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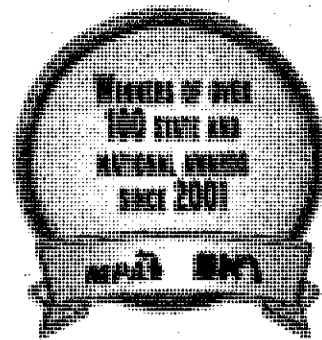
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State aid package won't help end crisis

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

At first blush, Gov. Jennifer Granholm's 2005 budget proposal for public education looks good.

She wants to increase state school aid payments for students in kindergarten through eighth-grade by \$175 per student and add an additional \$50 for high school students, making the increase \$225 per pupil in ninth-12th grades.

But Wayne-Westland School Superintendent Greg Baracy calls the proposal "disappointing" because it "does not solve the funding crisis in Michigan."

"It was my hope, and many other educators hoped that the three years of prorations and freezes that she would provide better incentives to get back on track," Baracy said. "Basically, our concern is that it does nothing to deal with the sky high costs we're facing."

Those "sky high costs" relate to what districts must pay for retirement and health care. Prior to 1994, the district's obligation was 5 percent for retirement costs. This year it's 14.8 percent and next year will jump to 16.3 percent. And even if the district had received the \$200 per pupil school officials had hoped for, it still would not be enough to cover those expenses, Baracy said.

"We happy to receive \$175, but it's a far cry from what we need to maintain our existing program," Baracy said. "It will take \$268 per student just to cover retirement and health care. It's nice, but we're at least \$68 per student in the hole with her proposal."

Baracy is maintaining a wait-and-see attitude, since the governor's proposal is just that, a proposal. The legislature will "have the last word."

"We only hope that the legislature steps up and keeps its promise to adequately fund public education," he said. "What we see now doesn't do much to help us out. If education is going to be our priority, I'd like to see the legislature illustrate that through action."

State Rep. Glenn Anderson, D-Westland, agrees that the proposal is "far short of what we'd like it to be, but it's a step in the right direction."

"This may not get the districts up where they need to be, but it may be the best we can do," he said. "Nothing is sacrosanct in the budget. We'll try to do as much as possible."

"The negotiations are just beginning, so it remains to be seen what the final product will be."

The state needs to increase revenue or decrease spending, but there is no one coming for-

PLEASE SEE AID, A5



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Off and running

Give a boy a ball and watch him play. Youngsters on mid-winter break from the Wayne-Westland Community Schools, practice running the with ball during Thursday's Rocker Soccer sports clinic at the Bailey Recreation Center. For more photos, see Page A2.

Annapolis Park seeks historic designation

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

A Westland neighborhood that became one of the first U.S. suburban communities mostly populated by black residents will likely be recognized as a national historic site, state officials confirmed Friday.

The question is, when? Annapolis Park, on the city's southeast side, was settled in the 1950s by African-Americans after developers made an appeal to blacks, particularly war veterans, to buy the two- and three-bedroom ranch homes.

Many residents who are still alive remain in the homes they bought five decades ago. It's a place where neighbors say they know and help each other, whether it involves mowing grass, shoveling snow or taking food to the sick.

"When we first purchased our homes, some people had the idea that in a few years the subdivision

PLEASE SEE HISTORIC, A5

2nd defendant gets prison sentence in drive-by shooting

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

A Wayne man will spend one to four years in prison for his role in a drive-by shooting that happened last September on a residential Westland street.

Daniel Jeffrey McGrath, 23, learned his fate after he pleaded guilty to felonious assault and was sentenced last week by Wayne County Circuit Judge Annette Berry.

McGrath was accused of concealing a license plate on a 2003 Monte Carlo from which an AK-47 assault rifle was fired by 23-year-old Marc Alexander Davis of Taylor.

The incident happened Sept. 25 on Elbridge, near Palmer and Wildwood. One woman received minor

PLEASE SEE SENTENCE, A5

Scouts brave elements to raise awareness of plight of homeless

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

On a cold February evening, 12 homeless girls gather outside of St. Matthew Church in Westland and set up the cardboard boxes they call home.

With little more than the clothes they're wearing and the promise of a hot meal from a nearby soup kitchen, they find solace in each other's company as they face another wintry night.

Unlike others their age, they have no television, no music CDs, no video games, no pizza

parties - and little hope.

That's the mock scenario as Girl Scout Troop 1752 prepares to brave the elements Friday to collect donations to help the real homeless.

"I think it's important for people to realize what homeless people go through, especially in the winter with the harsh climate," said Jordan Berry of Westland, a 13-year-old seventh-grader who attends St. Matthew School. "People take for granted what they have."

Jordan and her Garden City friend Alex



Alexandra Shingleton (left) and Jordan Berry are spearheading a benefit to collect goods for the homeless and raise awareness of their plight.

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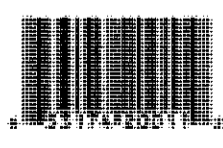
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IKEA pulls out of deal to locate in Canton

BY KURT KUBAN
STAFF WRITER

Canton Township officials were left stunned Thursday, after IKEA officials announced they were calling off plans to build a superstore on Ford Road at Haggerty.

