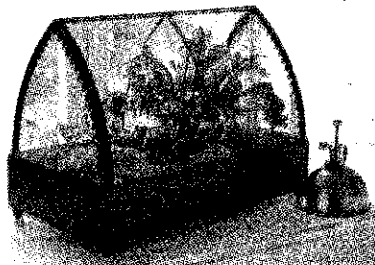


### District basketball tourney action begins on area hardcourts

SPORTS, SECTION C

### Small world Terrariums put you up close to nature

AT HOME, SECTION B



### A fairy tale story of transformation

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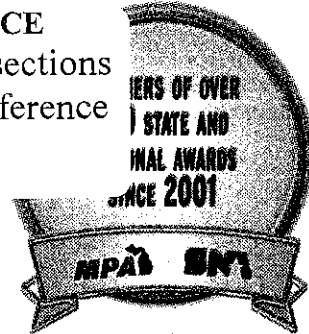
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## Pickering voices reservations about park plan

BY DARRELL CLEM  
STAFF WRITER

A Westland youth athletic group, lobbying for support of a mammoth sports complex near Central City Park, will promote its multimillion-dollar plan next week during a public forum at John Glenn High School.

Westland Youth Athletic Association leaders envision a sprawling Frontier Park with such amenities as several baseball/softball fields, soccer fields, an ice-hockey and figure-skating facility, an indoor pool and walking trails.

"I don't know of anything near here that's like what we're going to have," WYAA past President Mark Rodriguez said. The still-evolving plan will come with a huge price tag, estimated at \$35 million. It will

likely hinge on whether Westland voters will approve a tax increase.

WYAA officials will continue their push for public support during a forum scheduled for 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 9, inside Glenn's auditorium.

"The public will have an opportunity to hear firsthand all the different phases of the project," Rodriguez said.

WYAA leaders will explain the Frontier Park plan and field any questions that observers might have about the ambitious project.

#### FORUM WITH LEADERS

The forum will come just five days before WYAA officials will engage in project talks with elected leaders, during a public

PLEASE SEE **PARK, A5**



PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Larry Carey and his son Mark, both of Westland, worked together on the 1962 Chevrolet Bel Air that Mark will be showing at this weekend's 53rd annual Murray's Detroit Autorama.

## Callanan Jr. pleads guilty to drug charge

BY DARRELL CLEM  
STAFF WRITER

Westland attorney Evan Callanan Jr., formerly imprisoned for a case-fixing scandal involving his district judge father, has pleaded guilty to having crack cocaine when city police officers stopped his car.

Callanan Jr., 52, faces sentencing March 18 after pleading guilty last week in front of Wayne County Circuit Judge Vera Massey Jones.

Callanan Jr. pleaded guilty to one count in return for another cocaine charge being dropped. He also has been cleared of contributing to his 13-year-old daughter's delinquency by leaving pornographic materials where she could see them. Callanan Jr. was twice

stopped by Westland police last summer after an informant told authorities that he was having crack cocaine parties at his house on Arrowhead, near Wayne and Warhead.

The disclosure prompted police to place Callanan Jr. under surveillance, but defense attorney James O'Connell argued during a court hearing last August that authorities had no legal basis to stop the younger Callanan.

Callanan Jr.'s decision to plead guilty to a charge of having less than 25 grams of cocaine averted a trial. The charge carries penalties ranging up to four years in prison, although he also could be placed on probation.

PLEASE SEE **GUILTY, A5**

## Muscle power

### Car enthusiasts go for honors

BY SUE MASON  
STAFF WRITER

Joe Rozanski and Mark Carey have a few things in common. They both live in Westland and are into custom cars. And as members of the Motor City Muscle Car Club, they'll both be at the 53rd annual Murray's Detroit Autorama this weekend.

But there are a few differences. Rozanski has attended Autorama every year since he was 14, but this will be the first time he will show a car at what he calls the "granddaddy" of custom car shows.

"I've always wanted to do it," said Rozanski who will be showing his 1969 Chevrolet Chevelle SS at

PLEASE SEE **AUTORAMA, A2**



Under the hood of Joe Rozanski's 1969 Chevelle SS is a 540 cubic-inch Merlin block engine, Dart aluminum headers, .726 roller cams and a bit of art - a mural of a rat choking a cobra.

#### AT THE AUTORAMA

If you go to this weekend's Murray's Detroit Autorama, here's a few Westland customizing enthusiasts and the vehicles they'll have on display:

- John Blacklock - 1964 Chevy.
- Dave Cordova - 1967 Dodge.
- Steve Day - 1968 Chevy Camaro.
- Jerry Erickson - 1937 Ford three window.
- Ron Miller - 1971 Olds 442.
- Ronald Staples - Chevy Malibu.
- Derrick Wade - 1997 Suzuki BSX - R1100, 1995 Suzuki ASX - RR1100 and Suzuki Hayabusa.

## Gear shift, elevator: Black inventions put modern in modern day

BY DARRELL CLEM  
STAFF WRITER

To truly learn black history, young people should be taught more than the horrors of slavery and the contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a Westland minister said Sunday.

Not to minimize those topics, but the Rev. Terrance McClain, speaking during a Black History Month program at the Westland library, implored the crowd to imagine an America without the contributions of African-Americans.

McClain, minister of Annapolis Park Church of Christ, urged the crowd to imagine being transported back in time to "a twilight zone where there is an America without black people."

What would they find?  
"There are very few crops that have flourished because the nation was built on a slave-supported system," McClain said. "There are no cities with tall skyscrapers because Alexander Mills, a black man, invented the elevator, and without it one finds great difficulty reaching high floors."

Few, if any, cars would be found because Richard Spikes, a black man, invented the automatic gear shift, McClain said. Moreover, Garrett S. Morgan invented traffic signals, and Elbert Robinson the electric trolley.

Visitors to this different America would find few, if any, newspapers, magazines and books, McClain said. That's because John Love invented the pencil sharpener, William Purvis the fountain pen, Lee Burridge the typewriting

machine and W.A. Lovette the advanced printing press.

Homes wouldn't be as comfortable, McClain said, because Frederick Jones invented the air conditioner, Alice Parker the heating furnace, Lewis Latimer the electric lamp, Thomas Steward the mop, Lloyd Ray the dust pan, Sarah Boone the ironing board and George Samon the clothes dryer.

Even enjoying a dinner amid all the turmoil would be difficult, McClain said. "The food had spoiled because another black man, John Standard, invented the refrigerator."

Those are but a few of the contributions by African-Americans that McClain mentioned as keynote speaker of the second-annual Black History Month program, sponsored by the

Southeast Westland Homeowners Association and the NAACP western Wayne County branch.

"Our young people must be taught our rich history, our great heroes - and they must be taught that there is greatness in all of them despite the odds stacked against them," McClain said.

He framed much of his speech around a line from *Antwone Fisher*, the movie that marked actor Denzel Washington's directorial debut. As a people, African-Americans, he said, can proudly proclaim, "I'm still standing. I'm still strong. And I always will be."

McClain and others commended longtime Westland resident Nellie Williams for organiz-

PLEASE SEE **INVENTIONS, A3**

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#### INDEX

Apartments	F9
At Home	B1
Automotive	G3
Classified Index	E1
Crossword Puzzle	F6
For The Record	A5
Jobs	F10
Movie Guide	D6
Obituaries	C7
Real Estate	F1
Sports	C1
Taste	B7

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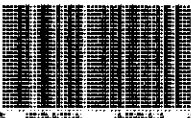
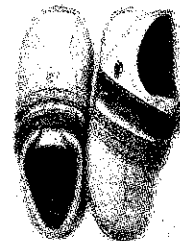
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### Coming Sunday on the PINK page

Step into Spring in PINK Picks!





