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2 teens are suspects in Cooper School fire

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Two Westland teenagers are facing charges in Wayne County juvenile court after authorities said they admitted setting fire Sunday to the old Cooper School, on Ann Arbor Trail east of Middlebelt.

Westland police turned the two 14-year-old boys over to juvenile authorities on Tuesday, after they confessed while being questioned at Livonia Franklin High School, police Lt. James Ridener said.

The teens will likely face charges of arson and breaking and entering, amid accusations they set two fires inside Cooper School about 3 a.m. Sunday, Ridener said.

The fire destroyed four classrooms and caused areas of the roof to collapse inside the school, which was fenced off and closed in 1991 after officials learned it was built on a contaminated landfill.

Firefighters from all five Westland fire stations battled the flames.

They doused the main fires within 30 minutes of arriving, Deputy Fire Chief Kevin Riley said,

but they remained at the school for 12 hours while they extinguished "hot spots" and allowed a company to secure the building.

The former school contained certain items, such as wooden desks and paper products, that only fueled the flames, authorities said.

The exterior, made of concrete block, was still

PLEASE SEE FIRE, A6



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Just like Ronnie sings

John Glenn High School seniors Katie Flacks as Mickey, Alexis Bland as Annie Golden and Rachel Smith as Shelley rehearse "Be My Baby," one of 23 hit songs from the 1960s in the Theatrical Guild's weekend presentation of *Leader of the Pack*. For more on the production, see Page A3.

Wayne man gets probation in Paul killing

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Rather than going to prison, a Wayne man will serve a probationary sentence for helping confessed murderer James Oehler dig a grave in his Westland yard and bury a Garden City man.

William Jay Nickerson, 59, who pleaded guilty to being an accessory after the fact to murder, was sentenced Friday to a three-year probationary term by Wayne County Circuit Judge Annette Berry.

Nickerson, who turned himself over to police in August, received probation because of an agreement reached between prosecuting and defense attorneys.

Authorities had said all along that Nickerson could receive a lenient sentence in return for testifying against Oehler, 44, who shot and killed William David Paul, 24, of Garden City.

Nickerson was at Oehler's house on Hiveley, near Cherry Hill and Carlson, when Paul was shot to death in April 1997. He has told authorities that Oehler and Paul — described by police as partners in a marijuana-growing operation — had argued before the shooting.

Nickerson could have been a key witness in Oehler's trial, although Westland police also had a confession by Oehler that he killed Paul and kept him buried in his back yard for seven years.

Police dug up Paul's body last July after receiving a tip from a still-unnamed informant.

In the end, Nickerson never took the witness stand because Oehler pleaded guilty in March to second-degree murder and felony firearm charges. Oehler admitted his guilt in return for a sentence of 23-40 years in prison.

He could have faced a mandatory life-in-prison sentence, if he had gone to trial and been convicted on an original charge of first-degree murder.

Oehler apologized to Paul's family during his March 23 sentencing by Judge Berry. Oehler called the shooting "a tragic mistake" and said, "I loved Billy like a brother."

On the grow Council OKs plans for 5 new businesses

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

An after-hours pizzeria, an autoworker union hall, a Chinese restaurant, a transmission shop and a new auto parts store will become the latest businesses to help boost Westland's economic climate.

All five businesses received support Monday from Westland City Council members who have said they are intent on bringing new jobs to Westland.

The latest developments came just five days after Mayor Sandra Cicirelli, during her State of the City address, said Westland has a thriving business climate despite tough economic times.

Under the latest votes:

■ Uno Chicago Grill will be allowed to serve pizza after bars close when the company opens a new restaurant on Wayne Road, on the east end of Westland Shopping Center.

The restaurant will hire nearly 140 workers before its projected opening in mid-August, company spokesman Roy Moore said. City leaders said the restaurant, even with an outdoor patio, will not become a nuisance because it is far removed from residential neighborhoods.

■ United Auto Workers Local 163, which represents 3,600 workers and 2,500 retirees, will move into a former nightclub on Merriman Road south of Cherry Hill, near the city golf course. Local 163 President Larry Long said the union is leaving Detroit after 62 years because it has outgrown its current hall, on Plymouth Road between Outer Drive and Telegraph. Union Vice President Ron Heard estimated that the Westland hall will open by September, possibly by Labor Day. Councilman William Will said the union hall "will be perfect for that site."

■ Union members and neighbors who have a craving for Chinese food won't have far to go. A new restaurant, China 88, will open soon in a shopping center on the southwest corner of Merriman and Cherry Hill roads.

■ On the city's west side, CTS Transmission Shop received a special land use approval Monday for a business northwest of Ford and Hix roads.

■ Murray's Discount Auto Parts Store, which opened 25 years ago on Wayne Road north of Ford, will move out of its leased facility after the company builds a new store across the street. Murray's representatives said they couldn't reach a new lease agreement with their landlord. Therefore, the company will build its own 10,000-square-foot business and move its employees to the west side of Wayne Road, where two houses have been torn down. Company officials hope to open the new store later this year.

Disabled kids get into swing of things

BY JULIE BROWN
STAFF WRITER

Handicapped youngsters in the Wayne-Westland schools have a friend in Westland Rotary.

The Rotarians have donated swings specially designed for use by disabled children to Madison and Edison elementary.

"I think that it means a lot to the two children in our building who are wheelchair-bound," said Madison Principal

Susan Kely. "For these children, it's huge. The children are children first."

The two are in motorized chairs and previously couldn't do much playing on the playground.

The ribbon cutting for the Madison swing was last Thursday, with club president Margaret Harlow and Kely among those present. The wheelchair rolls onto the swing platform.

"And then they can swing like the rest of the children," Harlow said.

Rotary's District 6400, which includes Westland, received \$25,000 from the international organization, with up to \$1,000 available in matching funds for the club.

Harlow had talked to Ed Turner, who serves on the Wayne-Westland Board of Education. She then called Kely and wrote a proposal for the swings.

"Sue tells me the kids are just beside

PLEASE SEE SWING, A4



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Fourth-grader Jordan Buford (left) and second-grader Erinne Williams (right) help Westland Rotary President Margaret Harlow and Wayne-Westland School Superintendent Greg Baracy cut the ribbon for a new platform swing at Madison Elementary.

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Coming Sunday
in PINK



Freecycle site easier on the environment New salon opens

BY CAROL MARSHALL
STAFF WRITER

Lisa Walker looks out her window and sees the landfill on Michigan Avenue growing bigger and bigger. But since January, she's been adding much less to it. That's when she joined Western Wayne Freecycle.

Freecycle is made up of more than a million people around the world who give each other items that they can no longer use. Every day, the western Wayne group posts on an Internet user board items such as clothing, appliances, books, furniture - those things that people no longer can use but just have too much life in them to throw away.

"It made no sense to me that people spend so much money on stuff, and at the same time they keep throwing things into the dump," Walker said.

That's why the group was formed by just 30 people in Arizona, just about two years ago on May 1, 2003. There are now more than one million members in 60 countries.

Just about a year ago, on May 19, 2004, Westland resident Bridget Jarvis helped form the western Wayne group. The western Wayne group now has nearly 2,900 members, and in the past seven days has generated some 360 messages about things to give away, things that people need, and things that have found new homes.

She was introduced to Freecycle by her mother, and her very first experience with it was when she was able to dig up hundreds of dollars worth of perennials from a freecycler's yard and plant them in her own.

"That's what really got me into the idea of Freecycle," Jarvis said.

GIVING AWAY

Since then Jarvis, like most freecyclers, has given away far more than she's received, but that's the whole point of membership, she said.

"The coolest thing I was able to freecycle was when I gave away a dog cage to a dad who finally relented and let his kid have a dog. That was pretty



Colette Maher of Livonia, Bridget Jarvis of Westland and Amy Gridley of Canton are all coordinators for Western Wayne Freecycle, an Internet recycling group with more than 2,600 members.

neat," she said.

But she's also given away unlikely treasures like mismatched socks, to one Freecycle member who takes them to make catnip toys.

"I rescued two projectors from the Dumpster here, and gave them to a guy who had just started to go through his grandparents' reel-to-reel films. He wrote and said how it was so great that he could finally see his grandparents in their home movies," said Canton resident Amy Gridley, who volunteers on the Freecycle board.

The volunteers help screen new members and screen posts for appropriateness (all items must be legal, totally free with no strings attached and must be appropriate for all ages).

Colette Maher of Livonia joined last summer, not so much to clear out her basement and garage, but to keep usable items out of landfills. In all, it's estimated that Freecycle keeps some 50 tons per day out of landfills.

"I did it more for the Earth than anything else. I would drive down the street and see so much stuff on the curb. I thought somewhere, someone must be able to use it," she said.

CLEANING UP

Mary Weishaar-Wall of Canton joined for the usual reason - to help neighbors find things they need, and to clear out the basement.

"To dust off that box in the corner of the basement, waiting for the yard sale that never materialized, and hand it to a smiling person is just terrific," she said. "You win two ways - less clutter in your own home, happy neighbor."

Her favorite experience by far, though, was giving away her wedding dress.

"It was never going to be worn again, being several sizes too small, and my sons weren't going to want it when they were older. What to do with it?" Weishaar-Wall said. "We weren't going to give it to a charity or sell it at a yard sale. It had too much personal meaning."

She considered donating it to a theater group, but then joined Freecycle. One of the people who replied was a man looking for a dress for his fiancée. Weishaar-Wall responded to him, and after a brief volley of e-mails, he took the dress.

"She loved the dress," she said. "(She) e-mailed to say

that the dress required only a few alterations and that she would treasure it forever. Even if it is the last thing we successfully Freecycle, it was a tremendous experience to give away something so personal to someone we felt appreciated maybe even more than we did."

Redford resident Tina England found something even better on Freecycle - she found the latest addition to her family, a 2-year-old German short-haired pointer named Carly.

