

3/17

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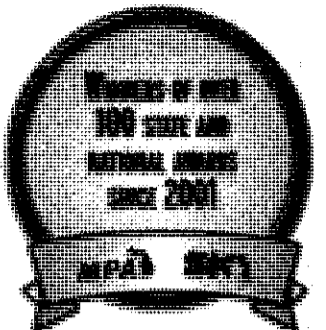
Foods of the world

TASTE, PAGE B5

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WESTLAND
Observer



THURSDAY
 March 17, 2005
 75 cents

VOLUME 40 NUMBER 84 www.hometownlife.com ©2005 HOMETOWN COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK



Westland ATHENA Award winner Charlotte Sherman (holding rose) and her husband, Scott, talk with Jon and Michelle Riebe of White Lake during the Chocolate Fantasy Ball Saturday evening.

Council: Park plan needs work

BY SUE MASON
 STAFF WRITER

Supporters of a state-of-the-art recreational complex west of the civic center will have to do more than promote the plan, if they hope to have it go before voters.

That's the message Citizens for Frontier Park (CFP) heard Monday evening as they made a formal presentation on the \$35 million Frontier Park proposal to the Westland City Council.

"Your job is just starting," said Councilman Robert Stottlemeyer. "You have to know what it's going to cost. You have to know if there's wetlands in there. There was a lot of dumping here, did it go the other way? Nobody knows what's there, and it's going to take money to find out."

CFP has proposed building a 60-acre complex that would include three soccer fields, including one indoor facility; eight baseball fields; two sheets of ice for hockey and figure skating; an indoor, competition-size pool; two additional basketball courts at the Bailey Center; walking trails and ponds; and a special-needs playing field, among other features.

CFP spokesman Mark Rodriguez said the group would like a proposal to cover the cost of the project on the November general election ballot, either by council approval or a citizen initiative.

"We definitely want it for 2005," he said. "Plan A is with council support, Plan B is garnering signatures."

But a majority of the council indicated the group would do better to first get the information needed to make a sound decision.

'SLOW IT DOWN'

"You have an ambitious plan, no doubt about that," said Councilman Richard LeBlanc. "But I suggest you put it in neutral, slow it down to gather information and gather more support."

LeBlanc, like most of the council members, pointed to the cost of the project, noting that if the area in question is contaminated, the cost could "go sky high."

"I don't know if realistically I can support this," he said. "Don't take this as a defeat. Let it settle, so you can garner support and information."

Councilman James Godbout also had a similar message for CFP, telling them that there are gaps in the information that need to be filled.

PLEASE SEE PLAN, A6

'A capstone to a wonderful career'

Sherman picked as 2005 ATHENA Award winner

BY SUE MASON
 STAFF WRITER

Charlotte Sherman has racked up a few firsts in her 30 years with the Wayne-Westland Community Schools.

As an assistant principal, she became the first female administrator at John Glenn High School, and as Greg Baracy's assistant, she became the first female deputy superintendent.

Her latest first came Saturday, when Sherman was selected as the 2005 Westland ATHENA Award winner, the first Wayne-Westland educator to ever receive the honor.

"It's a little overwhelming, I'm very humbled," said Sherman. "What I appreciate is that they honored some-



A beaming Charlotte Sherman has a good grip on to her ATHENA Award.

one in education. It's an honor for the whole school district. It signifies that education is an honorable profession and that education has contributed to the community."

Baracy, the Wayne-Westland school

superintendent, nominated Sherman for the honor.

"I think it's a capstone to a wonderful career of giving to the children and giving back to the community," said Baracy. "Char has given so much and has asked for nothing in return. It's a very nice reward for all she's done."

DEEP ROOTS

Sherman's connection with the district goes back to 1970 when she did her student teaching in mathematics at John Glenn High School. It came at a time when few women taught the subject. She picked math because she liked "the idea of getting credit for solving puzzles and playing games."

"I've always enjoyed challenges," she said. "And in college, I couldn't believe they'd give me credit for solving puzzles. They called it equations, I called it puzzles."

Jobs were scarce when Sherman finished her studies, but she kept her eyes open and in 1974 was hired by the district. She went on to serve as

PLEASE SEE ATHENA, A6

Fire officials suspect arson in carport fire

BY KEVIN BROWN
 STAFF WRITER

Nine cars were damaged in a suspected arson fire early Tuesday at Westwood Village apartments.

"There were several vehicles on fire underneath the carport," said Westland Fire Chief Mike Reddy, describing the scene as firefighters responded to a call at 3:06 a.m.

Witnesses told police the fire started in a 1995 Pontiac Grand Prix, its driver's door open.

Reddy said the metal carport helped spread the fire: "The fire rolls out and branches out to everything underneath."

The Grand Prix owner told authorities she suspected the fire was started by her boyfriend's ex-girlfriend, who had threatened her previously.

Westland Police Sgt. Dave Heater said police have a name and age on the ex-girlfriend, and are trying to determine where she lives.

There were no injuries in the fire. Reddy said the blaze posed no threat to people, as the carport was 200-300 feet from the apartment buildings.

Authorities have not determined how the fire started, adding no obvious accelerant containers, such as a gas can, were found at the scene.

Westland Fire Marshal Dave Szpara said authorities have ruled out an accidental cause.

"It wasn't electrical, mechanical or anything like that," he said. A person confessing to arson of personal property or found guilty on the charge could face four years in jail.

Heater said a person found to have set the fire could be charged with nine counts of arson, depending on the prosecutor's judgment.

"Eight cars were towed. Five had minor to moderate damage, three were a total loss," Reddy said.

kbrown@oe.hometowncomm.net

Demolition crew brings down smoke stack

Timberrrr!

The 225-foot smoke stack at the former Central Wayne County Sanitation Authority came down Saturday.

Brandenburg Industrial Service Co. took down the smoke stack as part of their contract to demolish the closed facility on Inkster Road in Dearborn Heights.

No explosives were used to take down the approximately 100-ton smoke stack. Instead, the stack was cut at an angle and pulled down by a large track loader. Built in 1998 as part of the conversion changing the facility from an incinerator to a waste-to-energy plant, the facility closed in August 2003 due to financial problems.

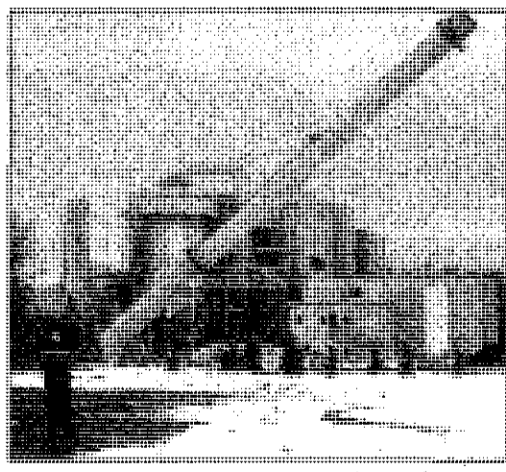
Nearly a year ago, the CWCSA, which has five member communities including Garden City and Westland,

entered an agreement with Waste Management to landfill trash instead of incineration.

Under that agreement, Waste Management paid \$4 million to the authority for the incinerator equipment, with those funds earmarked for clearing the 33-acre site and restoring it in preparation for being sold.

The \$500,000 realized from selling the equipment will be applied to the demolition bill which was expected to be less than \$2 million - well below the \$4 million originally budgeted.

Under their contract, Brandenburg is to have the demolition and restoration completed by Aug. 16. All steel from the site will be recycled and miscellaneous construction debris will be sent to the Woodland Meadows landfill.



A worker watches as the smoke stack at the former Central Wayne County Sanitation Authority incinerator is brought to the ground Saturday.

JERRY ZOLYNSKY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

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Coming Sunday in PINK

Fashion Forward

Get ready for a stylish spring with the freshest warm weather trends

Franklin cast welcomes live 'desert pet'

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

The Franklin Players see no barriers when it comes to wowing audiences year after year.

Those attending performances of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* this week will see that for themselves. For the first time in Franklin High School's history, the 56-actor cast also includes a 7 1/2 foot, 2,000-pound live camel named Casey.

"I don't think Livonia has seen anything like this," said Angie Hillman, director and English teacher.

She came up with what seemed an "insane idea" to include a live camel while planning the show with her collaborator, and mother, Barbara Hillman. A student knew just where to look.

Wilson's Camel and Pony Rides, owned by Robert Wilson of Vincennes, Ind., raises camels - and plenty of other livestock - some of which are quite accustomed to the stage. Casey is one of 11 camels, and about 180 animals on the farm.

Wilson traveled 7 hours with Casey to perform in the show. When off-duty, he and the camel are residing with friends on a farm in Ortonville. This isn't their first visit to Livonia. Wilson brought camels and ponies to the Livonia Spree last summer. But he said it's only the second time one of his camels has performed in a high school production.

Hillman said her students "went crazy" at the chance to act alongside a live animal.

Franklin senior Jeff Walker was so excited he couldn't sleep on Wednesday night - just before Casey's arrival.

"This is our desert pet," he



Casey the camel meets co-star Jeff Walker, a senior at Franklin High School.



PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Casey the camel, here with owner Robert Wilson, appears in an early scene of the show where Joseph, played by Johnny Quint, is taken away and stripped of his coat of many colors.

said, petting Casey's nose. He's sure he has the best role, because he wanders the stage with a camel at his side.

Johnny Quint takes on the title role of Joseph. "Ever since I started a lead

role has been a dream of mine," said the senior.

