

'Smacznego!'

Polish food says 'enjoy' in welcoming way

TASTE, PAGE B6



Spring check up

Ford Field show offers home improvements, garden ideas

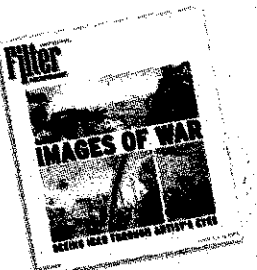
AT HOME, SECTION B



Art of war

Exhibit and film series at Cranbrook Art Museum see Iraq through the artist's eyes.

INSERTED SECTION



Your hometown newspaper serving Westland for 40 years

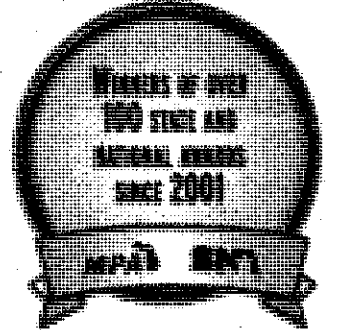
THURSDAY

February 24, 2005
75 cents

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Today's late delivery is not the fault of your Observer carrier. Due to technical difficulties, we were unable to get the newspaper out on time.

WESTLAND Observer



VOLUME 40 NUMBER 78

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Council schedules session on Frontier Park plan

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Westland city officials have agreed to engage in talks with a youth athletic group that has proposed a massive sports complex near Central City Park.

City council President Charles Pickering confirmed this week that the Frontier Park proposal, with an estimated \$35 million price tag, will be the focus of talks scheduled for 6 p.m. Monday, March 14, at Westland City Hall.

Elected leaders will discuss the plan with the Westland Youth Athletic Association, which has suggested asking voters to approve a 1-mill tax

increase to support the project.

"It is a good thing for the city," WYAA President Mark Rodriguez said Tuesday, during a council session. "It's something the city needs and it's something the city deserves."

The Frontier Park proposal would convert 80 acres of land west of Central City Park for a comprehensive sports complex. The bulk of the land is owned by Wayne County.

WYAA officials have shared their vision with some elected officials and local newspapers, and Rodriguez said Tuesday that a public forum will eventually be scheduled.

One local hockey enthusiast, Jerry Smith, indicated during Tuesday's council meeting that

he would support a 1-mill tax increase to pay for the project, although some residents have criticized the plan as too costly and grandiose.

The WYAA has proposed demolishing the city's Mike Modano Ice Arena and selling off land at Voss Park to help pay for the plan.

On Tuesday, Rodriguez conceded that the biggest hurdle to the Frontier Park project - money aside - will be acquiring the land needed to build the facility. The joint talks between the council and WYAA officials will be open to the public on March 14.

Frontier Park would include the following:

■ Eight to 10 baseball-softball fields, including one designed for special needs children.

■ Three multipurpose turf soccer fields, including one indoor.

■ A 118,000-square-foot facility for ice hockey and figure skating. It would accommodate 1,000 spectators and use a state-of-the-art geothermal heating and cooling system.

■ Next to the ice facility would be a geothermal indoor pool with a leisure area for senior citizens.

■ Expansion of the nearby Bailey Recreation Center to add two basketball courts.

■ A set of walking trails, particularly for senior citizens.

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF ABC-TV

After making the best of reality TV, Guy Flummerfelt and sons Rashad (second from right) and Marques were happy to have Doreen home again.

Wife swap

Family finds reality TV isn't really reality

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Guy Flummerfelt didn't flinch when his wife, Doreen, suggested that he swap her for a new woman.

He was watching television in the family room of their Westland home, paying little attention when she made her offer.

"I did the typical male thing and said, 'That's fine, dear,' not knowing what would happen," he said.

What happened would catapult them and their two sons into television history on *Wife Swap*, an ABC-TV reality show that switched Doreen Flummerfelt with a Baltimore wife for a week in December.

Their story was set to air Wednesday night as the Flummerfelts watched with family members, friends and reality show junkies during a special viewing at Emagine Canton theaters.

"It had some funny parts, and it had some tension," Guy



Doreen Flummerfelt helps Mia Bray with her shoes while filling in as her mother.

Flummerfelt, 46, said.

AVID VIEWER

Doreen Flummerfelt admits she'll watch any reality show. Still, she didn't really expect to appear in one when she went online last July and submitted an application for *Wife Swap*.

The show's producers called her in late October at Helm Inc. of Highland Park, where she works as a sales assistant for a company that produces publications for the Big Three automakers. By December -

after a series of family background checks - the *Wife Swap* segment had been taped.

"We found out that reality TV isn't really reality," Doreen Flummerfelt said. "We found out how real it really wasn't."

The show couldn't have switched her with a woman more different.

Doreen Flummerfelt is a working mother who has two sons, Marques Banks, 17, and Rashad Hamilton, 12, from her

PLEASE SEE SWAP, A7

Police begin probe of fatal shooting

Driver exhibited 'really bizarre behavior'

BY KEVIN BROWN
STAFF WRITER

A man who started fleeing from Westland police Monday morning was shot and killed as he tried to run over an armed Canton police officer.

According to Michigan State Police officials, Christopher Slay, 42, of Ypsilanti stopped to take a hit off a crack pipe from behind the wheel of his Jeep Grand Cherokee before trying to run down a police officer in a snow-covered yard north of Ford Road and east of Beck.

"That's when the gunfire started," said MSP Lt. Harold Love.

Five police officers - two from Canton, two state police troopers and one Wayne County sheriff's deputy - fired at Slay as he

drove the moving truck. "The officers were able to get out of the way," Love said. "He drove through the yard striking another vehicle. He made a small circle and ran into a fence and building. Officers approached the vehicle and saw he had been shot."

Slay was pronounced dead a short time later at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Ann Arbor.

"My brother was working in his garage (on Ford Road) when it all happened," said Jeff Rosa, gesturing west down Ford where it intersects with Beck Road, roughly an hour after the shooting.

He and other bystanders were kept several hundred yards from the shooting scene Monday by yellow

PLEASE SEE POLICE, A7

80th birthday brings accolades for Barns

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Westland political matriarch Justine Barns - a trailblazer for local women in government - received

praise Tuesday as elected city leaders paid tribute to her 80th birthday.

Barns, who rose through the ranks from school PTA president to state representative, was honored in a joint proclamation signed by Mayor Sandra Cicirelli and the Westland City Council.

"She has done a lot for the community," Cicirelli said

during a council session. "She certainly has paved the way for a lot of us women in government who have followed in her footsteps."

Barns didn't attend the meeting, but she is expected to greet her supporters during a coffee-and-cake get-together 6-7 p.m. Monday, March 7, at Westland City Hall. The public is invited.

Barns celebrated her 80th birthday on Feb. 2 - 53 years after she started her community involvement in 1952 as president of the Jefferson Elementary School PTA.

Wayne-Westland school officials eventually renamed the school as Jefferson-Barns Elementary in her honor.

PLEASE SEE BARNs, A7

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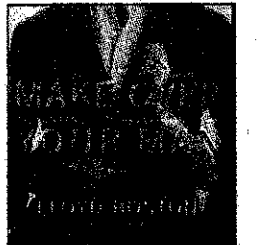
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Coming Sunday on the PINK page

Dressing Your Guy



Paraprofessional garners Golden Apple Award

Cindi Gutowski became the latest recipient of Livonia Public Schools' Golden Apple Award.

The special education paraprofessional works at Livonia Career Technical Center. Her co-workers filled the board room to share in the honor. "I'd like to thank everyone for this award," said Gutowski. "Without their support and help, I could not do what I do."

Principal Janet Haas nominated Gutowski, noting that "Cindi coordinates all staff functions, causing our staff environment to be positive, caring and joyous."

LIVONIA SCHOOLS

Teacher Joe Costa said, "Cindi is always, by her nature, giving personally and professionally of herself to both staff and students."

Gutowski mentioned Costa in her public acceptance, saying that thanks to him she "learns something new every day."

The Golden Apple Award recognizes time, talent and effort in support of students, parents and staff of the district.

by Stephanie A. Casola



Cindi Gutowski with her Golden Apple plaque.

Resale shopping grows up to fill Livonia space

RESALE AND RESTORE

Talk about expansion. Canton-based resale store, Consignment Outlet, has swapped its former Plymouth location for a mammoth space in Livonia.

Owners Todd and Michelle Schiffrar have purchased the former home of Ethan Allen at 15700 Middlebelt in Livonia, which encompasses 18,000 square feet.

"We opened the Plymouth store two years ago," he said. "It was only 1,800 square feet. We closed that store to purchase the Livonia store."

The new space accommodates more than 1,500 consignors who work with Schiffrar to sell everything from home furnishings, furniture, and jewelry, to clothing, tools, antiques and electronics.

While much of the merchandise is gently used, the store also offers new, closeout items from area big box



stores, and from liquidation sales.

Since it opened four weeks ago, two showrooms worth of furniture has been sold.