## PLACES AND FACES

## Youth help

Westland Youth Assistance is inviting its supporters to attend a fund-raiser 4-9 p.m. Wednesday, March 16, at Johnny Carino's Italian restaurant on Warren Road, between Wayne and Newburgh.

Food servers will donate their tips to the program, and donations will be accepted from diners. Director Ronaele Bowman said.

The program provides mentors and a variety of services to youngsters who are improving their lives after getting into trouble.

For more information, call (734) 467-7904.

## 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. Cost to have a table is \$25. For more information, call (734) 812-7978.

## 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 called the library at (734) 326-6123 or by e-mail at nankinhistoria@comcast.net.

## Free seminar

William Gramzow, an advanced planning counselor and funeral director with R.G. & G.R. Harris Funeral Home, will conduct a funeral planning seminar at Westland Convalescent Center on Thursday, March 10.

The seminar will be 2:30-4:30 p.m. at the convalescent center 36137 W. Warren, between Wayne Road and Central City Parkway in Westland.

Gramzow will cover such funeral planning topics as funeral prearrangement planning, how to select a funeral home and understanding Medicaid and SSI as it relates to funeral planning.

The public is invited to attend the free seminar. Call Judy Bianchi at (734) 728-6100 to sign up for the special event.

## 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 candles along with a few cash-and-carry vendors selling jewelry, denim purses, stamped greeting cards and other fun items. There will also be a bake sale held in conjunction with the bazaar, which will be held in the gym.

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

## 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, chil-

dren 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.

## Toy show

The Westland Rotary Club will host a toy show 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, March 6, at Joy Manor, 28999 Joy, east of Middlebelt.

The show will feature new and antique toys, collectibles, Beanie Babies, action figures, die cast toys, slot and model cars, Matchbox, Hot Wheels and more. There also will be 50/50 raffles and drawings for door prizes.

Show admission is \$3 for adults with children under age 12 free. Proceeds will support Rotary charities.

Table space is available at \$30 per table and is available by writing to Westland Rotary Toy Show, 6600 Burnly, Garden City, MI 48135. For more information, call Mary McGaw at (734) 748-8515.

## Art Auction

The Wayne Rotary Club and the Wayne Parks and Recreation Department are sponsoring an art auction and silent auction at 6:30 p.m. Friday, March 18, at the Wayne Community Center, 4635 Howe Road, Wayne.

The art auction will feature a wide variety of artistic styles. The silent auction will include such items as ice cream cakes, beer memorabilia, gift baskets and Detroit Piston tickets. The benefit will raise money for a playscape at Rotary Park No. 1. Tickets cost \$10 per person and include wine, cheese, hors d'oeuvres, dessert and coffee. A cash bar will be available. For more information call (734) 721-1185.

## Friends sell T-shirts to help family of deputy killed in crash

His friends at the Wayne County Airport Police called him Scrapy, so when they were looking for way to honor Sgt. Michael Scarbrough they created a T-shirt with the popular Hanna Barbera dog with attitude and fists at the ready.

He is dressed, appropriately, as a police sergeant. Scarbrough, 42, of Southgate was killed Feb. 9 in an automobile accident, when the patrol car in which he was a passenger hit a patch of ice and slammed into a pole. Sgt. Mark Bonza, who was driving, was seriously injured and hospitalized.

The T-shirt is being used to raise funds for Scarbrough's widow, Denise, and his three children, daughter Kelsey, 13, and twin sons, Josh and Mark, 10.

"He was such a scrapper," said Officer John Chamie. "He was five, nine but stocky. That's where the name came from. But the Marines started it before us and they had a little different origin to it, but that's what it was to us."

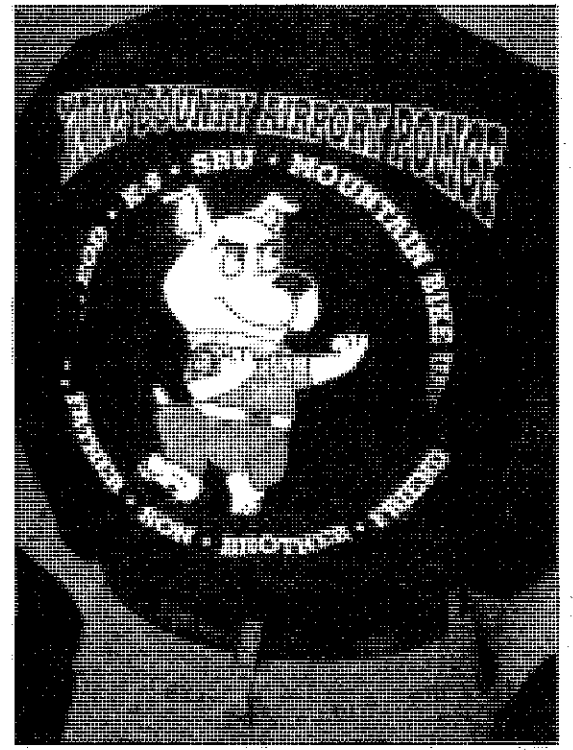
Officer Clay Monte said the officer's nickname suggested the design for the T-Shirt. The shirt was prepared by Advertising Accents in Redford.

"Mike was an excellent officer, an excellent field training officer. You could go to him and ask a question and he wouldn't make you look stupid," Monte said. "He was fair, equal, educating, a perfect sergeant."

Chamie said when he first saw the T-shirt he started tearing up from memories of the officer. "As an officer and a sergeant he was totally dedicated to the department," Chamie said.

Scarbrough was a 17-year veteran with the Wayne County Airport Authority Police who had worked as the head of the K-9 division, SWAT, the bicycle unit and bomb squad. He was also a trainer of other officers.

The T-shirts cost \$20 and are available at Advertising Accents, 25917 Plymouth Road, Redford; Little John's Trophies, 25886 W. Six Mile, Redford; Metropolitan Uniform, 1900 N.



The pugnacious Scrapy Doo honors Wayne County Airport Police Sgt. Michael Scarbrough.

Wayne, Westland; and the Wayne County Sheriff and Airport Police Local 502 Union Hall, 34900 Plymouth Road, Livonia.

In addition to the T-Shirt, friends are also sponsoring a fund-raising hockey game between the Southgate Police and Taylor Police 7 p.m. Saturday, March 5, at the Southgate Ice Arena, 14700 Reaume Parkway, Southgate. Tickets are \$2. For information, call (734) 258-3035.

Contributions may also be made to the Michael Scarbrough Family Trust Fund, Wyandotte Federal Credit Union, 4500 Biddle Street, Wyandotte, MI 48192.

## INVENTIONS

FROM PAGE A1

ing the Black History Month program - deemed a success by those who attended.

The room was decorated with photographs, historical documents, a plaque of boxer Joe Louis and gold records made by Motown's own The Marvelettes. An array of speakers made such contributions as African prayers and an Africa slide show, and lifetime NAACP member Vivian

Holifield led the crowd in singing the black national anthem, *Lift Every Voice and Sing*.

Frederick Thomas and Tené Dismuke, employees from the Charles Wright Museum of African-American History in Detroit, lightened up the event with a trivia game, "Get Your Black Facts On."

Ken Reeves, president of the Southeast Homeowners Association, mentioned ongoing efforts to get historic markers for Westland's Annapolis Park neighborhood - one of the first U.S. suburban com-

munities where developers made a direct appeal for African-Americans to buy homes.

"We would like to see it recognized as such," Reeves said.

Williams said she was pleased by the response to the program.

"It went very well," she said. "People have been calling and saying it was a wonderful program. I can't take all the credit, because I had help. But I'd have to say it went even better than I thought it would."