The family who offered her was picky, as they should be, England said.

They exchanged e-mail and phone calls, and when England finally met Carly, it was love at first sight.

"A day later they brought her to our home to introduce her to our 13-year-old yellow lab, Jack. They got along great," England said. "It for us was a perfect fit. We love her so much. My husband and I have said it's like she's always been here."

If there is a downside to Freecycle, it's that the group has grown so fast that sometimes it's hard to be a receiver, Walker said.

"You can give stuff away really easy, but getting stuff is pretty hard," she said. "Sometimes I think you better have the best story out there. People are bombarded with these sob stories. And the one with the saddest story is the person who gets the stuff."

For more information on joining Freecycle, visit online at www.freecycle.org

A NEW 'DO

Westland welcomed its newest business recently, as Hair Express opened its doors on South Wayne Road.

The full service salon opened in March as a partnership between owner John Lozon and stylists Jill Lozon, Toni Anderle and Nikki Harris - who worked together at another salon before joining forces at Hair Express.

The salon offers haircuts, color, highlights and eyebrow waxing. Prices range from \$8 for eyebrow waxing to \$10.99 for a cut. Highlights start at \$50.

"We offer monthly specials," said Lozon, who has 19 years of experience in the business. Currently customers can take advantage of \$5 off women's haircuts. Walk-ins are wel-



come. Hours are 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday-Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday.

Hair Express is located at 1163 South Wayne Road, across from Town and Country Bowling. Call (734) 595-0058 for more information.

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.

Council OKs request for tax abatement

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

In hopes of protecting jobs, Westland city leaders decided Monday to give a partial tax break to a local plastics company that employs 251 workers.

Westland City Council members gave sweeping support for a tax abatement plan that will spur an \$11 million project at Plastipak Packaging Inc., on John Hix near Ford.

"Citizens tell us to be smart and stay competitive," Councilman Michael Kehrer said. "I think that's what we're doing."

The council's decision will allow Plastipak to install a new production line and avoid paying \$870,000 in new taxes during the next 12 years.

During the same period, the company still will pay nearly \$1.1 million in new taxes on the machinery it plans to install.

Councilman Richard LeBlanc favored the plan partly because it will bring in more than \$1 million in tax revenues, even with the tax break.

Moreover, he said other communities had offered a tax abatement in hopes of luring Plastipak away from Westland.

City officials halted tax abatements in 1993, but they have switched positions amid hopes of protecting local manufacturing jobs.

Many jobs already have left Michigan, Councilman

The council's decision will allow Plastipak to install a new production line and avoid paying \$870,000 in new taxes.

William Wild said. "Now, we're looking at protecting the jobs we do have."

Plastipak - the city's eighth largest taxpayer - opened its Westland plant in 1983. The new tax abatement will be the company's fifth since then.

Plastipak senior tax manager Thomas Mellnick Jr. has predicted that 10-15 new jobs will be created with the new production line, which could be started by summer's end.

Mayor Sandra Cicirelli had urged the council to approve the tax abatement, and some citizens also sided with Plastipak.

Longtime resident Connie Hierta, speaking during Monday's council meeting, implored city leaders to support the tax break to protect jobs.

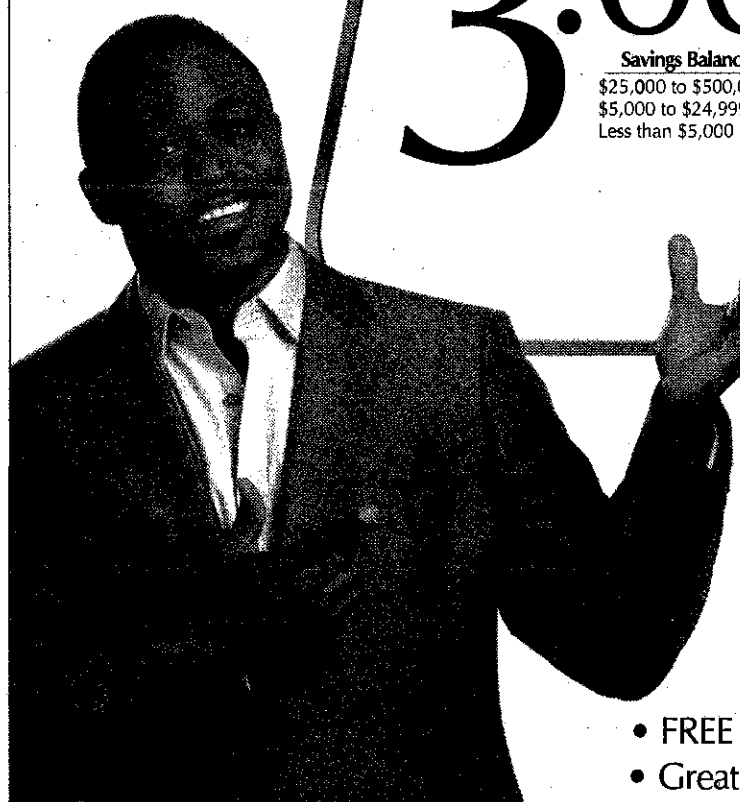
"I think it would be shortsighted not to approve this request," she said.

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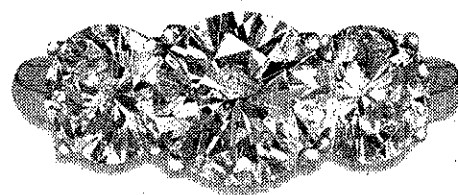


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A '60s kind of celebration

Glenn thespians showcase talent in 'Leader of Pack'

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

Are you a fan of '60s music? Do you know all the words to hits like the Dixie Cups' *Chapel of Love*, the Ronettes' *Be My Baby* and the Crystals' *Da Doo Ron Ron*? Can you can make the perfect motorcycle sound for the Shangri-Las' *Leader of the Pack*?

If you answered yes, then you want to be at John Glenn High School this weekend to catch the John Glenn Theatrical Guild's presentation of the musical, *Leader of the Pack*, a musical tribute to the writing genius of Ellie Greenwich.

The play is directed by Glenn drama teacher Sheri Grove, Belinda Walakonis-Semak and Nina Tetrault.

Leader of the Pack, which gets its name from the Greenwich song, is a musical retrospective of the life and times of Greenwich whose doo-wop sounds rocketed groups like the Shangri-Las and Ronettes to the top of the record charts in the 1960s.

The play traces her rise to fame and her marriage to songwriter Jeff Barry while showcasing 23 of her songs.

"I usually do the selection, but this show, but I turned over to my students so they would have the opportunity to showcase their skills," said Grove. "The bulk of the cast is seniors and I wanted them to showcase their abilities of singing, dancing and acting."

"We spent the past few years developing their skills in dancing and acting and I wanted to showcase that."

Maggie Phillips plays Ellie while Grant Macdonald plays her love

interest, Jeff Barry. Also starring in the show are Karlye Walker as singer Darlene Love and Bland as Annie Golden, a singer and friend of Greenwich.

For the directors, the production has provided a few challenges, specifically costuming, Grove said. Lining up '60s style clothing has been an "up-to-the-moment battle," with students borrowing and buying whatever they could.

"Some of the kids went to resale shops," added Walakonis-Semak. "People have donated clothes to Sheri over the years, so we rummaged through her collection for pieces."

But the "biggest struggle outside of the cost" has been time. They've had 25 days to learn 23 songs, their lines and the dance routines.

"We didn't begin incorporating the acting into the show until last week," said Grove. "Up until then, they were stuck on choreography and music."

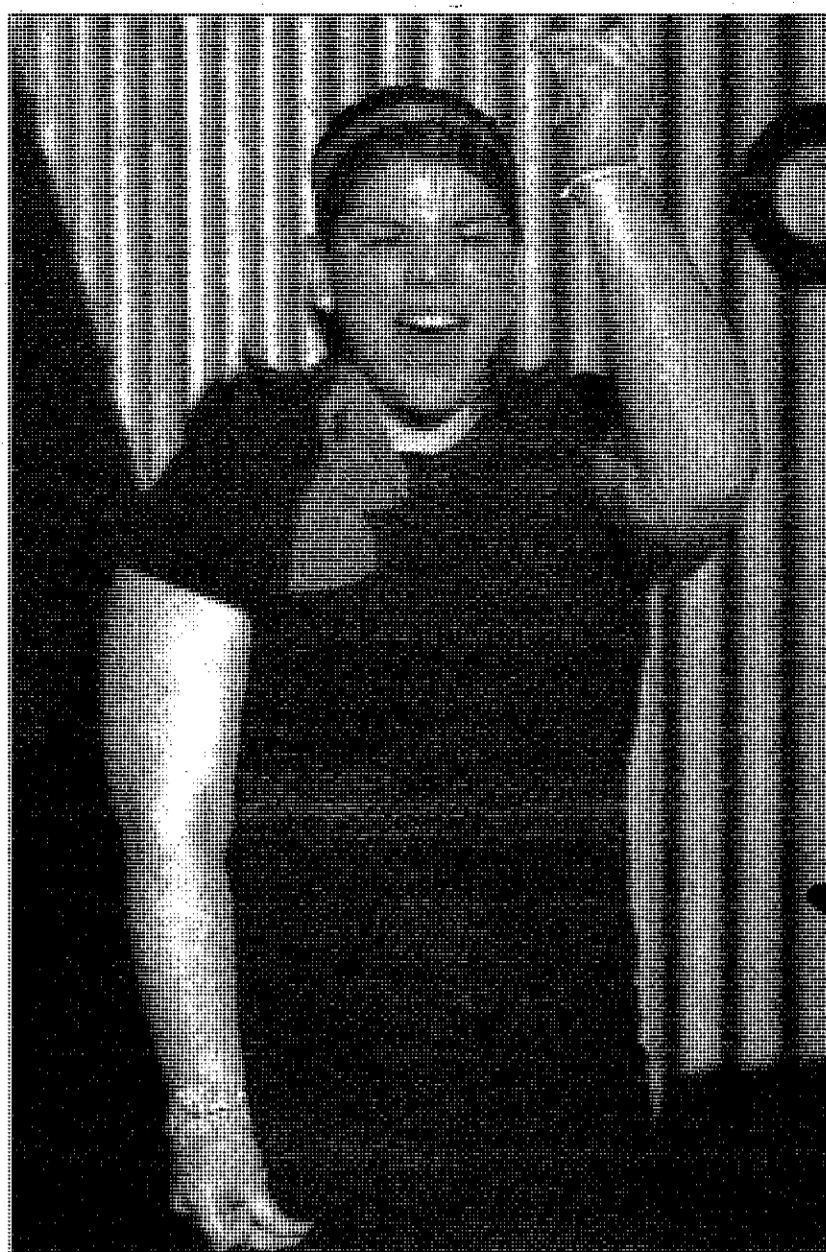
The students have had input into the production, helping with things like the choreography.

