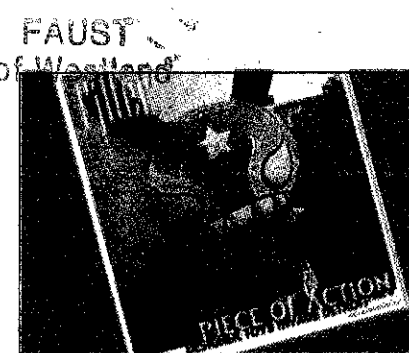
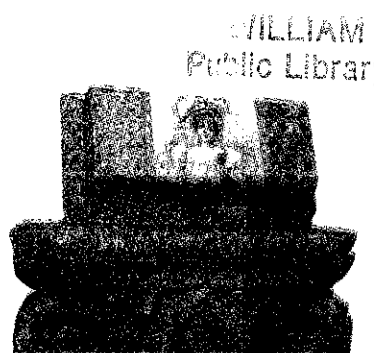


3/31  
**Antique Collector makes it personal**

AT HOME, SECTION B



Toy culture meets fine art at CPOP gallery in Detroit

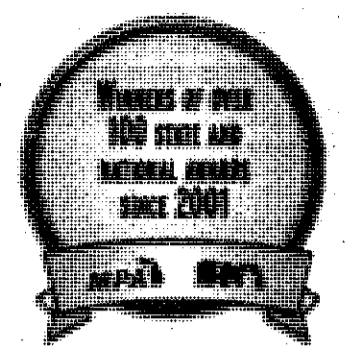
INSERTED SECTION

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**Plastipak seeks relief to make upgrades**

BY DARRELL CLEM  
 STAFF WRITER

A plastics manufacturing company has proposed investing millions of dollars in its Westland facility, if city officials agree to provide tax incentives.

Plastipak Packaging has proposed spending \$15 million to upgrade equipment at its facility on John Hix Road, south of Ford. In return, company officials have asked city leaders for a 12-year reprieve on paying new personal property taxes.

Plastipak officials already have met with city officials to discuss the proposal, and a second round of talks is expected.

"I think we're looking at it open-mindedly," said Westland City Council President Charles Pickering.

Plastipak has several facilities in which it could make the \$15 million investment, he said, "but they would prefer that it be in Westland."

Company officials couldn't be reached early this week, but Pickering estimated that Plastipak employs as many as 200 workers. Plans to upgrade the facility could add more jobs, he said.

The company also is one of the top 20 taxpayers in Westland, said city Assessor James Elrod.

City officials stopped granting tax abatements around 1993, Pickering said, because the economy was strong and it was believed that companies didn't need the relief.

The council even adopted a resolution stating that tax abatements would no longer be offered - a decision that Pickering said could be overturned.

"The economy is different now," he said.

During a meeting last week, city officials asked for more information from Plastipak before deciding whether to offer the tax breaks.

Plastipak hasn't threatened to close its Westland facility, even if the tax abatement is denied, Pickering said. The decision for local officials is whether to lose certain tax revenues for 12 years to ensure investment in the local facility.

"They're going to make that investment somewhere," Pickering said.

dclem@oe.homecomm.net | (734) 953-2110



Jeff Kreitner, 14, of Westland and a freshman at John Glenn High School, airs it out off the volcano at Westland's Concrete Jungle skate park during spring break.

**Airborne**

Spring break, warm weather draw crowds to skate park

BY DARRELL CLEM  
 STAFF WRITER

Westland's skate park, Concrete Jungle, has drawn large crowds since it opened last Friday - a sure sign that spring has arrived.

"It has been packed," Westland Parks and Recreation Director Robert Kosowski said. "I don't know if it's because these kids had cabin fever or what, but they're definitely out there."

Concrete Jungle had been closed since Nov. 22, but Kosowski said he is optimistic that the skate park's fourth season will be



John Glenn sophomore Ryan Albright, 16, of Westland tries a 'flip' on the boards at the Concrete Jungle.

successful. The outdoor park is located on the west side of the Bailey Recreation Center, behind Westland City Hall on Ford

PLEASE SEE SKATE PARK, A5

**City officials press case for block grant money**

BY DARRELL CLEM  
 STAFF WRITER

Westland city officials remain worried about possibly losing federal dollars for local programs that help senior citizens, troubled youths, public safety departments, low-income homeowners and physically disabled residents.

Local leaders concede that President George W. Bush isn't likely to receive the support he needs from U.S. legislators to eliminate Community Development Block Grant programs.

"The program appears to be safe at this time," Westland Community Development Director James Gilbert said. "But now we're concerned about what the funding level will be."

Bush's plan would slash CDBG funding and shift the program, along with 16 others, from the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department to the Commerce Department.

Westland receives \$1.2 million a year in CDBG funds, but local officials fear possible cuts amid talks of shifting the federal dollars from Midwest and Northeast states to the south and west, Gilbert said.

"We think that our federal legislators, if they really represent the state of Michigan and their constituents, will not go along with shifting the money," he said. "We've possibly won one battle, but the war goes on, and there just appears to be attempts to slash a lot of domestic programs that are really good programs."

Earlier this month, the Westland City Council and Mayor Sandra Cicirelli adopted a joint resolution detailing how the city for 30 years has benefited from CDBG funds.

"It's our tax dollars that are being returned to local government to benefit our residents, and it has been proven over the years that it helps our community provide services to those in need," council President Charles Pickering said.

The money has been used to:

- Revitalize low-income homes and stabilize once-declining neighborhoods.
- Improve roads, water lines, public sidewalks and sewer systems and remove diseased ash trees in eligible neighborhoods.
- Buy fire department vehicles and public warning sirens and upgrade fire stations, including building a new station on the city's southeast side.

PLEASE SEE GRANT, A5

**Suspect linked to dozens of break-ins**

BY DAN WEST  
 STAFF WRITER

Investigators say a 46-year-old Westland man arrested for breaking into a home in the Ann Arbor Road-Ann Arbor Trail area may be linked to a number of home invasions in Livonia and Westland in recent months.

"We've had an extraordinary number of home invasions here over the past two

months," said Livonia police Lt. Greg Winn. "We've known of this suspect for a while, but he was one of many possible suspects."

He added the man is a suspect in at least a dozen Livonia home invasions, including two in the State Streets subdivision last week.

The parolee was arrested early Tuesday morning by Livonia officers responding to a home invasion on Houghton at 12:25 a.m. Someone chucked a rock through a bed-

room window to enter the home, steal jewelry and walk out the front door. The homeowners were out of town at the time.

As officers arrived, they observed a Chrysler LHS leaving the area. Police, notified by a home security alarm company, stopped the vehicle and started asking the driver questions. Winn said there were inconsistencies in the suspect's statements,

PLEASE SEE SUSPECT, A5



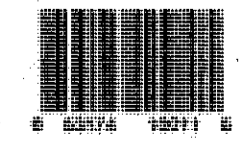
PHOTO BY HEATHER ROUSSEAU

**Now presenting . . .**

Len Fisher (center) directs Andrew Fisher and Courtney Nikon during practice for the Genesis Worship Center's upcoming play. For more, see Page A7.

**CONTACT US**

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**Coming Sunday on the PINK Page**

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# Fried pushes early childhood ed and rebuilding of schools

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA  
STAFF WRITER

Bill Fried, a 66-year-old Livonia attorney, is among seven candidates aiming for a seat on the Livonia Board of Education. If elected, he would push for more emphasis on early childhood education, vocational opportunities for students who aren't college-bound, and a stronger high school academic program.

Fried has been a Livonia resident since 1972 and raised four children who attended Livonia Public Schools.

"I moved here, like many people, for the school system," he said. Fried became involved in the schools when his son was interested in taking vocational classes but wanted to maintain an academic path for college. That wasn't a possibility, Fried recalled, so he fought to change the rules. "The people who control the education system are the ones who have academic degrees," he

said. "You need to have skilled trades in there."

He said teachers with a nontraditional academic background have a lot to give students.

Early education is another major concern for Fried. "Education starts before kindergarten," he said. "Why do we wait to teach a foreign language? Why don't we start younger?"

Likewise, he wants to see a change in high school curriculum. Fried was disheartened at recent news that reading statistics that showed weakness at the high school level. He said he wants to find out "why they're failing" rather than spend time to "re-train high school and middle school teachers."

"Are we here to train teachers or to are we here to educate kids?" he asked.

Fried has run for school board trustee about four times, he said. He's pushing for a change in the way board members think about education and address problems, like funding.

"They're operating a system that's not self-sustainable," he said. "We are in a crisis."

Fried proposed that the district institute a merit pay raise system,

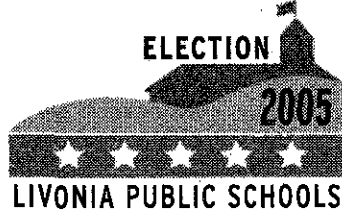
Editor's note: The following is the first in a series of candidate profiles for Livonia Public Schools Board of Education candidates. District voters will elect two people to four-year terms in the Tuesday, May 3, election.