The Swedish furniture giant backed out of the deal to buy the old Super Kmart site because of a dispute about shared parking spaces with an adjacent property owner.

According to IKEA spokesman Joseph Roth, negotiators for LBS Partners LLC, which owns the ABC Warehouse property to the west, waited until the last minute to raise the amount they were asking for a shared easement. Without that agreement, Roth said it didn't make sense to close on the 19 acres it had agreed to purchase from another party.

"We are seriously disappointed. We would like to think we can still get something worked out, but at this point we have terminated the purchasing agreement," Roth said. "We need to have a certain amount of parking spaces for a store of this size. If we can't use that parking lot (in front of ABC Warehouse), we can't justify building at the site."

The original announcement

from IKEA last fall said there would be about 1,100 parking spaces.

Canton Township Supervisor Tom Yack said IKEA's announcement was shocking and "right out of the blue." He spent Thursday afternoon and evening acting as a facilitator, trying to repair the relations between IKEA officials and LBS principal partner Daniel Stern. IKEA attorney Bryan Amann, who is vacationing in Aruba, also made many calls trying to save the deal. Yack said even Wayne County officials called his office to offer help.

"I've been going back and forth, trying to defuse the situation and get both sides talking again," Yack said. "The problem is we're on the sidelines, because this is a dispute between two private parties. But certainly we'll use our office to try bringing the parties together."

Yack said his office was flooded with calls from residents who were upset about the news, some of whom expressed anger at ABC Warehouse.

However, Yack stressed that ABC Warehouse is only a tenant of the property and has nothing to do with negotiations between Stern and IKEA. Yack also defended Stern.

"The township has dealt with Mr. Stern on other projects and we have found him to be a tough businessman. He's got to protect his interests, just like IKEA has to protect its interests," Yack said.

Stern did not return calls for this story, but was quoted in other media reports as saying he did not raise his asking price with IKEA, something Roth denied.

"Obviously there is a difference of opinion," Roth said.

In January, IKEA and the township agreed to create a planned development district for the former Super Kmart site. IKEA had agreed to build a two-story 306,000-square-foot store.

Plans called for an interior showroom that would've contained four interactive, full-size home displays, as well as specialty shops and a restaurant featuring Swedish meatballs and other Swedish dishes.

IKEA was hoping to open the store sometime in early 2006.

Canton officials said the store would've been a destination location, attracting customers from not only metro Detroit, but also from other areas of Michigan, northern Ohio and even Ontario.

Currently, the closest IKEA store is in Illinois. The retailer

has a total of 22 stores in the United States, and did \$1.7 billion in sales from those locations last year.

The Canton store was expected to employ 300 workers, and 500 union construction workers to build the massive store, which was supposed to generate about \$1 million in annual property taxes and about \$5 million in state sales taxes. It was also expected to pump up the local economy, bringing in about \$13 million for local stores, gas stations and hotels.

Roth said IKEA is still trying to find a location in the metro Detroit market.

Melissa McLaughlin, a township trustee and member of the planning commission, said she was also shocked by the news, but wasn't giving up hope something could be worked out. She said the IKEA store would've meant so much for the community.

"This would have been a huge regional attraction, and would have meant a great deal to our community. It would've spawned development, provided jobs and tax dollars. Just the flush of new economic activity it would've brought in would've meant so much," she said.

"I'm not giving up on this."

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PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Soccer time

Members of the Detroit Rockers soccer team came to Westland Thursday to help budding players with their fancy footwork. The clinic was one of several activities offered by the Westland Parks and Recreation Department as part of its mid-winter break lineup. Rocker Dan Diac tried to steal balls from Lucas Moore and Matthew Casuley.



Ryan Slowinski listens to instructions from Lorin Spasavici and Dan Diac.

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7:10, 9:20
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A place of renewal

Salon offers customers cuts, comfort

BY DIANE GALE ANDREASSI
CORRESPONDENT

Ramona Gambrel said the hair salon she frequents sets itself apart from others.

The Westland woman was at one of the lowest points of her life three years ago when she met Patricia Seguin, who had recently opened Set Apart Hair Salon on Wayne Road in Westland.

Gambrel had just left a bad marriage and was "pretty much penniless," she said, when she flipped through the phone book and randomly called Set Apart to inquire about getting her hair dyed.

"(Pat) said, 'You sound like you need to talk - why don't you just come in,'" Gambrel said. "She offered to help me with my hair and she let me pay when I could. This is a place for renewal - your hair is renewed and your spirit is renewed. There's an energy you get in this room."

Gambrel has been returning ever since that fateful first visit.

Seguin smiles. She has "an I.O.U. list" and only one person hasn't eventually paid.

"It's a small salon, but things go on here," explained Joyce Check, a Wayne resident who had worked as a facialist in the salon.

In fact, Seguin is the only stylist, however, she is looking to hire someone to help.