"Our motto is 'Resale beats retail,'" said Schiffrar.

He said he tells friends and relatives not to buy anything without coming to Consignment Outlet first. Store hours are 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday in Livonia and at 44125 Ford Road in Canton. Call (734) 261-9423 in Livonia or (734) 844-9423 in Canton.

TIMES TWO

The fashion forward will head to downtown Plymouth this Saturday, Feb. 26, to check out the newest area boutique - Duetto. Owners Nicole Jaskulka and Alexandra Papisifakis have been talking about opening their own clothing store since childhood. Both Troy residents, they've worked in retail since age 16.

Despite bachelor's degrees in elementary education and premedicine respectively, the longtime friends made their move four months ago. They took over the lease at 470 Forest Place, Suite 2.

The name Duetto represents not only their longtime friendship, but also the fact that the store offers clothing for both men and women.

Much of the merchandise is denim-based, but includes day and evening attire, and accessories - all featuring up-and-coming designers, said Jaskulka.

She'll be selling her own line of original jewelry, as well as designer handbags and - coming this spring - men's and women's shoes. Prices range from about \$40 to \$200.

Duetto will be open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. Call (734) 454-4700.

NEW DELI

Livonia's latest addition for the lunch crowd, simply called The Deli, held its grand opening Tuesday. Owner Paul Muonio made the easy decision to bring this latest restaurant venture straight to his hometown.

"I grew up here," he said. "I went to school at Stevenson. It's a good community."

Topping the menu is the hot corned beef sandwich, Muonio said, but The Deli offers everything from fresh lunchmeats, salads, soups and fresh bread baked daily. But above all, he hopes new customers will notice the "consistently excellent service."

The Deli isn't a pricey choice, either, as most sandwiches cost \$4.99 each. And a wide array of candies will satisfy any sweet-tooth. "You'll always be tempted," Muonio said.

The Deli, at 20235 Middlebelt, between Seven and Eight Mile, is currently open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Call (248) 442-7827.

Stephanie Angelyn Casola writes about new and changing businesses for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. E-mail tips on your new, favorite Wayne County shop to scasola@oe.hometownlife.com or call (734) 953-2054.

PLACES AND FACES

Strike!

Bowling for a Cure, sponsored by Westland Jaycees, will take place 1-3 p.m. Saturday, March 5, to help the local Relay for Life cancer-fighting benefit in June. The bowling event will be at Westland Bowl, 5940 N. Wayne.

Minimum donation for the event, which includes two games of bowling and shoe rental, is \$15 per person. All checks should be made payable to the American Cancer Society. Pledge sheets are available at Westland Bowl.

For more information or to reserve a spot, call (734) 729-6683. Reservations are requested by Wednesday, Feb. 23.

Dinner at Archie's

The Livonia Franklin High School Marching Band is sponsoring Dinner at Archie's Monday, Feb. 28, to raise money to purchase of new concert and marching band instruments.

Twenty-five percent of the food bill will be donated back to Franklin High School between 4-10 p.m., when band supporters and their families, friends and neighbors sign the bill with "Franklin Band."

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, between Middlebelt and Merriman, in Westland.

The school has preschool classes for three-year-olds on Tuesday and Thursday Preschool and for four-year-olds on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

It offers both three- and five-full-day kindergarten classes and a five-day half-day program (morning session) as well as grades 1-8. Before and after-school childcare also is available.

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, or on the city's Web site at www.ci.westland.mi.us. Applications are due in the mayor's office by 5 p.m. Friday, March 4.

The program will be held at 6 p.m. Wednesday, April 13, at the senior citizen Friendship Center, 1119 N. Newburgh.

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, at the William P. Faust Public Library of Westland, 6123 Central City Parkway, just north of Ford, Westland.

Richard Andrews, a local historian and author, will give the presentation. Admission is free. For more information call the library at (734) 326-6123 or by e-mail at nankin@comcast.net.

Going for gold

The Westland Parks and Recreation Department will host the Nursery School Olympics 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, March 5, at the Bailey Recreation Center, 36651 Ford.

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. Every child will receive a certificate of participation. To be able to have enough time to compete in all the events, children should register before 11:30 a.m. For more information, call (734) 7227620.

Casting call

City of Wayne Arts and Entertainment Department's Actors Community Theatre is holding auditions for Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Cinderella* at 7 p.m. Monday-Tuesday, March 7-8, at the State Wayne Theater, 35310 Michigan Ave., Wayne.

Auditions include singing, dancing and reading. For more information, call (734) 721-7400.

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THE **Observer & Eccentric**
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PARDON US WHILE WE TOOT OUR OWN HORN.

We grabbed our horn because we've just received the results of the 2004 Suburban Newspapers of America's (SNA) annual competition.

Our staff received nine awards for excellence in journalism in 2004. What makes this even more exciting is that of the 2,246 entries, we brought home more awards than any other non-daily newspaper in the state.

And here they are:

Best Editorial Writing Second Place - Troy Eccentric "Stop Recall, Insure Freedom, Don't Mess With Charter"

Best Column Writing Third Place - Sandy Armbruster, Troy Eccentric

Best Editorial Page Cartoon Second Place, Geof Brooks "Budget Cartoon."

Best Opinion Column First Place - Brad Kadrich, Plymouth Community Editor

Best Sports Writing First Place, Jim Toth, Troy/Rochester Special Editor Sports "Court Ruling."

Best Sports Writing Second Place - Ed Wright, Plymouth/Canton Special Editor/Sports "Aluminum Bat Usage Spurs Debate."

Journalist of the Year Third Place - Kurt Kuban, Canton Community Editor

Best Lifestyle Section Susan Steinmueller - Second Place, Birmingham Eccentric

Best Entertainment Section Third Place - Filter, Keely Schramm, Nicole Stafford, Lana Mini, Stephanie Tardy, Megan Pennefather, Randy Masters, Dan Dean

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ACHIEVERS

The following students from Westland earned a spot on the Dean's List for the fall semester from Schoolcraft College:

Faith O. Afolabi, Tracy L. Allen, Dion J. Angelosanto, Rodenc Asllani, Christopher W. Ayres, Karen E. Baker, Jennifer L. Barson, Julian Beqiri, Lisa L. Blaharski, Jill A. Blakley, James L. Bloom, Todd G. Boardman, Wendy S. Bodin, Sarah M. Boles, Sarah A. Bolish, Staci M. Branscomb, Jessica R. Brent, Linda M. Broaddus, Sarah A. Brown, Diane R. Browne, Janice L. Bruhnson, Amanda L. Budnick, Allison M. Bungardas, Karen E. Butkowsky, Crystal L. Campbell, Ashley N. Cecil, Teresa M. Chalifour, Gilbert J. Charfauros, Valencia F. Charfauros, Dawn M. Cheetam, Christopher P. Chirpka, Jason B. Clifton, Kimberly A. Corney, Alin V. Cosma, Geraldene G. Crider, Kristen M. Curzytek, Sarah E. Daley, Matthew C. Darnell,

Richard J. Dearing.

Phillip W. Deck, Alicia M. Dehelean, Erin J. Demers, Elizabeth A. Demoss, Andrea L. Depollo, Gazmend Dervishaj, Mohamed L. Diallo, Erin K. Dickey, Geri A. Edmonds, Leandra Y. Edwards, Lisa A. Eggleston, Leah M. Enright, Julie I. Farhat, Amy M. Feltz, Lucy A. Finney, Patricia R. Fitzer, Nicholas G. Fotiu, Jason D. Fozz, Alicia Fragoso-Rodriguez.

Laurie A. Gaffney, Sarah M. Garbutt, Lynn Gazdag, Leisha C. Genaw, Megan R. Giacchina, Jonathan D. Gietzen, Ylli Gocaj, Joseph A. Goldwater, David A. Gonzales, Deborah O. Goodling, Maureen A. Guardiola, Kathy J. Hamilton, Kristi M. Harrison, Patricia S. Haxton, Jeffrey P. Hayton, Catherine E. Hearn, Lauren A. Hewitt, Ishander P. Hiremath.

Gina L. Hitchcock, Holly K. Hofstess, Vanessa D. Hotoph, Yola R. Jabbour, Amy L.

Januszkowski, Stephanie L. Jerore, Adam W. Jinks, Bobbie J. L. Johnson, Nadia J. Kassis, Peggy A. Kazmierczuk, Mary L. Ketegwe, Tami Kirn, Louis E. Kolenc, Sydney C. Korth, Darcie K. Krause, Michael D. Kurgan, Gene P. LaPouttre, Herman D. Locust, Mary J. Macphail.

Aini M. Mahfooz, Mohammad H. Mahfooz, Renee A. Marhofer, Christina A. Matejck, Christopher S. Matthews, Jaime L. Mayer, Steven A. Meek, Joe Menchaca III, Charles B. Meyers, Cheryl A. Mikolajczyk, Matthew A. Moenaert, Denise L. Mozham, Christina L. Mufarreh, Sarina A. Mytych, Andy A. Najjar, Rula Nesheiwat, Bridgette A. Nicholas, Christopher R. Niemi.