Candidates are William C. Fried, Frank Kalinski, Steve King, Dan Lessard and Cynthia Markarian. Candidate Christopher C. Kaufman filed, but has chosen not to campaign.

rather than continue to pay increases in salary as funds are dwindling.

He said dollars alone are not the answer to Livonia's financial problems. Money won't transfer into student achievement, he said.

Fried would like to see a master plan created for the school district, a method of deciding where



money would be best spent and why. "There may be more economical ways to look at these buildings," he said.

Fried believes rebuilding school buildings would foster growth and solve Livonia's concerns of declining enrollment. "Rebuilding can affect demographic proportions," he said, adding that revamping neighborhoods will also draw in businesses.

"No one has tried this," he said. "I throw out ideas and concepts. I do think they should have a vision of where you'd like to be. It's the marketplace of ideas. Nothing should be considered out-of-bounds."

Fried admits change is necessary in Livonia, and he doesn't expect it will happen overnight. "Sometimes it takes a long time to sell the program," he said.

scasola@oe.homecomm.net | (734) 953-2054

## Livonia board race loses candidate

The race for seats on the Livonia Board of Education just got somewhat smaller. One of the six candidates has decided to drop out, five weeks prior to election day.

"I have decided to not pursue election to the position any further," wrote Christopher C. Kaufman in an e-mail message sent Sunday.

Kaufman did not attend the first public candidate forum, organized by the Livonia Democratic Club on March 16.

He is currently a full-time student at Eastern Michigan University, and works as graphic designer.

Kaufman said he has chosen to support the two incumbent candidates seeking election on May 3 - Daniel Lessard and Cynthia Markarian.

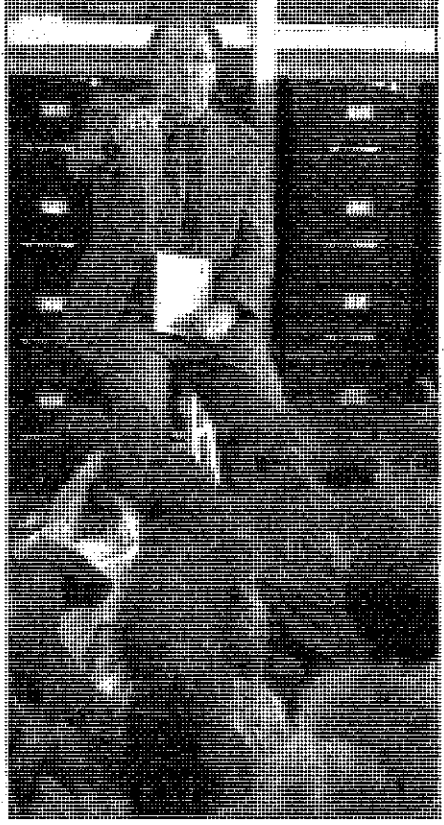
"I believe Mr. Lessard and Ms. Markarian have a proven track record and will continue to provide excellent service to our schools," he said. "I wish them the best of luck in their bids for re-election."

Also campaigning for the two four-year terms on the board are William C. Fried, Frank Kalinski and Steve King.

By Stephanie A. Casola

**He reads ... he scores**

He's the familiar voice as the Detroit Red Wings, but with the hockey season canceled, announcer Ken Kal put his voice to good use reading Percy the Parrot Passes the Puck to students at Lincoln Elementary School. Kal was a guest reader at the school as part of its March is Reading Month activities. He also discussed the importance of reading with students and donated 300 CCHA (college hockey) playoff tickets to the school. The tickets were raffled off during Family Literacy Night.



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## Bills would reform setting of insurance rates

State Rep. Glenn S. Anderson, D-Westland, is urging his colleagues in the state Legislature to pass bills that would reform the secretive process by which the Michigan Catastrophic Claims Association is able to continue raising insurance rates.

The MCCA is raising its 2005-06 rate to \$141.70. The 11.4-percent increase, which takes effect July 1, will be added to insurance premiums that auto insurers charge to each of the 7.1 million motorists in Michigan. The 2004 rate was \$127.24.

"As we recognize 'Sunshine Week' in Michigan, and as our state government, our agencies and even many businesses are now open to public accountability, the MCCA continues to operate behind closed doors," Anderson said. "How do they set their rates? What formula do they use? Is it justifiable? We will never know unless the

MCCA lets us see how it conducts its business.

This cloak of secrecy is at odds with the public's call for more openness. Insurance rates should not be a mystery to the motorists of Michigan. The consumer deserves a right to know how those rates are set."

Jennifer M. Granholm has called for the passage of the legislation Anderson has introduced, saying, "The public needs to have a say in this process, and I call on the Legislature to add sunshine to the process of setting our citizens' auto insurance rates."

Senate Bills 152 and 153, introduced with bi-partisan support by Sen. Mark Schauer, and House Bills 4140 and 4141, introduced by Rep. Lee Gonzalez, would add a member of the general public to the MCCA board. The bills also would require that the MCCA be included under the Freedom

of Information Act (FOIA) and Open Meetings Act (OMA.)

House Bill 4112, introduced by Anderson, will increase the MCCA board to nine members, including three members of the general public.

"Public input is a vital check on our insurance rates, and it will help keep those rates affordable for Michigan's motorists," Anderson said.

The MCCA, an independent insurance fund that pays for the care of severely injured motorists when such claims exceed \$250,000. The MCCA requires all auto insurance companies in Michigan to pay a certain amount into the fund.

The MCCA sets the amount paid into the fund. In 2001, the MCCA rate was \$14.41, and has skyrocketed since. Last year, MCCA rates were raised to record highs. The rates are determined by five insurance executives who assess the

reserve amount needed for the MCCA fund.

Because the MCCA is a statutorily established private association, it isn't subject to FOIA or OMA laws. There also is no public member on the current board who can represent the interests of the millions of insurance rate payers.

"It's certainly appropriate during 'Sunshine Week' to demand more accountability and transparency on the MCCA and its decision making process," Granholm said. "Michigan drivers are paying the tab and have the right to hold the MCCA accountable and to know how their auto rates have been set."

Granholm declared the week of March 13 as Sunshine Week in Michigan to encourage more government access for the citizens of Michigan who have the right to know how public officials are representing them and spending their tax dollars.

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FOR THE RECORD

DEATHS

Elizabeth Klaver Jenkins, 78, of Traverse City, died March 27.

Mary Elizabeth "Molly" Mundt, 63, of Plymouth, died March 26.

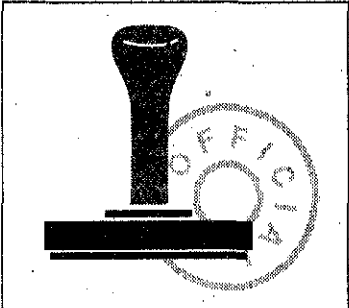
Ann Bleakley Spicer, 77, formerly of Birmingham, died March 28.

MIKE MODANO ICE ARENA

Open Skating
Open skating is available noon-1:45 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday and Friday now through March 31. Cost is \$3.50 for children and seniors and \$4.50 for adults.

BAILEY RECREATION CENTER

Court Use
Court costs are based on prime time hours - 4-10 p.m. Monday-Friday and all day Saturday and Sunday - and non-prime time hours - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday-Friday.



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.

for non-residents. Students pay \$1, but must show middle school or high school identification card.
Weight/Fitness Room
The weight/fitness room is open 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven days a week.

Facility and Park Rentals

Various room sizes are available for all occasions, including showers, wedding receptions, parties, classes, business meetings, etc.
Park Rentals - Pavilions, tables and grills are available May through October.

Jerry Dunn: His work benefited children

BY LEANNE ROGERS STAFF WRITER

Having spent his career working to benefit children and schools, Gerald Dunn continued those efforts until he died Tuesday.
Director of the Metropolitan Association for Improved School Legislation, Mr. Dunn, 70, of Williamston was at work until shortly before his death Tuesday in Garden City.

'Jerry will be missed. He did everything for K-12 and higher education.'

Marilyn Dunn
Mr. Dunn's wife

from Genesee County and served one term during which he chaired the Senate education committee.
In 1968, Mr. Dunn was elected as a University of Michigan regent and served in that position until 1984.

Many current school administrators were influenced by Mr. Dunn, his wife said, citing him as a professional mentor.