Her business cards read, "Before you were born, I set you apart," quoting from Jeremiah in the Old Testament of the Bible. The passage gives clients a hint about the spiritu-

al messages Seguin loves to share beyond the hair products and stylish cuts.

Although she's Catholic, the Westland resident said her clients are from all denominations.

HER MENTORS

Seguin has six children and had been a part-time hair stylist for 30 years at Charles & Co. and Rodeo's, both in Dearborn Heights; Hair Hut in Garden City and Secretz in Westland.

Each of these salons, Seguin said, provided mentors who helped her grow as a stylist.

"All of these owners invested a lot in educating me and I would like to thank them," Seguin added.

With \$10 in her pocket, Seguin said, she knew she was ready to venture out on her own after watching an *Oprah* show about the Prayer of Jabaz in the Old Testament. Like, Jabaz, Seguin set out to "spread the good news of God," she said.

Seguin also attributes her affiliation with the Taylor chapter of Women's Aglow, an international and interdenominational Christian group as giving her the confidence to believe it was possible.

"They helped me to not be afraid," she said. "I guess I would have done it a lot sooner, but I was afraid that I couldn't do it. I hope that people who have always had a dream to start a business will not be afraid. You can use all the resources around you and the people you know."

During her first year at Set Apart, Seguin said she realized

that some of her clients wanted to have a Bible study. So, she set out to organize a retreat.

"Pat is a kind-hearted, intelligent person and she doesn't know she has this gift and people follow her and they don't know why," said Check. "When people come to the salon, they don't just get their hair done. This is a place to come, because she cares."

"This is a Redkin shop and we have everything that Redkin sells," Seguin said, adding that she specializes in hair repair, as well as styling wigs for cancer patients, which she does for free.

DIFFERENT FEELING

Visitors who enter her shop next to Dobozy's barber shop could easily think they entered a tea room.

Her landlord, John Dobozy, didn't really want a salon in the building, because he thought there might be a problem with parking, Seguin said, adding that she convinced him to take a chance. Ever since, she said, he's done everything he could to help, from hanging mirrors to an array of other odd jobs.

Right inside the door an arbor is covered in greenery



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Touches of lacy and greenery brighten the inside of Patricia Seguin's Set Apart Hair Salon.

and visitors are greeted by a table with various flavors of tea and lovely cups and saucers.

"I love this place, but my goal and I feel it's a God-given goal, is a salon on one side and a tea house on the other," Seguin said.

Next to the tea cart is the appointment desk, which is a converted buffet found at St. Vincent de Paul resale shop. A large lace table covering adds Victorian charm. Seguin laughs when she explains that she changes the décor regular-

ly, spanning Roman, country and wicker styles.

"I don't look at it like it's my place, it's God's and I just get to work here," she said. "I love what I do. My dad always said, 'If you love what you do you don't have to go to work.'"

Pat tells a story about a woman who had been beaten by her boyfriend. The day after, she went to work and before going home she stopped at Set Apart.

"I told her to just sit and relax," Seguin said.

A nurse and a representative from First Step were in the shop and gave the woman numbers to call to get help. Seguin doesn't think it was coincidence.

"There's always someone here," Seguin adds.

"There's not very many places that people can come to just talk. Wonderful people come here."

"It's really a fun place to be, but you never know what's going to happen," Check added.

Livonia to vote on school funding Tuesday

Voters will hit the polls in Livonia on Tuesday, Feb. 22 to respond to two proposals pertaining to Livonia Public Schools funding.

Proposals No. 1 and 2 represent millage renewals, impacting business owners, homeowners and the future of the school district's operations and facilities upkeep.

This week, the Livonia Democratic Club publicly announced its support of both proposals.

"We have a great public school system and we encourage the entire community to come out on Tuesday to show support by voting yes on the renewal of the current operating millage and for the renewal of the sinking fund millage," said Mike Mastela, club president, in a released statement.

Voters will be asked to decide whether or not to approve an 18.4568 millage rate for non-

homestead property and a 0.63-mill "hold harmless" tax on homes. That money makes up almost one quarter of the general fund budget that pays for staffing, transportation, technology, materials and other day-to-day expenses.

The second request asks for 1.12 mills sinking fund millage, which will pay for major building repairs and maintenance, like replacing roofing, boilers, doors, or paving property.

The total tax rate, 1.75 mills, would stay the same as was approved five years ago, though the distribution would change and allow more money to flow into the sinking fund. The difference to taxpayers is estimated to cost \$12 more a year.

No organized opposition has been made public. The millage renewals would last five years, if voters approve them on Tuesday.