Benjamin B. Ogden, Lynne M. Olderman, Philip C. Perry, Antoine F. Pierce, Albert Ploici, Janice M. Porte, Nancy E. Potts, Mary A.

Provot, Jaclyn R. Puhlman, Cassandra J. Reed, Lisa M. Rich, Neil D. Robert, Paul Nicholas Robertson, Summar D. Ronning, Leah R. Russell, Penny M. Rutledge, Brooke A. Samelko, Maryanne Sandoval, Kerri M. Sarb, Jordan S. Saunders.

Christina L. Sawula, Robert L. Schultz, Amy M. Settles, Lori A. Shaney, Rebecca A. Sharioian, Angela M. Shiemke, Sarah M. Sikora, Tito V. Silvestri, Katherine L. Simmons, Bethany L. Slack, Terry R. Spurgeon, Laura A. Stanton, Rebecca M. Stockstill, Lucille M. Suchan, Dena M. Swope, Daniela Tadokoro, Dawn M. Tappen, Maria Tasi, Kathleen R. Thiem. Brittany J. Thompson, Renee M. Tobin, Felix Torjoc, Matthew B. Tykoski, Deanna J. Tyler, Jamie L. Vernier, Amy S. Webster, Nicole L. Wertz, Douglas E. Wesolowski, Paul E. Wilcox, Sarah J. Wisniewski and Baiyao Zheng.

FRANKLIN HONORS

Named to the second honor roll for the 2004-2005 school year at Franklin Middle School are:

Summer Adams, Ali Ahmad, Adeela Ali, Muhammad Ali, Nyleve Allen, Ryan Allen, Brittney Anderson, Danielle Anderson, David Arnold, Shelby Arnold, Michael Bailey, Robert Baker, William Baker, Alexander Balli, Farrah Barnes, Delancey Barron, Matthew Beard, April Beaugard, Jasmine Bell, Alexis Benefield, Shelby Benefield, Mahelia Benjamin, Cynthia Berean.

Chelsea Blamer, Brittany Blanton, Karissa Bolish, Edward Boros, Parris Bowen, Christopher Bowie, Amanda Bowman, Amber Nuoffer Bradley, Tyler Brechtbill, Jonathan Bryant, Dominic Burnett, Christopher Burtraw, Fred Butler, Alaina Butner, Aaron Byrd, Jonathan Cahill, William Cain, Samantha Calladine, Cody Campbell, Danielle Capraro, Erina Carmelo.

Samantha Carrier, Amanda Carver, Amanda Chalmers, Denecia Charles, Muhammad Chaudry, Taylor Clark, Ashley Clarke, Alicia Cole, Christopher Collingsworth, Megan Connolly, Kiara Cook, Heather Copeland, Nastika Cukali, Patrik Culey, Melissa Dabelstein, Quentin Dawkins, Joseph Dawson, Alexander Dayton, Cierra Decraene, Staci Delezenne.

Jessica Denny, Felicia Desselles, Michael Dewulf, Nicole Dezoete, Samantha Domeler, Elizabeth Douglas, Brandee Eckford, Ashley Elliott, Shelby Erickson, Antwanetta Faulk, Brittany Faulk, Heather Favazza, Pilar Felan, Jessica Fick, Jessica Fielhauer, Alyssa Florn, Katie Fogg, David Fourment, Scott Franklin, Anita Freeman, Scot Fretwell, Shannah Friedman.

Thomas Goachee, Michelle Good, Jenna Graham, Michael Grayer, Joshua Green, Jonathan Greene, Kayla Greene, Allison Hammond, Cassandra Hardy, Richard Hardyniec, Zachary Hardyniec, Brandon Harnos, Kelsea Harris, Renee Hartert, Amber Hartford, Amanda Harvey, Amber Hawk, Haley Hayes, Christopher Henisse, Donald Herber.

Callie Holiman, Kelsie Honeycutt, Paris Horgrow, Pierre Horgrow, Chelsea Housewright, Jeffrey Howard, Stefanie Huffman, Briana Hunter, Miles Hutchinson, Frances Jackson, Gabrielle Jackson, Alicia Jacobs, Taylor Jacobs, Arooba Javed, Anthony Jett, Cassie Johnson, Daniel Johnson, Jenna Johnson, Joseph Johnson, Kaitlyn Johnson, Alexis Jones.

Diamond Jones, Kaitland Jones, Hope Kaminski, Jordyn Karpinski, Ishpreet Kaur, Hunter Kennedy, Vivian Kennedy, Torrance King, Monica Kmet, Kayla Korinek, Dylan Korzetki, Christopher Kouri, Henry Kozlowski, Mary Kreutzkamp, Courtney Kucharski, Jessica Kuder, Samantha Kull, Jessica Labeau, Jory Labert, Patrick Lafferty, Halee Lankton.

Timothy Lauderbach, Heather Laveque, Dakota Leming, Shayna Lenox, Kateri Little, Michael Little, Trisha Lloyd, Bradley Lockhart, Meah Long, Samantha Lossos, Bryana Love, Joshua Lowe, Alyssa Lucas, Eric MacDonald, Kaytland Manning, Keena Marable, Emily Marshall, Paris Martin, Ashley Mashatt, Brianne Mason, Rebecca McClester, Sinead McGiffert.

Megan McGregor, Scott McIntosh, Derek McManaway, Shae Miller, Christina Mitchell, Sarah Mitchell, Kristy Molner, John Moore, Raymond Moore, Michael Morgan, Darrell Musselman, Tiah Napolitano, Vera Neci, Gary Neill, James Nettie, Allen Nugal, Rebecca O'Harris, Stephani O'Harris, Brandee Ochel, Steven Ogg, Kelsey Osborne.

Candace Papineau, Caitlee Parendo, Cory Parendo, Sunnie Patterson, Laura Pegg, Emily Penner, Daniel Pianowski, Jacob Pipe, Sean Pipe, Chelsea Pobur, Amanda Poirier, Trevor Pollard, Meghan Pollington, Renaldo Powell, Brittney Pruett, Dylan Ritter, Justin Robinson, Daniel Ross, Keshia Ross, Rebecca Rowlings, Samantha Rowlings, Vivian Ruczynski.

Jerold Runion, Robert Runstrom, Brandin Samples, Cary Scheuermann, Rachel Shackelford, Yasmine Shitta, Solomon Shurge, Andrea Sigler, Andrea Sims, Chelsea Skivers, Jamie Smith, Lauren Smith, Zachary Smith, Bernardina Spagi, Shantelle Spencer, Camille Springer, Jessica Spytko, Ashley Stamper, Keiara Stevenson, Corey Stewart.

Christopher Stewart, Eric Story, Rachel Sullivan, Sara Tackett, Nicholas Tarnowsky, Corey Taylor, Jacob Tenerovich, Jane Thayer, Amanda Thomas, Chantel Thomas, Kristy Thomas, Matthew Thompson, Michael Toms, Alyssa Torres, Ashley Trobley, Taylor Tucker, Martin Urbaniak, Chloé Ursem, Ashley Venters, Kneco Veres, Ashlee Vernon, Shelby Watts.

Aleshia Whaley, Korie-Lynn Whitlark, Danile Wilson, Krysta Wilson, Barbara Winberly, Joanna Witte, Kellie Woodard, Katherine Yax, Torri York and Andrew Zimmerman.

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Young musicians earn symphony scholarships

A Livonia trombonist and a bassist from Canton are among the seven winners of the 2005 Youth Artist competition sponsored by the Plymouth Symphony.

Thanks to an anonymous donor and gifts from the Plymouth Rotary Foundation and the Plymouth Optimist Club, some \$1,550 in scholarship money will be awarded.

The competition also is supported by the Michigan Council for the Arts, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, and Evola Music of Canton.

Trombonist Miranda Kalish, a 16-year-old Churchill High School junior, received a \$500 scholarship as the first-place winner in the Senior Instrumental Division. In addition to begin an active member in the Churchill High School instrumental music programs, Kalish has attended the Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp and Interlochen Center for the Arts. She is currently first chair for the Michigan Youth Band and Orchestra.

Kirstin Thieleman of Canton is the principal bassist in the Celebration Sinfonia. She gets a \$250 first-place scholarship in the Junior Combined Division. So does John Denton of Novi, currently a seventh-grader who plays trombone in the Detroit Symphony Orchestra's Civic Youth Ensembles.

Northville High School sophomore Elliott Huang receives a \$250 scholarship as the second-place winner in the Senior Instrumental Division. Huang began violin study at age 4 and has played in the Dearborn Youth Orchestra, Livonia Youth Philharmonic and the Detroit Symphony Civic Orchestra.

Honorable-mention scholarships of \$100 are being awarded in the Senior Instrumental Division to cellist Derek Thielemann, in the Senior Piano Division to Tiffany Pao and to pianist Chance Miller in the Junior Combined Division.

