY

The Redford Clergy Association will have its quarterly meeting Thursday, Feb. 25, in the R.C.D. Center of the Presbyterian Village Redford, 17383 Garfield, off Six Mile, Redford. Lunch will be served at 12:30 p.m., followed by the meeting. Reservations can be made by calling Alexandra at (313) 541-6487.

SPAGHETTI DINNER

Good Hope Lutheran Church will have a spaghetti dinner and silent auction 5-7:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 26, at the church, 28880 Cherry Hill Road, Garden City. Cost is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children 3-10 years of age. Proceeds will fund repair of the church carillon. Lutheran Brotherhood of Western Wayne County Branch 8197 will match up to \$450. For more information, call the church at (734) 427-3660.

Y2K AND JOSEPH PROJECT

A daylong conference that discusses the facts and implications of the Year 2000 problem and offer solutions for the Christian community will be held Saturday, Feb. 27, at the First Baptist Church of Northville, 217 N. Wing St., Northville.

The conference will begin with registration at 8 a.m. It will include workshops and discussions - "Biblical and Moral Perspectives of Preparedness" with Wade Waterman and "The Joseph Project: Beyond Personal Preparedness" with Michael Balon.

The Joseph Project is aimed at helping prepare the community for potential difficulties the Y2K problem poses. Seating is limited and preregistration is recommended. The cost is \$10 in advance and \$12 at the door. Pizza and drinks will be available for a charge. For more information, call (248) 348-1020.

PRaise AND WORSHIP

Dan Bergen and his son and daughter, Nicholas and Alicia, will minister in a program of praise and worship, featuring vocal, piano, saxophone, violin and drama, 6 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 28, at Calvary Baptist Church, 43065 Joy, Canton.

Bergen has been in concert and church ministry for more than 20 years. He blends contemporary worship song with great hymns of faith to draw participants closer to the Lord. A free will offering will be accepted. For more information, call the church at (734) 455-0022.

NEW BEGINNING

Warren Gilbert will discuss "Managing Memories" when New Beginnings, a grief support

group, meets 7 p.m. Thursday, March 4, at St. Matthew's United Methodist Church, 30800 W. Six Mile, east of Merriman, Livonia. The program is for people suffering as the result of the death of a loved one. There are no fees. Anyone may attend any or all sessions. For more information, call the church office at (734) 422-6038, Mariya Wilkin-son at (248) 380-7903, or Rosemary Kline at (734) 462-3770.

CHURCH WOMEN MEET

Church Women United Suburban Detroit-West will have their World Day of Prayer 12:45 p.m. Friday, March 5, at the Rosedale Gardens Presbyterian Church, 9601 Hubbard, at West Chicago, Livonia. Participants are asked to bring donations of hygiene products. Reservations for child care can be made by calling Norma Roberts at (734) 591-2127.

MOM TO MOM SALE

Table space is available for the Mom to Mom sale 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, March 6, at Newburgh United Methodist Church, 36500 Ann Arbor Trail, Livonia. Donations of toys and clothes are welcome. Proceeds will be donated to the Mom-Tot group. For more information, call Vicki at (734) 513-0167 or Kayla at (734) 595-6712.

Sacred Heart Church will have a Mom to Mom sale 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, March 20, at the church, 29125 W. Six Mile, east of Middlebelt, Livonia. Second-hand children's clothes (newborn and up), baby furniture and maternity items will be sold. Admission will be \$1. For more information and table rental, call Jennifer at (248) 426-6227.

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

Worldwide Marriage Encounter offers a weekend experience for married couples to improve their communication skills and renew their love for each other March 19-21 at the St. John's Family Life Center, 44011 Five Mile, Plymouth Township. The registration fee is \$50. Call Bill and Carol at (248) 528-2512 or Dan and Debbie at (810) 286-5524.