In addition to playing Greenwich, Phillips also is the student choreographer.

"I definitely needed to do some research and it was hard because I didn't know the music," said Phillips. "My mom, Miss Grove and Miss Wala helped me with that."

Grove said she will be happy with the final results, knowing that her students have given 110 percent.

"They've gone above and beyond to take ownership of the play and its outcome," she said. They've asked for extra rehearsals, even over the Easter



PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Maggie Phillips who plays songwriter Ellie Greenwich, performs "Doo Run Run," a Greenwich song that was made a hit by the Crystals.

break to prepare."

And behind the scenes, the Drama Mamas and Papas, not to be confused with the legendary rock group, have helped with everything from sewing to backstage changes to donating food.

"I didn't think they'd like having parents backstage, but they're back there asking if we have more moms

to help," said Grove.

Leader of the Pack will be presented at 7 p.m. tonight, Friday and Saturday in the auditorium of John Glenn High School, 36105 Marquette, Westland. Tickets are \$7 for students and \$10 for adults and are available at the door.

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



Seniors Grant MacDonald as Jeff Barry and Rachel Smith as Shelley dance together to "Da Doo Run Run" in the show.

CAST AND CREW MAKE

'LEADER' A SUCCESS

Behind every successful production is a dedicated cast and crew, and this year's spring musical at John Glenn High School is no exception.

Joining directors Sheri Grove, Belinda Walakonis-Semak and Nina Tetrault behind the scenes are assistant directors Alexis Bland, Katie Flacks and Rachel Smith. The vocal director is Nina Garcia, with Dan Fowler and Jason Rousse as technical directors, Anna Clark as stage manager and Shannon Krushlin and Anthony Reaume assistant stage managers.

The crew includes Nicole Burns, Ashley Dobos, Sarah Drum, Ashley Fowler, Jackie Grant, Dayna Krushlin, Breanna Luckett, Hayley Orzech, Lauren Orzech, Sonal Patel, Sarah Pruett, Brett Prokopchak, Kimberly Raley, Zack Rogers and Tess Wilmoth.

In the footlights are Karlye Walker as Darlene Love, Alexis Bland as Annie Golden, Maggie Phillips as Ellie Greenwich, Lauren Perry as Ellie's mom Rosie, Rachel Smith as Shelley, Katie Flacks as Mickey, Grant MacDonald as Jeff Barry, Jaret Bozigan as Gus Sharkey, Ryan Downs as Peter, Tina Evans as the waitress, Amber Webster as Pattie the lounge singer, Derek Sample and Jessica Syria as Keith and Shirley, the dance couple, Alison Closser as Gina, Curtis Sieckowski as Joe, Sean Barone as Chris and the dance company of Sieckowski, Barone, Ashley Johnson, Salina Delarosa, Amber Fernitz, Danielle Gibson and Kristin Queen.

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Pope must be different than he was as cardinal

BY ALEX LUNDBERG
STAFF WRITER

The world's 1.1 billion Catholics celebrate the election of the first pope of the third millennium, area religious leaders believe the man who was the Vatican's doctrinal watchdog will be a much different person in his new capacity as the Bishop of Rome.

On Tuesday, the Vatican's College of Cardinals elected German Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger to be named the 265th pope, now known as Pope Benedict XVI.

Archdiocese of Detroit Moderator for the Curia Monsignor John Zenz described the incoming pontiff as an intellectual giant and one of the last living connections to the Vatican II council.

"He has always been a brilliant intellectual, probably the best theologian in depth and breadth in the church," he said. "He was a *periti*, an expert adviser to the cardinals at Vatican II. He was 35 at the time."

He said Benedict XVI would most likely reaffirm the teachings of John Paul II and his selection by the cardinals "was an indication of their desire for continuity in leadership. Like his predecessor, the new pope understands the importance of every word he says and writes."

"He is a teacher and a writer," Zenz said. "He will be careful in how he nuances things. His words will be carefully chosen and sentences carefully sculpted."

For all the desire for continuity, he said the new pope can't be the same person he was as the dean of the college of cardinals and the dogged

head of the Congregational Doctrine of the Faith.

"He will have a new perspective," he said. "He's now more a pastor and more aware of the needs of the church around the world. His perspective won't just be doctrine, he will have to think of the needs of people around the world."

Rabbi Charles Rosenzweig of the Holocaust Memorial Center in Farmington Hills said the former Cardinal Ratzinger might have been a doctrinal hardliner, but Pope Benedict XVI could be a very different person.

"He may have been conservative as a cardinal but as the pope he has to deal with the fact that every word he says will have international implications," Rosenzweig said. "It's very possible he might turn out to be more liberal than we know from his record."

He said the new pope is undoubtedly aware of the beliefs of his parishioners around the world and that changes will need to be made to accommodate the modern age. The first year might be uneventful, but he said afterward there might be changes coming from Rome.

As to the new pope's history as a boy soldier in WWII and as a member of the Hitler Youth, the rabbi said that story mixes interestingly with his accredited instrumental role in John Paul II's push to repair relations with the Jewish faithful.

He hopes the contrast will not be lost on the new pope.

"I hope he realizes that he's been in a group that has stooped to the lowest potential in the human character," Rosenzweig said, "and now he is in the most lofty position."

Smoking ban doesn't generate much fire

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM
STAFF WRITER

The Wayne County Commission passed a smoking regulation that some critics say will be too difficult to enforce, allows for too many exceptions and doesn't provide for union exceptions.

Wayne County passed a workplace smoking ban in March that covers all employers with at least one employee. Exceptions are bars, restaurants, bingo halls, tobacco specialty stores, casinos, race-tracks and the city of Detroit.

The voluntary regulation allows employers to maintain designated smoking rooms, as long as non-smoking employees do not have to enter the room to access other workplace amenities.

Wayne County's Clean Indoor Air Regulation smoking ban is to take effect June 15, but employers must provide employees with no-smoking policies by May 25 — three weeks before the ban takes effect.

This means that "no smoking" signs must be posted in conspicuous areas and ashtrays and other smoking paraphernalia need to be removed. Smokers will also be prohibited from smoking within six feet of building entrances, windows and ventilation systems.

The Wayne County Health Department will be responsible for enforcement. Because the regulation is voluntary, individuals or businesses must initiate action. A couple of ways businesses can do this are by requesting smoking rooms be inspected to ensure proper ventilation and by lodging complaints about smoking scofflaws.

Fines for non-compliance by individuals will range from \$100 for first offenses to \$500 for second and subsequent offenses.

Complaints from employees

about businesses not following the regulation could invite an inspection by the health department.

Sharon Banks, spokeswoman for Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano, said no additional health department staff will be hired.

REGULATION VOLUNTARY

Instead, the county will educate businesses about how to properly designate smoking rooms and how employees can be encouraged to quit smoking.

"(The smoking regulation) is voluntary and based on complaints received from the workplace," Banks said.

The United Auto Workers, which represents 1.2 million active and retired workers nationally and 107,000 in Wayne County, supports the ban.

"The UAW's position is that we are in support of the concept of the smoking ban, if it is done in a way to respect collective bargaining agreements," said Roger Kerson, UAW spokesman.

"We think it is a sound concept," he added.

The UAW has not yet reviewed the regulation's language.

Washtenaw County adopted a smoking ban in 2002. Ingham and Genesee counties also have smoking bans, which the respective automotive plants have reportedly upheld.

County Commissioner Kay Beard favored the smoking ban though, as a former smoker, she realizes how tough it is to quit. She noticed that quitting smoking caused the birth rates of three of her five children to be about two pounds heavier than with her first- and second-born children.

"This really is a health problem," she said, referring to the hazards of secondhand smoke.

Originally, the county's smoking ban was in the form

of an ordinance, which was vetoed by Ficano in 2004. Reworking the smoking ordinance into a regulation meant that it could be more quickly implemented, Beard said.

Most of the comments Beard has received from constituents have been positive.

"I haven't heard other than a few people say anything negative about it," she said. "An awful lot of people were pleased about it."

Ficano said his main objections with the original ordinance were in giving "police powers" to people running businesses. The regulation, however, is not without its potential problems.

"Overall, the basic situation is that (the smoking regulation) does not apply to the city of Detroit," Ficano said. "That's a pretty big hole in the doughnut."

A statewide regulation would make more sense than a countywide regulation with separate rules between two segments of the population, he added.

About 35,000-40,000 people in the United States die annually from illnesses related to breathing secondhand smoke, according to the American Cancer Society. In addition, more than 60 compounds in secondhand tobacco smoke are known or are suspected to cause cancer.

MOST FAVOR BAN

County Commissioner John Sullivan said he received 1,000 e-mails from constituents on the subject — with only three of those being against the ban. This weighed heavily on his decision to vote in favor of the regulation, he said.

Sullivan said he replied to all three of those e-mails personally, mostly allaying concerns from smokers who feared they wouldn't be allowed to smoke.