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## Audio book narrator shares story with fans

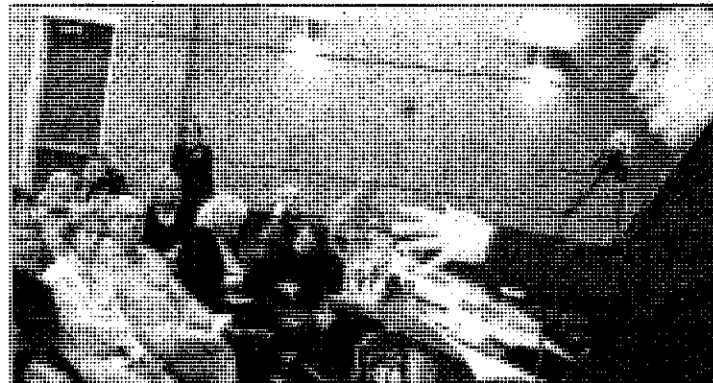


PHOTO BY HEATHER ROUSSEAU

Audio book narrator George Guidall takes time to answer some questions from listeners.

Fans of George Guidall were able to match a face with an oh-so-familiar voice at the Farmington Community Library this week.

The renowned audiobook narrator, who has entranced thousands of listeners through his acclaimed 20-year career, visited Farmington Hills Tuesday as part of the 4th annual Everyone's Reading program.

Guidall narrated one of the program's three featured books by Elizabeth McCracken, *Niagara Falls All Over Again*. He shared secrets and experiences in his audiobook career with the audience.

Widely noted as the world's most prolific narrator of audiobooks, Guidall has recorded nearly 650 unabridged novels, bringing a consistent artistry to his reading that has delighted listeners for more than two decades.

His narrations of everything from classics like, *Crime and Punishment* and *The Iliad*, to

best sellers like *Snow Falling on Cedars* and Lillian Jackson Braun's *Cat Who...* series have set a standard for excellence that is recognized throughout the audiobook industry.

Guidall received Audi Awards — the industry's equivalent of an Oscar — in 1999 for his recording of John Irving's *A Widow of One Year* and again in 2000 for his rendition of Wally Lamb's *I Know This Much is True*.

The visit was a highlight to promote the Everyone's Reading program in metro Detroit.

Other special events are happening at the public libraries in Birmingham, Bloomfield Township, Canton, Independence Township, Rochester Hills and West Bloomfield Township.

The program encourages everyone to read the same book — or three books in this year's program — between Feb. 1 and

April 16. The three books, all by Elizabeth McCracken, are:

■ *Here's Your Hat What's Your Hurry*, a collection of stories showcasing the author's sense of humor and talent for creating unforgettable characters.

■ *The Giant's House; A Romance*, a tender and quirky novel about a lonely librarian's love for the world's tallest boy.

■ *Niagara Falls All Over Again* chronicles two men and their flawed, passionate friendship over 30 years, weaving a powerful story of family, love, grief and loss.

"We hope that in offering a choice of books, we will encourage even more people to participate in the program," said Jean Tabor, director of the Canton Public Library.

For a schedule of Everyone's Reading activities, visit [www.everyonesreading.info](http://www.everyonesreading.info).

## Airport concessions receive high marks

Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport's (DTW's) concessions program at the McNamara Terminal is still impressing industry experts. The airport and its concession operators recently received high marks across several categories in Airport Revenue News' 2005 Best Concessions Poll.

Topping out the list of awards for DTW and its concessionaires, was that for the airport's Motown Music Review Store, operated by CA One Services, which was voted Best New Specialty Retail Concept.

Here's what some of the judges had to say about Metro's Motown Music Review Store: "Motown is the perfect local concept for Detroit and CA One Services has done a great job in execution."

"Motown fits the theme of the airport and the music history of Detroit."

"Music is a good airport concept and Motown is clearly Detroit. The concept defines a sense of place and is exactly what you would expect."

Detroit Metro Airport also

placed second among large airports in the category, Airport with the Most Unique Services.

In addition, DTW's concessions operators also received the following awards:

■ Second Place, Best New Food & Beverage Concept.

Mediterranean Grill, a Middle Eastern restaurant at the McNamara Terminal

■ Tied for Second Place, Retailer with the Highest Regard for Customer Service

Pangborn Design Collection, a specialty retail store featuring unique housewears items and gifts by local designer, Dominic Pangborn, and

Erwin Pearl, a women's fashion jewelry store

"We are very proud of our concessions program and the industry recognition we have received," said Myrna Mendez Director of Concessions at DTW. "With new and improved concessions still coming, we hope our program will continue to grow and to be rated among the best, by both travelers and industry groups alike."

In a report last year, the

Physician's Committee for Responsible Medicine commended DTW's HeartSmart program, which gives customers over 50 heart-healthy meal options through-out the terminal. The program was the brainchild of Wayne County Airport Authority CEO Lester Robinson.

This year's ARN Best Concessions Poll marks the 10-year anniversary of this important industry event. Airports and concessionaires alike, were nominated for a variety of awards in sixteen categories, and were rated by a panel of industry experts. Airports were rated based upon size and separated into four categories which included: large airports (serving more than 10 million enplaned passengers annually), medium airports (serving 4-10 million enplaned passengers annually), small airports (serving less than 4 million enplaned passengers annually) and single terminal.

For additional information about ARN's Best Concessions poll, please contact ARN's Pauline Armbrust at (561) 355-8488, ext. 101.

## Women of Color Task Force holds annual career conference at U-M

The University of Michigan Women of Color Task Force will hold its 23rd annual career conference 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Friday, March 23, at the Michigan League.

The theme for this year's event is "Inclusion and Opportunity: Recognizing Everyone's Contribution." Toni Hoover, vice president and development site head of Pfizer Global Research and Development - Michigan Laboratories, will be delivering the keynote speech during the opening session.

The conference will be at the Concourse Level of the Michigan League, 911 North University St. on the Central Campus of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

The conference, which is

open to the public, offers professional, financial and personal development workshops, a networking luncheon and an exhibit area featuring the following vendors: TIAA-CREF, Borders Express, Del Gallery, Out of Africa Clothing and Warm Spirit.

New this year is a strategic leadership seminar conducted by U-M Associate Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer Laurita Thomas; a workshop by UHS on how to have a productive doctor's visit; and two panel presentations.

The cost for current U-M staff, faculty and students is \$55 for the conference and \$75 to attend both the conference and luncheon. The cost for non-U-M employees is \$75

(conference only) and \$95 conference with the luncheon. You may still register for the conference via fax or in person; however, registration for the luncheon is closed. Workshop information and the conference registration forms are available online at <http://www.cew.umich.edu>

Also, conference attendees will be able to receive free massages from students studying at the Ann Arbor Institute of Massage Therapy, and University Health Services will provide free health screenings and have a clinician onsite for further consultation.

The conference is sponsored by Women of Color Task Force (WCTF) Center for the Education of Women, University of Michigan.

## Lawmakers seek to curb imported trash

BY PAUL R. PACE  
STAFF WRITER

Riding on the wave of last year's push to control the trash flow into Michigan landfills, Democrats in the House announced bills that would significantly boost the dumping fees.

The cheap cost of dumping in Michigan landfills — at 21 cents a ton — is appealing to out-of-state and Canadian trash companies looking to get rid of their garbage.

That appeal will hopefully end, say Democrats, if they manage to pass a bill that would charge waste haulers \$7.50 per ton.

Democrats said Michigan ranks third in the nation for the importation of trash.

"We don't want to be known as the Great Waste State," said State Rep. Aldo Vagnozzi, D-Farmington Hills, at a press conference this week in Farmington.