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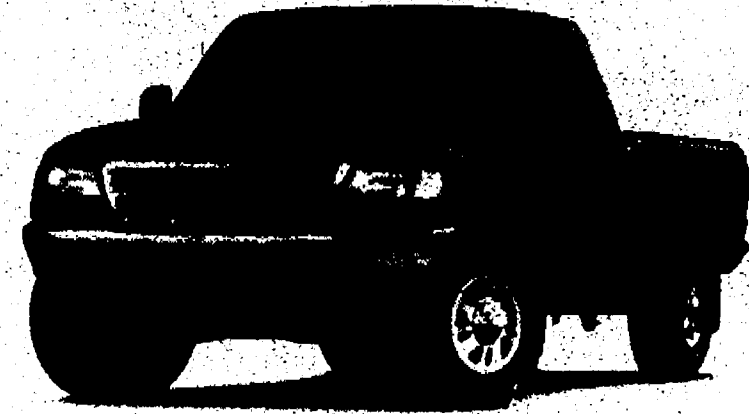
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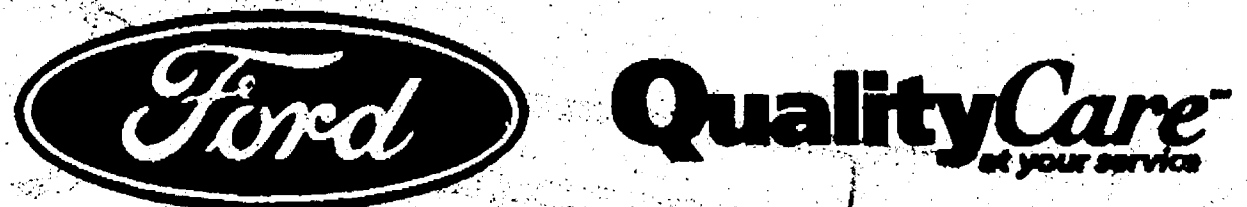
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200-yard medley relay: Wayne (Adam Chlasson, Justin Smoes, Sonny Webber, Greg Sarkozl), 1:51.45; **200 freestyle:** Jeremy Johnston (WM), 2:08.1; **200 individual medley:** Webber (WM), 2:13.42; **50 freestyle:** Sarkozl (WM), 24.61; **diving:** Sarkozl (WM), 142.65 points; **100 butterfly:** Kyle Scott (WM), 1:13.71; **100 freestyle:** Smoes (WM), 54.37; **500 freestyle:** Johnston (WM), 6:50.68; **200 freestyle relay:** Wayne (Webber, Smoes, Sam Raub, Aaron Lawson), 1:41.54; **100 backstroke:** Chlasson (WM), 1:01.06; **100 breaststroke:** Webber (WM), 1:06.91; **400 freestyle relay:** Wayne (Scott, Raub, Johnston, Mike Staffel), 4:02.62.

Wayne's dual meet record: 10-1 overall; 6-1 Mega-White.

Wayne's next meet: Mega Conference-White Division, Feb. 24-26 at Taylor Truman.

SPORTS ROUNDUP

WHIRLWINDS PLACE SIXTH
The Westland Whirlwinds Youth Introductory and Junior Classic teams each took sixth at the U.S. Figure Skating Association's Precision Championships last week in Huntsville, Ala.

PANGANIS, MARYANSKI SALUTED
Madonna University came away with top grades last week, capturing Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference Player of the Week honors in both men's and women's basketball.

Kathy Panganis, a sophomore forward from Allen Park, has led a recent Lady Crusader resurgence that has seen them win three-straight WHAC games. She averaged 20 points and eight rebounds last week in wins

over Tri-State and Indiana Tech; she currently leads the conference in scoring (WHAC games only) with a 19.6 average. For the season, she is averaging 16.3 points and 6.3 rebounds per game while connecting on 51.5 percent of her floor shots (including 49.4 percent of her three-pointers).

Mike Maryanski, a senior forward from Pleasant Ridge, scored 27 points in Madonna's 92-88 triumph over Indiana Tech Saturday. Maryanski averaged 18.3 points and eight rebounds for the Crusaders last week, during which they won twice. For the season, he is averaging 14.8 points and seven rebounds a game.

See Sunday's Observer for more prep sports, bowling, outdoors

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Learn more about the **Henry Ford Academy** for students entering the ninth grade.

The Henry Ford Academy, a new innovative four-year public high school that emphasizes the application of math, science, technology and humanities, is sponsoring a series of open houses. These events will provide applications and information about a unique educational opportunity for Wayne County students entering ninth grade this fall.

Open Houses

March 4th, Thursday, 5 to 7 pm Henry Ford Academy, Dearborn
March 7th, Sunday, 2 to 4 pm Henry Ford Academy, Dearborn
March 15th, Monday, 5 to 7 pm Henry Ford Academy, Dearborn

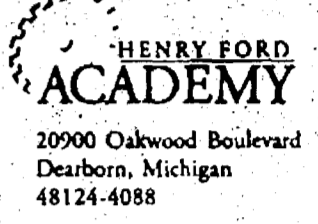
Community Session

March 10th, Wednesday, Wayne County RESA
6:30 to 8:30 pm 33500 Van Born, Wayne

Henry Ford Academy entrance is located on the west side of the Henry Ford Museum facing Oakwood Boulevard.

For more information, please call 313.982.6100, x. 2912.
www.hfacademy.org

The Henry Ford Academy is a partnership between Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village® and Ford Motor Company and is chartered by Wayne County Regional Educational Services Agency.



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FRIDAY



Soloist Elizabeth Beeler joins the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and the Madrigal Chorale of Southfield, for a pops concert featuring music from Broadway, 8:30 p.m. at Orchestra Hall, (313) 576-5111.