By Stephanie A. Casola

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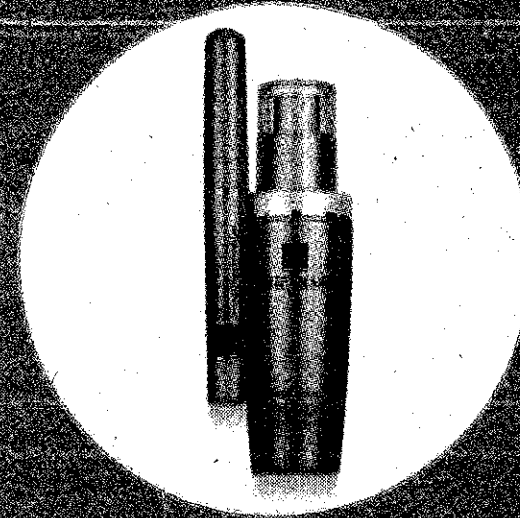
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Speaker to focus on Arab contributions

BY JULIE BROWN
STAFF WRITER

Ireland's a ways from the Middle East, but the two will have something in common when the Plymouth-Canton Branch, American Association of University Women, meets March 17.

Corned beef and cabbage will be on the dinner menu that St. Patrick's evening, and AAUW will host a speaker from the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services, or ACCESS, based in Dearborn.

"People have a lot of misconceptions and stereotyping," said Celine Taminian, supervisor of educational outreach for

ACCESS. The Livonia resident, 26, was born in Jordan of Armenian ancestry and came here two years ago.

The AAUW meeting (6:30 p.m. dinner, 7 p.m. program) will be Thursday, March 17, at Waltonwood at Cherry Hill, Cherry Hill and Lilley roads in Canton. Non-members, including men, are welcome and should call Pam Dean at (734) 455-3662 or Marly Birchmeier at (734) 459-3594 for dinner reservations.

Taminian will talk about the Arab world, including religions. Islam is the dominant faith, but some Arabs are Christian and even Jewish.

"Then we talk about the Arab-

American world in Michigan and in the United States," Taminian said. She'll answer questions such as why women wear head scarves.

Taminian will also discuss the Arab-American National Museum, at Michigan and Schaefer in Dearborn, slated to open May 5 of this year. The museum, which strives to document and inform on the contributions of Arab-Americans, will have a series of opening events beginning April 23 and continuing through the May 5 ribbon cutting at 5 p.m.

That museum's been in the works about three years, she said. ACCESS is 34 years old and is a nonprofit social service agency

that helps immigrants and others with jobs and other needs. Students whose parents don't know English or American culture receive help from ACCESS. There's a health clinic which includes mental health treatment, including for victims of torture.

Information on ACCESS is available online or by calling (313) 842-7010 or (313) 843-2844. The main facility is on Saulino Court in Dearborn.

Plymouth-Canton AAUW President Mickey Edell noted that her organization has a public policy diversity component. Thus, it seeks speakers who have diverse backgrounds and information on other cultures.

AID

FROM PAGE A1

ward, asking to be cut.

"They're all saying give me more, and it's unrealistic to think we can just get it from somewhere else. The governor's taken the step to increase funding, if the increase comes through. The proposal is being analyzed and picked apart right now."

The governor's budget proposal also includes an increase in educational funding for at-risk children by \$33 million and a push for school district cooperation, including a \$200,000 grant for a group of intermediate school districts to develop models of regional

cooperation in the delivery of services.

Baracy finds those comments perplexing, especially when the state has "developed 200 new school districts with charter schools."

"That's 200 new superintendents or directors and 200 boards of directors," he said. "If she's worried about consolidation, she should end deconsolidation. I have a hard time seeing this district dismantle some of the great things it has in place."

"State leaders have to do something to deal with the structural problems and restore the money to allow us to put it back in the classrooms."

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HISTORIC

FROM PAGE A1

would become a ghetto," long-time resident Reather Everett said. "We proved to everyone that we would have a beautiful neighborhood."

"We have proud homeowners in the southeast area," she said. "The pride shows all over the place."

Edna Parker, who moved to Annapolis Park 50 years ago with her late husband, Thomas, recalled a newspaper ad that ran in the *Detroit Sunday Times* in 1954, urging black veterans to buy homes there.

Why not? Homes started at \$10,950. Monthly mortgage payments were in the \$50 range. Taxes were low.

"Some people liked the concept of a neighborhood where 99 percent of the residents were black," Parker recalled.

Parker, Everett and others believe that Annapolis Park should be recognized for its historical significance. Early last year, Parker helped lead an effort by submitting documents to state historic officials.

Residents want historic markers placed at key entrances to their neighborhood - markers that would detail the area's history. They appear to have support from state officials.

"We feel that the subdivision qualifies for the National Register of Historic Places," said Robert Christiansen, who coordinates national register efforts for the state of Michigan. "We do feel that it is eligible, and we would like to see something happen."

Christiansen conceded that he hasn't adequately reviewed documents supplied by Annapolis Park residents to determine what other information he may need.

"I've been kind of remiss," he said, adding later, "It's one of those things that's been sitting on my desk far too long."

Residents indicated that they are willing to try to collect any additional information that the state may need to get Annapolis Park designated as a historic place.

"At this point, it's left up to the state of Michigan," Parker said.

Ultimately, residents hope to see historical markers at key locations, such as the Annapolis-Julius and Middlebelt-Hanover intersections.