He admitted he never imagined he'd share the stage with a camel.

It's all part of the experience, and Quint said, he hopes the

audiences enjoy it completely.

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat takes over the stage March 17-20 at Franklin High School. Shows are sold out.

Snow a factor in fatal Southfield crash

BY PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER

Snowy conditions were a factor in the Saturday morning crash that took the life of a 35-year-old Detroit man, according to Southfield police.

Mark Anthony Dunbar was pronounced dead at the scene after his vehicle, traveling south

on Southfield Road near New Hampshire, was struck from the side by a northbound car, according to Detective John Harris. The driver of the other car, whose name was not released, was identified as a 19-year-old man from Rockwood.

He did not require hospital treatment, Harris said. Another driver involved in

the three-vehicle crash, a 24-year-old Westland man, was not injured, the detective said.

Harris said that according to police reports the northbound vehicle crossed into the southbound lanes of traffic.

That vehicle hit the car driven by the 24-year-old, Harris said, and then collided with the car driven by Dunbar. A witness

told police the street was partially covered with snow and that it was snowing at the time.

The woman said the crash occurred shortly before 3 a.m., as she was traveling northbound about 35 miles per hour at the time. Dunbar was to be buried today from the Barksdale Funeral Home in Detroit.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE

Pursuant to state law a sale will be held at: Secured Self Storage, 6855 Yale, Westland, MI, March 26 @ 1:00 P.M.

#258 Michael Kidd, #1304 Cole Goolsby, #207 Crystal Shaw, #344 Tera Leedle, #222 William Bezverkov, #1318 Edward Hintz, #825 Tiffany Ahmad, #1320 Lori Comini, #714 Adam Dushary, #824 Bernard Gordon. Units contain: misc. household items.

Publish: March 13 & 17, 2005

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

The Architect will receive sealed bids for:

GENERAL CONSTRUCTION OF:
TRANSPORTATION BUILDING FUEL PUMP & MANAGEMENT SYSTEM REPLACEMENT

Bid Proposals will be received until the time and the place, as follows, where and when the opening of bid proposals will be conducted by the Owner in public:

Date: March 24, 2005
Time: 1:30 p.m. EST
Place: Board of Education
Wayne Westland Community Schools
36745 Marquette
Westland, MI 48185
Attn: Sheila King, Supervisor of Business

Bidding Documents will be available for examination and distribution on or after March 10, 2005.

Examination may be made at the Office of the Architect, TMP ASSOCIATES, INC., Architects - Engineers - Planners, 1191 West Square Lake Road, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48302; the McGraw-Hill Construction Dodge Plan Room, Southfield, Michigan; the Reed Construction Data Plan Room, Novi, Michigan; or the Construction Association of Michigan, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

Qualified Bidders may obtain bidding documents from the Office of the Architect, consisting of one (1) set of Drawings and Specifications.

Return Bidding Documents to the Architect within ten (10) days after opening receipt of proposals. Documents are to be complete, in clean and usable condition and free of marks or other defacement.

A sworn and notarized statement disclosing any familial relationship existing between the bidder and any member of the school board, school superintendents, or chief executive must accompany each bid. A board shall not accept a bid that does not include this statement. This statement is on the proposal execution form.

Bid Proposals shall be on forms furnished by the Architect, accompanied by a satisfactory Bid Bond or Certified Check for five percent (5%) of the Base Bid Sum maximum possible proposal amount.

Bidder shall agree not to withdraw Bid Proposal for a period of thirty (30) days after date for receipt of bids.

Accepted Bidder shall be required to furnish satisfactory Performance Bond and Labor and Material Payment Bond in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders.

The right to reject any or all Bid Proposals, either in whole or in part, or to waive any informalities therein is reserved by the Owner.

This project is to be bid at the prevailing wage rate.

Publish: March 17, 2005

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PLACES AND FACES

Coffee hour

State Rep. Glenn Anderson, D-Westland, will have his District Coffee Hour 9-10:30 a.m. Monday, March 21, at the Westland Big Boy Restaurant, 6360 Wayne Road at Hunter.

Vets helping vets

Veterans Haven is looking for a qualified veteran to be a live-in driver/maintenance/groundskeeper at its transitional housing facilities.

The applicant should be a self-starter who can follow instructions. The individual should also possess the ability to do light carpentry, plumbing and electrical jobs and operate power equipment for yard work.

Benefits include room and board - laundry room and meals. Contact Vince Berna at (734) 728-0527.

Historic fashions

Local historians will sponsor an "old-time" fashion show and luncheon at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, April 13, to raise money to help repair the city's historic Octagon House.

The cost is \$12 per person. The event will be held at the Bailey Recreation Center, behind City Hall on Ford Road. The show will be held in memory of the late Howard Becker, who was a supporter of the Octagon House.

For more information or to inquire about tickets, call (734) 729-1605, (734) 522-3918 or (734) 729-2953.

Mom to Mom sale

Ss. Simon and Jude Church will hold its first annual Mom to Mom sale 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, April 9, at the church, 32500 Palmer Road, Westland.

Used infant and children's items will be for sale. There also will be a raffle and food will be available.

Admission is \$1 for adults and children free when accompanied by a parent.

Blood drive

Wayne Memorial High School, 3001 Fourth Street, Wayne will host its annual Red Cross blood drive 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 22, in the gymnasium of the school, 3001 Fourth St., Wayne.

The blood drive is open to the public and no appointment is necessary. Blood donors must be 17 years old or older and weigh more than 110 pounds. Piercing is acceptable, if it was done at a place that uses sterile needles or studs. Tattoos requires a 12-month waiting period.

For more information, call Vickie Lewis at (734) 419-2204.

Poker Tournament

The Westland Jaycees is

sponsoring a Texas Holdem Tournament and Vegas Night Saturday, April 16, at the Bailey Recreation Center, 36651 Ford.

The tournament starts promptly at 6 p.m. and runs until 11 p.m. Pre-register by mail by April 1 for \$40. Send your name, address, phone number and e-mail address to the Westland Jaycees, P.O. Box 85191, Westland, MI 48185. Register at the door for \$50, beginning at 4:30 p.m. There will be no re-buy-ins during the tournament.

The Vegas Night will open at 7 p.m. and include blackjack, Let It Ride, Holdem and seven-card poker. Food, beer and pop also will be available.

For more information, call (734) 228-0400 or by e-mail at wholdem@yahoo.com.

Spring bazaar

The Edison Elementary PTO will have its Spring Bazaar 6-9 p.m. Wednesday, April 20.

The bazaar will feature a collection of 25 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.

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.

Vendor fair

St. Damian Church is inviting parishioners and their friends who have home-based businesses to participate in a vendor fair 1-4 p.m. Saturday, April 30, at the church on Joy Road east of Merriman.

Vendors that will have exhibits and/or products include Arbonne International, Logenberger, Princess House Crystal, DK Books, Pampered Chef and Party Light & Creative Memories.

For more information, call Ritaanne Felczak Otto at (734) 425-8970.

ORDINANCE NO. 05-002

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTIONS 52.03 (A) AND 52.04 (A) OF CHAPTER 52 OF TITLE V OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF GARDEN CITY.

THE CITY OF GARDEN CITY HEREBY ORDAINS:

I. That Sections 52.03 (A) and 52.04 (A) of Chapter 52 of Title V of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Garden City be amended to read as follows:

§ 52.03 WATER SUPPLY RATES.
(A) Consumption charges.
(B) Base rate \$20.22 per 1,000 Cubic feet

§ 52.04 SEWAGE DISPOSAL RATES.
(A) Consumption charges.
(B) Base rate, including excess sewage \$41.11 per 1,000 Cubic feet

REPEALER.
That Sections 52.03 (A) and 52.04 (A) of Chapter 52 of Title V of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Garden City and all other ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed. Except as herein modified, the said Code shall remain in full force and effect.

SEVERABILITY.
The City of Garden City hereby declares that if any section, paragraph, sentence, or word of this Ordinance hereby adopted be declared for any reason to be invalid, it is the intent of the City of Garden City that it would have passed all other portions of this Ordinance independent of the elimination here from such portion as may be declared invalid.

SAVINGS CLAUSE.
That nothing in this Ordinance hereby adopted shall be construed to affect any suit or proceeding pending in any court, or any rights acquired, or liability incurred, or any causes of action acquired or existing, under any act or ordinance hereby repealed as cited in this Ordinance; nor shall any just or legal right or remedy of any character be lost, impaired or affected by this Ordinance.

DATE OF EFFECT.
This amendatory Ordinance is declared to be effective upon publication as required by law.

Adopted: March 07, 2005
Resolution # 05-03-327
Publish: March 17, 2005

Chocolate ball is sweet success

It was a chocolate lover's dream come true Saturday evening as an estimated 240 people filled the Hellenic Cultural Center for the Westland ATHENA Award Chocolate Fantasy Ball.

The ATHENA Award is nothing new to the community, but this is the first time the presentation was incorporated into a formal function, sponsored by Mayor Sandra Cicirelli, the Westland Community Foundation and the Women of Westland.

"It was black tie optional and many people took the opportunity to dress formally," said WOW member Robin Kay Cooke.

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the ATHENA Award to Charlotte Sherman of the Wayne-Westland Community Schools. Sherman is the district's deputy superintendent for educational services.

"I have been so fortunate to be able to work in making the Wayne-Westland Schools the best school district," said Sherman, who has worked for the district for 30 years. "I'll have to ask Dr. (Greg) Baracy for a little bigger office in order to display all the tributes I received tonight."