"This invasion is threatening our air, land and water," he said.

Vagnozzi was joined by state Reps. Paul Condino, D-Southfield, and Marie Donigan, D-Royal Oak.

"The garbage industry is getting a free ride and it must end and end now," said Donigan.

She pointed out that Pennsylvania slashed its out-of-state trash by 14 percent in the second year after lawmakers

there started to charge companies \$7.25 a ton.

Other bills the Democrats are introducing involve harsher penalties to municipalities that violate the rules.

Municipalities that send banned items such as car batteries and motor oil to a Michigan landfill three times in a year will have their certification revoked.

Those caught sending dangerous items such as radioactive, medical waste and blood just one time will be banned for a year from dumping in Michigan.

Democrats are also pushing a ban on landfill expansion. The current ban ends Jan. 1, 2006, but the Democratic plan will extend it to 2010.

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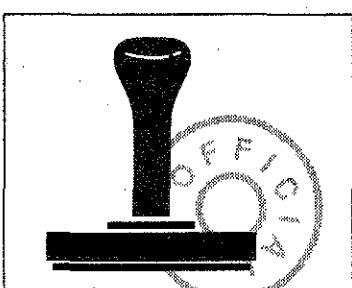
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FOR THE RECORD

DEATHS

- A**  
Oliver Aytes, of Livonia, died Feb. 27.
- B**  
Mark L. Brundage, 37, of Rochester Hills, died Feb. 21.
- D**  
Pauline J. Davis, 83, died Feb. 25.  
Lucille Caiani Dobbs, 82, of Garden City, died Feb. 28.  
William H. Douglas, 97, of Rochester Hills, died Feb. 16.
- F**  
Stella Margaret Fishel, of Plymouth, died Feb. 25.  
Errol E. Foster, 64, of Romeo, died Feb. 27.
- G**  
Ruah G. Graves, 99, of Livonia, died Feb. 28.
- H**  
Barbara L. High, 57, of Rochester Hills, died Feb. 14.  
Ruth J. Hoppe, 87, of Rochester Hills, died Feb. 24.  
Mary L. Huisman, 77, of Pontiac, died Feb. 14.
- K**  
Frederick Reid Keydel, 76, of St. Louis, died Feb. 26.  
John D. Knapp, 86, of Rochester, died Feb. 18.  
Mary Lou Kotlarz, of Livonia, died Feb. 28.
- L**  
Irma V. LeLacheur, 88, of Troy, died Feb. 11.  
Douglas W. Lintz, 67, of Rochester Hills, died Feb. 12.
- M**  
Regina Marie McVey, 61, of Roscommon, died Feb. 23.  
Marion Genevieve Discovich Murphy, 91, formerly of Bloomfield Hills, died Feb. 27.
- P**  
Ethel Parent, 96, of Lake Orion, died Feb. 19.  
Bobbie D. Pierce, 75, of Rochester Hills, died Feb. 24.
- R**  
William K. Rankin, 82, of Rochester, died Feb. 25.  
Louise Cecilia Roberts, of Waterford, died Feb. 27.  
Morley L. Russell, 86, of Utica, died Feb. 10.
- S**  
Barbara E. Schultz, 86, of Rochester, died Feb. 23.  
Delphine Marie Stachowiak, 76, of Rochester Hills, died Feb. 26.
- T**  
Joyce A. Taylor, 79, of Lake Orion, died Feb. 28.  
Joseph A. Terzo, 58, of Davisburg, formerly of Waterford, died Feb. 19.
- V**  
Peter A. Ventura, 95, of Livonia, died Feb. 26.
- W**  
Harry P. Westra, 84, of Rochester Hills, died Feb. 11.  
Beryl Whitman, 85, of Addison Twp., died Jan. 25.
- Z**  
Ralph E. Zimmermann Jr., of Bloomfield Hills, died Feb. 25.



For the Record appears in every edition of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. Complete paid obituaries can be found inside today's Sports in Passages on page C7.

INFORMATION CENTRAL

It is often said, "history is written by the victors." It is also worth noting that those victors are frequently male. This can make doing research in women's history difficult, yet very satisfying.

As Vicki Leon notes in her book, *Outrageous Women of Ancient Times*, "There are pieces missing from our women's lives. Sometimes the gaps are small. Other times, they're huge. But we can still enjoy and learn from what is left. After all, we don't put down the sublime art of the Venus di Milo because she is shy a few parts."

Here at the library, we have information on women from the earliest Roman empresses and lady pharaohs to our current legislators and astronauts. We have videos dramatizing Cleopatra's exciting, if ultimately fatal, relationships.

We have sound recordings of speeches by famous suffragettes, such as Sojourner Truth and E.C. Stanton. We have biographies and autobiographies of First Ladies, such as Barbara Bush and Abigail Adams.

The history of the women's movement is covered extensively in the 305s, with books such as *What Every American Should Know About Women's History and That Takes Ovaries! Bold Females and Their Brazen Acts*.

In fact, you'll probably find women in every Dewey section of the library - lady inventors and scientists in the 600s, female explorers in the 900s, comedienne in the 700s and 800s, philosophers in the 100s.

Unlike history, our books are sorted by what a person accomplished, not by what gender he or she was. Celebrate Women's History Month by sharing this new concept - look at the wonders women have wrought, not just in bearing and raising children and keeping the home fires burning, but in every aspect of life: love and discovery.

Please contact Lisa, Bridget, Susan, Rori, Cathy, Janet, Jane or Joshua (see, we really don't judge by gender) at the Reference Desk for more information.

The William P. Faust Public Library is at 6123 Central City Parkway, Westland. For More information, call (734) 326-6123.

Spring treats, more fitness options come to Wayne County

Not a dime

The groundhog may have predicated six more weeks of winter, but in Garden City, spring is set to arrive Saturday, March 5. That's when King Kone opens its doors.

The ice cream destination kicks off a sunnier season with tradition - Nickel Day. It will be open 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. March 5. Ice cream cones sell for a nickel, though sprinkles cost extra.

King Kone has been opening business with Nickel Day since 1992.

The business is at 31051 Ford Road, east of Merriman, in Garden City. Call (734) 522-5663.

In the zone

Women seeking a new choice in exercise won't have to wait much longer. Fit Zone for



Women is set to open its doors March 7 in Livonia. The women-only fitness center was created by CEO Gretchen Shannon.

Shannon opened her first Fit Zone in Kalamazoo and the company has since spread throughout Michigan.

Fit Zone features a variety of options. Nautilus for Women is a 30-minute circuit training program that includes both resistance and cardiovascular challenges from hydraulic, physical therapy equipment, all in a quick workout. Instead of increasing resistance by 10-pound increments, the equipment can be

altered in 1-pound increments.

"We are a full facility," said Bob Smilanich on behalf of Fit Zone. He added that they have the only antibacterial aerobic floor. Fit Zone offers everything from Pilates and Yoga, to Ball Blast, Step Aerobics, or Body Sculpting, all free with membership.

"This is a club designed by a woman and run by women," he said.

Personal trainers also come with each membership. And cardiovascular equipment - treadmills, bicycles and elliptical machines - is all part of the package. Each of the machines comes with a personal 17-inch television monitor.

Fit Zone also provides a level one weight loss program, for which all fees are tax deductible. Smilanich said the program is individualized, scientific, and

based on what each person actually likes to eat. It's not a diet, he said, and he can attest that it does work.

Memberships are based on one or two-year plans and will be limited to 700 patrons. Smilanich said it will never be "too crowded" and members will receive individualized attention. Grand opening specials for 1/2 off of enrollment fees are available now.