The Youth Artist Competition is held each year by the Plymouth Symphony Orchestra to recognize young talent in the Clarenceville, Livonia, Northville, Novi, Plymouth-Canton, Van Buren and Wayne-Westland school districts.

The competition was open to all orchestral instruments and piano, and was hosted by Evola Music in Canton earlier this month. Winners will be recognized at the Plymouth Symphony's "Sacred Sounds" concert March 12.

Young musicians interested in participating in the 2005-2006 competition may place their names on a list now to receive information in the fall 2005. For further information e-mail the symphony office at plymouthsymphony@aol.com or call (734) 451-2112.

Scrapbook crop to raise money for kids

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA STAFF WRITER

It seems no one can say "no" to Michele Fuher.

The Livonia resident has turned her hobby of scrapbooking into a fundraising effort that will benefit students throughout Livonia Public Schools. And so far, it's all coming together rather easily, she said.

She's contacted area businesses and restaurants to sponsor the affair, and so far she said, she hasn't heard "a single 'no.'"

The event, Crop for our Kids, will benefit the Livonia Public Schools Foundation, a nonprofit which supports programs in the schools. It is set for 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, March 12, at Dickinson Center, 18000 Newburgh Road in Livonia.

Laura Jannika of Creative Memories, will assist with the event. She's an expert in the

craft, which has become increasingly popular.

"I personally think of scrapbooking as documentation and storytelling, first and foremost," Jannika said. "We all want to be remembered and honored for what we do. Cameras have gotten so much better and cheaper and we are all taking a lot of photos.

"What does a picture mean if it doesn't have a story?" Fuher has herself been participating in scrapbooking for about six years. She isn't sure what sparked her interest, though she always did enjoy taking photographs and keeping photo albums.

"It's rare someone starts off and very soon isn't doing extensive albums," she said. "It's not just a matter of putting photos on a page, but doing it decoratively. It's not just pictures. It's journaling, adding dates and names. It's a way of preserving memories."

Fuher said she originally

thought she'd approach her son's elementary school with the idea for a fundraiser. But once she read about the LPS Foundation in the Observer, Fuher thought "it might be a better route, to reach more people."

The event can accommodate 90 "croppers," with each receiving a continental breakfast courtesy of Caterrific Catering, and lunch provided by California Pizza Kitchen. Raffle prizes have been donated by Cookies By Design, Charisma Salon, Parisian and TCF Bank, among others.

In addition to Jannika, representatives from local scrapbooking businesses will be on hand to help, including Barb Gentile, owner of Livonia's Scrappin' and Stampin', and Michele Sawyer and Rachel Wubbenhorst of Stampin' Up.

Creative Memories will provide a gift bag to all who register, and give away prizes every two hours, Jannika said. "We

plan on helping people with page ideas and showing them how to use their products easily and efficiently."

Fuher made a concerted effort to keep the event "Livonia-based."

"I'm so impressed by the community outpouring of support," she said.

Registration is open-ended and costs \$35 per person. Send your name, address, phone number and e-mail address, along with a check payable to Livonia Public Schools Foundation to register. Mail the information to LPS Foundation, to Jay Young, 15125 Farmington Road, Livonia, MI 48154.

For more details, send e-mail to mfuherr@hotmail.com. For a registration form, see the Web at http://www.livonia.k12.mi.us/ and click on "Crop for Kids Fundraiser."

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Luncheon kicks off NAMIWalk for Mind

NAMI Michigan (formerly National Alliance for the Mentally Ill) is inviting walking enthusiasts to lace up their shoes for the second annual NAMIWalk for the Mind of America walk-a-thon and salute the courage of those individuals and families who are living with mental illness.

The organization is hoping to build on the success of last year's walk which attracted 1,200 participants and raised \$64,000 to directly benefit NAMI Michigan (headquartered in Lansing) and several local Michigan affiliates, including Oakland, Livingston, Washtenaw, Genesee, Detroit, Lansing and Dearborn.

People interested in learning more about the 2005 walk are invited to attend a free kick-off luncheon noon-2:30 p.m. Saturday, March 12, at Burton Manor, 27777 Schoolcraft, Livonia.

Following the luncheon, which is sponsored by NAMI Michigan, representatives will provide details about the walk and discuss ways to participate.

NAMIWalks for the Mind of America is a national fund-raising and mental health awareness program that will be held in 50 communities around the country during the

month of May, National Mental Health Awareness Month.

The goal is to raise public awareness and funds to benefit individuals and families affected by mental illness. The Detroit area NAMI Walk will take place 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, May 21, on Belle Isle.

There is no charge for the luncheon, however, advance reservations are required and must be received by March 2. For more information or to make a reservation, call (248) 531-2404.

NAMI of Michigan is the State of Michigan's leading voice on mental illness. It is a

nonprofit, grassroots, self-help, support and advocacy organization of consumers, families, and friends of people with severe mental illnesses, such as schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and other severe and persistent mental illnesses that affect the brain.

NAMI Michigan has a network of local affiliates which meet regularly to share information, support each other, and assist persons in identifying and obtaining the resources they need for intervention, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation.



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Arbor Hospice CEO announces retirement

Markey Butler, the president and CEO of one of Michigan's most established hospice and home health care agencies has announced plans to retire.

Butler, who heads up Arbor Hospice and Home Care, has served as president and CEO since January 1999. No date has been set for her departure, but will come between June 30 and Oct. 31.

During her tenure, she has led the organization through a significant financial turnaround and has succeeded in positioning the agency as a valuable community asset widely recognized as one of the "crown jewels" of its kind in the country.

"The season has come for me to retire and share with my husband our life's journey... together," said Butler. "My initial commitment to Arbor Hospice's Board of Directors was for a minimum of three months, then six months, and now I find myself completing

the sixth year as CEO.

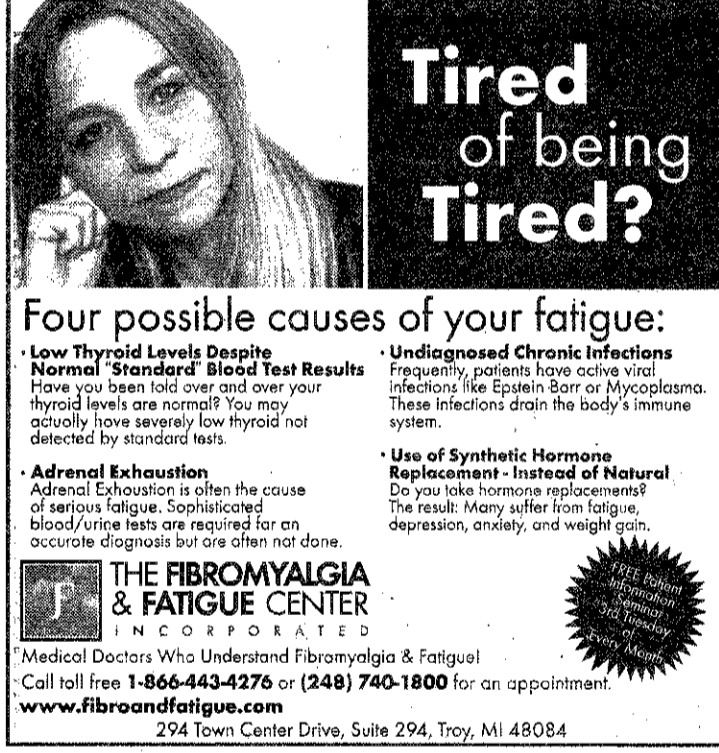
"I reflect back now on the many tribulations and triumphs we have been through as an agency ... and as a family. Each tribulation has made us stronger, each triumph reaffirming our work each day, from one season to the next."

Butler and her management team have accomplished notable milestones, including increased volume growth, establishment of The Arbor Hospice Foundation, expanded branch operations serving the Western Wayne and Oakland counties, a BraveHeart Grief Center in Northville, development and expansion of the agency's home health services, pediatric hospice care, and enhanced end-of-life education and related care delivery services throughout the region.

"During her six years at the helm of Arbor Hospice, Markey Butler has brought her commitment, knowledge, leadership, and vision to the organization, directing it through difficult times to its current status as a leader in the provision of high quality hospice care and positioning it on solid foundation for continuing success in the future," said John Martin, chairman of Arbor Hospice and Home Care's Board of Directors. "We recognize, appreciate and are grateful for Markey's outstanding contributions."

Over the course of the next few months, Butler will continue to work with Arbor Hospice's staff and community leadership team to complete the goals and objectives related to the agency's strategic plan.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my past six years with Arbor Hospice and treasure the communities and staff who are so dedicated to the mission of this phenomenal institution," she said.