The award is presented to a man or woman who excels in their profession, improves the lives of others and assists women in realizing their full potential.

Also nominated for the prestigious award were Mary Allsteadt, Lori Brist, Sam Corrado, City Clerk Eileen DeHart, Linda DeVore, Cheryl Graunstadt, Lynette Hobyak, Barbara Polish, Evelyn Prokop and Beth Welkenbach.

Commendations were sent by Gov. Jennifer Granholm, Congressman Thaddeus McCotter, R-Livonia, State Rep. Glenn Anderson, D-Westland, and County Executive Robert Ficano, while State Sen. Laura Toy, R-Livonia and Wayne County Commissioner Kay Beard, D-12th District, were on hand to make their own presentations. "Char really looks at things



Joy Ebel (left) and Mary Denning, vice president and president, respectively, of the Women of Westland, arrange the display of chocolate desserts at the Chocolate Fantasy Ball at the Hellenic Cultural Center Saturday evening.



John and Holly Adams of Canton share a laugh with longtime friend Meriem Kadi of Westland during dinner.

and makes sure the T's are dotted and the T's are crossed," said Beard, who received the ATHENA Award in 2003. "She's my type of gal." Cicirelli, DeHart and Council President Charles

Pickering also recognized Sherman for her achievement. "I remember Charlotte from the days when my kids attended John Glenn High School," said Cicirelli. "It was obvious back then that she was going

to contribute good things to our community."

Partygoers were treated to two chocolate fountains, one white and one dark chocolate, and endless desserts covered in chocolate or made from chocolate.

"Mary Denning outdid herself with the chocolate tables," Cooke said. "They were just jam-packed with chocolates and desserts. And everyone was able to take boxes of the goodies. They were able to take a doggie bag and people were just delighted."

The idea for the chocolate theme came from a program that Cooke has attended. The guests ate dinner while behind closed doors the chocolate tables were being set up in secret in the ballroom area.

"We opened the doors and it was that initial stunningness that created the initial impression," said Cooke. "We wanted people to go home and say it was the neatest thing and want to come back next year."

Partygoers also danced to the big band sounds of the 15-piece Rhythm Society, which brought along its own swing dancers for the evening and made their best offers in a silent auction for items donated by local businesses.

Community foundation President Glenn Shaw Jr. also came up with two big ticket items for auction - a full-length mink coat and a box at a Detroit Pistons game and basketball. The coat fetched a high bid of some \$3,200 while the box pulled in \$1,000, Cooke said.

There also was an additional \$20,000 in donations, she added.

How much was actually made from the event is unknown, but proceeds will be used by the Westland Community Foundation and WOW for their community work.

WOW uses its money to fund the Barb Douglas Scholarship - it awarded two last year and would like to expand the program - and to support such activities as the Relay for Life.

Education is priority for disabilities panel

Dynamic, dancing DJ Ray. That's what he likes to be called.

Westland resident Ray Schuholz doesn't let anything get past him or get in his way. He is always on the go, working, advocating and now, politics.

Schuholz was recently appointed by Westland Mayor Sandra Cicirelli to a two-year term on a new committee that will study the concerns of disabled residents.

"There are so many different things I want to discuss with the mayor that will help people with disabilities in the city," said Schuholz, who has a mild developmental disability. "I have been going to the city council meetings for quite some time, and I want my voice to be heard for me and on behalf of my friends. I want to advocate and be a leader for people."

Schuholz just attended a legislative reception in Lansing and got a chance to meet with state representatives and senators, including 18th District State Rep. Glenn Anderson, D-Westland.

Anderson said he recognized Schuholz from watching him on the local Westland cable channel that airs all of the city council meetings.

"I could not believe he knew who I was," Schuholz said.

Schuholz also made his mark on the steps of Capitol Hill several years ago when he gave a presentation about advocating for people with disabilities.

"We can all learn from one another and if I can help peo-

ple, then I will," he said. "My next goal is to meet the governor. I think she's doing a great job and I want to meet her someday."

When he is not rubbing shoulders with politicians, Schuholz holds down a job at the Extended Stay in Canton.

"I've been there for four years and I like it because I'm my own boss. I like working there and have many friends," he said. "When I'm not working, I like to DJ at parties and weddings. In my spare time I like to hang out with my friends and listen to music or explore the Internet."

Schuholz has been actively involved in many committees and has written for a newsletter. His goal for the mayor's new committee on disability concerns is to educate the community.

"I want to get people involved," he said, "and I want the community to be more receptive to people with disabilities."

Schuholz uses supports and services provided by Community Living Services, Inc.

CLS, a non-profit organization that promotes inclusion, full citizenship and a self-determined life for people with developmental disabilities, provides support and services to 2,700 people in Wayne County and is funded through the Detroit-Wayne County Community Mental Health Agency.

For more information, visit CLS's Web site at www.com-livserv.com.

Phones collected for soldiers

If you've upgraded your cell phone to get more bells and whistles but wonder what to do with the still-functioning old phone, drop by Liberty Tax Service.

All 1,400 offices nationwide are participating as drop-off centers for the Cell Phones for

Soldiers program aimed at helping soldiers call home.

Located at 29540 Ford in Garden Plaza, Liberty Tax Service is open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday.

Call (734) 425-4620.

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Youngster sheds hair to help Locks of Love

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

Nine-year-old Crystal Kelly figures it won't be long before she can have hair cut again.

She may seem eager to get it cut again considering she had some 12 inches removed last week. But she has a goal of making yet another donation to Locks of Love.

"Maybe by the end of summer it'll be long enough," she said. "My hair grows pretty fast."

The Schweitzer Elementary fourth-grader had some 12 inches of her bottom-length hair cut off. Now her hair is just below her shoulders. What was cut has been gathered up in a ponytail and shipped to Locks of Love which provides hairpieces to financially disadvantaged children under age 18 suffering from long-term medical hair loss.

"I'm so proud of what she did," said her mother, Carole. "Her smile is ear to ear."

Carole knew her daughter was contemplating cutting her hair for the summer and suggested she donate her unwanted locks to the organization. Crystal was "all gung-ho for it," so Carole went online to the Locks of Love Web site and found that the eSalon on South Wayne Road cut hair for the organization.

Crystal had planned to get



Crystal tips her head forward so the almost 12-inch tail can be cut.

her cut on Saturday, but found out the salon was closed, so she had to wait until after school last Monday.

"I wore it long to school on Monday and my friends said,

"Hey, you didn't get your hair cut," Crystal said. "On Tuesday, my teacher said, 'Oh, wow, I like your haircut.'"

Crystal has never had short hair, she always had it long,

and has never had this much cut off, according to her mother. In fact, other than when she was an infant, her hair has always been long, never going above her waistline.

"Everybody used to love Crystal with the beautiful long hair, but she's getting a lot of comments about her haircut," said Carole. "It makes her look much older with it cut short."

Crystal is getting used to not feeling it brush against her back and says she likes it because it's easier to brush.

"It's not all knotty anymore," she said, adding her dad, Mark, helped brush it when it was longer.

And there is some getting used to scaling back on shampoo.

"Last night, I took a shower and my mom put on tons of shampoo," she said. "She forgot my hair wasn't that long."

Locks of Love is a nonprofit organization that uses donated hair like Crystal's to create the hair prosthetics for children, many of whom have lost their hair due to a medical condition called alopecia areata, which has no known cause or cure.

The majority of the hair donations it receives come from children like Crystal who want to help other children. According to the Locks of Love Web site, hair donations have to be a minimum of 10 inches in length tip to tip. And its greatest demand is for blonde, black and red hair.

While Crystal is calculating how long until her next Locks of Love haircut, her 12-year-old brother, Alexander, also has expressed an interest in growing his hair.

"My mom said no way, you're getting a haircut," she said with a laugh.

For more information about Locks of Love, visit its Web site at www.locksoflove.org.

smason@oe.hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2112



Crystal Kelly poses with her long hair fanned out on a cape in advance of having stylist Angie Fumerelle cut it for Locks of Love.



Crystal shows off the shorter hairdo Angie Fumerelle created for her.

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DEATHS

B
Jeannine Marie Bussart, 78, died March 5.
D
Jack Dent, 76, of Milford, died March 14.
M
Dione Miles, 83, of Allegan, died March 11.
S
Melek Samarian, 82, of Bloomfield Hills, died March 14.
Jonathan Alex Stone, 63, of Bluffton, S.C., died March 9.
W
Ursula C. Wills, 90, died March 7.

OFFICIAL
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 C9.

The Westland Youth Assistance Program is funded by the City of Westland with additional funds from Wayne County, the Federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Target Corporation and North Bros. Ford. Office hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Evening appointments are available by request. You also can contact the WYAA via e-mail at wyaa@wyaa.org. For more information, contact Executive Director Ronaele Bowman or Deputy Director Paul Motz at (734) 467-7904.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Brunch with the Easter Bunny
Star your Easter celebration off with brunch with the Easter Bunny 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, March 19, at the Harris-Kehrer VFW Post 3323, 1055 S. Wayne Road. The cost is \$3 per child up to age 12 and \$4 for adults. The brunch includes homemade, hot-off-the-griddle pancakes, sausage, juice, coffee, tea and milk, a photograph with the Easter Bunny (additional photos cost \$2) and Easter bonnet

parade. Children should make bonnets or hats to wear to the brunch. Tickets are available in advance at the Bailey Recreation Center, 36651 Ford, or at the door. For more information, call Donna Jensen at (734) 728-8075. The brunch is sponsored by the Westland Parks and Recreation Department and the Westland Civitan Club. Tickets are now on sale for the Bunny Breakfast at 10:30 a.m. Friday, March 25, at the Wayne Community Center, 4635 Howe, Wayne. The cost includes pancakes, sausage, juice, arts and crafts and clowns. Pictures with the Easter Bunny cost \$2. Call (734) 721-7400.
Easter Egg Scramble
The Westland Parks and Recreation Department and the Westland Jaycees are sponsoring and Easter Egg Scramble 1-4 p.m. Saturday, March 19, at Jaycee Park adjacent to the Mike Modano Ice Arena at Wildwood at Hunter. The first scramble begins at 1 p.m. Youngsters will be broken up according to ages - up to 3 years, 4-6 years, 7-10 years and 11-14 years. Youngsters should bring a basket or bag for their eggs.