'Jerry will be missed. He did everything for K-12 and higher education,' said Dunn, a former legislative employee who worked for 10 years for former state representative William Keith (D-Garden City). 'He was instrumental in the state aid act. He was great for children.'
Arraignments were handled by John Santeiu and Son Funeral Home. No services were scheduled.

diagnosed his cancer there in October and underwent treatment in January, so they will be able to see the affects.
Once the medical school has released Mr. Dunn's body, it will be cremated and a private graveside service will be held in Williamston.
Other survivors include his children Leslie (Wally) Paulauskas, Carolyn, Stephen and Terrence; stepchildren Richard (Linda) Schmidt, Deborah (John Backus), Stephen Schmidt and Thomas (Karen) Schmidt; four grandchildren; five step-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.
Memorial donations may be made to Champions for Children Campaign, Mott Children's Hospital, 301 E. Liberty, Suite 400, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

irogers@oe.homecomm.net | (734) 953-2103

RECYCLING & COMPOSTING

RECYCLING

Westland's Recycling Center, located behind the Economic Growth Center at 37095 Marquette, is open all year for Westland residents only.
Hours of operation April 4 through October 21 are 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday. The center is closed on Sunday and holidays year round.
The center accepts:
- Clean newsprint stacked neatly, 6-15 inches high, tied with twine, or packed into paper bags. Papers must be dry, no mold. NO junk mail, catalogs, magazines or phone books, office paper, computer paper or cardboard accepted.
- Plastics (#1 or #2) drink jugs and colored laundry detergent-type jugs (HDPE No. 2 and PET No. 1) that are cleaned and washed out. No lids, no plastic bags, no caustic material (such as drain cleaner) containers and no oil or antifreeze containers are accepted.
- Cans - aluminum (WON'T stick to a magnet) cans only - no scrap metal, out-of-state beverage cans with no Michigan deposit. No foil or foil containers. And metal (steel that WILL stick to a magnet) - tin cans (actually steel cans with tin plating.) Rinse clean, remove labels, remove both ends and flatten to size in the dumpster. No paint, aerosol cans or scrap metal.

Used motor oil (Friday or Saturday drop-off only). Containers are to be taken and reused. Used motor oil will not be collected during the winter months. It may be brought into the Transfer Site on Friday and Saturday only during the hours of 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Batteries (automotive, watch, camera, hearing aid, lithium or Ni-Cad batteries) are accepted. Flashlight type dry cell batteries, watch batteries, camera batteries, hearing aid batteries, Ni-Cad batteries and automotive batteries at the Recycling Center Only. There also are battery receptacles located at the following City buildings for all batteries except automotive: City Hall, senior Friendship Center, Westland Public Library, Dorsey Center, Westland Cable TV and Fire Station No. 5
Glass bottles and jars washed clean with labels removed. Remove lids and metal rings (put in metal bin). No plate glass, ceramics (mugs, plates, etc.), Pyrex cookware, Mr. Coffee pots, dirty containers with food left in them and mirrors.
No yard, medical or hazardous waste is accepted at the center. For hazardous waste disposal, contact the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality at (800) 662-9278.

Contents may be left in the form of five garbage cans or 10 garbage bags. The total contents cannot exceed 60 pounds. Tree removal not accepted. Do not compost food scraps, animal waste, chemicals or sod.
The compost season, picking up of grass clippings and small branches, is April 5 through Dec. 9.
Compost is picked up the same day as regular trash. Compost must be in cans with a yard waste sticker attached or Kraft type brown bags. Plastic bags WILL NOT be accepted. Compost must be separated from regular household garbage by 10 feet. Mixed compost and garbage WILL NOT be picked up.
A separate truck will be picking up compost. Brush or limbs must not be longer than 4 feet nor larger than 3 inches in diameter and must be tied in small bundles with strong cord (no tape). Maximum of eight bundles per week allowed. NO STUMPS OR ROOTS.
Cardboard boxes containing compost will not be picked up. Sod, dirt, wood chips or landscaping material (wood chips, mulch, gravel, stone, cement, etc.), vines (of any sort), WILL NOT BE PICKED UP.
Residents will have the responsibility of disposal. Bundles of hay/straw MUST be broken down and put into cans or paper bags.
Christmas trees will be picked up at the curb for two weeks starting in January following the Christmas holiday.

COMPOSTING

Compost is grass clippings, leaves, yard and garden waste (excluding pumpkins) pruning debris and brush.

GARDEN CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT
6000 MIDDLEFIELD
GARDEN CITY, MI 48135

Table with 3 columns: YEAR & MAKE, STYLE, VIN #. Lists vehicles for auction.

Published: March 31, 2005

Cherry Hill School of Performing Arts
2005-2006 Open Enrollment

April 15 - April 29 2005
Applications available at, and must be submitted to,
Cherry Hill School of Performing Arts
28500 Avondae
Inkster, MI 48141

Academy of Inster
2005-2006 Open Enrollment

April 15 - April 24 2005
Applications available at, and must be submitted to,
Academy of Inster
28612 Avondae
Inkster, MI 48141

Academy of Wetland
2005-2006 Open Enrollment

April 15 - April 24 2005
Applications available at, and must be submitted to,
Academy of Wetland
300 Henry Ruf Rd.
Westland, MI 48186

Published: March 31, 2005

Wayne-Westland Community Schools
Westland, Michigan 48185

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS
RE-BID

Sealed bids for the re-bid of Wayne-Westland Community Schools' Bid Package #15,

Consisting of: Parking Lot & Bus Loop Expansions at Edison, Elliott, Hamilton, Lincoln, and Vandenberg Elementary Schools

will be received until 1:30 P.M. local time on Wednesday, April 13, 2005 at which time they will be opened and read publicly at Wayne-Westland Community School Board of Education Office, located at 36745 Marquette, Westland, Michigan 48185. Bids received after this time and date will be returned unopened.

Faxed proposals will not be accepted.

This Bid Package will consist of a separate sealed bid for the following Bid Divisions:

Table with 2 columns: Bid Division Description, Bid Division Number

Bidding documents prepared by TMP Associates, Inc. will be available for public inspection at the office of the Construction Manager, McCarthy & Smith, Inc., 24317 Indoplex Circle, Farmington Hills, MI 48335; the FW Dodge Plan Room, Southfield; the Construction Association of Michigan Plan Room, Bloomfield Hills; and the Daily Construction Reports Plan Room, Detroit.

Bidders may obtain one (1) set of bidding documents and re-bid addendum #1, beginning Monday, March 28, 2005, by contacting the Construction Manager, McCarthy & Smith, Inc., at (248) 427-8400. Additional plans may be ordered and purchased directly from Dunn Blue Reprographics Technology, (248) 353-2950. Bids are to be submitted in a sealed envelope supplied by the Construction Manager, McCarthy & Smith, Inc. The bid division(s) being bid is/are to be identified on the outside of the envelope.

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.

Each bid shall be accompanied by a Bid Bond in the amount of five (5) percent of the amount of the bid, payable to Wayne-Westland Community Schools, as a guarantee that if the proposal is accepted, the bidder will execute the contract and file the required bonds within ten (10) days after notice of award of contract.

If awarded a contract, the successful bidder will be required to furnish a Performance Bond and Labor and Material Payment Bond. Wayne-Westland Community Schools reserves the right to reject any or all bids received and to waive any informalities and irregularities in the bidding.

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

Published: March 31, 2005

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INFORMATION CENTRAL

April is the 10th annual National Poetry Month. Inaugurated by the Academy of American Poets in 1996, National Poetry Month brings together publishers, booksellers, literary organizations, libraries, schools, and poets around the country to celebrate poetry and its vital place in American culture.
Thousands of businesses and nonprofit organizations participate through readings, festivals, book displays, workshops, and other events. For more information see the National Poetry Month We site at www.poets.org/npm.
The William P. Faust Public Library of Westland has a large poetry collection. There is something for all tastes and ages, including many poetry books for children. In fact, searching under the subject heading juvenile poetry, there are nearly 800 books to choose from.
Our librarians have created a well-rounded poetry collection that includes both the classics and new types of poetry, such as hip-hop, that appeal to teens. In our collection you can find favorites by Ogden Nash (remember Custard the Dragon?) and how about A Light in the Attic by Shel Silverstein? You will

find that we have most of the classic poems from history.
At times people remember only a fragment of a poem or just the first line, but not the poet. Librarians used to have to refer to large poetry index books but now we have a wonderful and easy to use electronic tool called "LitFinder." This can be found on our Web page by clicking on "reference sites" and then "LitFinder." Inside LitFinder, click on "Poems" and search more than 125,000 full-text poems online.
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Happy Hounds Dog Day Care. We also offer Dog Obedience Classes beginning on April 11 & May 10. Tired of finding your own entertainment? Come play with us instead!

## Westland teen nets scholarship

Westland resident Aaron Sieloff is among six winners of scholarships totaling \$11,000 from Co-op Services Credit Union.

Sieloff of Divine Child High School and Southgate resident Jessica Nickrand of Southgate Anderson High School received Co-op's \$4,000 renewable Al Williams and Harlan Richardson Scholarships.

Winners of the \$1,000 Mark Stroebel and Margaret Kremer-Hehman Scholarships are Redford resident Gregory Rost of Detroit Catholic Central and Dearborn Heights resident Ashley Ostrowski of Crestwood High School.