Fit Zone for Women is located at 16112 Middlebelt in Livonia. Call (734) 525-4636 or check the Web at [www.fitzoneforwomen.com](http://www.fitzoneforwomen.com).

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.homecomm.net](mailto:scasola@oe.homecomm.net) or call (734) 953-2054.

PARK

FROM PAGE A1

session slated for 6 p.m. Monday, March 14, at Westland City Hall.

Some city leaders already have reservations about the proposal.

"I certainly don't fault the group for making an effort to make something like this happen," Westland City Council President Charles Pickering said.

Still, he questioned why WYAA leaders made their proposal public - and why they are having a forum next Wednesday - before meeting with the council.

"I'm not happy about that," Pickering said.

Moreover, he indicated that a 1-mill tax increase - as mentioned by WYAA officials - wouldn't be enough to build

Frontier Park, much less pay to keep it running.

"I would be concerned about the cost of the operation and whether it would even break even," Pickering said.

City officials had discussed a possible recreation center several years ago, when former Mayor Robert Thomas was in office, but the proposal fell through partly amid concerns about whether the facility would bring in enough revenue to pay for itself.

Pickering also indicated that talks of possibly asking voters to approve a tax increase are premature without knowing whether county-owned land, west of Central City Park, can even be obtained for the project.

Finally, Pickering said that "strong consideration" should be given to involving private enterprise in such a plan as Frontier Park.

TOO EARLY?

Rodriguez conceded that it's too early to know whether the council would agree to place a tax proposal on the ballot to let voters decide. Another option, he said, would be for Frontier Park proponents to circulate petitions and collect the thousands of signatures they would need to force the issue onto a ballot.

"We're confident that it's going to pass," Rodriguez said.

Pickering indicated that a petition drive might be the best avenue for seeking a tax increase, although he said other issues should come first, such as seeking assurances that the land can be obtained.

Meanwhile, Rodriguez issued some new statements about the Frontier Park plan:

■ Voss Park would not be proposed for sale to developers,

as had been earlier suggested.

■ WYAA property on Farmington near Ford Road could be sold to raise money, and the group could move its offices to what is now the Mike Modano Ice Arena on Wildwood near Hunter.

■ The indoor soccer portion of Frontier Park would include an air dome that could be taken down during summer months.

■ WYAA has proposed the sports complex not as a private enterprise that would make money off it, but rather as a nonprofit group. The park would be owned by the city, Rodriguez said.

■ WYAA leaders believe that Frontier Park would not only improve the quality of life in Westland, but could also boost property values.

[dclem@oe.homecomm.net](mailto:dclem@oe.homecomm.net) | (734) 953-2110

GUILTY

FROM PAGE A1

Regardless, he will lose his license to practice law.

"If an attorney enters a plea to a felony and it is accepted, they are automatically suspended," said Victoria Kremski, deputy regulation counsel for the State Bar of Michigan.

Callanan Jr. could eventually seek to have his license reinstated, Kremski said, but the state attorney discipline board isn't forced to grant the request.

Callanan Jr. spent time in prison amid accusations in the 1980s of a case-fixing scandal. He had been accused of taking

money from clients and promising leniency from his father, then-Westland District Judge Evan Callanan Sr.

Police Sgt. Scott Murray testified in Wayne District Court last August that Callanan Jr. was arrested once after he bought drugs near Hunters West Apartments, on Yale south of Warren, and once after

he received crack cocaine from a Garden City woman who lives on Marquette.

Murray testified that Callanan Jr. admitted to using crack cocaine since October of 2003 and that he had likely spent \$15,000 on drugs since then.

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**Attention Kmart Shoppers**  
One page 10 of the 02/27/05 Kmart circular, if incorrectly states that "230-thread-count cotton rich sheets" are included in the Essential Home Comforter Set that is featured. The sheet sets are sold separately.  
We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

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## OUR VIEWS

# Authority offers savings potential

It's been more than a year since the Central Wayne County Sanitation Authority incinerator closed, an action that has proven to be a positive for the five member communities, which includes the city of Westland.

In the plus column is the savings on the fees charged to dispose of trash the city has experienced and, when the debt millage expires in 2007, the costs will drop even more.

The authority board has also waived the billing for administrative costs for a six-month January-June period, which means a savings of \$141,216 for the city.

And now comes word that the cost of demolishing the facility on Inkster Road in Dearborn Heights will be less than half of what was initially anticipated.

In these financially strapped times, every penny saved is, as the saying goes, a penny earned for the member communities. And with the savings mounting, it makes the decision to abandon the facility a smart one for sure.

The fact that the authority is dismantling that which linked the five communities together doesn't mean the organization should cease to exist. The authority may have had no choice in closing the incinerator, but it now has the opportunity to find more savings on trash hauling.

Currently, each community has its own trash contractor. Each pays a different rate for the services provided. Some have curbside recycling, some don't.

Gov. Jennifer Granholm has asked school districts to consider consortiums to lower the costs of educating children. It's something cities should also be exploring. Volume buying can give them a better bang for their buck and, at a time when state shared revenue is on the endangered species list, it's something that could pay off big time.

We encourage the member communities to stay connected and use the partnership that was forged more than five decades ago to find ways of purchasing services and work together to save money. If it can work for school districts, why not municipalities?

**Currently, each community has its own trash contractor. Each pays a different rate for the services provided. Some have curbside recycling, some don't.**

# Ambitious roads plan has little hope of gaining favor

Everyone knows that the roads in metro Detroit are a mess. And everyone knows that something has to be done about it.

What that something is, however, is the topic of great gnashing of the teeth and wringing of the political hands.

Oakland County Businesses for Better Roads — an offshoot of the transportation committee of the Oakland County Business Roundtable — has decided to take the problem on by looking locally rather than hoping for an influx of cash from the state or federal government.

The group's plan is ambitious and expensive, and while targeted primarily at Oakland County, its success depends on similar proposals being approved in Wayne and Macomb counties as well.

The BBR wants to institute a 0.5-mill countywide property tax, a 0.5-percent local sales tax, a 20-percent increase in vehicle registration fees and a \$25 flat rate driver's license fee. All four initiatives would require the state Legislature to authorize a countywide vote to approve them.

According to the BBR's figures, the four funding sources would generate approximately \$126 million per year for road projects. The money would be used to widen congested thoroughfares, bring new roads to new developments and maintain other important highways and surface roads.

While the plan has merit, there is little chance it will fly in Lansing, or at the ballot box if it makes it that far. The reason?

While everyone agrees our roads are in a shambles, so is the state's financial house. And it is unlikely that the governor and Legislature will give their blessing to any new taxes at a time when whispers are growing that a hike in the state income tax may be the only way to pull the state out of its budget mess.

Which means that at least for the time being, commuters should prepare themselves for another long, hot summer navigating area roads.



Geoff Brooks 3-3-05 OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC

## LETTERS

### The other side of 'Wife Swap'

My name is LaShelle Bray and I am the other mom from the *Wife Swap*. I read your article and had a couple of things to say.

First of all, both of us moms have a "manual" that we have to live by. It is our Bible while we are in their house. We have to follow the rules in the manual for the first week that we are there. Doreen had to live by my rules and I had to live by hers. In her manual, there were no "chore sharing." She did chores once a month. Her husband and sons had chores to do everyday.

My job for the first couple of days was to lay in bed. I did not choose to lay in bed and watch TV, I had to because that's what Doreen had in her manual. I had to go to her job and then come home and get in bed. My job was to lie there and watch TV, eat dinner in bed and relax. The rest of the family had to wait on me hand and foot.

At my house, everyone has something to do. My husband works full time outside the house, that's his job, his chore. My job is to take care of my family and my house.