There also will be inflated games, surprises and activities. Juice and cookies also will be served. For more information, call (734) 522-8402. The event will be canceled if there is inclement weather. Call the recreation department at (734) 722-7620 after 11:30 a.m. the day of the event to verify if the event is canceled.
Marshmallow Drop
The Wayne Parks and Recreation Department's 26th annual Marshmallow Drop will be Friday, March 25, at the Anderson Ballfield, next to the Wayne Community Center, 4635 Howe, Wayne. The first drop will be at 10 a.m. for children ages 4 and under and children with a disability. The second drop is for ages 5-7 and the third drop for ages 8-10. The program is free. For more information, call (734) 721-7400.
Take-a-Break
The Wayne Parks and Recreation Department presents Take-a-Break Days day camp for kids ages 5-13 during spring recess, March 28-April 1. Register for all five days and get the fifth day free. Twenty-five percent off each additional child in

household. Activities include swimming, ice skating, arts and crafts, wallyball and more. Register now at the Wayne Community Center, 4635 Howe, Wayne. Call (734) 721-7400.
Power Soccer Clinic
The Westland Parks and Recreation Department will host a Power Soccer Team Clinic 2-5:30 p.m. Saturday, April 23, at the Bailey Recreation Center, 36651 Ford. Power soccer is a team sport for individuals with disabilities who use power wheelchairs. It is the first sport designed specifically for power wheelchair users. The game is usually played in a gymnasium on a regulation basketball court. Teams of two power wheelchair users attack, defend and maneuver an oversized ball into a designated goal to score points. The clinic is designed to build a Westland power soccer team. For more information, call Margaret Martin at (734) 722-7620, Jerry Frick, power soccer executive in Atlanta, Ga., at (770) 654-0715, Alan Pomranka of Michigan Wheelchair Veterans at (517) 490-3893 or Ken Britton at (734) 595-4157.

INFORMATION CENTRAL

Ice and snow, gray days, barren trees, and homes shut tight, make us long for spring. Soon we can anticipate the coming of this gentle season. To get you in the mood for colorful gardens, misty warm nights, and children up past dusk, visit your library to connect to springtime dreams. The library's beautiful picture book collection will fill your children with delight. When Will It Be Spring? by Catherine Walters presents a little bear cub, lonely for the sights of spring. In The Winter Wren by Brook Cole, a little wren tells a young boy how to defeat dismal winter. Katya Arnold's unique look and find book, Let's Find It, gives children a chance to locate all the wonders of a springtime world, from a forest snail to a blossom of Queen Anne's Lace. There's More... Much More, by Sue Alexander, will almost make you feel warm breezes. For so many people, spring is a time of rebirth, especially joined to the story of Easter. Many wonderful books reverently convey the Easter theme. The Legend of the Easter Egg by Lori Walburg shows how a young boy gains hope through the Easter story. Spring is welcomed all over the world. Spring, a seasonal craft book by Gilliam Chapman, celebrates festivals like Hina Matsuri in Japan. There are step-by-step crafts for children to gain an appreciation of global cultures. Your child might enjoy the imaginative world of six-year-old Stanley as he encounters groundhogs, caterpillars, butterflies and bluebirds in the juvenile DVD titled Stanley, Spring Fever. Ralph Fletcher presents poems of spring in Ordinary Things. Sun Through Small Leaves, by Satomi Ichikawa, highlights children's poems. If you are just waiting to touch spring flowers, there are countless sources for decorative ideas. A pretty spring flower swag and Easter wreath of glowing yellow daffodils are featured in Garlands, Circles and Decorative Wreaths by Fiona Barnett and Terence Moore. A delicate floral motif on a bedroom chair, pictured in Antique Style by Rubena Grigg, will inspire you to bring spring colors indoors. The Westland library staff looks forward to helping you select sources for your springtime dreams. After a long winter, we all need visions of butterflies and flowers. Give a call for more information on these and other titles.

eBay FAQ with the eBay Lady - 2 a.m. Saturday, March 19. Registration required. Join Donna Klein, the eBay Lady, in this popular non-technical workshop. Klein will share the answers to her most frequently asked questions along with some tips and tricks for using eBay. Using salable items instead of a computer, she will demonstrate the concepts you need to know for smart buying and selling.
Third-Fourth-Grade Book Club - 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 23. Register and pick up a copy of the book in advance. Talk about fun books, make new friends and participate in cool activities. This month's book is My Father's Dragon by Ruth Stiles Gannett.

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

YOUTH ASSISTANCE

The Westland Youth Assistance Program is at 36701 Ford Road in an addition to the Westland Police Department. The separate glass entrance facing City Hall and comfortable waiting area allows for private, professional, environment to assist families in Westland. Westland youth ages 7 through 16 are referred to Youth Assistance by the police, courts, schools, parents and other agencies. Once referred, an intake appointment is scheduled to explain the program's services to the youth and parents (guardians), and to offer them the opportunity to discuss their concerns and to ask questions. All information discussed is confidential. All services are free to Westland residents. If the assessment determines that a youth is appropriate for Youth Assistance, the following services may be required for the youth: Life Choices classes, Drug screens, Supervised Community Work Service, Jail/prison tour, Team Adventure Challenge, Mentoring, Karate, Counseling. Parents are required to participate in a Parenting Skills and Support Group.

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ATHENA

FROM PAGE A1

assistant principal at Glenn before moving to the district's department of instruction. She was tapped as an assistant superintendent by Baracy eighty years ago, and is now the deputy superintendent for educational services.

"I always seem to gravitate to jobs where there are few women," said Sherman. "When I went into administration, there were very few women in secondary administration. (The late) Matt McCusker was very instrumental in opening up jobs for females and for seeking women at the administrative level."

Baracy said he picked Sherman for the position because of "her outstanding work ethic and total commitment and dedication to the children" of the school district.

"My view of her is a person of the highest integrity of anyone I've worked with over the years," he added. "And I know her as a person of loyalty."

Among those projects she been involved in and is most proud of is her chairing of the committee that moved the district from junior high to a middle school format and overseeing that the money raised

through the \$108 million bond issue was spent as it was said it would be.

Her current challenge, she said, is to oversee the departments of instruction, special education, technology and student services "so we have better coordination of the departments that serve the children."

Sherman credits Baracy for bringing out the best in people.

KIDS FIRST

"He encourages and supports the staff, but he also gives a vision to the job," she said.

"It's never a job with Greg, it's a mission or a commitment. When we talk about a project, his first question is always how it will affect the children."

In nominating Sherman, Baracy described her as a "unsung hero," because of her "passion to help others succeed and promote fairness and equality throughout the community."

"Ms. Sherman is a strong leader who works tirelessly to enhance educational opportunities for children and is committed to giving back to the community to help make it a better place to live and learn," he said.

Sherman also has a multitude of community groups that she serves on or is active in,

including the Westland Juvenile Justice, Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration and Salute to Excellence Awards committees. She also is the district's Relay for Life coordinator, liaison with the American Legion and serves on the board of directors of the "100" Club, a charity for underprivileged students and residents. When she's not on the job, Sherman goes back to her roots. She grew up on a small farm near New Boston where her family had a few animals and grew vegetables that they sold a roadside stands. Home now is a 10-acre horse farm in the Howell area.

"When I get home, I like to do physical labor and hands-on things," she said. "Physically working with nature is a release because at work I do a lot of mental planning, meetings and problem solving. Prior to the ceremony I was cleaning horse stalls."

Sherman said she is committed to the district and doesn't plan on ever leaving it. It has been good to her, she said.

As for Saturday night ... "It was just a special night," she said. "It was just elegant and to be honored was just fantastic."

smason@oe.homecomm.net | (734) 953-2112

Businesses bring dining, donations

IT'S WINE TIME

Those with a penchant for wine tasting need look no further than Canton's only winery - the recently-opened Vintner's Cellar.

All of the wine sold at Vintner's is made on the premises. Owners Kathy and Darryl Nowacki invite customers to come in, and even bring up to 20 friends, for a free wine tasting party.

Wine tasting events include six to eight varieties, and hosts may bring their own hors d'oeuvres to accompany the sampling.

"We also afford customers the opportunity to make their own wine," said Nowacki. She and her husband have lived in Canton for 20 years and opened the franchise in November.

Vintner's carries a bevy of red, white, dessert and specialty wines. Custom blends, custom-made labels and special events are all available.

Vintner's Cellar is at 8515 N. Lilley Road in Canton. For more information and hours, call (734) 354-9463.

For a detailed list of wine and prices, check the Web at http://www.vintnerscellar.com/about_us.html.