"People still have the right to smoke — you can smoke all

you want," Sullivan said, describing his response to the e-mails against the ban.

Most importantly, Sullivan said, is that most businesses seem to have a smoking policy already.

Not all commissioners supported the measure. Laura Cox, whose 10th district includes Northville, Northville Township, Plymouth, Plymouth Township and a portion of Livonia, cited a number of concerns with the regulation.

For one, an informal study by a chamber of commerce in her district showed that about 80 percent of businesses already have smoking restrictions in place.

Secondly, there are too many exceptions.

"A large portion of the county is not even included in the regulation," Cox said.

"Government is picking and choosing who they're going to regulate. (Smoking) really and truly is a health issue. (Restrictions) should be done statewide — they should not be done county by county. It causes confusion."

Enforcement of the regulation may be too difficult, she added.

Smoking has become an incendiary issue, with some employers, including Weyco Inc. in Okemos, ordering its employees to quit smoking at work and at home — or be fired.

State Sen. Virg Bernero (D-Lansing) introduced a bill this week that will, if passed, ban this practice. The Employee Privacy Protection Act targets companies that attempt to regulate legal activities during non-working hours.

"A vast majority of employers respect their employees' privacy," said Randy Hannan, Bernero's chief of staff. "But some want to push that too far."

NOTICE OF ANNUAL ELECTION TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2005 SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF GARDEN CITY, COUNTY OF WAYNE, MICHIGAN

TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF SAID SCHOOL DISTRICT:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the annual election will be held in the School District of the City of Garden City, County of Wayne, Michigan, on Tuesday, May 3, 2005, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

At the annual election there will be elected two (2) members of the Board of Education of the School District for four-year terms, beginning July 1, 2005 and expiring June 30, 2009. The candidates for said office to the Board of Education are as follows:

TWO (2) FOUR YEAR TERMS (two shall be elected)

David Stapleton
John Thackaberry

Each person voting on the above must be:

- A citizen of the United States of America over eighteen (18) years of age.
- A registered elector of the City or Township in which he or she resides.

The places of voting for the annual School Election to be held on May 3, 2005, will be as follows:

Precinct 1	Farmington School 33411 Marquette
Precinct 2	Memorial School 30001 Marquette
Precinct 3	Lathers School 28351 Marquette
Precinct 4	Lathers School 28351 Marquette
Precinct 5	Memorial School 30001 Marquette
Precinct 6	Garden City Middle School 1851 Radcliff
Precinct 7	Maplewood Center 31735 Maplewood
Precinct 8	Henry Ruff School 30300 Maplewood
Precinct 9	Civic Center 6000 Middlebelt
Precinct 10	Douglas School 1851 Radcliff

All polling places are handicapped accessible. If you anticipate difficulties at your normal polling place please phone the City Clerk's Office to arrange an alternate location. Absentee Ballots for this Election are available at City Hall, 6000 Middlebelt, through 4:00 P.M., Monday, May 2, 2005, to anyone who meets one of the following requirements: Electors age 60 or older; Electors who expect to be absent from Garden City the entire time the polls are open on Election Day; Electors who are physically unable to attend the polls without the assistance of another; Electors who cannot attend the polls due to tenets of their religion; or Electors who are confined to jail awaiting arraignment or trial. Furthermore, any voter who requires assistance to vote by reason of blindness, disability, or inability to read or write may be given assistance by a person of the voter's choice, other than the voter's employer or agent of that employer or officer or agent of the voter's union.

In addition to our regular hours, the City Clerk's Office will be open on Saturday, April 30, 2005 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for the sole purpose of absentee voting.

Roy Watts
Secretary, Board of Education
School District of the City of Garden City

Publish: April 21, 2005 and April 24, 2005

020219030

SWING

FROM PAGE A1

themselves with excitement," Harlow said. Madison hosted the Rotarians for lunch, and then the ribbon cutting was held.

Madison parent Suzanne Williams of Westland, whose daughter Erinne, almost 8, has spinal muscular atrophy and uses a wheelchair, is excited.

"I was flabbergasted," Williams said. "I had no idea they were working on this."

Erinne's thrilled to be able to swing like other kids, her mom

said of the second-grader.

"I just felt very, very grateful," she added.

The family lives near school, so Erinne will get plenty of use of the swing.

"I never gave much thought to these handicapped children not being able to participate in recess," Harlow said. "It makes me feel good to be able to do something like that."

The swings can be moved to other district schools as the need arises.

Harlow appreciates the community's support of such Rotary activities as the Easter flower sale, golf outing, toy shows and annual dinner-dance auction. That support makes the swing project and others possible, she added.

Kelty appreciates Rotary's help and said working together can make life better for children. "It is not difficult to make things happen for kids," Kelty said.

GARDEN CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Garden City Public Schools is seeking bids for the re-seaming the roof of Burger School located at 30922 Beechwood, Garden City, MI 48135. Approximately 13,000 lineal feet of Versico EPDM is scheduled this summer for repair. Bids are due May 4th at 2:00 pm at Garden City Public Schools, Administration Wing, 1851 Radcliff, Garden City, MI 48135. Please contact Gary Marchel at 734-762-6323 for bid specifications.

All bidders must provide familial disclosure in compliance with MCL 380.1267 and attach this information to the bid proposal. The bid proposal will be accompanied by a sworn and notarized statement disclosing any familial relationship that exists between the owner or any employee of the bidder and any member of the Garden City Schools Board or the Garden City Schools Superintendent. The District will not accept a bid proposal that does not include this sworn and notarized disclosure statement.

Publish: April 21, 2005

0208317222

GARDEN CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Garden City Public Schools is seeking bids for the demolition of the existing bleacher systems and press box at Garden City Middle School, 1851 Radcliff, Garden City, MI 48135. Bids are due May 4th at 2:00 pm at Garden City Public Schools, Administration Wing, 1851 Radcliff, Garden City, MI 48135. Please contact Gary Marchel at 734-762-6323 for bid specifications.

All bidders must provide familial disclosure in compliance with MCL 380.1267 and attach this information to the bid proposal. The bid proposal will be accompanied by a sworn and notarized statement disclosing any familial relationship that exists between the owner or any employee of the bidder and any member of the Garden City Schools Board or the Garden City Schools Superintendent. The District will not accept a bid proposal that does not include this sworn and notarized disclosure statement.

Publish: April 21, 2005

0208317224



NOTICE OF PUBLIC ACCURACY TEST

A public accuracy test will be conducted at the time and location listed, for the purpose of testing the accuracy of the tabulating equipment and programs which will be used to tabulate voted ballots for the School and Special Local Election to be held on Tuesday, May 3, 2005 in Garden City, Wayne County, Michigan.

Location: Civic Center (City Hall)
6000 Middlebelt
Garden City, Michigan 48135

Date: April 27, 2005
Wednesday

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Contact: Allyson M. Bettis
City Clerk
734-793-1620

Publish: April 21 and 24, 2005

0208312051

CITY OF GARDEN CITY

Street Sweeping will begin in Section 1 and Section 2 on Monday, April 18, 2005. This will affect the streets with curb and gutters only. Section 1, Ford to Warren and Veno to Merriman. Section 2, Ford to Warren and Merriman to Middlebelt
Publish: April 17 and 21, 2005

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THE GOLD STANDARD IN SELF-STORAGE

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FOR THE RECORD

DEATHS

B
Frank Briggs, 76, of Troy, died April 13.

C
Mark Carroll, of Plymouth Township, died April 14.
John A. Cash, of Livonia, died April 8.
Margrette Janice Cole, 78, of Westland, died April 14.
Carolina M. Coughlin, of Livonia, died April 18.

G
Jacob Glass, 90, of Auburn Hills, died April 11.

H
Frank T. Hornung, 93, died April 18.

J
Ben S. Jones, 85, formerly of Troy, died March 26.
Iola Jones, of Westland, died April 7.

K
Nancy L. Kauth, 68, died April 17.

L
Helen "Lynn" LeMarbe, 42, of Clarkston, died April 18.
Margaret W. Luchewski, of Westland, died April 18.

M
Mary McBride, 96, of Rochester Hills, died April 6.
Daniel W. Meyka, 56, of Canton, died April 19.
Lynn C. Mitchell, of Canton, died April 9.
Ann L. Muckey, 77, died April 16.

P
Julie Otter Pearce, 74, of Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., died April 12.
Joyce L. Platt, 54, of Rochester Hills, died April 10.
Wanda Rita Procalo, of Livonia, died April 17.

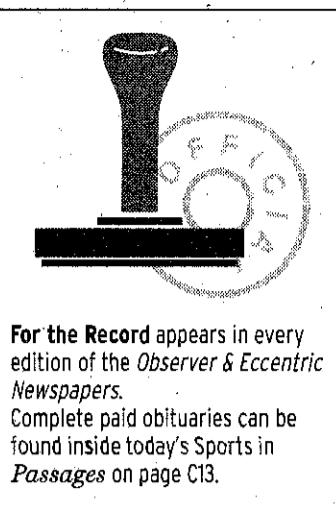
R
Nellie Raimer, 88, of Gainesville, Fla., formerly of Wayne, died April 1.

S
Margaret "Anne" Roberts, 84, of Jupiter, Fla., died March 21.

T
Russell B. Smith, 48, of Auburn Hills, died April 10.
Sharon L. Smith, 64, of Royal Oak, died April 10.
Hugh Sousa, 60, of Rochester Hills, died April 9.
Genevieve Sowinski, 82, of Rochester Hills, died April 9.

W
Betty Jane Talmadge, 77, of Westland, died April 11.
Paul Turley, 79, of Tennessee, formerly of Westland, died April 3.

X
Jeanne E. Watson, 85, of Rochester Hills, died April 11.
Judith M. Weber, of Waterford, died April 14.
Rev. John H. West, 52, of Farmington, died April 14.
Phyllis Ann "Pat" Whitton, 81, of Canton, formerly of Livonia, died April 16.