Parker estimated that each marker would cost \$2,000 - money that would be paid by the Southeast Westland Homeowners Association. That group formed early on in Annapolis Park and has remained highly active in the community.

Residents hope to see Annapolis Park officially recognized for its historic relevance while many of the original homeowners are still alive.

Some people have questioned what will happen to Annapolis Park, with such an aging population. They shouldn't worry, Everett said.

Many descendants of the original homeowners have settled in the neighborhood, and outsiders still view Annapolis Park as a welcome place to call home.

"We have been quite fortunate that the next generation has come in," Everett said. "Not only do we have a new generation of families who have grown up here, but we've got other people who always want to move here."

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SENTENCE

FROM PAGE A1

injuries after bullets struck a parked vehicle and sent metal shards flying.

McGrath's sentence came after the accused driver, 18-year-old Kimberly Ann Wells of Westland, was released from jail Feb. 8 after serving 138 days in jail for felonious assault.

Like McGrath and Davis, Wells pleaded guilty to felonious assault. Davis also pleaded guilty to a felony firearms charge. He will face a minimum of two years in prison when he is sentenced by Berry on March 4.

Davis opened fire with the assault rifle after Elbridge residents fired a paintball gun at the Monte Carlo and threw beer bottles and rocks at it, police have said.

Residents became upset that the Monte Carlo was going up and down their street. Police said Davis was looking for two men who had earlier assaulted him, although he didn't find them.

Davis stood through a sunroof of the Monte Carlo when he fired the assault rifle.

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SCOUTS

FROM PAGE A1

Shingleton are spearheading the project to help the homeless as they earn their Silver Award - the second-highest honor a Girl Scout can earn.

"I've always wanted to go to Africa and be a missionary, but I think it's important to help our own neighborhood, too," said Alex, an eighth-grader at Guardian Lutheran School in Dearborn.

Scouts will start their homeless night at 5 p.m. Friday in the church parking lot, on Venoy one block north of Ford Road. They're asking the community to bring donations of blankets, bed sheets, travel-size toiletries, towels, washcloths, large cans of tuna, other canned food, and all sizes of underwear and socks for women and men.

The girls will donate the items they collect to Our Lady of Good Counsel in Plymouth Township, which helps the homeless in Detroit, and to Christ Net - an area network of churches providing shelter.

"I'm really proud of these girls," St. Matthew Principal Richard Schumacher said. "It's an idea that was generated by the kids. It's good that they had an idea to help the community

and to bring awareness to this problem."

Troop 1752 already has helped address the homeless problem by handing out clothing and food in Detroit. Now, they want to tap into their own communities to help.

"I think it's awesome," Tobi Shingleton, Alex's mother and the Scout leader, said. "They have to do something for the community, and they decided this was something that people need to know - that there are people in our own back yards who need help. They are very passionate about it."

During the project, St. Matthew will host a soup kitchen 5-7:30 p.m. Friday. People dropping off donations or giving money are invited to eat.

The girls will "live" in cardboard boxes donated by the Sears Outlet in Livonia. Some girls have vowed to try to spend the night outside, but the school gym will be open as a homeless shelter in case the girls get too cold.

"We would never endanger them or allow them to get frostbite," Tobi Shingleton said. "We'll open the gym door around midnight and announce that we have room for 12 more people in the shelter."

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GOP still searching for right Senate candidate

Here's what you can say about Oakland County Sheriff Mike Bouchard's race for the U.S. Senate: It was short. It was sweet. It drew rave reviews. Nobody ever laid a glove on him. And then it was over.

Earlier this week, eight days after announcing that he would mount a major challenge to freshman Democrat U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow, the Oakland County sheriff announced he was, ahem, dropping out, due to mysterious and unspecified health problems, which he said were not life-threatening.

"I am extremely disappointed at this unforeseen development," the 48-year-old Republican said in a statement after a series of medical tests.

Though nobody doubts his word, some wicked gossips were wondering whether part of Bouchard's problems might be a sudden case of cold feet.

And though Saul Anuzis, the new GOP state chairman, is talking as though he expects a large group of heavyweight contenders for the state's top jobs next year, the truth may turn out to be something else again.

The main problem for Michigan Republicans is the U.S. Senate, where in recent years, they have done about as well as the Prohibition Party. Democrats have won nine of the last 10 U.S. Senate races.

Two years ago, Republicans couldn't even find a candidate to run against U.S. Sen. Carl Levin. In the end, an unknown state legislator named "Rocky" Raczowski ran and was creamed.

Five years ago, Stabenow, now 54, narrowly defeated then-U.S. Sen. Spencer Abraham, who had been elected in the Republican landslide of 1994, even though she was outspent by almost two to one.

Traditionally, Michigan voters either toss their senators out after a term, or embrace them 'til they decide to leave or their teeth fall out.

In some respects, Stabenow ought to be vulnerable. No major legislation has been linked to her name, though her supporters say that there is little she could accomplish as a freshman member of the minority party.