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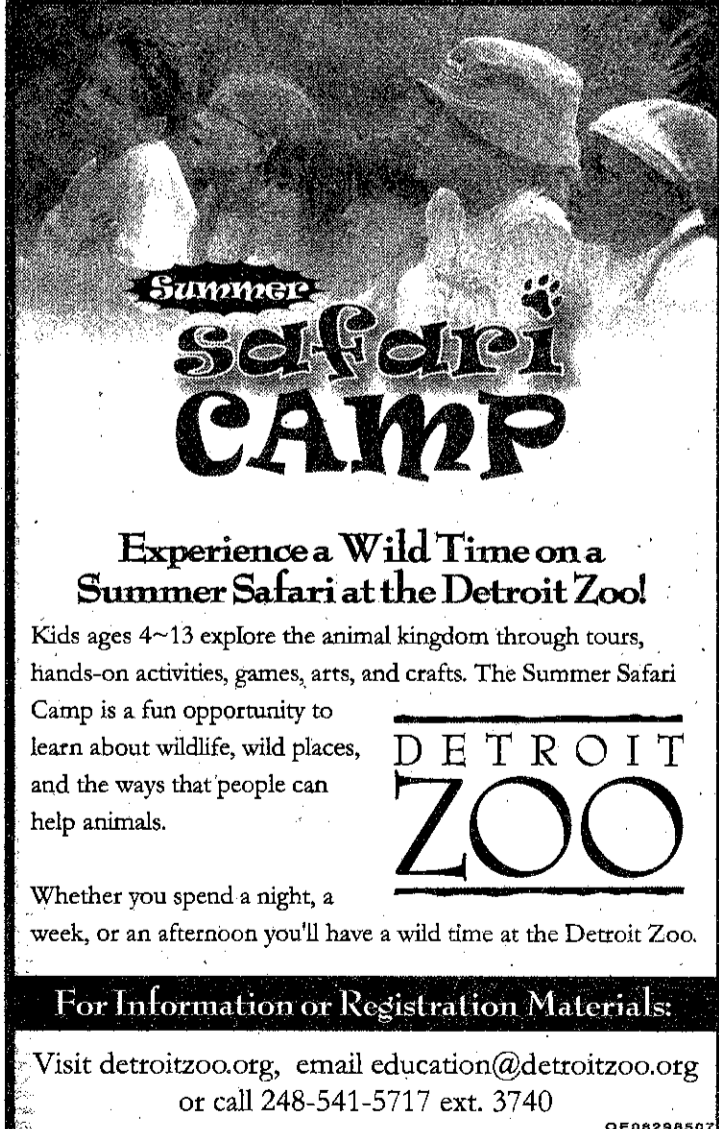
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PHOTO COURTESY OF ABC-TV

Marques Banks (left) and his brother Rashad Hamilton share a moment with LaShelle Bray, who temporarily switched places with their mother for the reality TV show Wife Swap.

SWAP

FROM PAGE A1

two previous marriages. "The third time is the charm," she said of her current six-year marriage. LaShelle Bray - the Baltimore woman she replaced for a week - is a stay-at-home-mother who is schooling her five children, ages 2 to 9, at home.

"She has four girls and one boy. I have no girls," Doreen Flummerfelt said.

About the only thing the two women have in common is that they are in interracial marriages. Doreen Flummerfelt is a black woman married to a white man; LaShelle Bray is a white woman married to a black man.

Doreen Flummerfelt quickly learned that she wasn't prepared for the swap.

"The biggest change for me was, one, the kids, two, how dirty the house was, and three, she was a housewife who was home-schooling her kids," she said.

"I go to work every day, and I come home and my family all shares in the chores," Doreen Flummerfelt said. "I'm a take-charge person, but she is told what to do. And even when my house is dirty, my friends always say it's clean."

"This woman had a George Forman grill that still had grease it in from October, and this was December," she said. "The ceiling fans were dirty. For two days, I did not eat in that house."

TOUGH SLEDDING

Back in Westland,

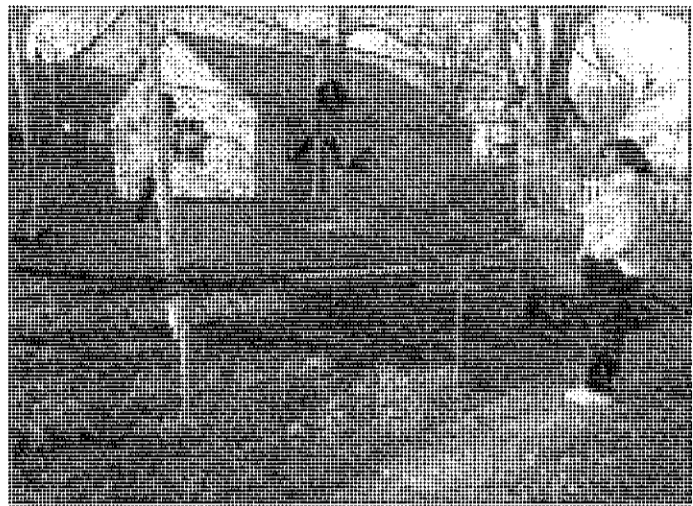


PHOTO COURTESY OF ABC-TV

Doreen Flummerfelt of Westland watches her temporary children - Eric Bray Jr., Kalea Bray and Mia Bray - at their home in Baltimore.

Flummerfelt's family wasn't exactly charmed by LaShelle Bray.

"The first few days, she had to live by our rules," said Guy Flummerfelt, who, with his brother, owns a business, HAF Industries, that serves as a manufacturing representative for the casting industry.

"She would spend her time leisurely watching TV and doing whatever she wanted," he said. "Then, she became a mother and homemaker, and we butted heads on a few things."

"She took her impression of what a family should be - meaning her family - and applied it to ours," Guy Flummerfelt said. "She approached it like she was going to fix us, but we didn't need fixing."

The Flummerfelts, who live in Millpointe subdivision near Palmer and Newburgh, learned that TV family life, especially when wives are swapped, isn't exactly like Ward and June Cleaver from

Leave It to Beaver.

"She left my house like hers," Doreen Flummerfelt said. "When I came home, my house was so messy I started crying. My mother was waiting for me, and we spent time cleaning. That's the first thing we did as a family."

Guy Flummerfelt couldn't have been happier to have his real wife back. What was the worst part of the experience for him?

"The fact that she insulted my family," he said of LaShelle Bray's behavior. "She basically told me that my family was falling apart, that I was not a good role model for my boys, that I was not a real man, and that my sons didn't have an appreciation for their heritage. It was all bull."

Guy Flummerfelt learned a valuable lesson. "Seeing another family and how they live gives you a greater appreciation for your own."

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POLICE

FROM PAGE A1

police tape stretched across the roadway, contrasting with white snow that covered nearby fields. A Wayne County Sheriff's Department patrol officer used his marked patrol car to block westbound Ford at Beck, directing traffic away from the shooting scene.

THE PURSUIT BEGINS

The incident started at about 9:30 a.m. at the intersection of Wayne and Warren roads in Westland. There, Slay made an illegal right turn while the traffic light was red, police said.

Rather than stopping for police, he eluded them for miles, driving east on Warren, north on Farmington, east on Cowan, south on Venoy, east on Warren again, south on Merriman, west on Ford, north on Newburgh, east on Warren yet again, and north on Central City Parkway to Wayne Road, where he continued north until he left the Westland city limits at Joy Road.

His fastest speed in Westland was about 70 mph on Ford Road, police said.

Westland police put out an area broadcast describing the suspect. He was next spotted by patrol officers with the Wayne County sheriff's department and the Michigan State Police, driving west on M-14. Police continued on a chase

that reached speeds of more than 100 mph.

Love said police pursued Slay to U.S. 23 in Washtenaw County, before he changed direction and headed east along Ford Road back to Canton.

"He (Slay) sees a police car at the intersection of Ford and Beck. He turned around to come back westbound on Ford Road and drove off the roadway, across several yards on north side of the road," Love said.

Trying to elude police patrol cars, Slay backed into a blue state police car. When he tried to drive the Jeep into an officer on foot, five officers fired the shots that killed him.

"None of the shots hit any homes," Love said.

INVESTIGATIONS

Each department will conduct separate investigations of the shootings to determine if the officers followed proper policy. But both Love and Canton Director of Public Safety John Santomauro agreed the decision to shoot appeared justified.

"He was attempting to run over an officer on foot," Love said. "If that is the case, they're justified within the guidelines."

"The preliminary reports I received stated that the initial volley of rounds that were fired were the result of officers feeling their safety was in jeopardy

or threatened," Santomauro said. "The person made eye contact with police personnel and demonstrated the intent of running the officer over. That would certainly indicate the first volley of rounds that were fired were justified."

Following standard procedure after a shooting, Santomauro said the state police would investigate the actions of the Canton officers.

Also in following procedure after a shooting, both Canton officers have been placed on leave and have been given options for counseling. They can be returned to active or limited duty, pending the completion of investigations.

Santomauro said Tuesday he is aware of the notion in popular media that some suspects shot and killed by police are in effect seeking to commit "suicide by cop."

Was that the case here? "I don't really know," Santomauro said. "I do know the driver from the onset of the traffic stop was exhibiting some really bizarre behavior. Whether or not that plays into that theory, I don't know."

"He had an extensive record of auto theft, breaking and entering, fleeing police, assault, and drug charges," Love said.