SATURDAY



See some of the hottest hot rods and wildest custom cars, trucks, vans and motorcycles of the past and present 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. at Autorama at Cobo Center. Tickets \$12 at the gate, children under 12, \$5.

SUNDAY



The Longhorn World Championship Rodeo comes to The Palace of Auburn Hills, 2 p.m. Tickets \$18, \$14 and \$12, call (248) 645-6666.

HOT



Dance Theatre of Harlem company members worked with students at Plymouth Salem High School as part of its outreach program. Dance Theatre of Harlem performs at Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts through Sunday, Feb. 21. Tickets are \$41.50, \$36.50 and \$31.50. Call (313) 963-2366 for information.

CIRQUE INGENIEUX

raises spectacle to art

Avant-garde circus at Music Hall bound for Broadway

BY FRANK PROVENZANO
STAFF WRITER
fprovenzano@oe.homecomm.net

Years after he left Broadway as a young scenic designer because the competition was too cutthroat, Neil Goldberg will make his return to Gotham City this fall.

In between leaving and returning to Broadway, Goldberg established himself as one of the industry's most sought-after big-event producers with a couple of Super Bowls and Miss America Pageants to his credit, not to mention a few thousand corporate shows.

But in the early 1990s, fed up with what he called "Band-Aid productions" and "safe" corporate shows, Goldberg ran off and joined the circus.

Actually, he created a circus, "Cirque Ingenieux," to be performed Tuesday-Sunday at the Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts.

The avant-garde circus is partly an old-fashioned P.T. Barnum extravaganza, and partly European existential dream. A mix of outrageousness and a bizarre, voyeuristic intimacy.

For those who've watched "Cirque Ingenieux" on PBS, there's really only one word that sums up the troupe of contortionists, acrobats, aerialists and illusionists — spectacle.

Story of the circus

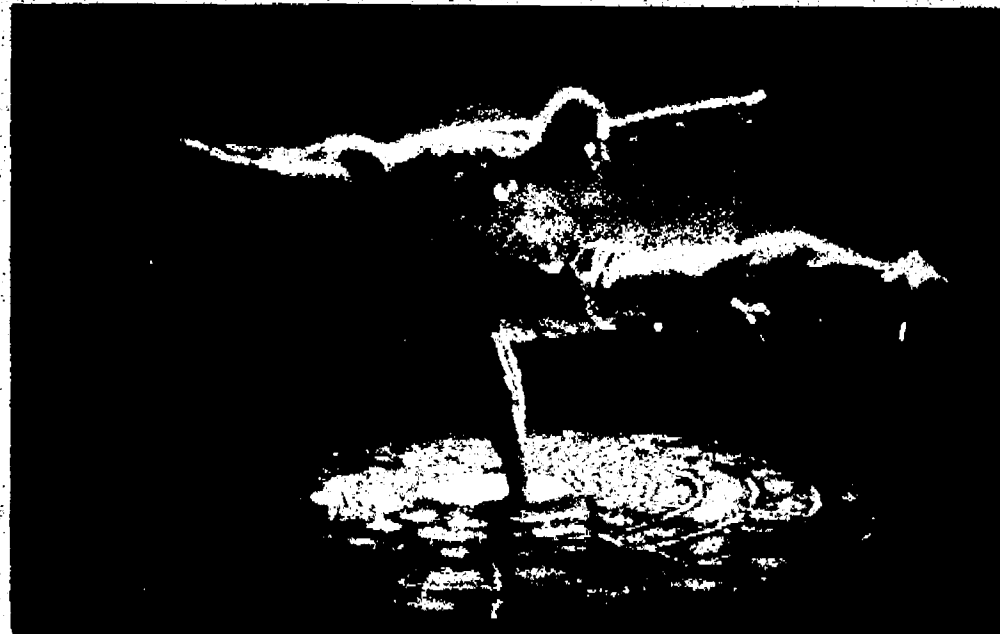
In the European tradition, Cirque Ingenieux relies on a single-ring circus in an intimate setting, not a three-ring circus set amid a canyon.

Unlike the mawkishness of a Disney production, Cirque rushes headlong into a wildly imaginative, and, at times, frightening universe.

The peculiar spectacle follows the story of Sarah, a young girl who becomes enthralled by the circus performers.

Please see **CIRCUS**, E2

WHAT: Cirque Ingenieux
WHERE: Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts, 350 Madison Avenue, Detroit
WHEN: Tuesday, Feb. 23-Sunday, Feb. 28
PERFORMANCE TIMES: 7:30 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday; 8 p.m. Friday; 1 p.m., 4:30 p.m. & 8 p.m. Saturday; 1 p.m. Sunday
TICKETS: \$25-\$38.50, call (248) 645-6666 to charge tickets, or (313) 983-6611 for more information.



Held up: (Top photo) Circus-like athleticism offers a blend of gymnastics and body sculpture. (Photo above) Cirque Ingenieux offers a contorted view of aesthetic defiance.