Livonia resident Elizabeth Turbiak of Stevenson High School and Belleville resident

Eboni Elam of Belleville High School receive the \$500 William Allen and James Cullimore Scholarships.

Since the scholarship program began in 1995, Co-op Services Credit Union has awarded more than \$80,000 in scholarships to outstanding high school seniors who are also members.

"Each scholarship is named for a pioneer of Co-op Services Credit Union," said Michael A. O'Hehir, chairman of the volunteer board of directors. "It's always an honor to recognize these deserving students and their families at our annual meeting. This year was even more special because of our 50th year celebration."

In addition to awarding scholarships for graduating

high school seniors to continue their education, Co-op Services Credit Union offers a "Next Generation Savings Club" for children to age 17 to learn how to save and manage their money before entering adulthood.

Co-op Services Credit Union has approximately 43,000 members, maintaining branch offices in Dearborn, Livonia, Walled Lake, Westland and Downriver. Members also have access to any of 23 Family Service Center shared branches located throughout Michigan.

For more information about Co-op Services, visit the credit union Web site at [www.cscu.org](http://www.cscu.org) or call toll free at (800) 321-8570.

## SUSPECT

FROM PAGE A1

giving police probable cause to search the vehicle.

The search revealed a jewelry box with the Houghton homeowner's name engraved on top. In the trunk, investigators found a number of pieces of jewelry, cameras and collectibles.

"It was a good piece of police work by those officers because they didn't catch him in the house; they caught him driving away," Winn said.

After obtaining a search warrant, Livonia and Westland police sifted through the suspect's Westland home Tuesday evening at the Wilderness Park Apartments on Warren between Newburgh and Central City Parkway. Investigators said they found a number of valuable items in the apartment, including some firearms.

"We believe he's done a number of Westland B&Es," Westland police Lt. James Ridener said Wednesday. As police contact recent break-in victims and items are reclaimed, investigators said it will take some time to connect the home invasions with the suspect. Winn added police have evidence the suspect was selling the jewelry for cash.

"We expect him to be arraigned on preliminary charges in the next day or two," Winn said Wednesday. "I imagine there will be initial charges, and as we sort through the evidence, there will be additional charges filed later."

The man, Winn said, was paroled for past convictions of home invasion, receiving and concealing stolen property and robbery. Other police agencies, he added, may want to interview this suspect as part of home invasion and robbery investigations in their communities.

Staff writer Darrell Ciem contributed to this report.

dwest@oe.homecomm.net | (734) 953-2109

## GRANT

FROM PAGE A1

■ Hire community police officers and help the city's Youth Assistance Program, which provides services and programs for troubled youngsters.

■ Provide affordable rental units for hundreds of low-income families and make certain homes more accessible for physically disabled residents.

■ Build the award-winning senior citizen Friendship Center and operate it.

■ Improve parks by purchasing new playground equipment and build walking paths and picnic shelters.

■ Make city facilities more accommodating to disabled residents and provide transportation for homebound senior citizens.

■ Help support domestic violence prevention programs and provide emergency food for families in need.

Those are just a few reasons cited by city leaders in approving the resolution opposing Bush's plans to eliminate CDBG programs.

"Many of our local programs are dependent on those funds," Pickering said.

City leaders hope that the resolution will help put pressure on federal legislators to protect CDBG programs and to oppose any efforts to shift money from one U.S. region to another.

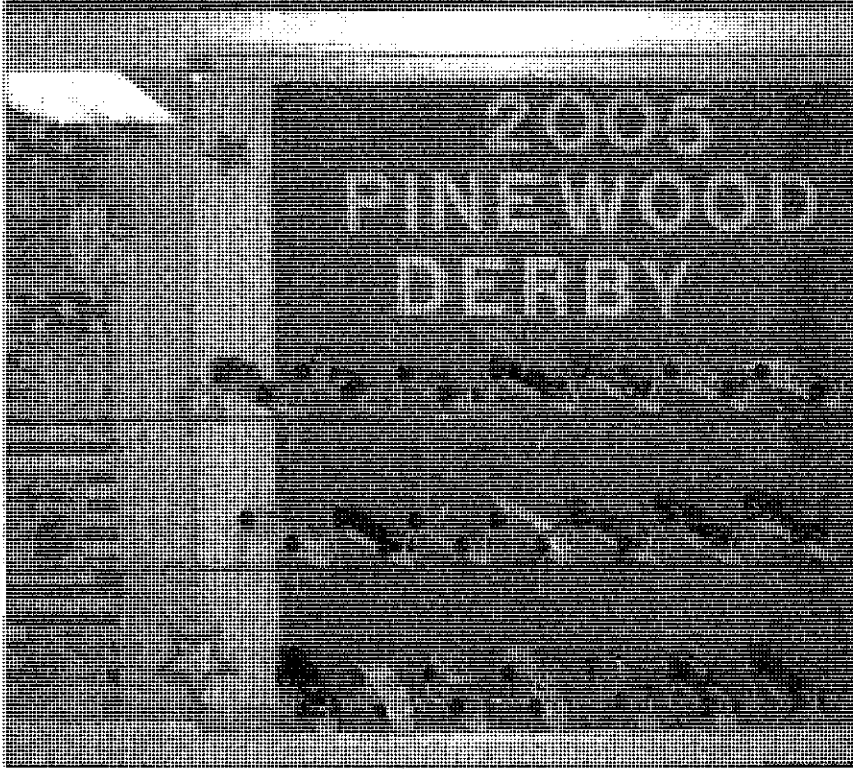
Bush has proposed cutting CDBG funding by consolidating the program with 17 other federal programs as part of the new federal budget.

U.S. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter, R-Livonia, recently issued a statement saying he supports protecting the CDBG program. He also said he proposed a plan, during a meeting of the House Budget Committee, that would restore some of the president's proposed cuts.

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## Zoom, zoom

The Pinewood Derby cars of Cub Scout Pack 1526 were displayed in a Madison Elementary School showcase before the big race. The scouts designed and made the cars. The fastest will advance to Sunset District race in May. Teachers served as judges, picking best stock vehicle design, best modified vehicle design, best paint job and best overall theme.



## SKATE PARK

FROM PAGE A1

east of Newburgh.

Since last July 1 — the start of the city's new budget year — Concrete Jungle has brought in \$14,167 in gross revenues.

If that trend continues, then the skate park will likely meet its projected revenue of \$30,478 for the budget year that will end June 30, Kosowski said.

In all, 4,032 fans of skateboarding and inline skating visited the facility since last July 1. Particularly large crowds are expected this week, with local students out of

school for spring break.

Largely funded by Wayne County tax dollars, Concrete Jungle was built and opened in 2002 after skateboarding fans pleaded with city officials to find a way to help them enjoy their sport.

Many of them had run into problems with property owners for using business parking lots and ramps.

Kosowski said he is hopeful that this season could be among the best for Concrete Jungle.

"I think we're going to do really well," he said.

The skate park is open 3 p.m. until dark Monday through Friday and 11 a.m. until dark Saturday and

Sunday.

Cost is \$3 per session. Only one session is scheduled for weekdays, but there are two sessions on weekends: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. until dark. Patrons can pay \$5 for all-day access on weekends.

Those using Concrete Jungle need to bring their own skateboards or inline skates. However, other supplies can be rented at the Bailey Recreation Center. Activities in Concrete Jungle are monitored.

"We have an attendant who's out there all the time," Kosowski said.

For more information, call the center at (734) 722-7620.

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# Change of venues

## Worship center evolves into theatrical troupe

BY DIANE GALE ANDREASSI  
CORRESPONDENT

The Rev. Len Fisher has the actors, audiences and even the dates for his next theater show. All he needs is a place to perform.

A theater group emerged a couple of years ago during Fisher's time as pastor of the First Missionary Church on Palmer Road in Westland. He came to the church in 2000 shortly after the congregation voted to close.

"We needed to do something, because we desired to find new and artistic ways in expressing the gospel," Fisher said. "We were struggling for ways to build up membership."

The church became the Genesis Worship Center for the Arts, combining church services and hosting theater productions.

"We wanted to bring our message through the arts," Fisher said. "It was an evolution. We're where imagination and inspiration meet."

Genesis Worship Center for the Arts remained open until October 2004, however, the lack of members and money finally closed the doors. But, it didn't put an end to Fisher's hand in theater.

"I'm an artistic director who happened to be a pastor," he explained. The pastor of Warren Road Light

and Life Free Methodist Church in Westland saw one of Fisher's shows and hired him to do *A Christmas Carol* at his church.

"When I completed the project I realized this is what I was good at and what I enjoyed doing," he added.

Last January he started canvassing friends about the possibility of launching his new endeavor, Renaissance Productions. The response was overwhelming and he's currently looking for nonprofit status.