THAT'S ITALIAN

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Alfoccino Italian Restaurant on Grand River in Farmington Hills has recently spiced up its atmosphere with an interior remodel. The family-owned eatery started out as a little pizzeria in Oak Park in 1982.

Specializing in homemade lasagna and other Italian classics, Alfoccino's in Farmington Hills has been in business since 1986. Bottomless salads, fresh seafood and that famous Alfoccino salad dressing, which is bottled and ready to take home, are the signatures of the business, said Frank Shushtari, who co-founded Alfoccino's with his brother, Tony. The restaurant has second location at 2225 Opdyke in Auburn Hills, just south of the Palace of Auburn Hills.

What's the secret to success?

Frank says that's simple: "The key to my success, I would say, is keeping the same recipes," he said. "I learned that you start with the best quality and you end up with quality."

Alfoccino's is at 39205 Grand River, at Haggerty in Farmington Hills. Call (248) 476-0044 for more information.

SAY CHEESE

Grab your fine furry friend and get a photo. This weekend, you can have your pet's picture taken with the Easter Bunny for a \$5 minimum donation to Home Fur Ever Animal Rescue. A variety of spring bonnets will also be available for the fashion-conscious pet.

Come support animal rescue at the event, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, March 19, at the Pet Supplies Plus store on Orchard Lake Road near 14 Mile in Farmington Hills.

Staff writer Stacy Jenkins contributed to this report. 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 or call (734) 953-2054.

PLAN

FROM PAGE A1

"It's a great plan, I like the concept, but there's a lot of steps, a lot of holes to fill in to get support up here," he said.

Council President Charles Pickering also focused on the cost, telling CFP representatives that "in my mind, it isn't solid."

"My biggest concern is that I believe it won't generate enough revenue to cover the cost," Pickering said. "Westland has been able to survive and continue operations and provide basic services. If other cities aren't able to support these kind of developments, how can Westland?"

He also told the group that as a parks and recreation professional, he would be thrilled to have such a park available, but as a councilman he has different responsibilities. Pickering

is a former assistant parks and recreation director

"I feel this isn't the way to go and I won't support putting it on the ballot," he said. "Your thoughts are great thoughts, I can't fault you for that, but without the information, I can't support putting it on the ballot."

LAND ACQUISITION

Rodriguez admitted the CFP is aware everything must "fall into place," if the park is to become a reality. He said Wayne County Commissioner Kay Beard, D-12th District, is working with them on acquiring the land.

"But we need assistance in getting some of the information," he said. "We're looking for your support as much as you can. If you don't vote to put it on the ballot, if you're not able, we understand, but we need help getting the information. We need your help."

"We want input," added CFP member Todd Kangas. "We need your support. We don't expect a yes vote when we don't have the T's crossed, but we need your help."

The group did get a few offers and suggestions. Councilman Michael Kehrer volunteered to help the group find out who owns the property which at one time had been platted for residential development.

"It's time-intensive, but I'll help you," he said. "I'll be happy to get you started."

Suggestions were to check will the county or local Realtors to obtain the latest wetlands and flood plain maps.

"We're not quarreling with the concept, we're talking about due diligence," said City Attorney Angelo Plakas. "You need to get your arms around this. No one I have heard speak here tonight is against the concept."

Day spreads news about programs

Livonia Public Schools took another step toward gaining new students and informing incoming community members about the district this week.

Franklin High School was recently transformed into a welcoming ground for new families moving into Livonia and Westland. The district hosted a Realtor Appreciation Day at the school, 31000 Joy Road.

"It was a resounding success," said Jay Young, director of community relations. About 45 area realtors attended, which was as many as the room could accommodate, he said.

The event was meant to educate Realtors on what the district has to offer, in an attempt to spread that information to

LIVONIA SCHOOLS

prospective homebuyers in the area. Young said he hopes the information will attract new residents.

Supt. Randy Liepa gave the group an overview of Livonia Public School programs, and those in attendance watched a video produced for this same purpose.

A tour of the school and lunch - provided by The Patriot Inn - were all part of the experience. Staff members in different departments at the school were available to answer questions on everything from counseling to the Junior ROTC.

"Everyone raved about the food," said Young.

Parting gifts included the district's DVD and an LPS information packet. Additional materials are being made available by request.

Of the visitors, 38 filled out a survey. All of those surveyed said they would use the DVD - mostly to share with prospective buyers or show at an open house.

Young said this was the first time in many years the district has hosted such an event.

"We thought this would be a valuable tool," he said. "We are mutually important to one another."

Realtor Appreciation Day was spurred by a long-standing school improvement goal, as was the informational video produced this year.

by Stephanie A. Casola

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Audit reveals costly lack of oversight at Northville Psychiatric

BY DAVID AGUILAR
NORTHVILLE RECORD

Sloppy bookkeeping by former Northville Psychiatric Hospital employees and inappropriate access to state-owned resources may have cost Michigan taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars before the facility closed two years ago.

An auditor general report released Feb. 18 claims former hospital employees were allowed inappropriate access to taxpayer-paid credit cards, on-site gasoline pumps and facility accounting records while failing to properly inventory state-owned equipment, monitor vendor billing practices and account for hospital medications.

It also claims hospital officials extended — without proper oversight — a \$1.86 million electrical project billed to the state through fiscal year 2003-04 that included significant hospital wiring and rewiring, along with new voicemail, paging and weather alarm systems.

Originally, the state approved spending only \$482,234.

The report, conducted June-November 2003, also details a laundry list of other faulty practices. Among the report's findings:

- Hospital officials regularly did not seek competitive bids for on-site work.
- A vendor was overpaid \$16,446 for hourly labor performed at a rate higher than one previously agreed.
- A vendor was paid at least \$114,430 for hourly labor without proper documentation.
- In one instance, hospital officials approved a \$308 vendor payment for work done for another of the vendor's customers.
- Hospital officials paid \$18,725 to one vendor without verifying goods and services

had been received.

■ For 84 monitored expenditures, hospital officials filed a necessary purchase order only 43 percent of the time.

■ Hospital employees failed to properly inventory all state-owned property and equipment worth more than \$5,000 following notice of the facility's closing. The failure resulted in damaged equipment, loss and unaccounted for state-owned property, including an improperly documented \$1.96 million negative adjustment in September 2001.

■ Hospital pharmacy staff did not properly document about \$5.1 million worth of medications purchased between 2000-02, nor did they properly inspect medication deliveries between 2000-03.

All this is according to the 43-page report. Conducted as a standard practice following the closure of a state-operated facility, it lists numerous "concerns," reaches 13 findings and offers 23 agency recommendations.

Poor record keeping prevented auditor general officials from specifying exactly how much money was lost or how many state-owned resources were lost or misappropriated, the report concluded.

REACTION

"Obviously, the audit points out some things that concern us," said T.J. Bucholz, communications director for the Department of Community Health, the state agency responsible for overseeing Michigan's seven state-operated medical facilities.

"This audit has been a wake-up call for us. It caused us to re-evaluate the way we do certain things... Anytime there is unaccounted for equipment and unaccounted for dollars, that is certainly a concern."

He said the report findings, while troubling, occurred during



The Northville Regional Psychiatric Hospital is on Seven Mile Road.

the waning days of Gov. John Engler's tenure and should not reflect poorly on Gov. Jennifer Granholm. Bucholz said he has no idea how the former Northville hospital went so far astray. "I don't know how it happened," he said. "It baffles us."

He said the report has prompted internal Department of Community Health changes, including the appointment of an administrator responsible for overseeing the agency's statewide facilities.

"We've gone back and looked at our spending," Bucholz said. "I can guarantee you won't see another audit report like that."

WHO PAYS?

Bucholz said to date no former or current state employee has been disciplined or fired due to the report's findings, despite allegations former Northville hospital employees had inappropriate access to procurement cards and each of the 73 procurement purchases tested by the auditor general failed to meet one or more necessary guidelines and procedures.

During a two-year period ending September 2002, hospital officials used procurement cards to make purchases totaling \$1.02 million, according to the report.

The report also concludes the State of Michigan lost about \$320,000 worth of federal Medicaid reimbursements in 2002-03 because hospital

officials did not properly document electricity, water, sewer and steam services it provided to the nearby state-run Hawthorn Center.

Michigan taxpayers facing escalating gasoline prices may have also paid twice for hospital employees who had inappropriate and unmonitored access to on-site fuel pumps.

"Northville Psychiatric Hospital could not ensure that the gasoline and diesel fuel it purchased and dispensed was used for official state business," according to the report.

Furthermore, the reported concluded, \$49,000 worth of gasoline was double-billed to the state's general fund because of poor bookkeeping.

Bucholz said procurement cards are not as easily accessible as they once were and more stringent Department of Community Health oversight procedures are now in place at each of the state's other medical facilities.

"Action speaks louder than words," he said. "We are concerned and committed to solving these problems."

View the report online at www.audgen.mi.gov

David Aguilar is the Northville Record editor. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700, ext. 102. Or by e-mail at daguilar@nt.homecomm.net.

Hydroplane driver begins series on Detroit River

The Detroit River is highlighted in a series of lectures that encompass the heritage and ecology of our waterway at the Dossin Great Lakes Museum Maritime Institute, continuing at 2 p.m. Saturday, March 19.

The second lecture in the series features Danny Foster, who drove the unlimited hydroplane Miss Peps-V to victory in the 1947 Gold Cup race — bringing the cup back to Detroit. During 1947 while racing Miss Peps-V, Foster also won the President's Cup, the National Sweepstakes Trophy, the Auerbach Trophy, the Maple Leaf Trophy, the Imperial Gold Cup and the Detroit Memorial Trophy.