DAVID JAMES/DREAMWORKS PICTURES

Wartime drama: *Sergeant Horvath* (Tom Sizemore), *Corporal Upham* (Jeremy Davies), *Private Jackson* (Barry Pepper) and *Captain John Miller* (Tom Hanks, right) are pinned down by an enemy sniper as they try to help a terrified little girl in a scene from "Saving Private Ryan."

W.W. II, 1500s vie for Oscar

BY HUGH GALLAGHER
STAFF WRITER
hgallagher@oe.homecomm.net

World War II and Elizabethan England dominate this year's Oscar competition.

Three Best Picture nominated films — "Saving Private Ryan," "Life is Beautiful" and "The Thin Red Line" — examine the devastating effect of the war on soldiers and ordinary people. "Shakespeare in Love" and "Elizabeth" are, respectively, a costume comedy and a costume drama featuring the old and young Queen Bess.

It's hard to read any deep meaning into this other than coincidence. The biggest surprise and disappointment is that "The Truman Show" failed to win a Best Picture nomination, though director Peter Weir was nominated. The nominating process — in which everyone nominates in the Best Picture category while other nominations are made by those in the particular craft — makes these contradictions inevitable. "The Truman Show" might have offended the Hollywood crowd with its critique of media manipulation, or they might just be tired of the movie's star, perennial adolescent Jim Carrey, who didn't receive a Best Actor Nomination.

I would have easily eliminated "Elizabeth," an entertaining but not spectacular political drama, in favor of "The Truman Show."

Carrey also deserved a nomination for reaching beyond his usual clown persona. The nominated actors — Tom Hanks for "Saving Private Ryan," Ian McKellen for "Gods and Monsters," Roberto Benigni for "Life is Beautiful," Edward Norton for "American History X" and Nick Nolte for "Affliction" — are an outstanding group. Benigni's warm, Chaplinesque performance shows that he also can occasionally rein in a wild comic spirit.

Tom Hanks proves again his versatility and his talent for creating believable characters with small telling gestures. McKellen's performance as director James Whale has been sharing critics' honors with my personal choice for best actor, Nick Nolte. Nolte's performance in "Affliction" is raw, honest and complex and a cap to many years of fine performances.

Best actress

In the best actress category, the critics have chosen Fernanda Montenegro for her performance in the Brazilian film "Central Station." She is also my choice for playing a part that could have plunged into sentimentality at any moment. She keeps it totally honest as a retired teacher who helps a little boy find his family. Cate Blanchett is also excellent as a headstrong and incisive young Queen Elizabeth and

Please see **OSCAR**, E2

POPULAR MUSIC

Black Crowes hold up release

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

Steve Gorman, drummer for The Black Crowes, knew that as soon as he and his bandmates wrapped up work on their fifth album, "By Your Side," they would regrettably write a great song.

"In the past when you make a record

and you finish it and you turn it in, the next song is always great. But it's too late and by the time you're ready to make a new record, you've written a bunch more," he said.

And it happened again. But this time, The Black Crowes had the clout to put the brakes on the September release of "Stand By Me" (American/Columbia).

After turning in the album to the record company, The Black Crowes headed out on a summertime club tour which inspired the rollicking "Go Tell the Congregation," and the lazy, New Orleans-inspired "Diamond Ring."

When the two songs surfaced, the band decided to return to the studio and revamp the album.

"We were in no hurry to put the

Please see **RELEASE**, E2



Shake your moneymaker: *Black Crowes* — from left, keyboardist Eddie Harsch of Detroit, drummer Steve Gorman, singer Chris Robinson, guitarist Audley Freed, guitarist/vocalist Rich Robinson, and bassist Sven Pippen

Ghetto Billies look on the funny side of rock



CHRISTINA FUOCO

The Ghetto Billies' debut CD "Some Rezeev" includes songs about drag queens, truck drivers on drugs, and pornography. And in case you're wondering, yes, they do mean to offend

listeners. "That's why it's funny. They can't believe we said something rude," said guitarist/vocalist Robb Conaway of Ann Arbor.

"But we have certain rules about the songs that we write. They are kind of unsaid. We don't say anything blatantly. We don't make any usually straight-out sexual references. It's very rare that we swear in a song. If there is swearing, it's very poignant and there's a point to why we use it."

But the meanings of the 13 songs on "Some Rezeev" are hidden within a maze of double entendres and smart remarks.

"We never say anything directly. It's always in some twisty kind of way. That's where we find the humor. If we're sitting there saying, 'I'm a guy and I like to wear chicks' underwear and I like to wear it.' It wouldn't be very funny."

The Ghetto Billies - which also includes bassist/vocalist Jason Church of Fenton and guitarist/vocalist Derek Kramer of Hartland - celebrate the release of "Some Rezeev" at 9 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 20, at Alvin's, 5756 Cass Ave., Detroit.