Her name is not yet a household word, and she has neither the looks nor charisma of Gov. Jennifer Granholm. Yet voters seem to feel comfortable with the senator, a motherly figure who put herself through Michigan State University partly by singing gentle folk ballads.

She's won favorable attention by leading a series of highly publicized bus trips taking seniors to buy cheaper medication in Canada.

"So who will Republicans run against her? The two announced candidates aren't ready for prime time: Bart Baron, a perennial candidate,

and the Rev. Keith Butler, a former Detroit councilman who now lives in the suburbs.

Increasingly, the party is focusing on Peter Cummings, a very, very rich real estate developer and the son-in-law of Max Fisher, the legendary Republican money man. Cummings, now 57, is perhaps best known as the former chairman of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

Outside Detroit, however, he isn't known at all. He has never run for anything, is uneasy with the press, and is a completely untested campaigner.

To be sure, New Jersey elected a U.S. senator a few years ago (Jon Corzine) who spent \$63 million, mostly his own money, to essentially buy the seat. But that seems unlikely to work in Michigan. George Romney, the former head of the former American Motors Corp., did come out of the business world to be elected Michigan's governor back in the 1960s.

But he had blazed a trail just before that as leader of the state's constitutional convention, and had been a very visible corporate leader in a state where the auto industry was the culture.

Republicans, who tried to make an issue out of Granholm's Canadian birth, also would have to explain why Cummings, who is also a Canadian, didn't even bother to become a U.S. citizen 'til 1984.

Probably the strongest candidate the GOP could field is U.S. Rep. Mike Rogers, a trim, handsome former FBI agent who holds Stabenow's old Lansing-based congressional seat.

Rogers, 42 this year, is a fast-rising star from Brighton who has proved adept at fund raising. Put in charge of money efforts for House Republicans in the last election cycle, he boosted the take from \$141 million to \$175 million. This year, Speaker Dennis Hastert assigned him to the House Intelligence Committee, a clear sign of trust and favor.

His seat has been redistricted to make it entirely safe. Yet the U.S. Senate is a far bigger platform; Lyndon Johnson once compared the House and the Senate to the difference between chicken salad and chicken exhaust.

Should Rogers risk it all for a potential seat on the national stage? Last week, aides would only say "people were looking at it." Rogers has a considerable war chest, and might not need to make up his mind as early as some contenders. But he doesn't have all the time in the world.

Spencer Abraham spent \$16 million in losing five years ago. Expect Republicans to spend far more next year. If they don't beat Stabenow, there's the possibility Carl Levin will decide to retire in 2008, when he will be 75.

Or maybe not. At that age, after all, Strom Thurmond was just warming up.

Jack Lessenberry is editorial vice president of HomeTown Communications. He can be reached by phone at (248) 901-2561 or by e-mail at jlessenberry@homecomm.net.



Jack Lessenberry

State needs to increase, not cut, college funding

One of the nation's first land grant colleges, Michigan State University, founded to bring higher education to the working classes, is celebrating the 150th year of providing an excellent education to students around the globe.

Michigan is grateful and proud of the many contributions made by the 15 major universities and 46 independent colleges in our great state.

As a parent of two daughters enrolled in our public universities, Western Michigan University and Grand Valley State University, I am personally aware of the financial responsibility and sacrifices that families make to put their children through college. Furthermore, I am encouraged by the challenge that Gov. Granholm has presented to us - to double the number of individuals in our state with advanced degrees in the next 10 years.

However, I am disheartened that higher education has experienced 15-16 percent cuts over the past two years and now the governor is poised to cut even more. In 1975, the state provided approximately 74 percent of the support to our institutions of higher learning; yet, in 2004 that support dwindled to 37 percent.

For example, Eastern Michigan University's state appropriations per student in 2005 is \$3,948. The Executive Order will reduce the state's appropriation per student to \$3,867, which would be the lowest since the 1995-1996 school year. This declining public support will make our public institutions more dependent on private investment which may then dictate the mission and direction of our public universities.

As chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Higher Education, my primary goal is to achieve the highest level of "academic excellence and intellectual integrity." To this end, there must be an increase in funding as a result of the Cherry Commission. An economic impact study commissioned in 2002, the Michigan University Presidents Council, determined that every \$1 invested in our 15 public universities generates \$26 in positive economic impact. Furthermore, the study concluded that no other public investment in Michigan produces such a high rate of return to its citizens as post-secondary education.

There are about 1.5 million state residents with some post-secondary education. Measures which would entice them back into the classroom to complete their degrees would boost the state's economic growth and in turn create higher wages.

Our universities work diligently to prepare the workforce as they carry on vital research to improve the quality of life for every Michigan citizen.

We must diversify our economy. Our future depends on the innovation that our universities and colleges provide. Our universities can serve as the sparkplug to ignite this expansion. All across Michigan from Oakland University to Michigan Tech in Houghton, the universities are driving our state's economy and job growth, e.g. research and development for the auto industry and other fields.