Miss Peps-V was also awarded a trophy by the Mexican government. Between 1946 and 1965, Foster raced for such notable Detroiters as the Dossin Brothers, Horace Dodge, Jr., Joe Schoenith, and Jack Schafer. He will be talking about his experiences and showing films of some of the races.

Each of the following presentations also start at 2 p.m. and are free with paid admission to the Dossin Great Lakes Museum. Call (313) 297-8366 for more information.

■ Saturday, April 16, 2005 —

Gary Williams of Michigan State University will discuss "The Water Quality of the Detroit River" and conduct a hands-on demonstration investigating waterborne life.

■ Saturday, April 30, 2005 — Patrick Livingston conducts a discussion of his experiences on lake boats and his new book, "Sailing In The Sixties," recently published by Wayne State University Press.

■ Saturday, May 21, 2005 — Joseph Cabadas will narrate a slide show companion to his newly-published book, "River Rouge — Ford's Industrial Colossus."

These programs are supported by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Detroit Historical Society and the Great Lakes Maritime Institute.

The Dossin Great Lakes Museum, 100 Strand Drive on Belle Isle is open to the public Saturday and Sunday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$3.50 for adults, \$2.50 for seniors and children 5-18, and free for children 4 and under. During the week, the Museum is open for group tours by advance reservation. For more information, call (313) 833-1805 or check the Detroit Historical Museums website at www.detroithistorical.org.

Schoolcraft board incumbents run unopposed

Incumbent Schoolcraft College trustees Philip Cascade, Patricia Watson and Gregory Stempien will run unopposed in the May 3 board election.

Watson and Stempien are running for re-election to six-year terms.

Cascade, who was appointed to complete the term of Richard DeVries, is running to fill the remaining four years of the six-year term. DeVries was murdered in June 2004.

Deadline for nominating petitions was March 7.

The seven-member governing board holds regularly scheduled monthly meetings as well as special meetings as necessary. There is no compensation for these elected positions.

Schoolcraft College is a public two-year college, offering classes at the Livonia campus on Haggerty Road between Six and Seven Mile roads, at the Radcliff Center in Garden City and online.

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OUR VIEWS

Let reps know grant is needed

There are good ideas and there are bad ideas. And President George W. Bush's proposal to slash Community Development Block Grant dollars, realign certain programs and shift them to the U.S. Commerce Department goes well beyond being a bad idea.

For 30 years, the goal of the block grant program has been the "development of viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low and moderate incomes."

In Westland, city leaders have used the \$1.2 million a year it receives on senior citizen services; Youth Assistance and low-income housing repairs. One-third of the city's budget for senior citizen programs and 25-30 percent of the money available for Youth Assistance comes from block grant money.

At a time when the city is struggling to maintain services in face of continuing cutbacks from the state, the loss of block grant money would be nothing short of devastating.

Block grant money also keeps open the doors of the Dorsey Community Center, which provides emergency food, after-school programs, a community police office and other services in the low-income Norway area.

At a time when the city is struggling to maintain services in face of continuing cutbacks from the state, the loss of block grant money would be nothing short of devastating.

The federal government funds thousands of programs. Some of them work, some of them don't. This is one program that does work. It's not a pork barrel project, it's not full of fat. It's doing what it's suppose to do and has done so for 30 years.

It's important people for to speak up and let federal lawmakers know that the president's proposal is dead wrong. That's why we join city officials in urging residents to contact U.S. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter, R-Livonia, and U.S. Sens. Carl Levin and Debbie Stabenow to voice their opposition to the changes.

Tell them in no uncertain terms that that money is needed and well spent in the Westland community. Tell them to reject the president's proposal and continue to fund the Community Development Block Grant program.

Area teams supply lots of March Madness

Spring is the time for eternal hope and what better event than March Madness to usher it in? Whether it's tier one programs or those holding Cinderella hopes, college basketball teams this time of year strive for the ultimate reward and memories of playing on the greatest stage of all.

Michigan will again be represented on all counts. Michigan State's men's team will continue its postseason streak, MSU's women's team has moved onto new heights as a No. 1 seed and, closer to home, Oakland University's men's team has navigated onto uncharted waters.

Despite the route to the NCAA's Big Dance, what makes the next three weeks so exciting is that all the teams that have punched their tickets have an equal opportunity to succeed. Previous slates are wiped clean and it's play until you lose.

Cinderella stories are the talk of any ball, and in the leading role this year will be head coach Greg Kampe's Golden Grizzlies. Their grit and determination after starting the season 0-7 proved that even the unlikely of goals is attainable.

This is the first time for OU to be mentioned alongside the elite - schools like Duke, North Carolina, Connecticut, UCLA and Oklahoma State that bleed basketball - but not the first time with the odds stacked against them. The Golden Grizzlies defied the odds and had a Cinderella moment of their own just last week when they put together an improbable run to win their own conference tournament. That victory came courtesy of a 3-point basket by senior Pierre Dukes as time was running down.

It was another reminder that spring and March Madness make it very enjoyable to be a college athlete, a college student, or just a college basketball fanatic.



LETTERS

'Greatest' stories

I am replying to your article "We need to hear the stories of the 'greatest generation,'" *Observer*, March 10.

In this regard I have not been idle since I was a teenager. Now I am age 62. I started writing the family tree story as a teenager. I also wrote other neighbors' life stories.

I grew up around my father, uncles and neighbors who were or still alive of the greatest generation. My father worked at Weltronic Co. of Southfield; providing electronic welding controls to Willow Run to help build the B-24 Liberator bomber. He was a sales engineer, supplying welding controls to many other local military supply companies.

Dad was an amateur radio operator, who thought, if he was called up for military service, he could serve as a radio operator in the Army or Navy.

One neighbor served with tankers in North Africa and Europe. Another neighbor was a B-17 pilot for the Eighth Air Force out of England. Another neighbor served in Korea as a tanker. Another friend of the family installed wiring harnesses on the B-24s at Willow Run.

I have met an Italian immigrant who served with the U.S. Army in North Africa. He said at one time he called across the lines and found he was fighting against his cousin in the Italian Army. I met another fellow who was a cook who had to take up a rifle in the Battle of the Bulge.

Neil Karl
Livonia

Patriotism and pride

I read your recent article titled, "We need to hear the stories of the greatest generation." Recently, I interviewed my own father, who turned 80 this past January and also served in World War II, for a paper I was writing.

I, too, learned many things about his personal involvement and responsibility during this very monumental time in history. What is particularly interesting to me as I heard his story or listen to other people who have had related similar experiences is the wealth of patriotism and pride they have as they tell their stories.

They had, and continue to have, a deep, instilled belief in what they were doing, which by the way, was defending their country with their lives, was absolutely correct and right.

We certainly live in different times today with a war that consumes American soldiers, but with a divided spirit in America, and the world for that matter, that is not so willing to believe in the cause or the price.

I guess the bottom line difference in the two periods of history and the two wars is ideology. What is the difference between the two periods and the two wars?

In any case, I enjoyed your article.

Colleen Klaus

Form a new county

As a resident of western Wayne County, I am unhappy with having to view "Detroit's problems as mine, as well." The city of Detroit currently repre-

sents about 9 percent of the population of Michigan, yet receives 25 percent of the state's revenue sharing monies!

Why should the suburbs continue to subsidize an urban area where values, needs and quality of life issues vastly contrast to our own?

We do not need or want a "metropolitanized" area. My family or community will not benefit in any way from an undertaking such as this. In fact, I would like to postulate a counter-thought: The collective suburban communities within Wayne County should move to distance themselves from the city of Detroit through secession, and form a new county.

If you ignore geographical boundaries, it is evident Detroit and its suburbs are already divided in ways much more critical than can be illustrated on a map. This polarization exists philosophically, culturally, politically and economically.

A western Wayne County split from Detroit proper is a reasonable and constructive option to enhance the ability our region to be more responsive and reflective to the needs and desires of each unique constituency.

Any suggestions for naming a new county?

Sandra Martin
Plymouth

Governor's plan

The bond plan proposed by Gov. Granholm to initiate new business operations would issue \$2 billion in bond instruments. The administration of commerce promoted by government planners seems less promising than private enterprise initiatives.

Today, though, I have questions concerning the report in a Sunday newspaper, "How jobs bond plan will affect investment in Michigan." The bond initiative suggests that the estimated annual interest will be \$10 million to \$12 million.

The \$2 billion in bonds are to be sold and distributed in lots or batches of \$200 million. If one computes the interest to be paid on the 10 annual bond placements with the payment of the bond lots in full after the end of the 10th year, he will find that the \$10 million in interest in each of 10 years will produce an average annual return to lenders of about 1 percent. If the bonds are issued with extended due dates, the bond interest to be experienced would be appreciably less than 1 percent.

Who will be first in line to purchase, with the expectation and promise of a 1 percent return on his loan, his bond purchase? The report must be in error; the original sin that of the planners in Lansing. Some scolding of this writer or correction by the bond lenders should be forthcoming, and soon.

Neil Goodbred
Livonia

Dean supporter

In August 2003, I became a supporter of Howard Dean for president. Today, I'm excited to see he is gaining support as the leader of the Democratic Party.

His energy, his pragmatic ideas and his plan to make Democrats competitive in every race in every state make him the best choice to lead the party into the future.