"By the time we were done with the meeting, the enthusiasm was so great we had a partial season with two shows," he said.

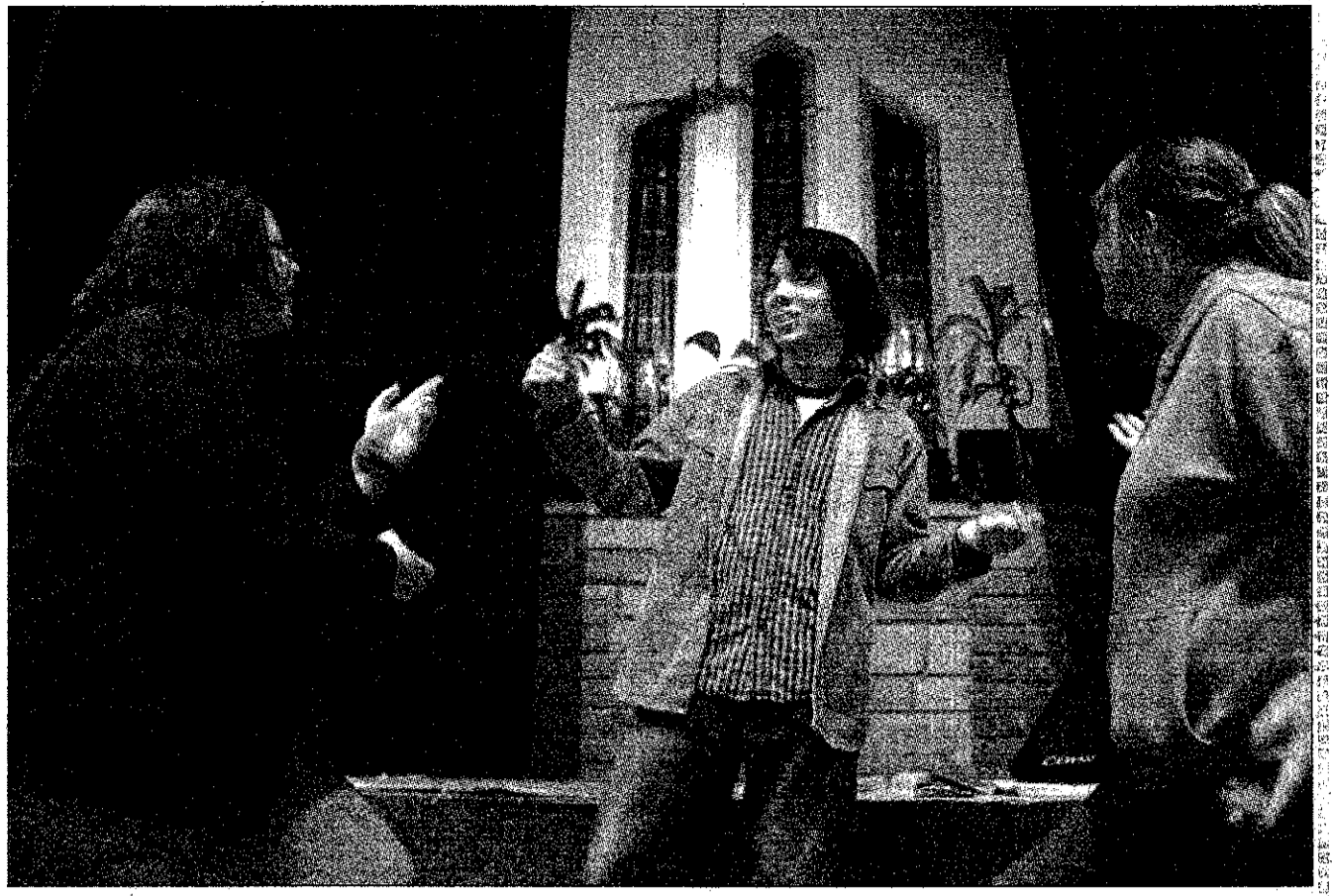
His new theater, once a location is finalized, will be called Inspired Theater.

### DEDICATED CAUSE

"It's a fun fear," he said. "Because we don't know where we're going to land. I have a board and a group of actors dedicated to this cause. We're bringing quality theater to western Wayne County and our mission is to change the planet one actor at a time."

His audience does seem to be growing.

Earlier in March, the pastor of First United Methodist of Wayne, Dave Stewart, saw a Genesis



PHOTOS BY HEATHER ROUSSEAU

Heather Thornton (from left), Andrew Fisher and Courtney Nikon rehearse the Prodigal Son scene an upcoming Renaissance Productions' play.

Worship Center for the Arts production and asked Renaissance Productions to perform at his church.

They presented *That's Amore*, a musical tribute to love and marriage.

"Is there a Christian message? Absolutely, but it's not an overt, blatant message," he added. "We're a group that happens, right now, to be a group of Christians. We're not a Christian theater."

While the actors and production people pray at the start of their practices and performances, Fisher said, non-religious people can take that time to focus and regroup.

Michelle and Greg Fuchs are members of Warren Road Light and Life Free Methodist Church and have performed in a couple of Fisher's productions.

Michelle said she loves the venue not only for artistic outlet, but it also gives her an opportunity for evangelism when the show deals with a Christian message.

"We've also gotten to know people in our church who we didn't know before," she said. "On Sundays, they'll come up to us and give us a hug."

### NONDENOMINATIONAL

Fisher said he's looking for people who love to do theater and their reli-

gious affiliation is not a big concern.

"We can't guarantee that we won't affect them," he adds. "It's not our purpose to change the people involved."

"But, when you get involved you end up being changed."

Renaissance Production's next show is *Godspell*, May 20-22, but even though Fisher said he doesn't know where the stage will be he doesn't seem terribly concerned. He recently held auditions and filled all the female parts. He's still looking for three men, from 17 to 30, to sing and act in the show.

Everyone has a creativeness inside, but they might not be aware of that ability, he adds.

"Our goal is to help bring that creativity to the surface in an entertaining way," Fisher said.

Tones of his preacher days emerge now and then when he's talking about the theater company.

"I don't have a church," he said. "I have a group of people who love me and put up with me and trust me in that I know what I'm doing," he said. "I tell them constantly that our theater is not about them."

"It's about the audience and what we're trying to say. In fact, the time they spend in the productions and getting ready for the productions has to be fun or they're not doing it right."

Fisher said he started with a group of people, most of whom had not done theater before.

"I pushed and shoved, sometimes willingly and sometimes not," he said.

"When they saw the production they had a blast. We had a group of people on stage who acted like a team and believed what they were doing was making a difference. They were stretched beyond what they thought they could do, but they excelled and they continued to amaze."

Aside from his own theater company endeavor, Fisher hints that something is brewing on the Westland arts front in general, maybe in the form of an arts council.

"We want to see an arts council in Westland," he said. "We want to see theater, art shows and art in the park. We want to take performing arts into the school."

Noting that Westland is without a performing arts center, Fisher said, an arts council could change Westland's image.

"People will come to Westland in order to be artistically stimulated," Fisher said.

"Right now, I don't think we're telling young people, 'You are creative and you just haven't discovered it.'"



Heather Thornton (from left), Courtney Nikon, Matt Holland, Danielle Peterson, Andrew Fisher and piano player Sue Fisher do vocal warmups during practice for upcoming play.

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**OUR VIEWS**

**Rec program does right by residents**

The Friends of Frontier Park may be grabbing all of the attention with their proposed \$35 million recreation complex, but before we get too caught up in that heady dream, it would be nice to acknowledge what we have.

If you haven't gotten a copy of the Parks and Recreation Department's newest recreation brochure, take time to get one and then take time to open it up and look inside.

Spring, summer, winter and fall, there are special events, sports programs and ongoing classes that give youngsters and oldsters an opportunity to stretch their muscles and their minds at the Bailey Center and the city parks scattered around the city.

Some events like Winter Fest have gone by the wayside because of the budget constraints, but tried-and-true favorites like the annual Summer Festival, Fishing Derby at Friendship Lake and "Magic Monday" Family Night at the Bailey Center pool are on tap for this summer.

In addition to recreation, there's also special activities like adopting a planter outside the Bailey Center in honor of Earth Day or putting your hand over your heart and participating in the annual Flag Day ceremony on June 14.

Westland may not have the flashy recreation centers with the indoor pools and water slides, climbing wall and well-stocked fitness clubs, but that seems to have had little effect on what the city has to offer to residents. And little touches here and there, like the fresh paint and carpet at the Bailey Center and park improvements, keep people coming back for more.

Parks and Recreation Director Bob Kosowski and his staff have done an admirable job of providing something for everyone. It's not easy in these lean times, but they have managed to be creative and clever in planning programs that meet the needs and wants of all residents - young, old, able and disabled.

Frontier Park may be a long way off, but for the now, we encourage residents to stop and take a look at what the city has to offer recreationally. That one look may introduce you to your next great interest.