In a roundabout way, the Ghetto Billies has been a project in the works since high school. Out of sympathy, Conaway let Church join his high school band.

"Derek was terrible. He was awful at everything. First we had him on keyboards but he couldn't play the keyboards at all. Then we had him as a background singer but he couldn't sing at all. But he was one of our friends. Somehow we had to include him, we couldn't exclude him so we made him a tam-

bourine player."

The band broke up when the adventurous Conaway moved to Texas to live within an environmental commune in 1992. He realized that a cult wasn't exactly his thing, so he returned to Michigan and got in touch with Kramer. Before long, however, Conaway moved to San Miguel, Mexico, to study art at The Instituto De Allende. Upon completing his studies, he went back to Michigan where Kramer and his roommate Church had a surprise waiting for him.

"Not only could he (Kramer) play the guitar really well, he had a really good sense of rhythm. He can sing now. The songs were funny too. When my girlfriend and I broke up, they were my saving grace. I was over there all the time," Conaway said.

Still, Conaway moved to Dublin, Ireland, for three months but the band stayed on his mind.

"While I was there I decided that when I came back I was going to propose that all of us

make a serious go at getting a show. Before we were doing it for the fun of it. I told him about it and they said they were thinking the same thing."

Conaway, a comic book artist, is now studying art closer to his Ann Arbor home - Eastern Michigan University. Since that first show in January 1997, the Ghetto Billies have made a name for themselves around Ann Arbor and Detroit as the premiere jokester band. The Ghetto Billies describe themselves as a "bluegrass disco humor band."

"As soon as you do that, the look of people's faces is like, 'Oh, OK.' They think this can't sound good. It's a bunch of guys singing a bunch of stupid songs with acoustic guitars and no drummer."

Crosby, Stills and Nash they are not.

Many "serious" bands write-off bands like the Ghetto Billies, the Barenaked Ladies, or even Beck, as being lazy. Conaway called people like that "egotistical."

"There's so many bands out

there that are all so serious. They think they're so important in what they have to say. Like everybody really cares about what's going on in their life or what not. They're just a rock band. There's very few bands in the world that are more than just a rock band."

"I think one of the main reasons why we do songs that are funny is just to give the audience and people out there a break from all the monotony. When we start playing, you can see in their faces. At first they're just looking at us thinking, what's up with these guys with three acoustic guitars. Are they joking? See, we sing it so serious. A lot of times they don't even get it until the end of the second song."

Sometimes, he said, being dubbed a "novelty act" works against them.

"A lot of places won't take us seriously because we're a humor band. I think that's really annoying. I think that just because you're writing humorous songs doesn't mean there isn't any meaning to the songs."

"Like, 'Steve,' is about transvestites and crossdressers and the idea that at first the guy is totally fooled then he freaks out when he realizes it's a guy. Then he says, oh well. There's social commentary hidden in the songs."

The Ghetto Billies, with special guest Gravity Well, celebrate the release of "Some Rezeev" with a party and performance at 9 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 20, at Alvin's, 5756 Cass Ave., Detroit. Cover charge is \$5 for the 18 and older show. For more information, call (313) 832-2355 or visit <http://www.ghettobillies.com>

Christina Fuoco is the pop music reporter for The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. If you have a question or comment for her, you can leave her a message at (734) 953-2047, mailbox No. 2130, or write to her at The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia, Mich., 48150, or cfuoco@oe.homecomm.net

'Martian' is lots of fun for Saturday morning set



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Intergalactic comedy: When TV reporter Tim O'Hara (Jeff Daniels, left) stumbles upon a real-life Martian (Christopher Lloyd) he thinks he has the most fantastic story of his career in journalism in "My Favorite Martian."

BY JON KATZ
SPECIAL WRITER

Except for its ending, Disney's "My Favorite Martian" doesn't attempt to invoke baby boomer nostalgia for the original TV series. A smart move, indeed, considering the disastrous attempts at bringing "McHale's Navy," "Car 54, Where Are You?" and, most notably, "The Avengers" to the big screen.

Instead, the special effects-driven comedy goes right for the Saturday morning set. A wise-cracking space suit called "Zoot," goofy sight gags and some harmless potty humor will keep the kids interested, while Elizabeth Hurley's wardrobe will do the same for the adults (for the men, what she's wearing; for the women, why she's wearing it in this movie).

"My Favorite Martian" ran for three seasons (1963-66) on TV, during the years when we were still giddy over the exploits of Mercury and Gemini astronauts. The possibility of life in our solar system was quite real, and Mars had held a particular appeal going back to Orson Welles' Halloween broadcast of "War of the Worlds" in 1938.