Those of us in the 11th Congressional

District who have been working in the last year to support Dr. Dean's

Democracy for America group welcome his rise to the top of the DNC candidates list. We'd also welcome our friends and neighbors to join us on the first

Wednesday of each month for a "meet-up" at various local locations (visit www.meetup.com for times and sites).

Kara Gavin
Plymouth

Granholm double take

Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm turned around and said the right thing now that she wouldn't support displaying the Ten Commandments in the Capitol Rotunda. She is calling such a display unconstitutional.

She appeared on public television's *Off the Record* program and said she didn't have a problem with having the commandments at the statehouse.

"I know that will make some people mad. But I think they are universal values," she said.

She said that while the government should not be promoting religion, the Ten Commandments promote "a universal desire for people to behave with dignity and honor God."

In an incredible display of contempt for our nation's laws she spouted, "That is not promoting a particular religion. That is just recognizing some universal values."

More than 100 years ago, Robert Green Ingersoll wrote the following in *Substitute For The Bible As A Moral Guide*: "All the Ten Commandments that are good were old, were the result of experience. The commandments that were original with Jehovah were foolish."

"The worship of 'any other God' could not have been worse than the worship of Jehovah, and nothing could have been more absurd than the sacredness of the Sabbath."

"If commandments had been given against slavery and polygamy, against wars of invasion and extermination, against religious persecution in all its forms, so that the world could be free, so that the brain might be developed and the heart civilized; then we might, with propriety, call such commandments a moral guide."

Wise words.

Alfred Brock
Canton

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

"Char really looks at things and makes sure the I's are dotted and the T's are crossed. She's my type of gal."

- Wayne County Commissioner Kay Beard, D-12th District, about Charlotte Sherman, the 2005 Westland ATHENA Award winner

Fairness in journalism on its way to becoming an old idea

A coalition of news organizations has proclaimed this to be "sunshine week," a time when we celebrate openness in government (such as it is) and fight to get more of it. I've always believed strongly that any government that conducts business in secret is a government to be feared.

So it is with a sense of alarm that I bring you some distressing anecdotes from a sunshine front that this year is, at best, partly cloudy.

Last month it came out that a regular participant in White House news conferences was a fake reporter (James Guckert) using a false name (Jeff Gannon) working for a spurious news service (Talon News) that had no circulation nor readership ... but which was owned by the same guy (Robert Eberle) who also owns a pro-Republican Web site (GOPUSA.com.)

Gannon/Guckert was outed and ousted after asking such inappropriately softball questions that legitimate reporters started wondering what was going on.

More troubling was the news that the Bush administration over the past few years has employed as paid propagandists no less than five "journalists." Two of them wrote syndicated newspaper columns while being paid by the Department of Health and Human Services to promote the administration's "marriage initiatives," while the other three played real newsmen on TV.

For real journalists, taking a bribe of this kind would be as unethical as child molesting. Yet Armstrong Williams was paid \$240,000 by the Department of Education, and Karen Ryan and Alberto Garcia starred in fake reports about the administration's Medicare prescription drug plan, reports branded illegal "covert propaganda" by the Government Accountability Office.

Now you have to admit that the public relations "spin" mastery of this administration has been far better than any other in living memory. Simply dazzling.

But there's a much more insidious side to all this. Some people in the White House and in right-wing think tanks are now arguing there can be no such thing as empirical, verifiable reality in the news — which means that the idea that there could possibly ever be an objective and accurate free press is a quaintly old-fashioned idea. If you believe that, then the implications are clear: You can say, or print, whatever you want to, because it doesn't matter.

An earlier version of this approach was to assert the mainstream news media are dominated by "liberals." From there, it isn't much of a logical leap to mount a wholesale challenge to the accuracy of the media. Another device is simply to be blatant about it. Fox News, which advertises itself as "fair and balanced," is making a pretty good living these days by forthrightly slanting its newscasts to favor the conservative side under the wonderfully crafted marketing slogan, "We report; you decide." How droll.

Not that repeated bumbles by the conventional news media — think of Dan Rather's badly researched and inaccurate story about President Bush's service in the Air Force — haven't made the going easier for the ain't-no-such-thing-as-accuracy crowd. And newspapers such as *The New York Times* can be charged with as obvious a leftward editorial slant as Fox News or *The Wall Street Journal's* editorial page is to the right.

But if there is no such thing as fair, accurate and objective journalism, where will we be as a

people other than as mere targets for manipulation by any means possible? Propaganda, whether sleazy or forthright, is still propaganda. And voters who have no way to find out what's really going on — "objective reality" is the fancy term — are unlikely to make thoughtful choices in a democracy.

We had such a system in American journalism in the 19th century, when most newspapers were either wholeheartedly Republican or Democratic from the headlines right straight through to the editorial page. You read whichever newspaper fit your particular political bias and you considered assertions from the other side nothing more than slander and lies.

Of course, what was absent in all this was the notion that there is something profoundly important for fair-minded people — scholars, even journalists — to try as best they can to determine what is true and what is not as an essential part of their professional code. Some of this thinking goes back to the turn of the century, when Theodor Mommsen, the great German historian of ancient Greece and Rome, argued history should be "Wie es eigentlich gewesen," that things should be — and could be — described "exactly as they were."

As it turned out, economic reality undermined the propagandistic bent to American journalism. Newspaper publishers realized the more people that read their paper, the more they could charge for advertising.

If their circulation was limited, say, only to the Republicans in town, they couldn't maximize circulation — and maximize profits. Thus the origin of the idea that papers should try to be accurate and balanced, at least in their news coverage, while consigning propaganda onto the editorial page as "opinion."

This remains the professional standard for honest newspapers and professional reporters, one that this newspaper tries to observe every week.

But the world of information is no longer defined by what's printed in the newspaper. There's radio, TV and cable. More importantly, there is the cascade of stuff — fact, opinion, blog, whatever — delivered through the medium of the Web. There are no "gatekeepers" on the Web, editors who make it their professional business to maintain standards of accuracy and fairness. Instead, everybody with a computer can be a publisher or a reporter. That's a good thing, to the extent that it democratizes the information flow.

But it's a bad thing if it pollutes a journalism that we have come to depend on as one that strives for accuracy and fairness. We need to know as much of the truth as we can find out about the status of Social Security, for example, not just both parties' propaganda.

This nation, and all our communities, will be in far worse shape if we wind up back in the bad old days when people read only what conformed to their biases. That's how it was back in the 1850s, and that system polarized the nation so much it ended in the bloodiest war Americans have ever fought, our own Civil War. We would do well to avoid another one of those.

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

Don't try to tell me this stuff isn't a sport

A former sports editor used to try to tell me that cheerleading wasn't a sport.

He'd never seen a competitive cheer competition in person, but by his narrow definition a sport pretty much needed to have a ball or puck of some kind and there had to be points or goals kept, usually on a scoreboard. On the other hand, if the winner was chosen by a judge or judges — like figure skating — it wasn't a sport, he'd argue.

And all this was after the Michigan High School Athletic Association sanctioned competitive cheer and decided that it's indeed a sport.

I actually had the same general feeling three years ago when my younger daughter dropped soccer after five years and decided she was going to be a cheerleader.

Now soccer is a sport with balls and scores and it was similar to the football, baseball and basketball that I had always loved. I'd grown to love it. But cheerleading? This shift wasn't easy, especially for me. During my period of withdrawal, I'd go to see local high school and college soccer teams, even find games on television to watch. As for my daughter's new sport, well, I'd tell myself, at least I'd get to watch some football and basketball games during the sideline season.

My view of cheerleading changed quickly, though. I would strenuously argue with that former sports editor in defense of what these girls do as, in fact, a real sport. In the past few years since she's become a cheerleader, I've talked to lots of other parents who also had no idea just how much hard work, training, athleticism and teamwork went into this sport, until they saw it first-hand with their girls.

They need to learn and remember formations; they need balance, gymnastics and tumbling. When it comes to stunts, the flyers need balance and to learn to trust their stunt groups, while the bases and backspots need to be as strong as weightlifters and support the girl they're hoisting on their hands. They lift her, carry her around, catch her, then lift her again.

Like other sports, there are dangers and injuries, but these athletes are asked to be tough. At a competition a few weeks

ago, one of my daughter's teammates twisted an ankle at the end of the first round. Like any athlete not wanting to let down her teammates, she had her ankle taped and went back for the second round and the team performed well.

Parents and fans, though, were unfamiliar with a revised second round, and perhaps anxious about the injury situation. So we weren't on target with our answers to "When we say Blue, you say White. Blue ..." We found out later that the team finished out of the top three places because they were scored so poorly on the fan response. In this particular competition — not sponsored by the MHSAA — fan reaction played into the scoring, but it doesn't in the sanctioned competition cheer events.

Just a few days before a Feb. 26 competition — which was a Livonia Public Schools high school city meet between Churchill, Franklin and Stevenson — one Stevenson girl injured her shoulder. Her injury forced several others girls to learn new positions to fill her spot in different parts of the competition, which was a major challenge.

It didn't quite work as they'd hoped and, though they tried valiantly, Stevenson's varsity came up short. Franklin's varsity squad performed outstanding routines, winning all three rounds to win the city title and a big trophy.

These competitions feature an intense rivalry between the squads, but it's always great that you can see the cheerleaders regularly and enthusiastically cheering the good work of other squads at most every competition.

As a parent, I'm proud of the dedication my daughter has brought to learning and perfecting roundoff back-hand-springs, splits, toe-touches and more. And it's really exciting to watch her and her team perform.