**Granholtm right to honor commitment**

We're happy that Gov. Jennifer Granholtm has decided to honor a promise made by her predecessor and award graduating seniors this year and next who qualified for up to \$500 in scholarships while in middle school.

After all the political name-calling, it is the right thing to do. A commitment made on paper to citizens of the state by one governor must be honored, even by a governor of the other party. We are concerned that state record keeping is so poor that it took the governor a week to discover that parents had been informed that their children would receive a \$500 scholarship. But all's well that ends well.

Though not a large amount of money, especially at a time of escalating college tuition and fees, \$500 can be an important part of a student's total financing package. Students are also eligible for the \$2,500 Merit Award if they score well on their 11th-grade MEAP tests.

At a time when the governor is encouraging more students to receive postsecondary education, she should have looked somewhere else to save money in the state's troubled budget (the cost is estimated at \$9 million).

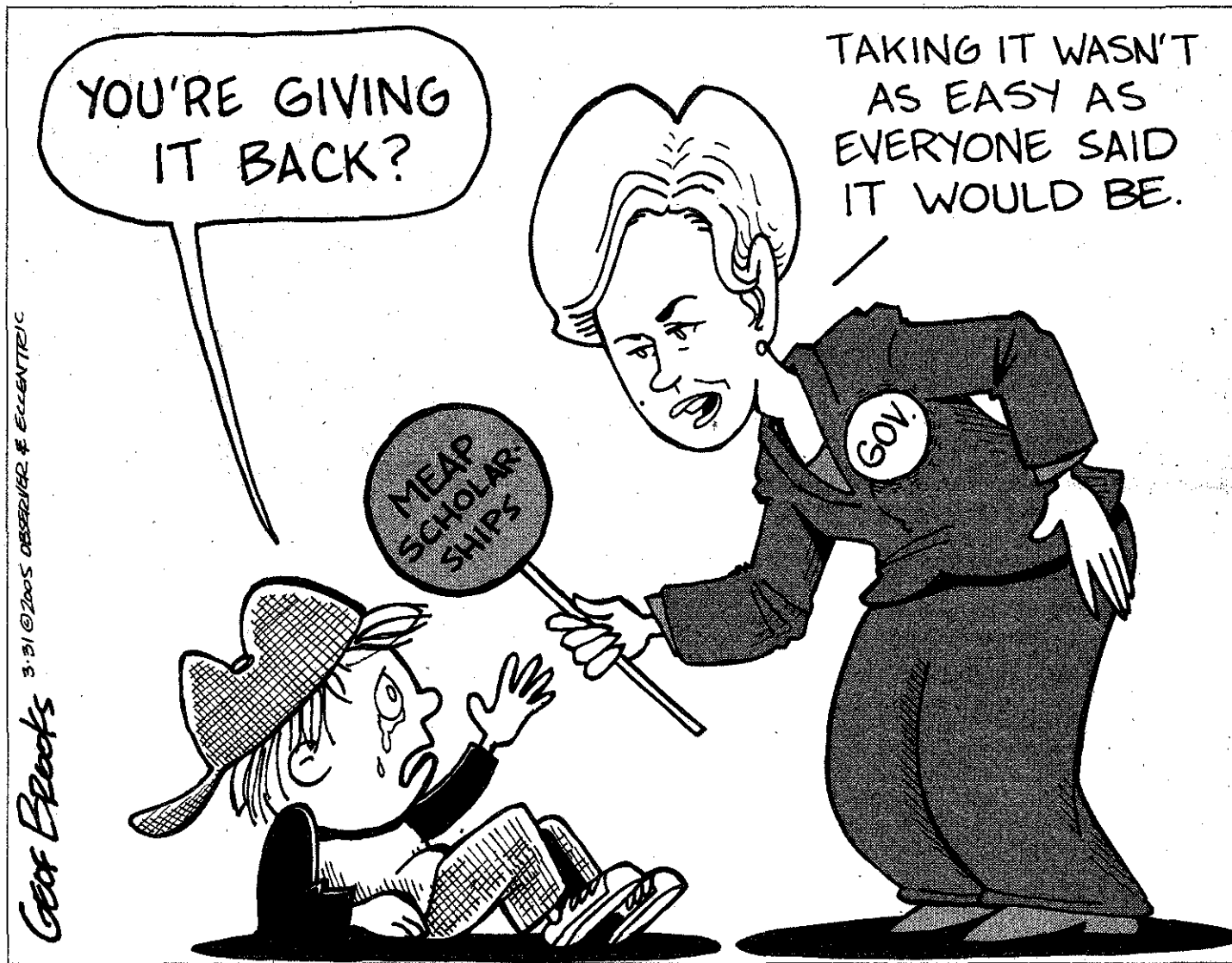
Granholtm has said that education at all levels is the state's top priority. She's made a serious effort to push postsecondary education, a position bolstered by the findings of the Cherry Commission, a panel appointed by the governor and chaired by Lt. Gov. John Cherry.

The commission concluded that Michigan must increase the number of residents who receive postsecondary education to remain competitive with other states in attracting high-tech businesses.

It was inconsistent for the governor to take away money from students that would support that basic conclusion of the Cherry Commission.

But Granholtm's plan to change the awarding of the Merit Scholarship is a move in the right direction and consistent with support for serious students. Granholtm proposes replacing the \$2,500 Merit Scholarship awarded upon graduation with a \$4,000 grant for students who have completed two years at a university, college or community college.

We agree with the governor that this will encourage students to complete their education and we encourage the Legislature to seriously consider the idea.



**Agrees with Pickering**

Council President Charles Pickering, I for one have gained a tremendous amount of respect for you based on your stand regarding the \$35 million recreation complex proposed by the "Friends of Frontier Park." In addition, Jim Cook covered the situation we are facing in Westland in his article, "The wrong time" on March 24, 2005.

My feelings like others, let's get our education and city services up to par before we put money out to try to maintain a facility that most within Westland couldn't enjoy based on travel time.

I feel that when the city is financially sound and able to provide routine police patrols within the northeast end of Westland to cope with parking on easements, wrong ways and over walkways plus restoring others services that had to be cut back then we can talk about a big playground.

Warren Allen  
Westland

**Helping to cut costs**

President George W. Bush and Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholtm are urging more at-home care for Medicaid clients. I applaud these budget-cutting moves.

About 5 percent of those in the state's nursing homes are improperly placed, according to Michigan Department of Community Health reports. They don't need 24-hour care at \$3,000 to \$4,000 per month. They can be happier in their own homes or an assisted setting at less than half that.

But to qualify for long-term care under Medicaid, patients typically must enter a nursing home. It once cost Medicaid \$4,200 monthly for 80-year-old Hester Woods to live in a nursing home.

Now she lives in her own one-bedroom apartment in the American House Senior Living Residence in Hazel Park. It costs Medicaid \$600 monthly for her meals and at-home care. Her Social Security covers her rent.

Her recent move saves taxpayers \$3,600 monthly, achieved when The Area Agency on Aging 1-B and American House's Stephanie Donaldson utilized a MI Choice Medicaid Waiver Program. It lets patients receive Medicaid-covered services in their homes.

American House Senior Living Residences are proud to play a role in this MI Choice program. David Schless, president of the American Seniors Housing Association in Washington, D.C., says, "American House and the Michigan MI Choice Medicaid waiver work extremely well for the residents, their families and the taxpayers alike."

Robert W. Gillette  
vice president  
American House Senior Living Residences

**Rise above**

Jack Lessenberry's article ("Belle Isle Aquarium another sad chapter in city's history," March 6) about the closing of the Belle Isle Aquarium encapsulates the decline of the city in stark terms.

When residents and businesses began to leave the city in droves during the latter decades of the 20th century, they probably gave little thought to what

would happen to the city's cultural attractions. The economic decline of the city has taken a severe toll on the ability of the city government to support the many fine facilities that used to define the city.

We live in the midst of a region in which the affluent suburbs are relatively poor in cultural institutions. The impoverished city is stuck with paying the bill for the area's major cultural attractions.

This condition has developed because our leaders have confused two different conceptions of the city. A city can be conceptualized as a statutory entity, or as an organic entity. The organic city is the city of history. Cities developed originally as places where people could meet their needs for residence, commerce, and culture, all in easy proximity to each other. Organic cities provide places to live, to work, to shop, and to recreate.

The city of Detroit once was an organic city but is no longer, because of the extensive migrations that have weakened it. It is now a statutory city like the others. What we have succeeded in doing has been to assign the responsibility for maintaining our most expensive institutions to the statutory entity least able to do so.