In a clever opening sequence, this version zings our zeal over the Martian Rover's video transmission of a few rocks and gives us reason to believe that citizen-

ry on the Red Planet is more than possible. What they don't give us is a reason why one of them crash lands on a beach near Santa Barbara.

The alien ship-shrunk down to toy-size by its inhabitant - is found by Tim O'Hara (our own Jeff Daniels), an ambitious TV news reporter ("I will go to the ends of the earth for a great story"). Tim's been passed over by the station owner (Michael Lerner) in favor of his airhead daughter Trace (Hurley). After he gets the ship home, the Martian appears in human form. Fortunately for us they must get "Taxi" up there, for whose form does he take but Christopher Lloyd's.

Tim senses the story of a lifetime, but instead commits to hiding the identity of "Uncle Martin" so the traveler can repair his ship and return home. Naturally the bad government guys, led by Ray Walston (TV's original Uncle Martin) and the underrated Wallace Shawn, are hot on the trail.

Superpowers abound here. Martin can make himself invisible, literally comes apart when he's depressed and his finger's more potent than Samantha's nose. He also has a particular disdain for us earthlings ("You people still think E=MC2"). His Zoot suit has a life of its own, which is somewhere between "The Mask" and Don Rickles,

and also has the best lines.

The cast has lots of fun cavorting in a Disney flick, but the two or three big gags are repeated over and over...and over. Lloyd does his bug-eyed thing that's worked for twenty years, and Daniels is fine at being flustered. Darryl Hannah as a tomboyish camera person is surprisingly misused here; she looks and

sounds like she had the flu for the whole shoot. Hurley actually, carves out the freshest territory of the bunch, doing an acceptable turn as the broadcasting bimbo.

This is one where you might want to drop the kids off and catch something else at the mall yourself. They'll fill you in on the good parts and it'll take a lot less time.

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www.blastmovie.com No passes accepted

Pompano's features a taste of Miami's South Beach

BY ELEANOR & RAY HEALD
SPECIAL WRITERS

Couldn't get away to warmer climes this month? Newly-opened Pompano's in Farmington Hills, with its seafood and Caribbean-style specialties, has the taste of Miami's South Beach and might substitute at least for a night!

If you're not fond of restaurants in hotels such as a Holiday Inn, reconsider. Ramzi Naber and his wife Connie have transformed the former Brady's and before that Matt Brady's, basically a burger and bar spot, into a comfortable dining atmosphere.

Clubby and cozy with large cigar-friendly central bar, Pompano's sings a seafood theme. Brightly-colored fish swimming out from the walls set a warm-climate atmosphere. Cordial, owner-on-premise hospitality speaks a friendly tone.

If you dined at Southfield's Golden Mushroom in the early 1990s, Ramzi Naber was the night manager. He went on to other corporate restaurant and hospitality arenas in the area and, like many before him, just had to become a restaurateur.

"I have fond memories of days spent in both Miami and San Francisco, so naturally I chose a seafood theme," Naber said. "The area at 10 Mile and Grand River needed a restaurant with seafood emphasis; the closest is Steve & Rocky's on Grand River in Novi."

A hotel eatery generally has built-in diners weeknights, but needs to attract locals on weekends. Pompano's is no exception and the deals abound. On Fridays, one pound of King Crab Legs, including salad, redskin garlic mashed potatoes and veg-

Pompano's Seafood Grill

Where: 38123 W. 10 Mile Road (at Grand River in the Holiday Inn) Farmington Hills, (248) 478-7780.

Hours: Monday-Thursday 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Until midnight Friday and Saturday.

Menu: Salads, savory sandwiches and wraps for lunch. Seafood is the specialty with pastas and grilled meats at dinner. Housemade pizza at lunch and dinner.

Cost: Lunch \$5-14; dinner \$13-20.

Entertainment: Friday and Saturday 8 p.m. to midnight.

Reservations: Recommended

Credit cards: All majors accepted.

Banquet facilities: 20-350 people

etable is \$19.95. For the same price on Saturdays, it's Surf and Turf (filet mignon and lobster tail).

From 8 p.m. until midnight both Friday and Saturday, you can listen to jazz artist George Colovus or in his absence, Charley Salaz playing Caribbean-inspired selections.

Yes, you can get pompano, a favorite from the sunfish family, at Pompano's. But only at dinner. An eight-ounce filet of pompano is sauteed with pistachio citrus butter sauce. Flown fresh to Royal Oak's Superior Fish Company, it is delivered to Pompano's five times weekly along with other fresh delicacies from the sea.

Other seafood specialties prepared by Chef de Cuisine Gary Bradt, a 1991 Oakland Community College culinary grad who honed his skills at Chuck Muer's River Crab and the Troy Marriott, are: Conch Salad; Scallops McKinnon, lightly floured and sauteed with Drambuie served with shitake mushrooms and snow peas; Blackened Yellowfin Tuna with melon salsa; and very Caribbean Coconut Shrimp, but-

terfied, dipped in a beer batter and shredded coconut, served with a guava/mango sauce.