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 C13.

Museum to reveal Arab-American story

BY JULIE BROWN
STAFF WRITER

The Arab American National Museum will open its doors on May 5 at Michigan Avenue and Schaefer in Dearborn. The public is invited Thursday, May 5, for the grand opening of the AANM, beginning at 5 p.m. The event is free, and will feature a night of music and celebration.

"We just want to welcome everyone to come out," said Hannan Deep, director of communications for the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services. The new museum is a project of ACCESS, which also offers such services as employment training. Of the 15,000 major museums in the United States, the AANM is the first to celebrate the Arab-American story. "This is a first of its kind," Deep said. "We're getting a lot of excitement. It's quite the buzz lately." She's had a number of media inquiries, and noted the museum has generated attention not only locally but also nationally and internationally. The museum documents, preserves, celebrates, and informs the public on the history, life, culture, and contributions of Arab Americans. It is a resource to enhance knowledge and understanding



The Arab American National Museum will open May 5.

about Arab Americans and their presence in the United States. A 38,500-square-foot space, the museum will function as an educational facility, an institution of preservation, and a community center, with a 158-seat auditorium, classroom space, a library/resource center, and shop. The permanent exhibitions focus on two themes: the Arab world and the Arab-American experience. Planning began about five years ago, Deep said, with major work done in the last three years "which is a pretty short amount of time." Fund raising has taken place, with businesses and foundation grants providing support. The museum, 13624 Michigan Ave., can

be reached at (313) 582-AANM or on the Web at www.theaanm.org. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday, noon to 5 p.m. Sunday.

The museum will be closed for Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. Admission is \$6 general, \$3 for students, seniors and children ages 5-12, free for children 5 and younger. Target sponsors free family admission, with a child on Sunday. School and group tours are available and can be arranged by calling the above number. The first exhibit, "In/Visible," will open May 19. "It's a group of Arab-American artists," she said. "Their art will be showcased." Also, Multicultural Nights featuring an array of performers will begin in the fall, with Comerica and Ford Motor Co. as sponsors. A fund-raising gala will be held Saturday, April 23, at the museum. Tickets are \$250 or \$500 (which includes a VIP reception). For more information or to buy tickets for the gala, contact Barbara Logan at logan@accesscommunity.org or (313) 842-7010. Actor Tony Shalhoub, star of the television series Monk will attend, Deep said.

Arsonist blamed for fire in southeast area home

Arson has been blamed for a fire that damaged a house on Westland's southeast side early Monday, Deputy Fire Chief Kevin Riley said. The fire started about 2 a.m. on Lacy, a street in a subdivision on Van Born near Middlebelt. A man who lives in the house was vacationing, and Riley said an arsonist somehow got inside the residence and set a fire that damaged a stairway and the second floor. It wasn't clear how the arsonist got inside the house, because there were no signs of forced entry, Riley said. Firefighters from nearby fire station No. 5 responded and quickly put out the fire, he said. The incident marked the second time in about two years that the same house had caught fire. The earlier fire was blamed on problems with a natural gas line, Riley said.

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FIRE

FROM PAGE A1

standing. "Anything that was inside the school was totally destroyed either by fire or smoke damage or water damage," Riley said.

Riley and Bob Gorman, an environmental consultant familiar with the site, said the fire wouldn't have fueled any airborne toxins that might threaten the neighborhood.

"It's my understanding that the contaminants were in the ground, and all we had burning were the contents of the building, so that shouldn't have created any kind of health hazard," Riley said.

Gorman, in a separate telephone interview, gave a similar assessment.

"The landfill was not involved in the fire," he said. "This would have been just like a regular fire, no worse than a house fire."

The boys accused of setting the fires will likely be charged as juveniles, authorities said. Police took the ninth-graders into custody after their confessions, Ridener said.

The teens had told some of their peers, who notified police and fire officials after fire Capt. Colleen Fedel went to Franklin, talked with school administrators and put up posters seeking help in finding the suspects, Riley said.

The boys confessed after police Sgt. John Hoak, accompanied by Fedel, questioned them about the fires.

The boys accused of setting the fires will likely be charged as juveniles.

"This was a very good joint effort by the police and fire departments," Mayor Sandra Cicirelli said.

The boys apparently got inside the school through a roof hatch that was broken open, Riley said.

They are accused of starting one fire in the northwest corner of the school and another on the south side.

Neighbors have long considered the school an eyesore since it was closed by Livonia school officials and fenced off in 1991.

The school is expected to be torn down this summer, as city and school officials start preparing the site for new development. This week, Cicirelli said the fire isn't expected to halt those plans.

"I don't consider it a setback yet," she said. "I haven't been given any information to say that the fire would delay anything."

Southfield-based Jonna Cos. unveiled a plan last October to build a three-story, 144-unit senior citizen apartment building, a medical office building, an outpatient surgical center and a golf driving range on the site.

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Board candidates share views at 2nd forum

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA STAFF WRITER

Pay-to-participate, privatization and board priorities topped the discussion Wednesday night as the Livonia PTSA Council hosted its annual school board Candidate Forum.

All five candidates competing for two four-year terms on the Livonia Public Schools Board of Education were in attendance for the event, held at the school district's board office. Most agreed on the topics posed by audience members.

When asked about the hot-button issue of pay-to-participate proposal for the district, most candidates agreed the cost-saving measure should be applied across the board.

Daniel Lessard said "we need to consider all extra-curricular activities" when looking

at the possibility. Frank Kalinski and Steve King agreed with the idea.

Cynthia Markarian said she is still looking for a lot of answers and direction from the community, such as how much to charge for activities.

And William C. Fried took it a step further, noting that financial assistance should be provided for those students who are economically-disadvantaged and want to participate.

When asked whether the candidates favor privatization to save costs, reaction varied among the candidates.

Kalinski said he would be willing to look into new ideas for the school district to partner with the city, in order to save money. He gave an example of making more use of bus service for both the schools and city.

Fried said having well-

trained workers within the community is important, though he would support more competition for jobs in order to keep costs in line.

"I'm in favor of looking at outsourcing," added Steve King. "Let's compare it." He suggested outdoor maintenance in the district might be privatized to save money, because the district does own so much land.

But current board members Lessard and Markarian disagreed. Markarian said privatizing jobs like that of custodians would only create a rift in the district.

"Sixty percent of our support staff lives in the district," she said. "They are very committed."

Teaching and student learning topped each candidate's list as the main priority protected by the school board.

King spoke out for teachers

and support staff. Kalinski said teachers need more support from the district. And Fried called for a major overhaul on the way the district is run.

He said: "We do not have a sustainable system," and shared his support for expanding early childhood education. Lessard named "student achievement, without a doubt," as the top priority, as did Markarian.

All five candidates will appear on the ballot for two school board seats on Tuesday, May 3. Watch the PTSA Candidate's Forum in its entirety on LPS TV Channel 15 for Bright House and Wide Open West cable subscribers, and Channel 19 for Comcast users. It will air again at 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 21, Tuesday, April 26 and Thursday, April 28.

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Board finds Baracy 'exceeded every goal'

BY SUE MASON STAFF WRITER

Wayne-Westland School Superintendent Greg Baracy received his "report card" from the Board of Education and it appears he received an A.

According to school board President Frederick Weaver,

the superintendent "exceeded every goal" set for him by the board.

"He has worked tirelessly for the district," said Weaver, speaking on behalf of the board. "He has a better understanding of working with the kids and of elevating to higher achievement."

"I want to thank you for the opportunity to serve as superintendent and superintendent for this community," said Baracy. "I want to thank you for your support and the support of the staff. My evaluation reflects all of their work."

The board met with Baracy in March to review his work in eight areas - professional leadership and personal qualities, curriculum and instruction,

business and finance and community, employee, school board, intergovernmental and student relations.

In a statement released Monday evening, the board pointed out that after eight years on the job, Baracy "continues to exhibit a high energy level when dealing with all aspects of school district operations."

He also continues to motivate the staff to address the goals set by the board for the district.

In looking at those goals, Weaver praised Baracy for keeping the district "financially sound which is tough to do in this day and time with this economic climate."

The annual evaluation "is

just a review, it's not tied to any pay increase," Weaver said, adding that while Wayne-Westland is the 14th largest school district in the state, its superintendent is in the bottom half in salary.

"He's done an incredible job, we're lucky to have him," Weaver added.

His sentiment was shared by Cliff Johnson of Wayne who called Baracy "the best of all of them."

"Greg Baracy has paid his dues to the district and I want people to know," he said. "I'm thankful that he and his helper (Deputy Superintendent Charlotte Sherman) work for the district and for the kids."

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



CITY OF GARDEN CITY NOTICE OF ELECTION

TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF THE CITY OF GARDEN CITY:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Special Election shall be held in the City of Garden City, County of Wayne, State of Michigan, on Tuesday, May 3, 2005, from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., at which Special Election there will be submitted to vote of the qualified electors of the City the following proposition:

JUDGMENT FUNDING BOND PROPOSAL

Shall the City of Garden City, Michigan, borrow the principal sum of not to exceed Seventeen Million, Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$ 17,500,000.00) and issue its general obligation unlimited tax bonds therefore in one or more series payable in not more than fifteen (15) years from issuance, for the purpose of paying a judgment in the Wayne County Circuit Court against the City of Garden City, Michigan (the "City") in favor of Wayne Oakland Contracting, Inc., the costs and interest on the judgment, and all cost in connection with issuing said bonds? The estimated millage to be levied in 2005 is 1.9856 mills (\$ 1.9856 per \$1,000 of taxable value) and the estimated simple average annual millage rate required to retire the bonds is 2.1498 mills (\$ 2.1498 per \$1,000 of taxable value). The millage will be used to pay debt service on the bonds.