We must recognize that the metropolitan area is our organic city. Leaders in government, commerce, and the arts must create ways for the many local subdivisions to provide resources to support our city's cultural institutions. This situation represents an opportunity for civic leadership to rise above the narrow interests that usually define our actions:

Earl Newman  
Redford

**Not all were deserters**

Regarding Jack Lessenberry's article in the Sunday, March 6, paper, "Belle Isle Aquarium another sad chapter in city's history,"

Mr. Lessenberry states that fewer people have come because, "Whites deserted the city." I was raised in that area now called Woodbridge Historical Area. My parents stayed even after my brother was attacked on their front porch and stabbed with a sharpened screwdriver. After marriage and a child, in 1959, my husband and I moved to an apartment building on Commonwealth (in) an integrated neighborhood.

Our building had been built in the '20s and there were 12 apartments. We were on the first floor facing the street. Lovely French doors opened onto a porch. There was a living room with a fireplace. The floors were hardwood. Two bedrooms, a large dining room, small kitchen with a dumbwaiter, bathroom and a million cockroaches after the lights were turned out.

One day, a neighbor asked if I wanted to go to the basement with her and see our new stoves and refrigerators. This was news to me. We all got letters telling us to take down all drapes, curtains and window shades.

The windows were to be puttied. We were told to remove all food stuff, they were going to fumigate. Next came notice that we would not have laundry facilities for two weeks. New machines and dryers would be installed. We had never had dryers, we hung clothes in the basement to dry. We were happy to comply; it would all be worth it.

But, before the stoves or refrigerators were brought upstairs, we all got letters from the owner of the building, a Monsignor in the Catholic Church, telling us that he was turning his building into a "black building" and that we were to move out as soon as possible. We left, but we were not deserters.

Mr. Lessenberry makes a statement that, "There is plenty of money in the suburbs." Not true, according to other articles in the same paper. Then he goes on to say that most of the people who visit the aquarium live in the suburbs.

In what part of the impoverished central city does Mr. Lessenberry live?

Loretta Stringer  
Livonia

**Thou shalt not**

On March 2, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments on whether the Ten Commandments can be displayed on government property. The First Amendment to our Constitution requires a clear separation of church and state. The government must not endorse any particular religion, and it guarantees that every person can follow his/her religious beliefs, or no religious beliefs.

That's why the United States has more religious freedom and diversity than any other nation on earth. It's something we should all cherish and protect.

If the government posts a list of specific rules taught by Jewish and Christian religions, especially in a courthouse, it implies that the government intends to use those rules in making judgments. If you were a Hindu, or Buddhist, or Muslim, would you expect our courts to judge your case using Jewish laws? If you were a Christian, would you want the courts to follow Islamic laws?

Many religious leaders - and The Interfaith Alliance representing many religions - have asked the Supreme Court to uphold the First Amendment and deny the display of religious teachings in government buildings. We know our beliefs and we don't want or need the government to tell us which are the "right" beliefs.

We've seen that happen in other countries and, frankly, we haven't been impressed with the results.

Ron Heilner  
Oxford

**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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**QUOTABLE**

**"I plan to be here for a long time. I've been in this situation before - it's all talk. We're in full production now. Nothing has been done now. These guys just came in with a presentation. I don't want people to think we're out of business."**

- Joe Barson of Barson's Greenhouses about a presentation to city council about developing the site with storage units

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# State government continues to bleed our great universities

Here we go again: Gov. Jennifer Granholm and the Legislature agreed last week on mid-year spending cuts to erase a \$380 million deficit in the state budget. State universities took a \$25 million hit, supposedly offset by a deal that gives higher education first dibs if tax revenue comes in above projections. (Don't hold your breath.)

Sound familiar? It should. It's been the same sad story for years. State support for higher education was once considered something society was just supposed to do; something that, in addition, benefited not only students and their families but the citizens and the economy of the entire state. Now, however, it has evolved, or degenerated, into a system of private user fees, accompanied by a gradual deterioration of what used to be one of Michigan's most wonderful assets.

Thirty years ago, state appropriations covered roughly 75 percent of the operating revenues of Michigan public universities. Today the proportions are nearly reversed, with tuition and fees accounting for a bit more than 60 percent. Think about this: Michigan now spends more on warehousing felons in our prison system than in educating our young people at college.

Talk about misplaced priorities! Unless, of course, we want to be known more for the size of our prisons than the quality of our work force.

Frankly, for a state whose economic base in brawn-based manufacturing is evaporating before our eyes, the policies we are following are nuts. And this trend is a road sign on the route to economic disaster.

If we are to have a future, the health of our great universities is paramount. If we are going to maintain our historic base in auto-related manufacturing, it will be only by keeping research, engineering and upper management functions in Michigan — precisely those activities that require university degrees. It is perfectly clear that the agile manufacturing techniques of the future will require a college-educated work force.

And if we have any hope of generating a diversified economy — life sciences, homeland security, information technology, whatever — we must attract highly educated entrepreneurs who can translate the discoveries of university research labs into the reality of high-tech startup companies.

But you don't get there by inflicting on your best schools the slow death of a thousand cuts. Michigan for years has had a state budget that is chronically and structurally unbalanced by more than \$1 billion each year. This has been aggravated further by the bad economy of the past few years.

What to do? The obvious remedy is to conclusively address the core of the problem, the structural budget deficit. My own preference would be

to radically reduce business taxes and at the same time broaden the state sales tax to include services and at the same time reduce the rate.

A general sales tax pegged at 5 percent, for example, would nearly wipe out the structural deficit, while also aligning our tax system with the increased service base of our economy.

Frankly, I doubt if the occupants of our political system have either the guts or the farsightedness to adopt such a step.

Instead, the politicians have been relying for years on a policy that can only be described as remorseless incrementalism, in which the Legislature and governor make numerous little cuts, year after year, throughout the entire state budget. The result? Overall priorities are seldom respected and the most important things in our state's future — our great universities, for example — are subject to death by slow bleeding.

They are doing that, of course, because they think it is the best course politically for them. Intellectually, the only way you can rationally justify such an approach is to argue that Michigan is merely experiencing a cyclical decline in our economy, and everything will turn around if we just hold out for a while longer. That argument made sense in 1955.

Sadly, there is no evidence that it is true in 2005. Our real economic problems are deeper, caused by fundamental changes in technology and overall economic conditions, not mere oscillations in the business cycle.

All this has produced the worst of all possible outcomes for our state universities. Simultaneously, they face budget cuts year after year; they are prohibited from managing their income by arbitrary caps placed on tuition increases; and they are asked by the Cherry Commission and others to double their output of graduates during the next decade.

As my old philosophy professor used to say, these are "mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive." As for the future — readers might remember the old story about the frog in the pot of cold water on the stove. You put a frog in the pot and you slowly turn up the heat, a degree or two at a time. Supposedly, the frog will sit quietly until, yep, he's poached.

Based on the way we are going, the combined effect of our present policies will leave our signature universities well and truly poached. As the governor and Legislature consider this, they might also investigate how much it will cost to repair our universities once we discover our goose is, well, cooked. What is clear is that the costs, and the grief, will be far higher than doing the right thing now would be.

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

# Rising health care costs are making everyone ill

Everyone struggles with the cost of health care. In 2004, General Motors estimated that the cost of each of its vehicles included \$1,400 to cover the cost of health care for its employees. The cost of health care has the Big Three automakers looking to Congress for relief. But it is not only the big guys that feel these costs.

Every business that supports its workers with health care benefits has been forced in recent years to re-examine its commitment to this benefit.

Our public agencies are not immune to these health care costs. As Gov. Granholm and our state Legislature budget for next year, they are discovering the increase they had planned for our public school students may be eaten up by increased health care and retirement costs.

We hear General Motors, Ford and DaimlerChrysler point to health care costs as cutting into their competitive edge with foreign manufacturers.

Higher health costs for our schools mean less resources for student learning, which cuts into our students' abilities to compete in that same international arena.

You might say, "If business has to cope with these costs, so should public schools." Our schools are dealing with health care costs in much the same way the Big Three have. The difference is, they have traveled to Lansing to ask the state Legislature rather than to Washington D.C. to ask Congress.

So what is the state Legislature doing about this? The Michigan Senate is in the process of gathering the facts of current employee health care to determine if our schools could save money by pooling all school employees in a statewide program. Each district would then negotiate with its

So what is the state Legislature doing about this? The Michigan Senate is in the process of gathering the facts of current employee health care to determine if our schools could save money by pooling all school employees in a statewide program. Each district would then negotiate with its unions from a common menu of options. There are a couple of placeholder bills in the Senate ready to use if this option can be worked out.

unions from a common menu of options. There are a couple of placeholder bills in the Senate ready to use if this option can be worked out.

Much work has to be done to bring all the stakeholders together.