I have five small children and I home-school. I have to make a decision on either a clean house or happy healthy kids. I choose the kids! They are my priority and I love being with them and teaching them. I love taking care of my husband and my kids. I choose to stay home and "serve" my family. No one forces me to do so, it is my choice.

As for leaving her house a mess, that is wrong. I cleaned her house as per her instructions. The house was cleaned on Thursday and she came home Sunday. Could it be that I got dirty after I left? I am disputing that I left her house a mess. Her house looked great when I left.

I will admit that I insulted Guy and his family. I also apologized for that and Guy forgave me. We were able to work all that out and get along. Doreen also insulted my family and me. Again, we were able to work it out.

I just wanted to make sure that you got a well-rounded article.

LaShelle Bray  
Baltimore, Md.

### Leave Social Security alone

Don't listen to these politicians saying the sky is falling on Social Security. There is nothing wrong with Social Security, other than having the money in the general fund.

The money has to be dedicated to Social Security only. That way, the politicians can't borrow money from it to pay for everything imaginable and not pay it back. If the money is dedicated, problem solved.

That is the same thing that is happening to the road fund in Michigan. Dedicate it, period! It is a slush fund for all these politicians' raises, lucrative retirements, and everything.

Wayne Mirth  
Westland

P.S. Call your congressmen today and tell them to leave Social Security alone, please!

### Social Security changes

Mr. Bush's recent assault on Social Security reveals and often overlooked rationale that created Social Security. The Social Security Administration is not a retirement fund, the Social Security system was devised as a safety net, supplemental income, to prevent retired workers and their children who have lost a parent from becoming homeless.

From the time of its inception, the leaders of this country in their compassion for its citizens determined the need to protect the unfortunate. For many generations, citizens of this country felt it is their responsibility to insure our own people are provided with a minimum standard of living, keeping the less fortunate out of poverty.

The promise of the proposed personal retirement accounts is another sure-fire failure. Many years ago, instead of 401(k)s, we had pension funds used by companies often investing in their own companies for funds. These funds worked well following their inception, when the market and the economics of the times worked as they were designed. But as times and the assumptions changed, their feasibility changed and many have failed.

We have seen countless instances over the last few years, where these pension funds have defaulted and offered no compensation for those that had invested for years into these accounts.

The latest example of this, of which very close associated of Mr. Bush have a large responsibility, is Enron. The same failure will occur under the Bush administration's low yield, low-risk retirement accounts, and as we have seen with Enron, there will be no accountability for their wrongdoing.

Today, the number of seniors using Social Security as a vital portion of their retirement income is large. Even though Social Security was not intended to be a retirement fund, many seniors' lifeline depends by their monthly check.

Ask many of these seniors of their retirement plans and they will tell you of their inadequate retirement savings, all with good plans, but falling short of what is needed for a moderate standard of living in retirement. If we ask any of these seniors of their retirement plans, they will tell you they intended to save more, but there was never enough money left at the end of the check.

The Social Security program is a very good deal for "We the People" America, those who believe we are part of a greater society and feel responsible for America and its citizens.

There will be problems with funds in the future, but these can be remedied with minor changes not a complete gutting of the program, and ensuring complete failure. The first could be to return Social Security to the intent of the program and not prop up or replace other social programs that have been cut in recently.

The intent of this administration may be, as demonstrated by several administration initiatives, is to bankrupt the program, and spend the funds earmarked for Social Security on other programs.

This method of redirecting funds inappropriately was recently proposed by Mr. Bush himself. The District of Columbia requested funds to pay for security for the inaugura-

tion, was told to use money for homeland security to pay for the inauguration.

Spending money, or using property for its intended purpose is being responsible and justifying exception is being accountable, neither of which have yet to be demonstrated within the administration.

Allan Biber  
Westland

### A Christian nation?

In a recent letter to the editor, a writer laments that secularism is ruining American culture, which he never gets around to defining. He erroneously claims America is a "Christian nation" because, as he asserts, 90 percent of its citizens believe in some "one-God."

In addition to discounting Judaism, Islam and other religions that also support the idea of one God, the writer either believes that 10 percent of our citizens make decisions for the rest of us, or he dispels his own link between Christianity and preserving our culture.

Our earliest settlers came here to escape being ruled under one prescribed religion dictated by government. Separation of church and state is an important part of our Constitution.

The fact that one can legally marry or have an abortion in this country without interference from the Church demonstrates that we aren't a Christian nation. The Supreme Court supports our right not to be controlled by religious doctrines.

The writer admonishes "those new to our land" to respect our culture as though it were static. Immigrants as well as our native younger generation continue to shape our culture through their own values and experiences. Examples range from changing tastes in music to a Muslim call to prayer in Dearborn to products and services being offered in Spanish as well as English. In fact, most of the Hispanics in our community happen to be Christians, too.

If this writer believes that a religious-based government would be superior to the direction he claims we're moving toward, he might want to consult with the Afghans.

Glynette Wolk  
Farmington Hills

## SHARE YOUR OPINIONS

We welcome your letters to the editor. Please include your name, address and phone number for verification. We ask that your letters be 400 words or less. We may edit for clarity, space and content.

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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.

## QUOTABLE

**"The board has to decide what to do with the extra money - if they pay for other things or give a credit to the communities. The board has talked about a mid-year budget review."**

- Central Wayne County Sanitation Authority Director Steven Aynes, about the less than anticipated cost for demolition of the incinerator on Inkster Road in Dearborn Heights

# Local leaders showing the way to state's politicians

Michigan is having trouble working out a sensible business strategy. There are lots of reasons, some good, some bad.

Start with the bad: The usual mess in Lansing. The governor's a Democrat; the Legislature, Republican; both are more than faintly interested in short-term partisan advantage.

Nor does the infighting stop there. As I understand it, the tone of discourse during the meetings between Gov. Jennifer Granholm, Speaker of the House Craig DeRoche and Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema involves language you wouldn't want to appear in a family newspaper. Worse, relations between DeRoche and Sikkema vary between frosty and frigid. If these folks can't get along like sensible adults, where does that leave the state?

The Legislature started by treating Granholm's proposals as DOA, but then (oops!) figured out that to just keep on saying "no" risked being called obstructionist. So maybe they're re-thinking. On top of it all is the sad state budget, which will need something like \$376 million in cuts to bring this year's spending plan into balance. This is mostly the result of our chronic structural budget deficit, which the Lansing politicians are too timid to tackle.

But the biggest obstacle might be called the "live by the sword, die by the sword" problem. For decades, Michigan made a great living off the high-pay, low-skill manufacturing jobs provided by the auto industry. But over the past few years, a combination of outsourcing, offshoring and productivity gains has resulted in an accelerating hemorrhage of these jobs. It's as though the foundation for our entire economic house is being disassembled, cinder block by cinder block.

Worse, the "one big industry" habit of mind is deeply entrenched. Far too much conversation in Lansing rotates around the fantasy of one great big economic silver bullet that will bail us out of trouble. Will it be life sciences? Might it be homeland security? Could it be agile manufacturing? Nah.

Most likely it will wind up with an unpredictable mix of things where Michigan has a comparative advantage. And the process is very likely to take place piecemeal and by fits and starts.

Which is why it's instructive to look at two locally-based efforts that offer some hope for the future. First is Automation Alley, originally proposed by Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson in 1997. The idea was to leverage the combined strength of the county's automobile-related, high-tech businesses into a national marketing effort that would attract skilled talent and new cutting-edge companies. Forty-four organizations joined initially,

and trade missions jetted off to Europe, China and Mexico.