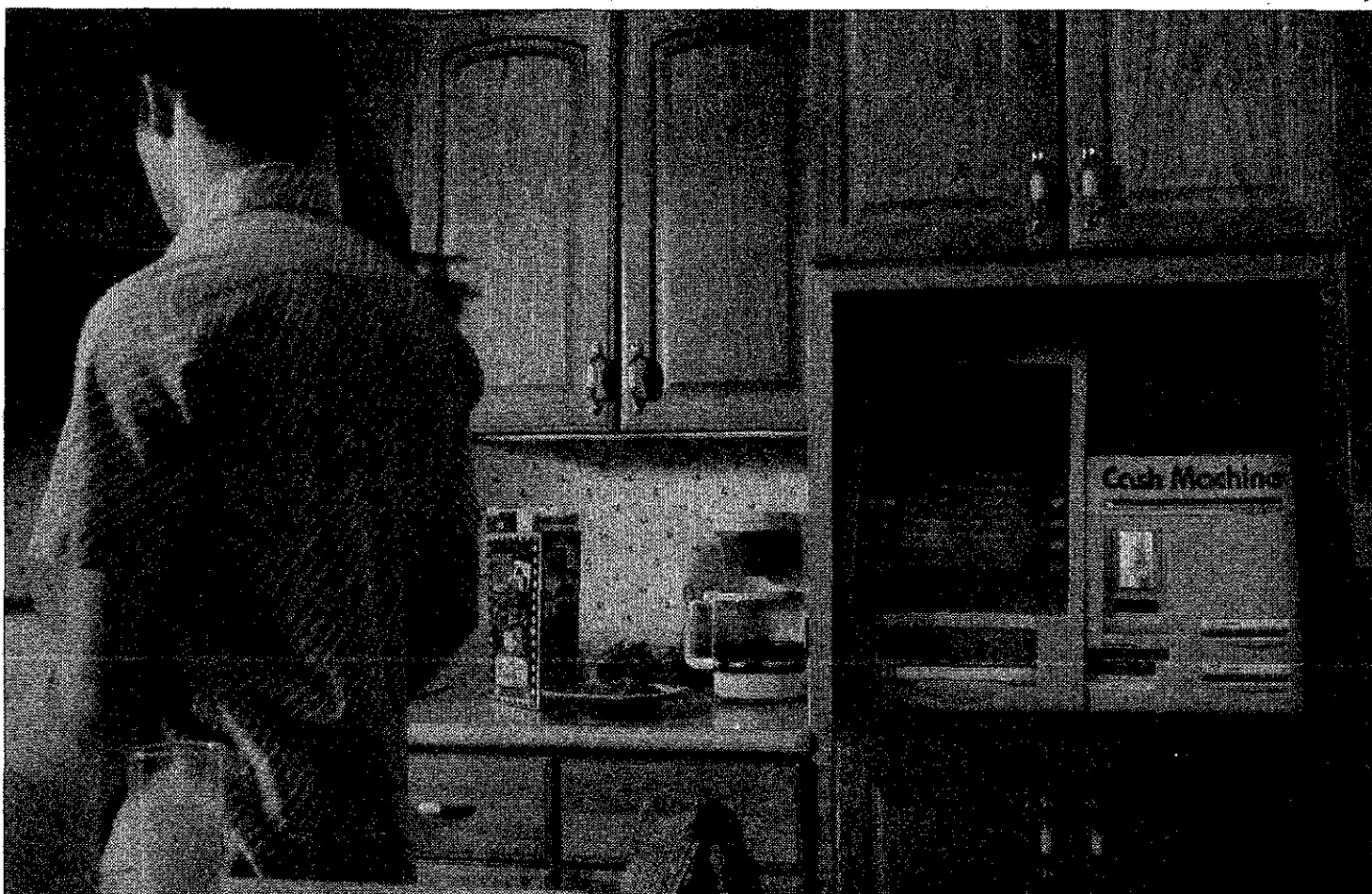
Even better was what I saw from my daughter after the team's less-than-perfect performance on that Saturday. One cheerleader blamed herself for missing her stunt and she was in tears. And there was my daughter with her arm around that disconsolate teammate trying to comfort her. That made me even prouder.

Pride is something that comes naturally to parents of any and all athletes. So don't try to tell me — or any number of other cheer parents out there — that what these girls do on those competition mats each spring isn't a sport.

Dave Varga is editor of the *Livonia Observer*.



Dave Varga



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Act allows law enforcement, schools to compare notes

BY ALEX LUNDBERG
STAFF WRITER

Districts around the state put together a package of information about what crimes have gone on in their districts to share with the state and local law enforcement. The idea is that by keeping tabs and pooling information from various sources, tragedy can be avoided.

The state Legislature approved a public act (PA 102) in 1999 calling on school boards to make a report to the state superintendent at least once a year on all student expulsions and the reasons given for each one. The deadline for reporting is June 30.

Michigan Department of Education Safe Schools Consultant Bob Higgins said the act was created as a response to the times.

"It was probably a reaction to Columbine and other school shootings," he said.

The act also made crime reporting a requirement. Under the act, crimes reported must include physical violence, gang-related activity, illegal possession of controlled substances or intoxicants, trespassing and property crimes like vandalism

and theft.

All the information is passed on to the Center for Educational Performance and Information where it is used for a variety of purposes. CEPI is the state's database for information on school districts and the repository of all data that gets passed on to the federal government to show compliance with No Child Left Behind, the Gun-Free Schools initiative and the Persistently Dangerous Schools program, to name a few.

But the information and where it ends up is really secondary.

"The data collection is a small part," Higgins said. "The legislation requires schools, law enforcement, prosecutors and counselors to set up a system for communication and sharing information. So that they know what's going on with every kid."

PA 102 is an addendum to the Statewide School Safety Information Policy, which spells out basic communication and information sharing rules for school districts and law enforcement entities. The rules ensure a reciprocal relationship for discussions between the two groups.

Whenever an incident hap-

pens in a school building, the superintendent must report that incident to local law enforcement agency. Conversely, when a crime occurs within a 1,000-foot radius of a school building or a pupil or staff member is victim or perpetrator of a crime, law enforcement must contact the superintendent.

The policy also calls for county prosecuting attorneys to contact a school district regarding any criminal or juvenile court action initiated against a pupil in the school system.

Oakland Schools official Carolyn Claerhout said all schools working to comply with reporting requirements are bounded by the federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act which protects the confidentiality of student records. Under the act, parents must give permission before their children's records can be handed out to some other entity.

"Quantitative numbers are all right," Claerhout said. "You can say that there were 10 larcenies in a given year, but to say Johnny Jones committed five of them? Maybe not. The schools have had to juggle between the two laws."

Schoolcraft schedules Focus Latin America events

Schoolcraft College is dedicating a year to Latin America. Focus Latin America will incorporate Latin culture, history, politics and literature into regular college course work and also in events open to the public.

The following are events planned for this spring. More events will be scheduled in the fall, culminating in a Fiesta in November.

■ Latin American Film Festival: "The House of the Spirits." Noon, 3 and 6 p.m. Thursday, March 17, Liberal Arts Building Room 200. Free

■ Lecture: David Frye, University of Michigan, on "The Myth of the Mestizaje." Noon, Monday, March 28, Liberal Arts Building Room 200. Free.

■ Latin American Film Festival: "Frida." Noon, 3 and 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 30, Liberal Arts Building Room 200. Free.

■ Lecture: Deborah Zuccarini, Richard Zuccarini on "Diego Rivera & the Mexican Muralists." 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 5, Liberal Arts Building, Room 200. ♦♦♦♦♦

■ Lecture: Rudy Simons, "Haiti After Jean-Bertrand Aristide." 10 a.m. Tuesday, April 12, Liberal Arts Building Room 200.

■ Latin American Film Festival: "Evita." Noon, 3 and 6 p.m. Thursday, April 14, Liberal Arts Building Room 200. Free.

■ Lecture: Sue Satler, "Perspectives on the United States and El Salvador." 11:30 p.m. Monday, April 18, Liberal Arts Building Room 200.

This year, the college is sponsoring a trip to the Yucatan to study Mayan culture. The trip is part of a college geography class but is also available to the general public. For information on the field trip to Yucatan, call Diane O'Connell at (734) 462-4400, ext. 5238.

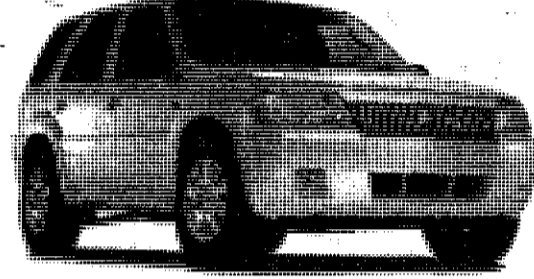


Some Latin American artifacts including a votive candle, center, a mortar and pestle, left, and a ceramic grater, right.

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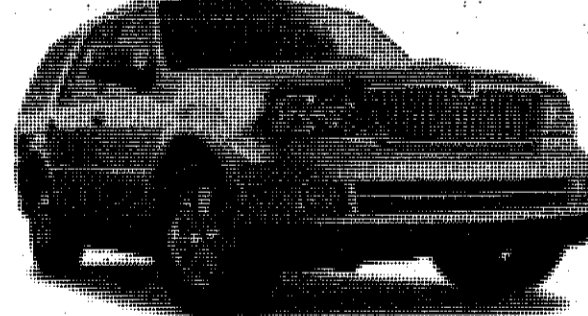
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