The vital research being conducted in our state universities, such as the University of Michigan, Michigan State University and Wayne State University, is being implemented in the marketplace. In the last five years, nearly 95 companies, which are engaged in the life sciences, automotive technology and homeland security, were launched as a result of the creation of the Michigan Technological Tri-Corridor, a partnership between universities and private companies and research institutions.

Our universities work diligently to prepare the workforce as they carry on vital research to improve the quality of life for every Michigan citizen. Universities operate efficiently with the dollars given to them by the state and tuition paid by students. Partnerships have been created to reduce energy and purchasing costs with the goal of keeping schooling affordable.

The state must increase, not cut, funding for higher education, as well as K-12.

What I want for my own two daughters is a solid education which prepares them for personal future successes and provides them with meaningful opportunities to give back to their community. I want this for all Michigan citizens.

Finally, I thank you for the privilege and responsibility as chairman of the Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee and I look forward to providing a forum for re-establishing the value of higher education in society and its role in economic expansion.

State Rep. John Stewart, R-Plymouth, represents a district that includes Plymouth, Northville, Wayne and the eastern part of Canton. On Thursday, the state Senate rejected Gov. Granholm's executive order to reduce state spending by \$227.1 million, including cuts to higher education.



Rep. John Stewart

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Calling Democrats

The Westland Democratic Club will have its monthly meeting at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 22, at the Dorsey Community Center...

Officials are asking that 2005 dues be paid. They are \$12 a year, \$6 for seniors.

Meeting delayed

Because of President's Day on Monday, the Westland City Council meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 22...

Tax guides

State Rep. Glenn Anderson, D-Westland, has announced that he has placed free taxpayer guide booklets at the Westland public library...

The step-by-step guides also include tax forms.

Strike!

Bowling for a Cure, sponsored by Westland Jaycees, will take place 1-3 p.m. Saturday, March 5...

Minimum donation for the event, which includes two games of bowling and shoe rental, is \$15 per person.

For more information or to reserve a spot, call (734) 729-6683.

Dinner at Archie's

The Livonia Franklin High School Marching Band is sponsoring Dinner at Archie's Monday, Feb. 28...

Twenty-five percent of the food bill will be donated back to Franklin High School...

Flea market

VFW Harris-Kehrer Post 3323, 1055 S. Wayne, will host an indoor flea market 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, March 5.

Open house

St. Damian School will have its annual Open House on noon-2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 27.

An accredited Catholic School, St. Damian is accepting enrollment for all classes at the school at 29891 Joy...

The school has preschool classes for three-year-olds on Tuesday and Thursday...

It offers both three- and five-full-day kindergarten classes and a five-day half-day program...

For more information, call (734) 427-1680.

Best mother, father

Mayor Sandra Cicirelli has announced that nomination applications are available for

Mother of the Year and Father of the Year - awards she will give during her State of the City address in April.

Applications are available at the city cable station WLND, 33455 Warren Road...

The program will be held at 6 p.m. Wednesday, April 13, at the senior citizen Friendship Center...

Relay kickoff

Relay for Life of Westland will kick off its 2005 fund-raising season 6:30-8 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 24...

Road. Information will be available about getting involved in the 24-hour event that raises money to fight breast cancer.

Call Megan Holt at (248) 483-4344 or e-mail her at megan.holt@cancer.org.

Bit of history

The Friends of the Westland Historical Museum will host a talk, "What is an Interurban?," at 1 p.m. Sunday, March 6...

Richard Andrews, a local historian and author, will give

the presentation. Admission is free. For more information called the library at (734) 326-6123...

Spring bazaar

The Edison Elementary PTO will have its Spring Bazaar 6-8 p.m. Wednesday, April 20.

The bazaar will feature a collection of 20 vendors, mostly direct-sell businesses like Tupperware, DK Books and Party-Lite...

No children will be allowed in the gym, however, baby-sitting will be available. Edison School is at 34505 Hunter, Westland.

Tuning up

The Wayne Memorial High School and John Glenn High School Instrumental Music Programs will present the annual Festival Preview Concert at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 23...

Scheduled to perform is the John Glenn Symphony Band and Symphony Orchestra, the Wayne Memorial Concert Band 9, Concert Band

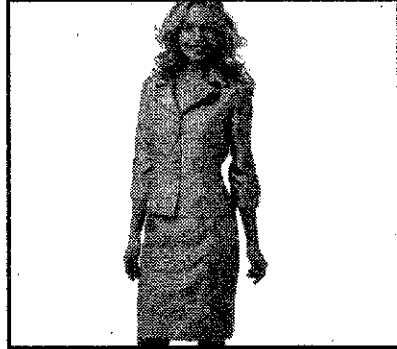
Symphony Band and Symphony Orchestra.

Going for gold

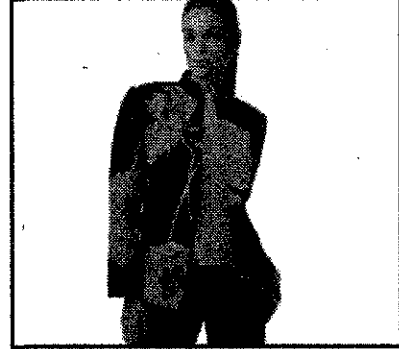
The Westland Parks and Recreation Department will host the Nursery School Olympics 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, March 5...