In 2001, the Alley affiliated with the Great Lakes Interactive Marketing Association, marrying the high-tech business community and an interactive and technical labor force. In 2003, Automation Alley created the Technology Center, which leverages businesses, educators, government and money to help entrepreneurs bring new technologies to market quicker and more efficiently. Just last year, the Alley started a new headquarters in Troy.

The Alley's current annual budget is around \$2 million, mostly raised from dues from member companies and some state assistance. Tom Anderson, the capable and thoughtful director of the Tech Center, says that he's trying to start a quarterly forum to bring together entrepreneurs and investment professionals to make more visible the good business investment opportunities available in southeastern Michigan. He's also working on tripling the Alley's \$1.4 million seed fund.

Over in Ann Arbor, some local business leaders are hooking up with the University of Michigan to try to do something similar. With a working title of "Ann Arbor Tech Central," the group is shaking the bushes to put together a \$1 million-plus annual budget.

Central to the undertaking is active involvement by the University of Michigan, which under President Mary Sue Coleman's regime has at last realized it needs to get its hands dirty exploiting its terrific research capability and helping get businesses launched.

A university insider put the case sensibly to me last week: "We've got to look on this just like a venture capital firm looks at a startup. It's a long-term proposition. You've got to keep at it. You'll make some mistakes. But you have to keep working on it until it works."

Right on. In the case of Automation Alley, it's taken seven years of hard work to make a functioning organization capable of building on southeastern Michigan's existing strengths in automobile-related high tech.

In the case of Ann Arbor Tech Central, the right people are coming to the right conclusion at the right time. Similar organizations are bubbling up in Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids.

In all cases, it's hard-driving local folks who are leading the charge, not the politicians in Lansing. Sure, they need support from the state, in two major ways: a) money; and b) keeping out of the way. And fortunately the local folks are not all hung up with partisanship, egos or chronic structural budget deficits. Perhaps Lansing can learn something from the Livonians of this state. Let's hope so.

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.



Phil Power

# Vietnam War Memorial should be our nation's last such monument

My husband and I had one day to spend in Washington D.C., so on a beautiful autumn day we decided to see some of the outdoor memorials. The list is very long.

There are memorials honoring presidents and then there are the war memorials. There is the Marine Corps War Memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial, Tomb of the Unknown covering World Wars I and II and the Korean War. There are memorials for women in military service for America and one to honor women who served in Vietnam. The World War II Memorial is under construction.



Ann Abdo

Then there is the Vietnam War Memorial — the marble wall filled with the names of those who paid the ultimate price. Its understated design is so powerful. Every time I see it, I feel so sad and angry. I remember watching from my dormitory window the male students walking to a testing site at Michigan State University. The results of the test determined who stayed in college and who got drafted.

I remember looking in my world atlas to find out the location of Vietnam, and when I saw this small country thousands of miles away, I could not see how Vietnam would be a danger to us. It wasn't. All the predictions of what would happen if the entire country became communist did not happen.

As we walked by the wall, we noticed the tributes people left: flowers, a teddy bear and a set of I.D. tags. After all these years, maybe the family of the deceased had found closure, and so they left the tags as a way of saying goodbye? Then I saw a man who had placed a piece of paper over a name and with chalk or crayon, he was rubbing the name onto the paper. Was this the son, nephew, or much younger brother?

For five nights a week for about six years, the network evening news gave a body count. There were more than 58,000 U.S. casualties. Thousands more were injured physically and mentally. More than one million Vietnamese civilians were killed and more than 6.5 million were displaced-war refugees. More than 200,000 Vietnamese soldiers were killed. There were very graphic pictures on television and in the print media.

What did we learn from this? What have we shown the families and friends of those whose names are engraved on the wall? I had hoped that they would be shown that we learned our lesson, and developing more

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sophisticated ways to kill people is not the answer. I had hoped our vast resources would be used to support more humanitarian efforts. I had hoped that our leaders would never again give us a faulty justification for sending our armed forces into combat.

On Jan. 27, 1973, the military draft ended. Our military is made up of men and women who volunteer. Each has their own reason for wanting to serve their country, but all have willingly put their life on the line for us. We owe these brave people the utmost respect; therefore, we should never put these people in harm's way unless it is absolutely necessary.

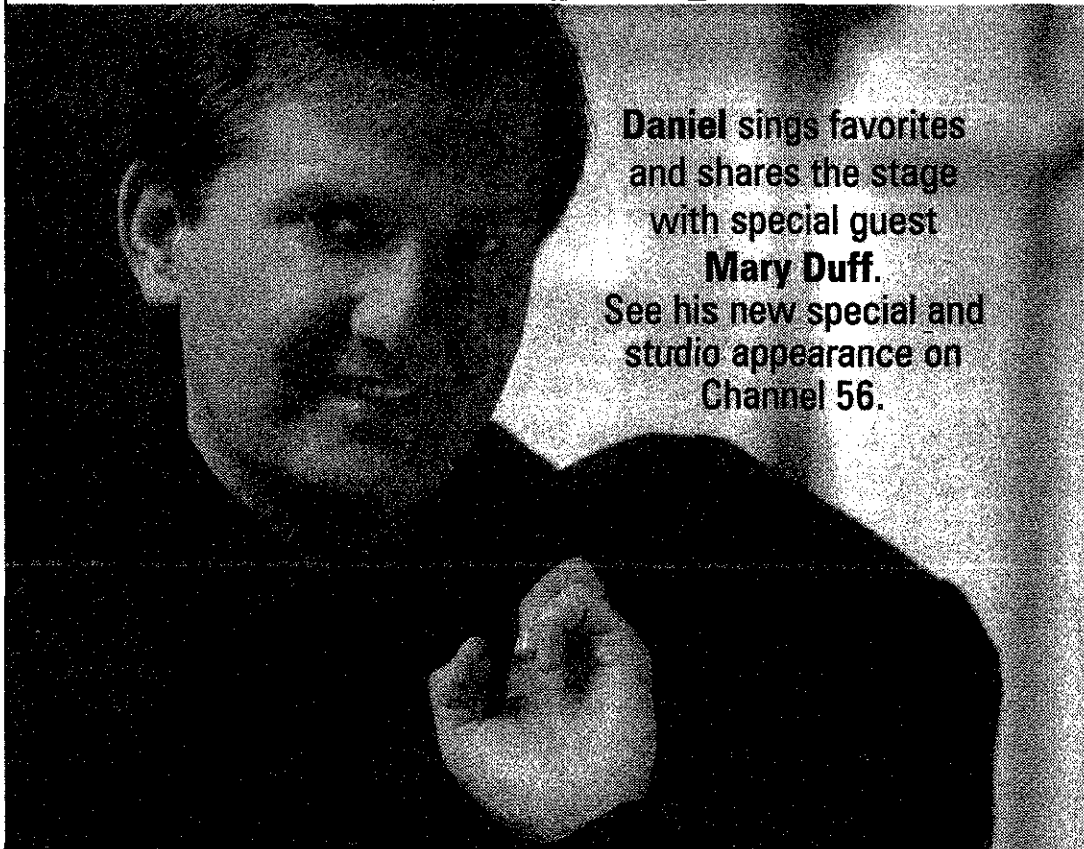
We are not shown the real horrors of the war in Iraq. With 76 percent of Iraqis living in the urban areas where the war is taking place, casualty estimates range from 50,000 to 100,000. With a volunteer army, public protest has been less effective. Also, we have been told that if we speak against the war, we are not supporting our troops. U.S. casualties are now more than 1,400 killed in action and more than 10,500 wounded. Will the brave men and women of this war have a memorial as well?

I hope for the day when our political leaders will say this is the last war memorial. From now on all our efforts will be toward creating a peaceful world. There will be a cabinet level Department of Peace that will strive to fulfill Franklin Roosevelt's wish that "we want to end the beginnings of all war."