THE PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST OF THE GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS SHALL BE PAYABLE FROM THE GENERAL FUNDS OF THE CITY INCLUDING AD VALOREM TAXES LEVIED WITHOUT LIMITATION IN SUFFICIENT AMOUNTS TO PAY THE ANNUAL PRINCIPAL OF AND INTEREST ON THE BONDS.

YES NO

All qualified and registered electors of the City may vote on the above bonding proposition.

I, RAYMOND J. WOJTIWICZ, Treasurer of Wayne County, Michigan, do hereby certify that, as of April 15, 2005 the total of all voted increases in excess of the Constitutional fifteen mill tax rate limitation and the years such increases are effective are as follows affecting the taxable property of Local Unit:

Table with 4 columns: Local Unit, Date of Election, Voted Increases, Years Increases Effective

The places of voting for the Special Election to be held on May 3, 2005, will be as follows:

- Precinct 1 Farmington School 33411 Marquette
Precinct 2 Memorial School 30001 Marquette
Precinct 3 Lathers School 28351 Marquette
Precinct 4 Lathers School 28351 Marquette
Precinct 5 Memorial School 30001 Marquette
Precinct 6 Garden City Middle School 1851 Radcliff
Precinct 7 Maplewood Center 31735 Maplewood
Precinct 8 Henry Ruff School 30300 Maplewood
Precinct 9 Civic Center 6000 Middlebelt
Precinct 10 Douglas School 6400 Hartel

All polling places are handicapper accessible. If you anticipate difficulties at your normal polling place please phone the City Clerk's Office to arrange an alternate location. Absentee Ballots for this Election are available at City Hall, 6000 Middlebelt, through 4:00 P.M., Monday, May 2, 2005, to anyone who meets one of the following requirements: Electors age 60 or older; Electors who expect to be absent from Garden City the entire time the polls are open on Election Day; Electors who are physically unable to attend the polls without the assistance of another; Electors who cannot attend the polls due to tenets of their religion; or Electors who are confined to jail awaiting arraignment or trial. Furthermore, any voter who requires assistance to vote by reason of blindness, disability, or inability to read or write may be given assistance by a person of the voter's choice, other than the voter's employer or agent of that employer or officer or agent of the voter's union.

In addition to our regular hours, the City Clerk's Office will be open on Saturday, April 30, 2005 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for the sole purpose of absentee voting.

This notice is given by order of the City Council of the City of Garden City, Michigan.

ALLYSON BETTIS, City Clerk, City of Garden City

Publish: April 21 and 24, 2005

CE08312077



NOTICE OF ELECTION TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2005 SCHOOLCRAFT COMMUNITY COLLEGE COUNTY OF WAYNE, MICHIGAN

TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF SAID COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the biennial election will be held in the Schoolcraft College District, City of Garden City, County of Wayne, Michigan on Tuesday May 3, 2005, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

The following trustee at-large positions are to be filled by the voters in the Schoolcraft College district at the May 3 Regular Biennial School Election:

TWO 6-YEAR TERMS (2005-2011) Gregory J. Stempien Patricia L. Watson

ONE 4-YEAR TERM (2005-2009) Philip N. Cascade

Each person voting on the above must be:

- (a) A citizen of the United States of America over eighteen (18) years of age.
(b) A registered elector of the City or Township in which he or she resides.

The places of voting for the Election to be held on May 3, 2005, will be as follows:

- Precinct 1 Farmington School 33411 Marquette
Precinct 2 Memorial School 30001 Marquette
Precinct 3 Lathers School 28351 Marquette
Precinct 4 Lathers School 28351 Marquette
Precinct 5 Memorial School 30001 Marquette
Precinct 6 Garden City Middle School 1851 Radcliff
Precinct 7 Maplewood Center 31735 Maplewood
Precinct 8 Henry Ruff School 30300 Maplewood
Precinct 9 Civic Center 6000 Middlebelt
Precinct 10 Douglas School 6400 Hartel

All polling places are handicapper accessible. If you anticipate difficulties at your normal polling place please phone the City Clerk's Office to arrange an alternate location. Absentee Ballots for this Election are available at City Hall, 6000 Middlebelt, through 4:00 P.M., Monday, May 2, 2005, to anyone who meets one of the following requirements: Electors age 60 or older; Electors who expect to be absent from Garden City the entire time the polls are open on Election Day; Electors who are physically unable to attend the polls without the assistance of another; Electors who cannot attend the polls due to tenets of their religion; or Electors who are confined to jail awaiting arraignment or trial. Furthermore, any voter who requires assistance to vote by reason of blindness, disability, or inability to read or write may be given assistance by a person of the voter's choice, other than the voter's employer or agent of that employer or officer or agent of the voter's union.

In addition to our regular hours, the City Clerk's Office will be open on Saturday, April 30, 2005 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for the sole purpose of absentee voting.

Allyson Bettis City Clerk

Publish: April 21, 2005 and April 24, 2005

CE08312080

INFO CENTRAL

The Friends of the Westland Library is a committed group of volunteers whose main purpose is to further the goals of and support, both financially and through volunteer work, the Public Library of Westland. It is composed of a governing board, its trustees and membership roster.

Their main sources of income are sponsorship of used book sales, membership fees, a bookstore within the library, and the selling of office products (paper, pencils, disks, book bags, etc.) to patrons.

The Friends are most generous with their funds in support of the library. Over the years, the Friends have sponsored Summer Reading programs for children, young adults and adults. They have provided numerous prizes for incentives.

The Friends have been instrumental in funding core collections, such as books on CD, purchasing books for the Adult Book Discussion Group, an American Girls doll collection, programming and even the ink cartridges for various printers. Without their help, many of the items we now take for granted would not have been possible.

The Friends group is not costly to join, nor is the work/too time intensive. It can be a nice way to meet and make social contacts.

Also, by joining the Friends, you are eligible to attend a special preview sale before book sales are open to the public. The book sales occur about every three months, and they are always well attended.

Anyone can become a Friend of the Library, and we are always looking for new ways to broaden membership. The Friends meet on the second Tuesday of each month at 2 p.m. in the library meeting room.

If you like to socialize, are looking for a way to make some new acquaintances, or become involved in your community, the Friends of the Westland Library is just the ticket for you. We hope to see your smiling face at the next Friends meeting.

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



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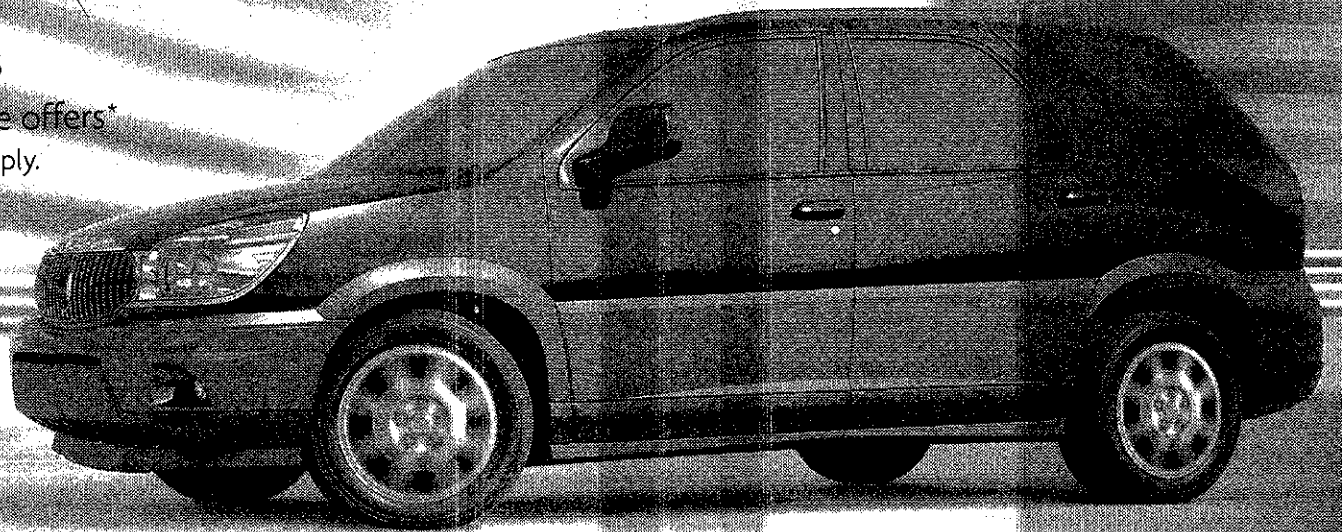
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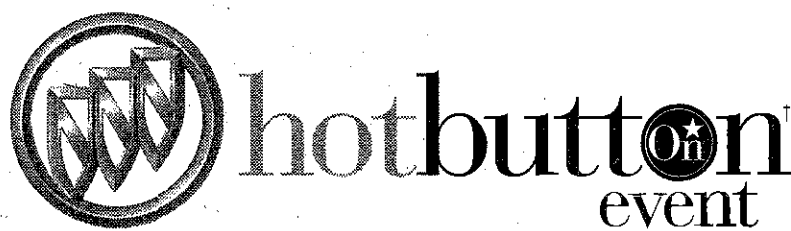
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*Payments are for a 2005 Buick Rendezvous CX with an MSRP of \$27,270 (24 monthly payments total \$4,536), a 2005 Buick LaCrosse CX with 16" aluminum wheels and an MSRP of \$23,845 (24 monthly payments total \$4,776) and a 2005 Buick Terraza CX with an MSRP of \$28,825 (36 monthly payments total \$10,764). Option to purchase at lease end for an amount to be determined at lease signing. GMAC must approve lease. Take delivery by 5/31/05. Mileage charge of \$.20/mile over 24,000 miles for Rendezvous and LaCrosse, 36,000 miles for Terraza. Lessee pays for excess wear. Payments may be higher in some states. Not available with other offers.