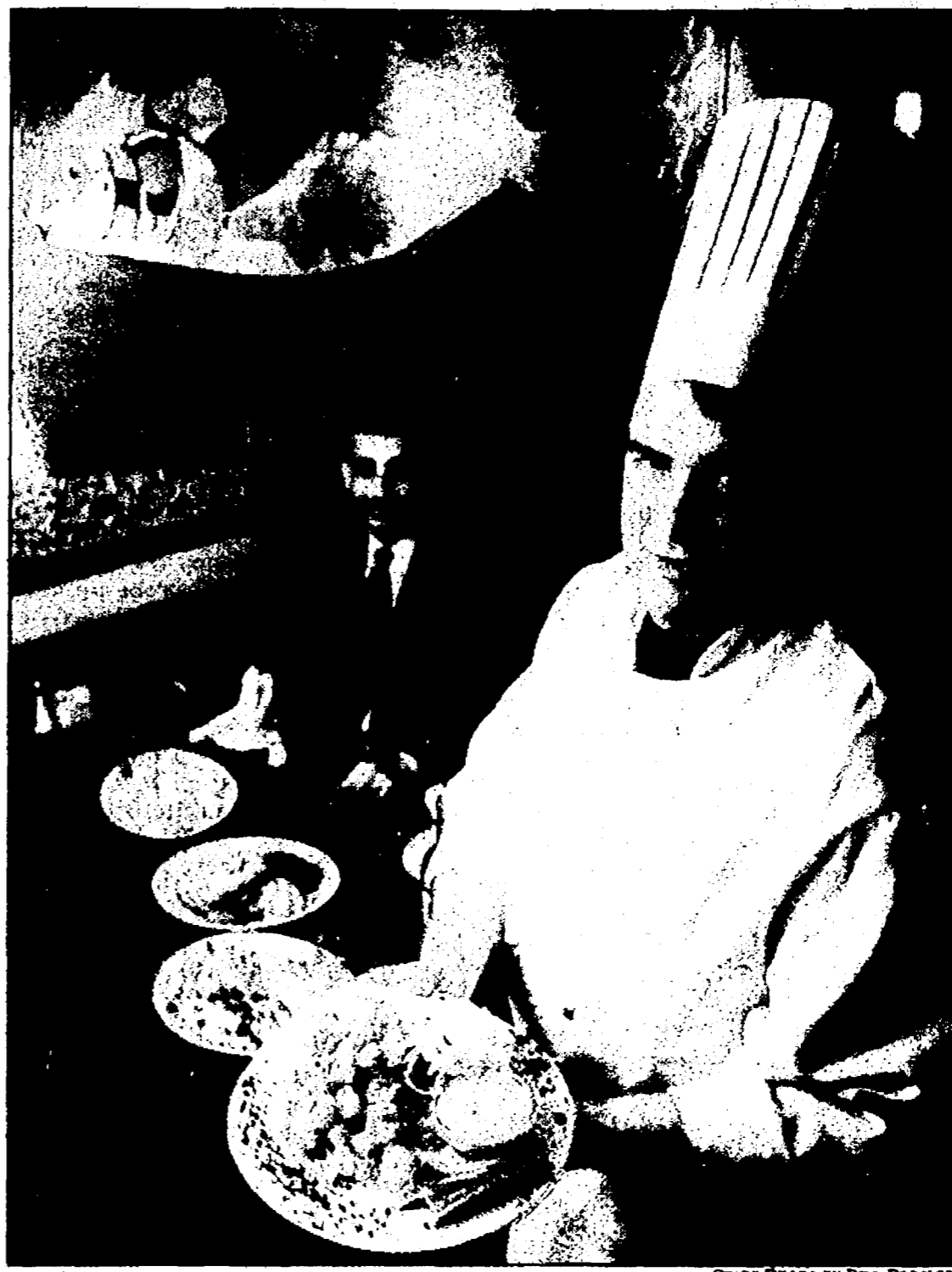
Pasta lovers can get full or half orders of Linguine Fruit de Mer (shrimp, clams and scallops); Smoked chicken with Penne Pasta or a Vegetarian Delight, tri-colored pasta tossed in tomato broth, fresh vegetables and topped with shaved Romano cheese.

Landlubbers may choose from chophouse features such as Filet Mignon, six or eight-ounce portion; Lamb Chops served with black currant sauce or Cinnamon Grilled Pork Chops.

Added to smaller portions of house seafood specialties at lunch, there's a four ounce Petit Filet Mignon Sandwich (beating most burgers by a mile), Mexican Club Wrap or a significantly-sized salad.

At lunch or dinner, Pompano's pizzas are made from scratch from fresh ingredients. Order the "Four Cheese" specialty or build your own from a wide array of toppings.