President Bush stated in his second inaugural address that all people are entitled to enjoy the benefits of freedom and liberty. It can be done. The legislation has been written. All we need is enough sponsors in Congress to make it happen. For more information on the Department of Peace campaign, see [www.dopcampaign.org](http://www.dopcampaign.org).

Ann Abdo is a Livonia resident and a member of the 11th District Citizens for Peace.

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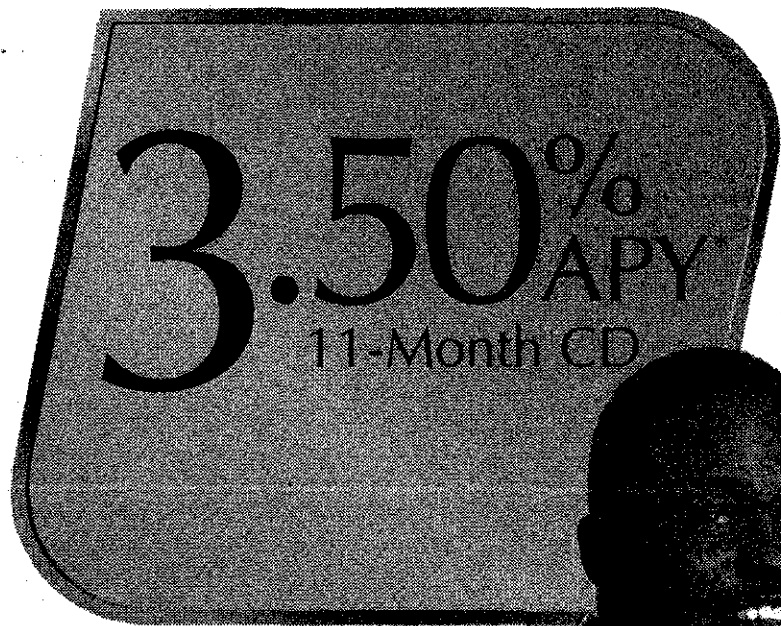
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# Returning soldier calls service a blessing

# Private companies to get crack at Wireless Oakland

BY DIANE GALE ANDREASSI  
CORRESPONDENT

Capt. Larry Smith hadn't seen his 3-month-old daughter, Alexa, until he arrived at Detroit Metro Airport from Kuwait Saturday night and instead of feeling robbed of the time missed, the Army trainer said it was a blessing.

"I think it's the absolute opposite of being robbed," Smith, 28, said. "I wouldn't change anything. My daughter is going to grow up knowing that her dad did everything absolutely possible that he could to make sure she'd grow up in a better place. The fact that I wasn't there for the first three months doesn't change anything."

He said the magnitude of war struck him the hardest last Father's Day when his unit was returning from a patrol and a roadside bomb killed two soldiers and seriously injured 11 others.

"We had been shot at before that, but that was the first experience we actually had casualties and it opened my eyes to the real horrors that were going on over there," Smith said. "I looked down and my arms were saturated with blood, because I was trying to bandage people."

On Aug. 14, his unit was involved in another encounter and this time Smith was wounded in the leg. He received a Purple Heart, but he didn't even mention the honor until his wife, Gina, brought it up.

### DOWNPLAYS INJURY

"At the tail-end of that mortar round there was a hit about 10 feet from me and I went down with about nine other soldiers," Smith explained in an interview at his parents' home late Saturday. "My leg didn't move and there was some nerve damage. They were going to evac me to Germany, but I didn't think it was worth it. It was just a little hole."

Family, friends and members from their church, Merriman Road Baptist in Garden City, gathered Saturday evening in his parents' Livonia home. They were greeted at the front door by two posters that read:



Capt. Larry Smith is greeted by his wife, Gina, and 3-month-old daughter, Alexa, at Metro Airport on his return from duty in Iraq.

"Thank you so for protecting your family, neighbors and fellowmen." "You made a difference. We are so very proud of you."

Cathy and Larry Smith were just happy their son was on American soil, even though he would only be in Michigan for 12 hours before driving to Texas where he and Gina will live. Smith also has three sisters, Jennifer, 27, Rebecca, 24 and Melissa, 19.

"It's an amazing relief just to have him safe at home," Cathy explained.

Although Larry and Gina, who was raised in Redford Township and has a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Detroit Mercy, have been married two years they've only been together three months, because Smith served in Korea the year before he was sent to Iraq. Smith was on a short leave when Gina became pregnant with Alexa.

Being able to talk by telephone occasionally and using e-mails helped lessen the pain, somewhat, of being apart and knowing that her husband was in such a dangerous situation, said Gina, a graduate of Redford Thurston High School.

"I talked to my grandma who

had to go through the same thing in World War II and they would go months without anything," she adds.

### GOD AND COUNTRY

Smith, a former *Livonia Observer* carrier, said he believes he was called by God to serve in the Army.

"I love my country and this is the path that God set out for me and every time he calls you it's not always what you want to do," Smith said. "It's still something that needs to be done, regardless, and it's an honor to be chosen for this purpose."

After the welcome home party, Larry and Gina planned to return shortly to the Farmington Hills apartment where she and Alexa have been living.

In Texas, Smith will continue to work as an Army trainer and has decided to make the military his career. The 1994 graduate of Stevenson High School and 1998 graduate of Eastern Michigan University knew he wanted to be in the service since he was 15.

"The things I've seen in the last year," Smith said. "It put things in perspective about how wonderful it is that our families don't have to experience that

BY ALEX LUNDBERG  
STAFF WRITER

Oakland County is taking steps to lay the groundwork for its proposed comprehensive wireless Internet system, "Wireless Oakland," by throwing open its doors to the companies upon whom, ultimately, the creation of the system rests.

At his State of the County address, Executive L. Brooks Patterson announced the county's plan to create a "technological cloud," universal wireless Internet access, encompassing all of Oakland County. Anyone with the right kind of modem could access the web without connection to a cable or telephone line.

As part of his bid to bring high-tech jobs to Oakland County, Patterson wants to offer every businessperson rolling through to be able to access their accounts as easily as they could at home. The details are still sketchy, but he says there might be a mixture of advertising and for-fee services to pay for the continued operation of the system.

To that end, the county will hold a private sector summit on March 14 to put the word out to vendors of all kinds in advance of making a request for proposals in the spring. The county is hoping to answer questions potential partners will need to ask before the project kicks off in earnest.

Deputy County Executive Phil Bertolini said the summit will play host to a wide range of businesses.

"We will be talking to bandwidth and technology vendors," he said. "We've sent out some invitations and more than 80

companies have shown an interest."

He said companies like Comcast and SBC, which sell access to the Internet, will be side by side with companies that build the actual components used to access the Internet — both kinds of companies are necessary to getting the Wireless Oakland initiative off the ground.

"I don't believe any one company will be able to do the whole job," Bertolini said. "I think some companies will partner up to make proposals. This will be an opportunity for some companies to come together."

The summit is the first step toward actually getting Wireless Oakland off the ground. Bertolini said he expects to make a request for proposals in April and, he hopes, award contracts as early as June.

While the final costs are unknown, officials believe Oakland residents have already ponied up enough money for technology to cover their end.

Patterson reiterated that point, adding that between emergency towers, water towers and the fiber optic cable already in place, the county has a very good platform for private investors to build upon.

The final cost? That will come from the private sector.

The Wireless Oakland Private Sector Summit will be held at 1:30 p.m. March 14 in the Oakland County Board of Commissioners Auditorium, 1200 N. Telegraph. The event is open to the public. More information on the web at [www.co.oakland.mi.wireless](http://www.co.oakland.mi.wireless).

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