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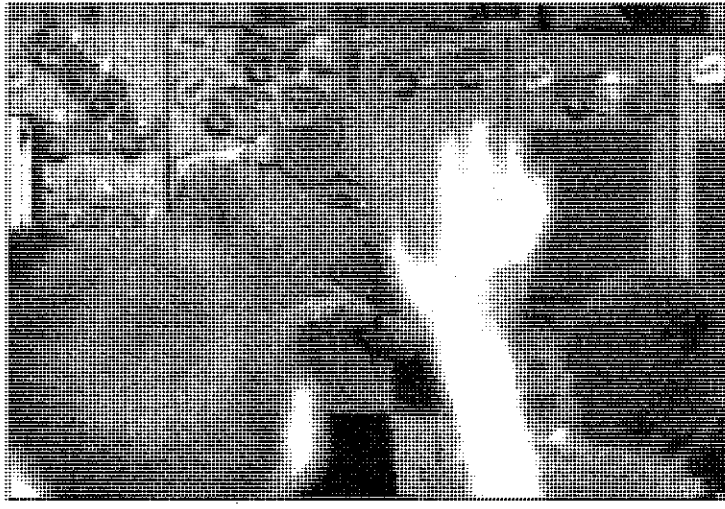
†Hot Button ends 5/31/05. For details, see gm.com/hotbutton.

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Of sandstorms and homesickness

Marine connects with pen-pal students at Randolph

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER



TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Sgt. Misty Gatlin answers questions about her experiences in Iraq as she talks to Kate Herriff's sixth grade class at Randolph Elementary School. Gatlin corresponded with the students by writing letters while she was away.

The students had plenty of questions for Gatlin once they finally had the chance to meet her in person. They asked about her favorite food and what she might have wanted to bring back with her from Iraq. Gatlin said she loved pizza. And if she could've brought a souvenir, she would've chosen a piece of marble from one of Saddam Hussein's palaces. Gatlin was one of 11 women in a unit of 220 Marines. Some students asked if she was ever scared or homesick. Gatlin answered yes to both questions. "There were times when you're scared," she said. "You're away from home and it's a different country. I got homesick." Gatlin said later that receiving letters from the students in Livonia eased some of her

homesickness, and sometimes brought her to tears. She said it meant a lot to know the students, and their parents, supported the troops. "She always wanted to be a Marine," said Schwarz, "since the fifth grade. And she never wavered." Going to Iraq was one of her proudest accomplishments as a Marine, she told the students. On Sunday, she will leave for Camp Lejeune in North Carolina. Herriff was pleased to have Gatlin visit. She said the experience fit into many of her class lessons for writing, social studies and current events. "I'm just thankful the students had this opportunity," she said.

scasola@oe.hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2054



Kayla Hills and her family are hoping to raise nearly \$8,000 for a week-long trip to New York to hone her skills as a performer. The 10-year-old hopes to have a career singing.

Benefits to give girl chance to compete in talent contest

A local girl is looking for help in reaching her goal of a career as a singer. Westland resident Kayla Hills, 10, has been singing at local establishments and holding fund-raisers, such as an upcoming bowl-a-thon, to raise nearly \$8,000 to participate in the International Modeling and Talent Association competition July 17-23 in New York City. The Kettering Elementary School student was selected through an audition to represent Aero/Royal Model Management at the competition. "It will fine-tune her acting, singing and putting together a resume for competitions," said her mother, Tonya Hills. Kayla will perform tonight (Thursday) at the Sports Venue on Middlebelt in Garden City. Other upcoming fund-raisers include a psychic fair at the Westland AMVETS Hall on May 22 and a June 11 bowl-a-thon at Town & Country Lanes, also in Westland. The youngster, who names Tim McGraw as her favorite singer, has received support from American Legion Post 396 where her family are members and she belongs to the Junior Auxiliary. For more information about the fund-raisers, call (734) 641-9729.

First Citizen of the Year

NOMINATION FORM

Co-sponsored by the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers and the Westland Chamber of Commerce

Purpose of the Award

The First Citizen of the Year Award was created to recognize an individual for outstanding local volunteer community service. The winner will be honored at the Westland Chamber of Commerce Spring Awards Dinner May 24.

Nominee

Name _____

Title/Position _____

Company/Organization _____

Business Address _____

Nominator

Name _____

Company _____

Outline of Service - Include the impact on the community, length of time and offices held. Use additional sheet if necessary.

Notice - Deadline for nominations is April 29, 2005. Local residency is not required. Those currently holding or seeking public office are not eligible. Mail: Westland Chamber of Commerce, 36900 Ford Rd., Westland, MI 48185 or Fax: 734 326-6040

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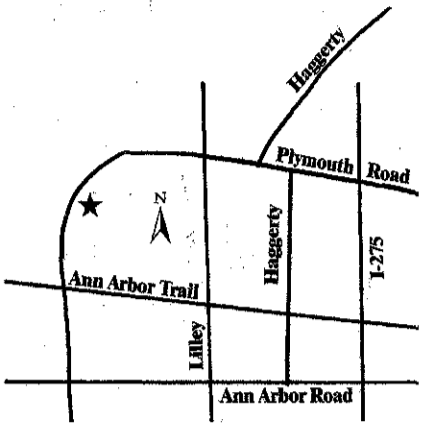
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Highest honor

Project gives moms some rest

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

New moms at Mott Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor have someplace to rest their feet, thanks to the efforts of Tim Ursem.

A sophomore at Wayne Memorial High School, Ursem, with the help of family and friends, made 20 nursing stools for the hospital as his Eagle Scout community service project.

"My friends think it's kind of cool," said Ursem who completed his board of review earlier this month and is waiting for his certificate from Boy Scouts headquarters before planning his Eagle Scout court of honor, probably in June.

"Tim's cousin was born with a heart defect last July and was flown to Ann Arbor," said his dad, Dan. "They had a few stools there. When it came time to do his project, he decided it would be a nice way to give back for what they had done for his cousin."

Ursem planned, organized and got donations for the project. Northside Hardware ACO and Nankin Hardware in Westland, Town & Country in Garden City and Romulus Hardware helped with donations.

He used a stool like the one his sister donated to the hospital to make the pattern and DTR Innovations in Utica chipped in the plywood.

"My dad works with a guy who has a friend who owns the company," said Ursem said of DTR. "He donated the wood and cut out the pattern. We still had to do the sanding,

putty up the holes and assemble it."

For the Wayne resident, getting the donations was no easy task. According to his father, he has struggled with dyslexia and getting a badge like citizenship was difficult.

"Sometimes, I had my doubts, but Tim's been really conscientious and has stuck with it," said his father. "He would rather be doing something else, but he kept on. It kind of became a family effort although he did do all of the work."

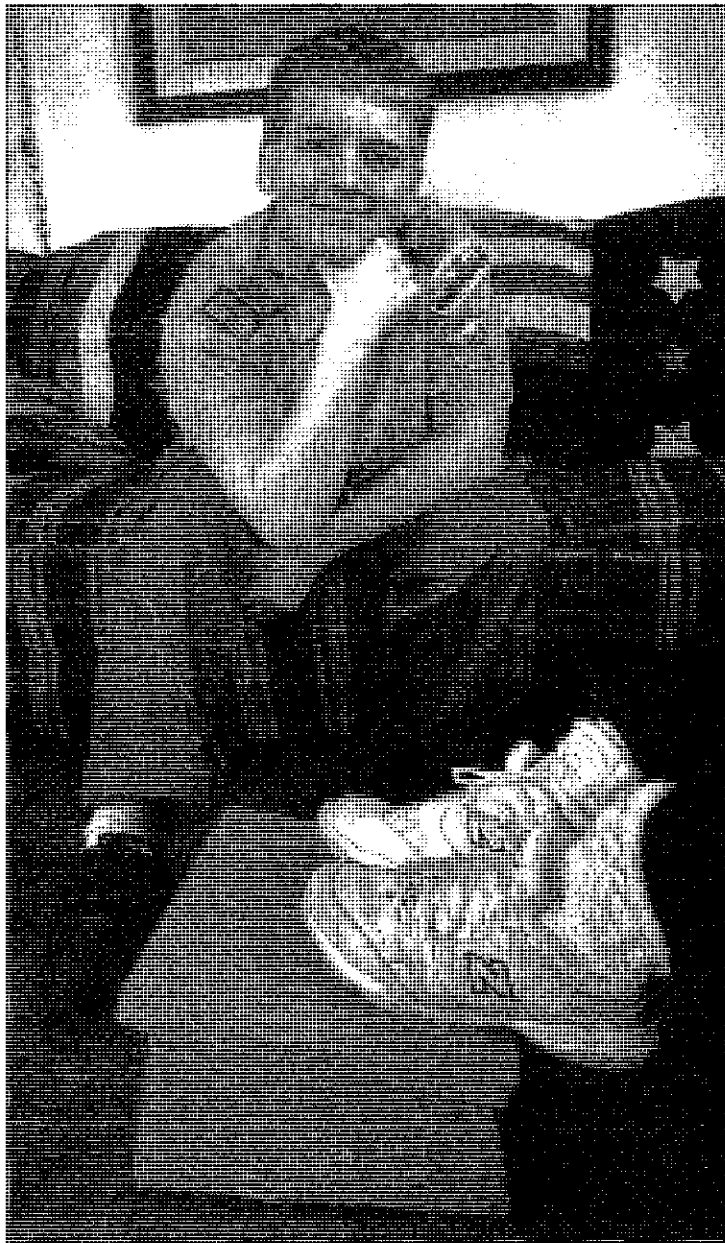
Of the 21 merit badges he's earned to date, Ursem's favorite was learning how to care for and use a shotgun. The hardest was communications, and that was a difficult part of his project.

"I had to call people," he said. "I don't like talking on the telephone and that made it difficult for me."

Ursem started in Cub Scouting at age 8 and joined the Boy Scouts at age 11. A member of Boy Scout Troop 1742 of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints in Westland, the 16-year-old is following in the footsteps of his older brother Danny, who earned his Eagle Scout several years ago.