Full bar service includes a short, but well-priced wine list with by-the-glass pours \$3.75-



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRASLER

Super seafood: Restaurant owner Ramzi Naber (left) in the dining room of Pompano's. Chef de Cuisine Gary Bradt presents Buffalo Rock Shrimp, one of his seafood specialties.

\$5.25 and bottles \$17-\$38. Specialty drinks and coffees \$5.75-\$6.75 can accompany a dessert selection including, of course, Key Lime Pie.

Something extra: Pompano's Hall of Fame is looking for diners' fishing pictures. If you have more than a fish tale, take it along when you dine and have

that big one that didn't get away, hung to be noticed by all!

WHAT'S COOKING

Send items for consideration in What's Cooking to Keely Wygonik, Entertainment Editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Inc., 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150, fax (248) 591-7279, or e-mail kwygonik@oe.homecomm.net

THE MOOSE PRESERVE BAR & GRILL
3 Day Beach Bash, Thursday-Saturday, Feb. 25-27, 2395 N. Woodward Ave., (just north of Square Lake Road) Bloomfield Hills. Caribbean food, live Reggae bands, sand dance floor, hair braiding, limbo contest, and other surprises. Call (248) 85-TROUT for details.

THE LARK
California-French Dinner, 7 p.m. Monday or Tuesday, Feb. 22-23, 6430 Farmington Road (north of Maple Road) West Bloomfield. Cost \$87.50 per person not including other beverages, tax or gratuity. Call (248) 661-4466 for reservations/information.

GOODFELLAS
A dueling piano bar on Haggerty Road (just south of 14 Mile Road) in Farmington Hills features a bar stocked with domes-

tic and imported beers on tap and more than 20 vodkas, as well as 14 wines and two champagnes. The light fare menu includes pizza, portabella mushroom sandwiches, appetizers and desserts. Four piano players take turns, two at a time, entertaining the crowd. Hours are 5 p.m. to 2 a.m. Wednesday-Thursday; 5:30 p.m. to 2 a.m. Friday; 6 p.m. to 2 a.m. Saturday; and 5:30 p.m. to midnight Sunday. There is a \$5 cover on Friday-Saturday. Call (248) 788-4444 for more information.

LA SHISH
Is celebrating its 10th anniversary. The Middle Eastern Restaurant chain operates restaurants in Dearborn, and locally in Farmington Hills, 37610 W. 12 Mile Road, and at the Orchard Mall, 6303 Orchard Lake Road in West Bloomfield. Two La Shish restaurants are under construction in Livonia and Canton Township.

BUDDY'S
Announces their newest "feature" pizza, the Fire-Roasted Veggie Pizza, topped with Wisconsin brick cheese, fire-roasted red and green peppers, white onions, corn, a layer of sweet

tomato basil sauce, and sprinkles of asiago cheese. Buddy's operates six restaurants, two take-outs, and one take-out/cafeteria location throughout metro Detroit. Call your local Buddy's for information about their newest pizza.

PANERA BREAD
Has opened two new bakery-cafes in Livonia and Troy. The new bakery-cafes and meeting places offer more than a dozen varieties of fresh-baked bread, along with bagels, fruit-filled croissants, cinnamon rolls, muffins, desserts, plus hot and cold espresso beverages. The Livonia store is in the Newburgh Plaza, 37133 Six Mile road (at the intersection of Newburgh), (734) 542-0532, and in Troy at the Troy Commons, 823 E. Big Beaver Road (on the corner of Rochester Road), (248) 526-0822. Hours are 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday-Friday, and 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sunday. Other metro-Detroit Panera Bread Bakery-Cafe locations include 27651 Southfield Road, Lathrup Village; and 6399 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield.

BOGIE'S AMERICAN GRILL
Has a new menu and newly-renovated facilities. The restaur-

ant located in the Evergreen Plaza at 19701 Twelve Mile Road in Southfield features lavish roll-ups, chicken picata, seafood jambalaya, barbecue beef, baby back ribs, appetizers, sandwiches and other entrees. The lower level banquet room has been remodeled and seats 130 people. The main level seats 250 people and offers a bar, games area and TVs. Bogie's American Grill is open 11 a.m. to 2 a.m. Monday-Saturday, closed Sunday. Call (248) 559-4400 for more information.

BACI ABBRACCI ITALIAN CHOPHOUSE
"Tony n' Tina's Wedding," an interactive theatre show with patrons having an Italian dinner, and dancing to a live band performing traditional Italian wedding songs, has an open-ended run, at the restaurant, 40 W. Pike St., Pontiac. 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays-Fridays, 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. Sundays. \$50 Wednesdays-Thursdays and Sundays. \$55 Fridays and Saturdays, in advance at 8 W. Lawrence St., Pontiac. (248) 745-8668/(248) 645-6666

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