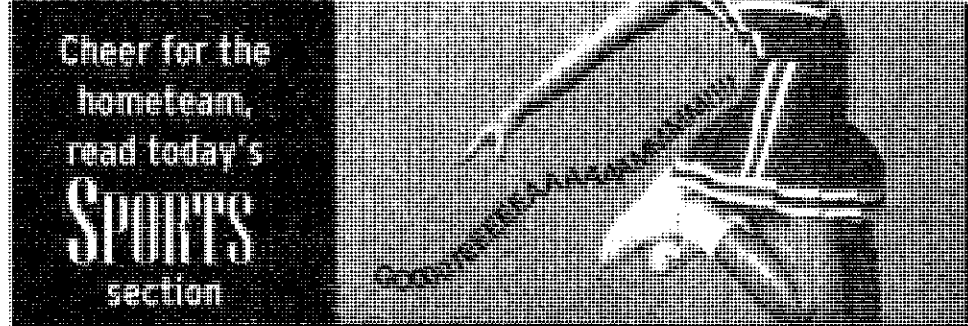
But one thing is certain, if we are to solve the problem of the high cost of health care to doing business, whether that is making cars or educating our children, the public and private sectors must do it together.

In the end, the cost of health is paid for by the revenues created by our collective work. If an individual does not have access to the health care system through insurance, whether that is private or public, the result is poor health and we all pay for that.

Pan Godchaux is a member of the Oakland Schools Board of Education, but her comments here are her own and not those of the board.



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# Hendrix brings mayoral campaign to suburbs

BY HUGH GALLAGHER  
STAFF WRITER

Freman Hendrix brought his campaign for mayor of Detroit to the suburbs Monday, saying Detroit can't solve its problems on its own and needs a leader who brings "experience, integrity and reality" to the position.

Hendrix, 54, chief of staff and deputy mayor for former Mayor Dennis Archer, met with HomeTown Communications editors in Livonia.

Hendrix is running against incumbent first-term Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick and Detroit City Councilwoman Sharon McPhail.

"The image of the city affects the entire region. What happens in the city affects you," Hendrix said.

Using Archer as his model, Hendrix said his former boss was "an inspiration" to thousands of people.

"He brought money and confidence to a city that we didn't

have before," Hendrix said.

Archer reached out to other parts of the state, Hendrix said, and it paid off by humanizing the city's mayor and the city itself.

"It starts to change the discussion and how their (out-state) politicians campaign when it comes to the city of Detroit," Hendrix said.

This bridge building makes it harder for the opposition to rail against the city of Detroit, he said.

In his campaign Web site, www.fremanhendrix.com, Hendrix acknowledges that despite some pleasant residential areas such as the Boston Edison neighborhood, the image of the city is one of crime, deterioration and neglect. But, he said, some suburbs are beginning to experience their own similar problems.

"As the suburbs grow more brown and more black, the close suburbs are aging. The Southfields, Royal Oaks, Redfords and Dearborns have

more in common with the city. It's aging vs. development," he said.

Detroit and its near suburbs need to work together to slow urban sprawl. Hendrix said a key component is the development of a regional mass transit system.

### FAVORS LIGHT RAIL

"Transportation has been the bane of our region. I won't even talk about Toronto, Washington or New York. But we are at the bottom of every major urban area," he said. "The politics of race, party, suburbs vs. city. Everyone bears some of the blame."

Hendrix said he supports development of light rail lines and said he is interested in Ferndale's plan to begin its own mile of rail. He said he would be willing to match them "mile for mile."

But crime, not transportation, is Hendrix's "No. 1 issue for obvious reasons."

"If we can't have a safe city people won't come to live and



Hendrix

work here," he said.

He was critical of Kilpatrick for increasing staffing at the precincts at the expense of cutting specialty units dealing with gangs and drugs, which Hendrix said were more effective in dealing with the most serious crime problems.

On his Web site, Hendrix advocates a closer working relationship between the police department and neighborhood

organizations. He also advocates a "zero tolerance" program similar to those in Boston, New York and Los Angeles.

The Web site says, "The principle behind 'zero tolerance' ... is the idea that by cracking down on the minor crimes, you can prevent the major ones."

In addition to crime, the city's other major problem is a pending financial crisis. Hendrix said the city faces the real threat of bankruptcy. He said the threat of going into receivership might be a lever for dealing with the city's unions in next year's negotiations.

Hendrix supports a return to "zero-based" budgeting rather than across the board budget cuts. He also advocates sharply reducing the number of city departments and reducing the number of management positions.

### PARTNERSHIPS

He said Archer's demeanor

was helpful in attracting investment to the city. He said he would also seek more "private-public" partnerships with business and private foundations. He said Archer had a full-time foundation liaison and he will also.

Hendrix acknowledges that he has less name recognition than Kilpatrick or McPhail, who has previously run countywide for prosecutor and county executive. But, he said, he wants to be the "grown-up" in the campaign.

"I don't know if there's a candidate who brings the experience I can bring to the job," he said. "Kwame came to office with a steep learning curve and it's evident in the way the city is being run."

Hendrix said he's had a lot of success as a campaign manager, having managed Archer's campaigns and Bill Clinton's Michigan campaign.

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## Dinner pairs high-end wines with three-star dishes

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN  
STAFF WRITER

Bruce Konowalow expects La Balade Bodelaise, the April 2 fund-raising dinner for students in the Brigade program at Schoolcraft College, to be an educational as well as sensual experience. Guests will not only be treated to a six-course dinner, but savor Bordeaux wines from the 1980s. Certified Executive Chef Marcus Haight and post-graduate students from the Brigade program are preparing dishes from two- and three-star French restaurants to complement the 61-different bottles of wine.

Elie Boudt, owner of Elie Wine Company in Royal Oak,

along with a few of his friends, is donating the wine. Elie Wine specializes in French wines and is one of the largest purveyors of French wines in the country. Boudt will be at the dinner to speak "to what Bordeaux means and what the 1980s means to Bordeaux."

Not only will the dinner provide an education in Bordeaux wines but the money raised will allow Brigade students to go to Paris to learn firsthand about two- and three-star restaurants and the way food is prepared in France.

Tickets prices for the April 2 dinner at the American Harvest Restaurant at Schoolcraft College vary between \$150 and \$250 depending on the wines served. To order tickets, call (734) 462-4400, Ext. 5507.

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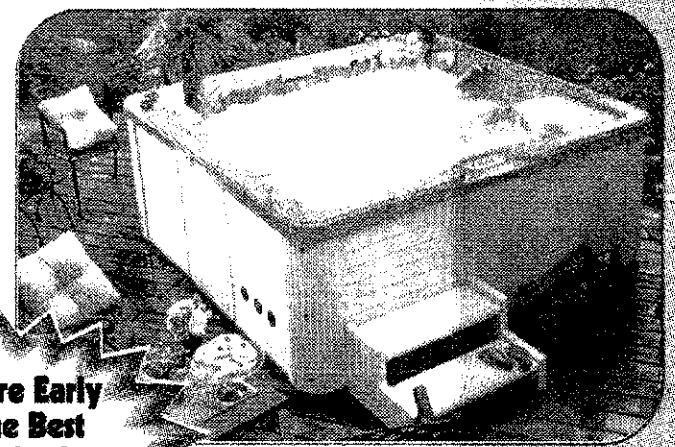
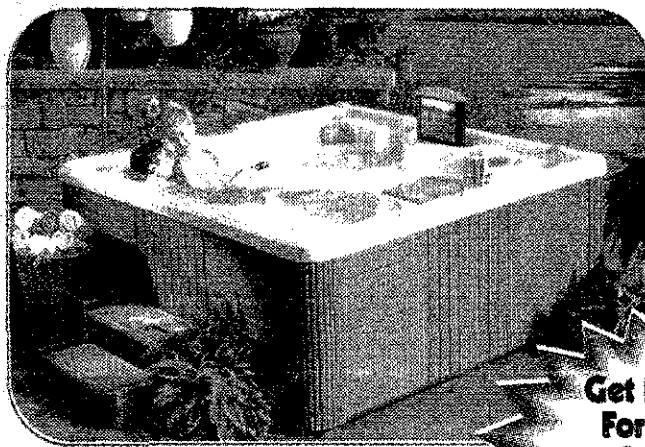


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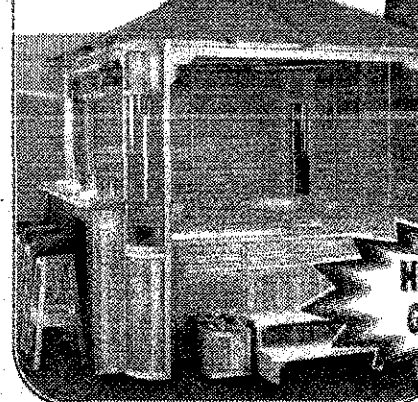
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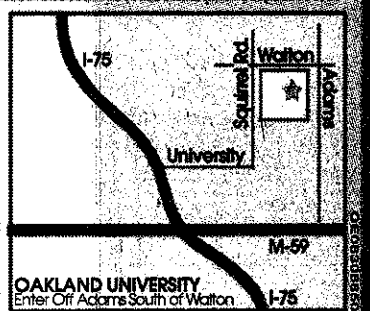
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