Tots will be able to compete in 18 different events, including the Marshmallow Shot Put, the Toddler Trot, the I-Did-A-Rod Hurdles and Obstacle Course.

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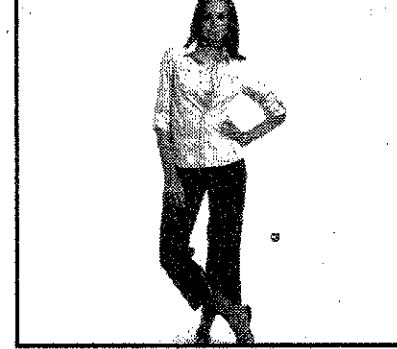
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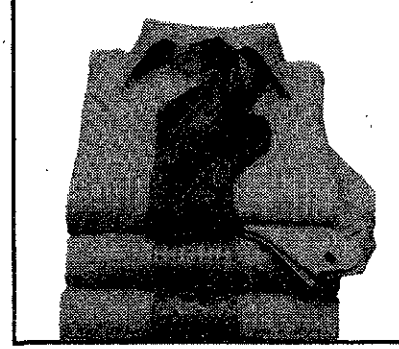
30% off Great selection of ladies' spring suits from Travis Ayers, Tahari ASL and more. Orig. \$240.00-400.00, sale \$168.00-280.00.



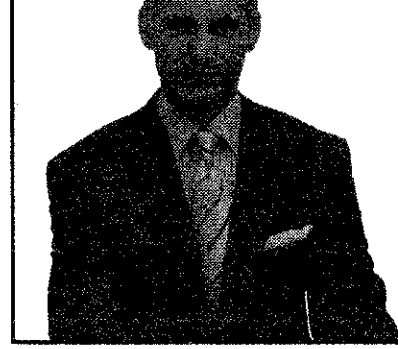
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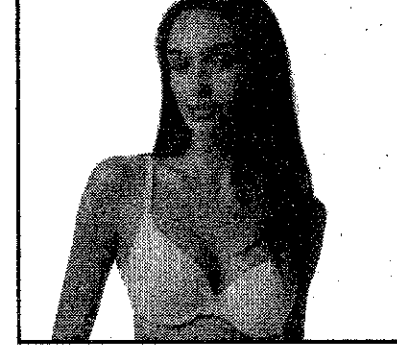
30% off Boys' and girls' Easter dresswear from Bonnie Jean, Rare Editions, Hype, Claiborne and Parisian Bebe. Orig. \$20.00-135.00, sale \$14.00-94.50.



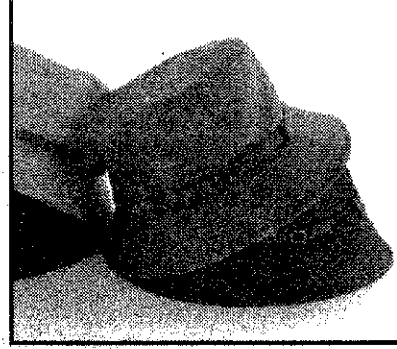
29.99 Dress shirts and 100% silk neckwear from Preswick & Moore. Dress shirts. Orig. \$50.00, Neckwear. Orig. \$42.50.



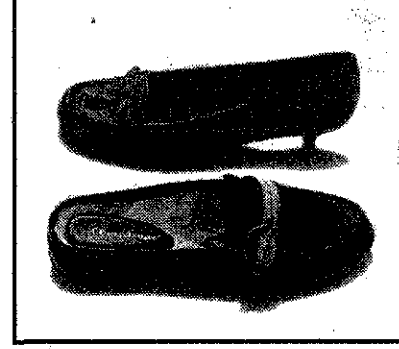
150.00 off ENTIRE STOCK of regular-priced men's suits. Orig. \$495.00-750.00, sale \$345.00-600.00.



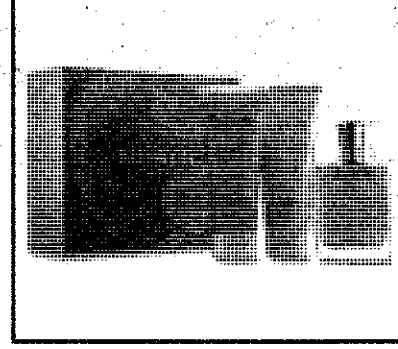
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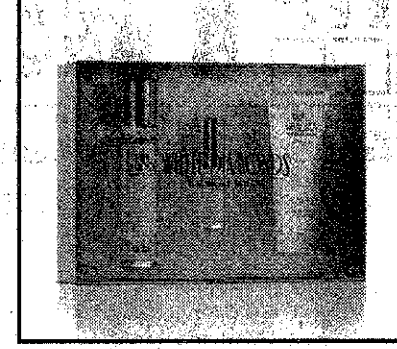
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