Staff writer Darrell Clem contributed to this report. kbrown@oe.homecomm.net | (734) 459-2700

BARNS

FROM PAGE A1

Even those who had political differences with Barns have indicated respect for her. On Tuesday, Councilman Richard LeBlanc commended Barns for substantial donations she has made to the Westland public library and for once donating a house she owned to an organization that helps abused women.

City Clerk Eileen DeHart, who worked as Barns' legislative aide in Lansing, remembered Barns as "a boss and a friend."

DeHart read aloud the proclamation, which noted that Barns became "an influential part of this community" some

14 years before part of Nankin Township became Westland.

A staunch Democrat, Barns was a Democratic precinct delegate for several years and served on the Westland Planning Commission for five years as her political career began to flourish.

She became the only woman elected to a charter commission that helped pave the way for Westland to become a city. She was the first woman elected to the Westland City Council, and she became that body's first female president in 1976.

Barns wrote an ordinance for the Westland Commission on Aging, and she led negotiations for the donation of land used for the Westland city golf course. She was the first - and

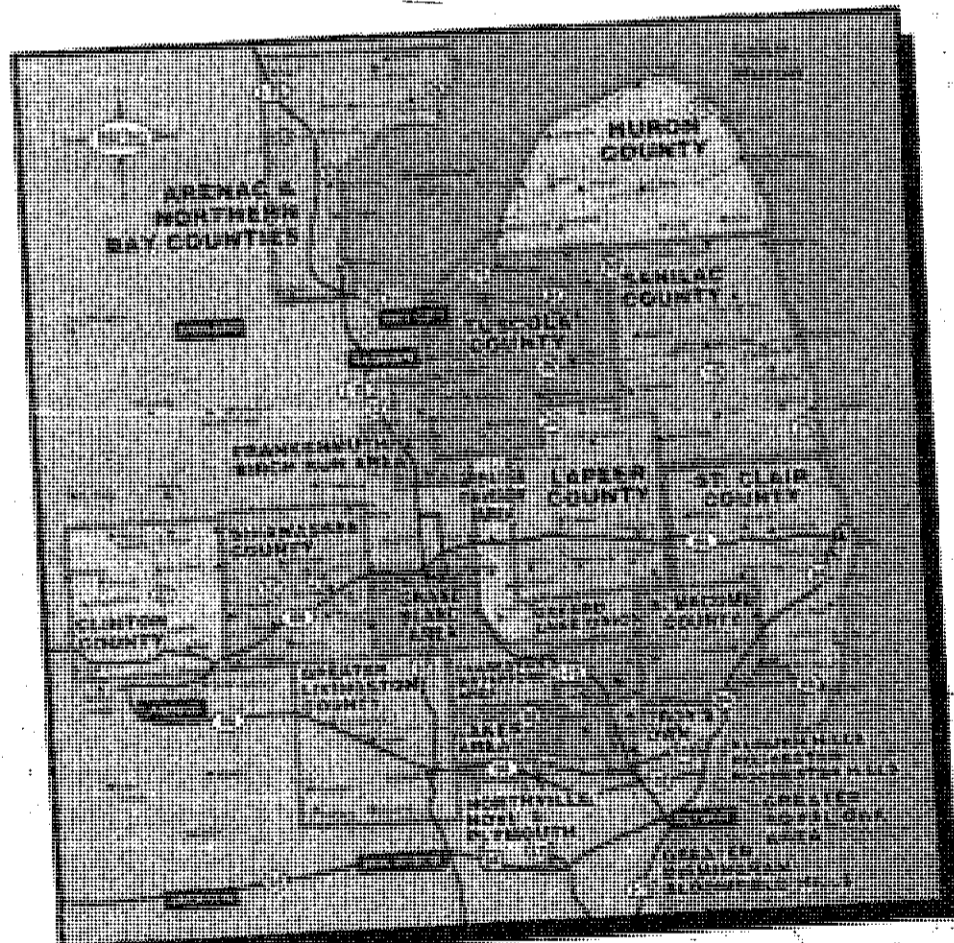
only - woman to serve as acting mayor in 1974.

Barns was named Citizen of the Year in 1967 by Ford Motor Co., and she was honored as Westland Woman of the Year in 1975 by the Westland Jaycees. She started serving on the Wayne County Charter Commission in 1981 and was the panel's first vice president.

Barns served as a state legislator for 12 years starting in 1983. She successfully fought against part of the old Eloise property in Westland being converted into a state prison in 1985.

In conclusion, the proclamation honored Barns for her years of "service, compassion and dedication to her family, friends and the entire city of Westland."

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OUR VIEWS

WYAA plan has plenty of merit

Ambitious, impressive and massive. Those are the words that come to mind in looking over the Westland Youth Athletic Association's Frontier Park Plan.

The WYAA's plan would transform the 80 acres of land west of Central City Park into a sprawling recreational complex, featuring among other things three multi-purpose turf soccer fields, two sheets of ice, an indoor pool and two additional basketball courts.

It is an ambitious proposal in terms of the scope of the project and a massive undertaking in terms of its cost — an estimated \$35 million. But the WYAA seems to have done its homework, proposing a 1-mill tax increase, sponsors for portions of the plan and the sale of land at Voss Park to help finance the project.

There is a lot to be said about the Frontier Park Plan, and most of it is good. It most definitely would greatly improve the city's recreational offerings, which pale in comparison to those available in neighboring communities like Livonia, Canton and Wayne.

The city's recreational facilities are old and in need of updating. The Bailey Center was built with federal public works money in the early '80s. Unlike its twin, the Inkster rec center, its updating has been mostly cosmetic with fresh coats of paint and new carpeting.

And the Modano Ice Arena, opened initially to offer skating in the winter months and indoor tennis during the summer, needs more than just being named after an NHL superstar.

Swimming is only available in the summer, soccer fields are scattered around the city and, other than the walking paths, the city's premier park, Central City, is deserted for six months a year. Families, school groups and the average Joe go to neighboring communities to swim; the Frontier Park Plan would keep them in Westland.

We believe city officials should give strong consideration to the WYAA proposal. The plan is well thought out and takes recreation to a whole new level in Westland in the 21st century.

It will be a massive undertaking, but we believe the end result will be well worth it. Kudos to the WYAA for coming up with the proposal. It shows the group's commitment to making Westland an even better place to live.

Sunshine laws serve public well

In the almost three decades since Michigan approved its so-called Sunshine laws — the Freedom of Information Act and the Open Meetings Act — every community certainly has faced decisions about how information is released and how decisions are made and when meetings are held.

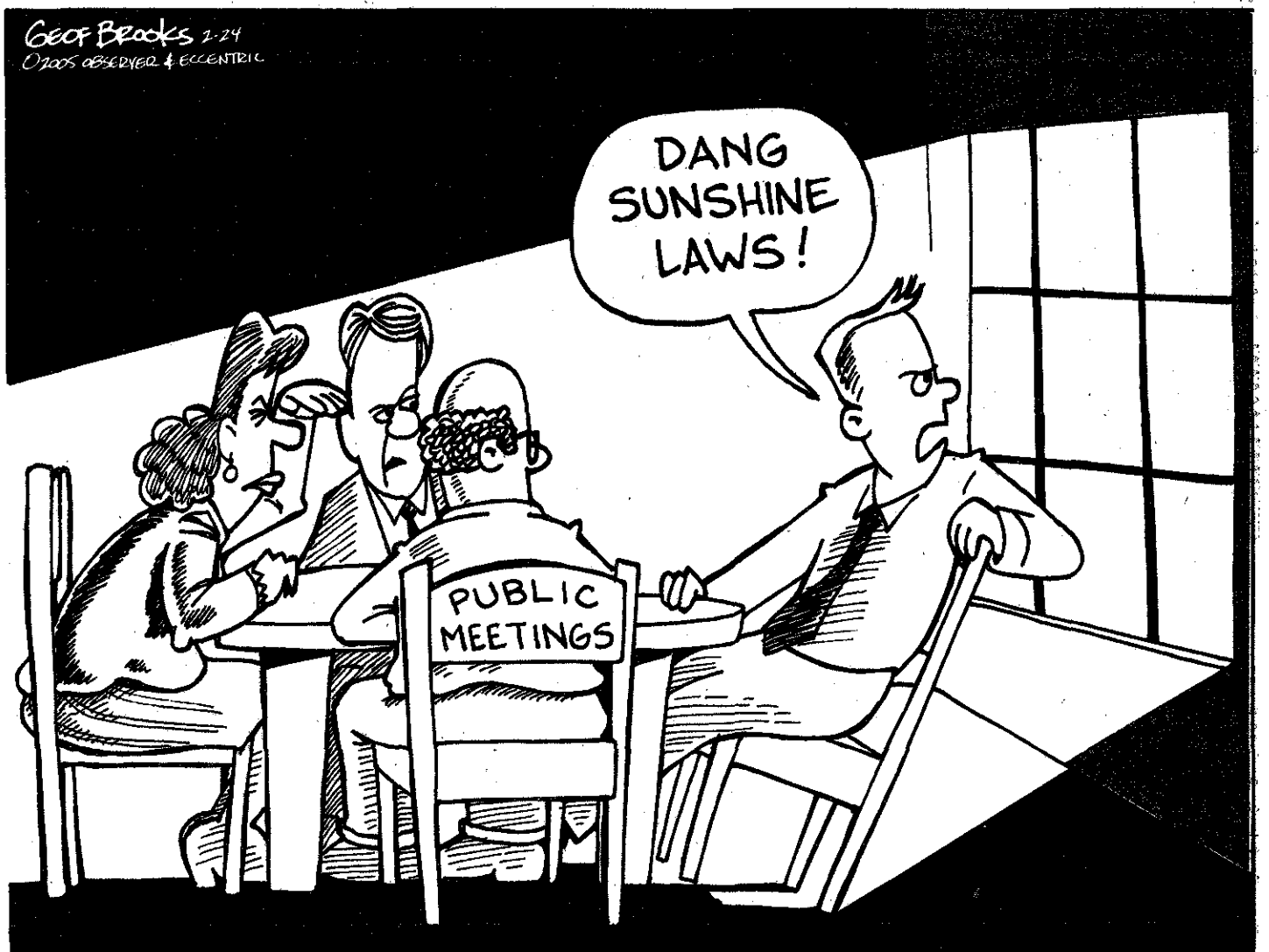
Many times our own communities have failed, knowingly or not, to uphold the intent of these laws. The intentions of the laws are clear. The FOI regulates the definition of public records by public bodies, while the OMA is to "strengthen the right of citizens to know what goes on in government by requiring public bodies to conduct nearly all business at open meetings."

During the week of March 13-19, we celebrate Sunshine Week, a reminder of just how important these laws are for the operation of our nation's particular brand of governance — for the people, by the people and of the people.

The idea for Sunshine Week comes from newspaper editors in Florida, and it's sponsored nationally by the American Society of Newspaper Editors and, in our state, by the Michigan Press Association. And, while we newspaper types may often harp about freedom of information and open meetings issues, this isn't a "press" issue — it's a citizens issue.

These laws, for instance, prescribe that meeting announcements be posted in advance, that minutes be taken and that, only in very specific and limited situations, public bodies meet behind closed doors. They allow "chance gathering" quorum meetings — but only as long as matters of public policy aren't discussed. And they limit specifically what information can be kept secret from the public.

So when councils, commissions and boards meet in hastily-called meetings, chart out plans in sub-quorum groups, use the phone or e-mails to plan out voting strategy, or find other ways to skirt these Sunshine Laws, they must be challenged. Not for the sake of the media, for the sake of the public.



LETTERS

What's really happening?

I am extremely concerned what the privatization of Social Security would do to our citizens. It sounds well and good to allow the people to invest in Wall Street, but what happens if stocks begin to fail then what are we to do?

We know what happened during the depression and the recessions in the '80 and '90s. Millions of people lost a great deal of money in the stock market, including myself. We cannot gamble on our future financial situation.

Bush, as usual, is trying to create a crisis so he can "fix" it his way, just like he is doing with education. Before you know it even education will be privatized.

We have been told by the Social Security Committee that Social Security is safe for another 37 years. I am sure there are many other options to consider to fix the problem.

Presently, Social Security tax is exempt on salaries over \$90,000. Why not raise the ceiling on this?

Why is it that the middle class always has to take the fall? Is there a secret agenda? Is the government trying to do away with the middle class?

Why is Bush pushing privatization when there are several other ways the future Social Security problem can be handled?

We need to ask ourselves "What is really happening here?" I'm afraid the answer to that is the bigger issue and it scares the hell out of me.

Janine Smith
Westland

We need road builders

I cannot understand what people are thinking when they say more gas tax will help.

Gov. John Engler said the same thing a couple of years back and we raised the tax five cents a gallon and did it help? No, the roads are worse now.

We need to have accountability from our politicians and state and county road departments. There are too many bureaucrats and money misappropriated. We are not getting our bang for the buck.

Even though I feel that will improve with our new county executive, Robert Ficano, I think a lot of the "do-nothing jobs" and very lucrative retirements are going to be a thing of the past.

Taxes are the only thing some politicians know. We need to hire road builders, not friends. It would be interesting to know how many graduated engineers work for the road commission.

I do not want to circumvent the system, but we need better roads which means better people that are more knowledgeable of the problem and more accountability from contractors. If you do the work, shouldn't a 25-year road last 25 years? And what recourse do we have, if it doesn't?

Wayne Mirth
Westland

Politics and driving habits

Survey says "Republican supporters are more aggressive, reckless, discourteous drivers than Democratic supporters."

Being in tune to the environment around us is important. We keep

informed of the direction of society by surveys and studies. Many are quite involved, require experts to create and analyze them. But often, observations by everyday people have results reflecting overall trends in society.

Of course, caution must be used to generate an accurate study, such as including enough samples in the study and understand what can skew the results.

With these thoughts in mind, a study recording political decals on cars was done with the objective of observing behaviors of driving habits of politically expressive citizens around the city of Detroit.

This survey occurred over November and December during weekday travel, observing the driving behavior of vehicles with presidential bumper stickers. This study was initiated to respond to repeated run-ins with overly aggressive dangerous drivers with one or more Bush bumper stickers.

In order to ensure fairness and objectivity in this study, qualifying characteristics were established. The first is to include all and only cars and light trucks with Kerry/Bush bumper stickers, that were moving in traffic. No other bumper stickers counted and if the vehicle was parked or was not observed moving in traffic at least one minute, then it was not included.

The second was what qualified aggressive or reckless driving. To be as objective as possible, speeding more than 20 mph over the posted limit or any driving behavior that caused other traffic to change their driving pattern. This eliminated questionable 10 mph over the speed limit and cars that may have cut someone off but did not affect traffic flow.

The total number of vehicles spotted over the length of the survey was 62 vehicles. The split for each candidate was in half — 32 for Bush and 30 for Kerry. There was only one instance of a Kerry driver committing some type of irregular behavior.

It was very surprising that nearly half of all Bush supporters demonstrated some type of aggressive, reckless, discourteous behavior. This is a troubling issue.

Of course, Republicans will denounce this survey and Democrats will applaud the results. But the results correlate with each party's foundation. Democrats are passive, prone to cooperation, respect for others and concern of fellow human beings, while Republicans call for vehement actions toward those not following their thoughts, disrespect and a lack of concern of others.

I can only speculate the increase in violence and plummeting moral values parallels the rise of the Republican Party.

Allan Biber
Westland

Fly the flag

In several states President's Day is a legal holiday celebrated on the third Monday of February. The general public is urged to fly the American flag to honor the veterans on this day.

I have lived under the leadership of 12 presidents. Men with awesome power of authority. Men who could make a nation great or men who could reduce a nation to ridicule.

During my study of the presidents and their accomplishments and famous quotes, I was moved by what President Herbert Hoover, who was president

when I was a baby, was quoted as saying: "Older men declare war ... but it is youth that must fight and die. It is youth that must inherit the tribulation, the sorrow, and the triumph that are the aftermath."

This is an excellent reason to fly the American flag as we honor the veterans on President's Day.

Jack Hoffman
Westland

America must do more

I recently became very enthused when I read that \$2 billion has been pledged to help the victims of the devastating tsunami. In the midst of so much pain and suffering, a person can only be hoping and praying for every life that was affected by this terrible tragedy.

Although in matters of life and death, monetary issues barely affect a conscious mind, it is very evident that modern societies must rely on financial courtesies to pull out of such tragedies. To me this is a tragedy in itself. Above, I used the term "financial courtesies," because of the simple reason that a great majority (not all) of the money donated is purely political.

For example, Japan has donated more money (\$500 million) than the richest country in the world (U.S. \$350 million). If we were being humane, we would do our duty to humanity and help out, over and above all other nations, because we are America.

Events like the tsunami take precedent over all economic, political or friendly ties between nations, for people who live with in these nations are not our enemies, they are simply citizens, who occasionally live under evil regimes, but they are still good humans, who simply want to live.

Therefore, it is our duty, not our privilege, our duty to make sure that the people affected by the tsunami have every chance possible to live. As an extremely patriotic American, who does not take for granted what his nation has provided for him, I believe we must step up and put all political motives behind us. For the sake of humanity, the true universal link among all peoples, America needs to take a more responsible role in this tragedy, thus illustrating the respect it has to the Asian community affected, its people, itself, and most importantly, all of humanity.

Brad L. Dzik
Farmington Hills

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QUOTABLE

"I think it's important for people to realize what homeless people go through, especially in the winter with the harsh climate. People take for granted what they have."

— Jordan Berry, who with friend Alex Shingleton is spearheading a Girl Scout project Friday night to help the homeless

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Our fundamental purposes are to enhance the lives of our readers, nurture the hometowns we serve and contribute to the business success of our customers.

Stewart has thankless task in funding state's universities

The new chairman of the higher education subcommittee of House Appropriations, one of the most powerful and consequential committees in the state Legislature, is Rep. John Stewart, R-Plymouth. He's an interesting study — part evangelist, part hopeful Boy Scout, part calculating politician.

And he's got one of the toughest jobs in the state. In case you hadn't noticed, state support for our colleges and universities — without doubt the absolute core of any plausible economic strategy for Michigan — has fallen for the past three straight years.

We now spend more to stockpile felons in the state's prisons than we do in educating our bright young people for high-paying productive jobs. And with our elected representatives united only in being — to a person — too timid to tackle our state's \$1 billion-plus chronic structural deficit, higher education appropriations — “appropriations,” to use the Lansing term — have become one of the most highly charged subjects in the Capitol.

Stewart is a real rarity these days: He's an unapologetic Republican moderate who admires former governors George Romney and Bill Milliken. (“We cannot let our party lose touch with the vast majority of solid, sensible people in the middle,” he says.) He's an unabashed defender of our colleges and universities. (“Our great universities are the jet fuel for Michigan's economic takeoff, and we simply cannot afford to let them run on empty.”)

And he believes that today's partisan poisonous atmosphere in Lansing will do nobody — least of all the citizens of Michigan — any good. (“We've got to find a way for the sensible center to work civilly together to get the public's business done.”)

Not that he's all Boy Scout and no politician. “I want to reclaim the territory of higher education for the Republican Party. It's a core part of our values,” he says. He recognizes that some day he and other Republicans will have to cut a deal with Democratic Gov. Jennifer Granholm.

But he wonders aloud about the governor's “magnificent hyperbole” in talking about how important it is to double the number of college graduates in Michigan in a decade even as she is presiding over the greatest slide in support for higher education in modern times. There are a few Democrats, frankly, who have been wondering the same thing.

Dazzlingly handsome at 55 and possessed of a fine baritone (he sings in Plymouth's First Presbyterian Church, where he's been a member for 21 years), Stewart has a bachelor's degree from Eastern Michigan University, a master's from Wayne State and a J.D. from what then was the Detroit College of Law.

He's practiced law in Plymouth for 25 years and has been an active Kiwanian. He served as a Plymouth Township trustee for four years before being elected to the legislature in 2000. His smart and capable wife, Beth, is director of the Plymouth Historical Museum.

Stewart's interest in education runs deep in his blood. Counting his mother (a Vanderveen from Holland, Mich.) and his aunts and uncles, he has seven relatives who have taught for more than 40 years in Michigan public schools. His uncles were superintendents in, respectively, South Lyon, Rochester and Mason.

All in all, he's what we used to know as a salt of the earth, Main Street Republican. Problem is Stewart's party has moved hard rightward in recent years. “Are you a tough, mean SOB enough to deal with your caucus?” I asked him. “No, but I can be hard-core. My values are unshakable,” he replied. Then, no doubt to the pleasure of the GOP House caucus, he threw down the gauntlet to Granholm: “She talks the good talk about how important our universities are to the future of the state, but where's the walk?” Next, moments later, he looks forward to a time when sensible people can reason together: “I want to know what Jennifer Granholm needs politically for her to provide an increase in funding for higher education. I think education is at the core of her values, and I want to find a way that we can work together to mesh these values to help our state.”

Stewart is nothing if not ambitious in his new committee assignment, undertaken with the explicit support of new House Speaker Craig DeRoche of Novi. As part of the appropriations process, he has scheduled a set of hearings on the role of higher education in Michigan. The star-studded lineup for March 23 alone is impressive: University of Michigan President Mary Sue Coleman, Michigan State University President Lou Anna Simon, Wayne State University President Irvin Reid and former Senate higher ed approps chairman and now Congressman Joe Schwarz. “These hearings should be a seminar for my colleagues about how vital our great universities are to the future of the state,” he enthuses.

Interestingly, Stewart says he gets his complex personality from his religious persuasions. He started out as a Methodist, which he thinks gave him his social conscience and his evangelistic tendencies. But when he married Beth, he became a Presbyterian and took on the church's orientation toward flinty intellectual honesty.

Personally, I think he'll also need the grit and deviousness of a Jesuit and the patience of a Buddhist in order to survive the ghastly super-charged atmosphere of Lansing during appropriations time. But I sure admire his instincts, and wish him well in his task. As should we all.

Phil Power is the chairman of the board of the company that owns this newspaper. He would be pleased to get your reactions to this column either at (734) 953-2047 or at ppower@homecomm.net.

We need to hear the stories of the 'greatest generation'

Maybe I was oblivious, but I don't remember the ceremonies coming every 10 years for momentous events related to World War II. Don't get me wrong. In no way, shape or form do I think they're frivolous. I just don't recall.

But my head snapped to attention Saturday when I realized that it was that day in 1945 that the Marines stormed the beaches of Iwo Jima. Sixty years ago, they piled off landing craft with one order: you must take the beach. The battle was the bloodiest of the war in the Pacific. One of every three Marines was killed or wounded in the battle that raged for 36 days.

On Saturday, there was one man missing, Walter Page. He died Feb. 1. I knew this dashing young man by another name, Uncle Walt, my mom's only brother. He is the second of my greatest generation to pass in this new millennium.

The first to pass was my dad in 2000. Although he did not see combat, he served his country with distinction. Dad had tried to enlist, but was sent home because of his poor eyesight. According to mom, the recruiting officer had told him they didn't need someone who had to feel their way across a battlefield.

His contribution to the war was to work with the team in Los Angeles, Calif., that helped develop the self-sealing gas tank for the long-range bombers. Many air crews would live to fly another day because of their work.

My folks were living in Pasadena during the war; Uncle Walt was at Camp Pendleton. My dad, having some connection or another, knew he was about to ship out, so they took a road trip to see him. My brother, age six months, was their ticket in.

Uncle Walt had never seen his godson, so they told the guards who gave them a half hour to visit. Luckily, the guards didn't check the baby blanket. Mom and dad hadn't come without gifts. Hidden in the blanket was a bottle of whiskey and mom's homemade cookies.

They also gave Uncle Walt a photograph of my brother. He would carry it with him into battle and when the 50th anniversary rolled around, when his godson took him to dinner, he pulled it out of his wallet. He told my brother that it was that photo that helped get him through it.

Uncle Walt liked his shots and beers and when he was feeling no pain, he would talk about the war. He'd talk about the enemy and being wounded by a sniper on Iwo Jima.

With me, the conversation would turn to talk of his work with his buddy, Al Josephy. Al was a military war correspondent. Uncle Walt was a Marine first and a photographer second. He would go out with Josephy to cover the battle.

Josephy liked to get up close and personal and more than once the dynamic duo got caught behind enemy lines. In his memoirs, Al said he wouldn't be alive today if not for Walter Page.

I've seen some of Uncle Walt's photos, both civilian and military. As a child, I loved looking into a box in a closet. Underneath some handmade models of World War II fighters were some of Uncle Walt's war photographs. Some were graphic — dead Japanese soldiers, some charred beyond recognition — and there was one of a soldier using a flame-thrower. In the white border at the bottom were typed remarks about the images.

How we got them, I don't know, nor can I recall when they were taken or in what battle. And I'm clueless as to what happened to the box after we moved from Michigan to Pennsylvania in 1963. That was about the last time I recall seeing them.

And forget that aforementioned one-in-three statistic, Uncle Walt, I discovered, was one of five members of his company of 240 Marines to survive the battle for Iwo Jima.

And his buddy Al ... I really should have paid very close attention. If you're into native American history or the tribes of the West, the name may ring a bell. Al is Alvin Josephy Jr. He dabbled in journalism, screenwriting and short fiction, even interviewed Leon Trotsky as a *Chicago Herald Tribune* correspondent in Mexico. After the war, he was an associate editor of *Time* and eventually became vice president and editor-in-chief of *American Heritage* magazine before authoring numerous books on native American history and tribes.

He was a networking opportunity I missed.

Uncle Walt would talk some about his time in the service, but I unfortunately never took the time to hear the whole story. I now realize it is my loss. As the journalist, I should have taken on the task of recording his memories of that war. We are left with bits and pieces and no way to complete the picture.

Each day, more and more of the greatest generation are passing. They all have a story to tell, and it behooves us all to listen. We need to make what they did a part of our own personal history. We need to remember their sacrifices and honor their commitment to this country.

Sue Mason is the editor of the Westland and Garden City editions of the *Observer Newspapers*. She can be reached by e-mail at smason@oe.homecomm.net.



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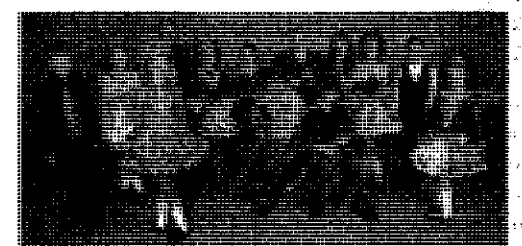
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