Danny sets a positive example for his younger brother who already is contemplating how many more merit badges he wants to earn. For every five badges past the rank of Eagle, a Scout earns a palm. Danny has five palms.

"I plan to get more badges to earn palms and help with the younger Scouts; I've got to beat my brother," Ursem said.



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Tim Ursem shows off one for 20 nursing stools he made for Mott Children's Hospital as his Eagle Scout community service project.

According to his father, Ursem is one of three Eagle Scouts in the troop which has 16 members. There's also another young man working on his community service project and five Life Scouts, one rank below Eagle. The remainder of the troop are new Scouts.

For now, he can relax and wait for his court of honor and congratulatory letters from far and near.

"Danny got a whole bunch of them," said Dan. "He got one from Al Kaline and the president, and Tim is looking forward to that."

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

PLACES AND FACES

Book sale

The Friends of the Westland Library will hold a book sale 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday-Saturday, April 22-23, and noon-4 p.m. Sunday, April 24, at the library, 6123 Central City Parkway. There will be a preview sale 2-4 p.m. Thursday, April 21, for Friends of the Library members and those people wishing to join the group that day.

Open House

The Wayne-Westland Community Schools Family Resource Center and the Oakwood Lincoln-Jefferson Barns Clinic will host an open house 2:30-6 p.m. Monday, April 25, in celebration of 17 years of combined service to the Wayne-Westland community. Tours of the clinic will be conducted 2:30-6 p.m. with a presentation at 5 p.m. The clinic is at Lincoln Elementary School, 33800 Grand Traverse, Westland.

Free seminar

Kate Ferrett, hospital liaison for Arbor Hospice and Home Care, will speak about such issues as advanced directives in a presentation 5-6 p.m. Thursday, May 19, at Westland Convalescent Center.

Ferrett will discuss such topics as what are advance directives, when is it time to think about advance directives, who needs advance directives, what is the difference between advance directives and a living will and how to get started.

The seminar is free of charge and open to the public. Contact Judy Bianchi at (734) 728-6100 to sign up for this very special event.

Curtain call

The City of Wane Arts and Entertainment Department Actors Community Theatre will present Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Cinderella* at 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, May 6-7, 13-14 and 20-21, and 2 p.m. 2 p.m. Sunday, May 8 and 15, at the State Wayne Theater, 35310 Michigan Ave., Wayne. Tickets cost \$15 for adults, \$13 for students and senior citizens and \$8 for children.

There also will be a Mothers Day Lunch - *Cinderella* Spectacular at noon Sunday, May 8. There will be a full lunch buffet, served at the Wayne Community Center, 4635 Howe, followed by the matinee performance of *Cinderella* at 2 p.m. at the State Wayne Theater. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$15 for children 12 years and under. Package fees are available.

For more information, call (734) 721-7400.

The Community Theater is hosting auditions for Jesus Christ Superstar 4:30-9:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 27, at the Wayne Community Center, 4635 Howe, Wayne. Call (734) 721-7400 to reserve a time slot for an audition.

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. 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.

Garage Sale

It's like having more than 80 garage sales all in the same place at the same time. The Westland community garage sale will take place 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, May 7, in the parking lot west of Westland City Hall, 36601 Ford Road, next to the Police Department. For further information about reserving a spot, call Margaret Martin at (734) 722-7620.

Golf outing

The Westland Rotary Club will hold a Centennial Golf Celebration Thursday, May 26, at the Golden Fox at Fox Hills in Salem Township. The outing will have a scramble format and 11 a.m. shotgun start. It includes 18 holes of golf, lunch and beverages at the turn, door prizes and a filet mignon dinner and banquet.

The costs is \$160 per golfer or \$600 for a foursome. Sponsorships also are available. For more information, call Dr. Kim Shunkwiler at (734) 728-5533, Tom North at (734) 421-1300, Todd Blevins at (734) 425-7766 or Capt. Matt O'Neil at (734) 722-3660.

To register, send a check, payable to Westland Rotary to the Rotary Golf Outing, Shunkwiler Chiropractic Health Center, 5978 N. Wayne Road, Westland, MI 48185.

Proceeds will benefit the Salvation Army and Westland Rotary charities.

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.

Parent seminar

The Wayne-Westland Community Schools' Family Resource Center in collaboration with Hegira Prevention is offering a parent seminar on Positive Discipline 5-6:30 p.m. Thursday, May 5, 12 and 19, at Vandenberg Elementary School, 32101 Stellwagen, Wayne.

The seminar will cover the difference between punishment and discipline, how parenting styles affect how children learn and more. Each participant will receive a copy of Jane Nelson's *Positive Discipline*.

Participants can attend one session or all three. For more information, call (734) 419-2709.

CLUBS IN ACTION

Listings for Clubs in Action should be submitted in writing. They can be mailed to Sue Mason at 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150, by fax at (734) 591-7279 or by e-mail at smason@oe.homecomm.net. For more information, call (734) 953-2112.

T.O.P.S.
Take Off Pounds Sensibly No. M128, a

support group for sensible weight loss, meets 6:30 p.m. Tuesdays at Good Shepherd Reformed Church, Wayne Road and Hunter in Westland. Call Jackie at (734) 722-7225.
n Take Off Pounds Sensibly No. M153 meets at 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays at St. John Episcopal Church, 555 S. Wayne Road, Westland. Call (734) 721-5023. Call Rosalie at (734) 728-0299.

Genealogical society

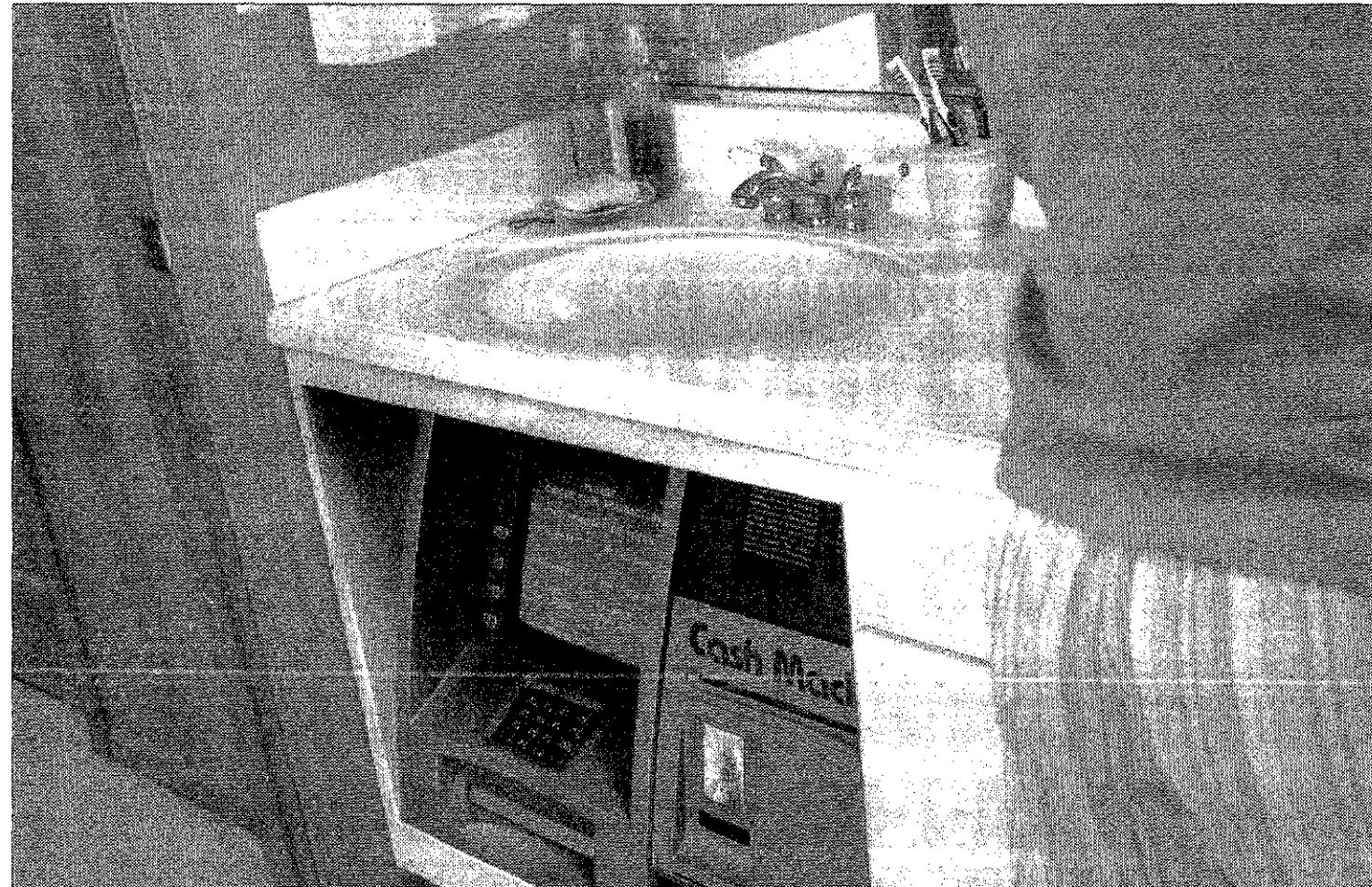
The Western Wayne County Genealogical Society meets the third Monday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at the Livonia Civic Park Senior Center on Farmington Road, south of Five Mile. Beginning genealogy and computer classes start at 6:30 p.m. Guests are welcome.

Hospital retirees

The Oakwood-Annapolis Retirees meet at 1 p.m. the first Monday of the month at Oakwood Hospital Annapolis Center, Venoy at Howe in Wayne. All Oakwood Retirees are welcome to attend.

Westland Rotary

The Westland Rotary Club meets 12:15 p.m. Thursdays at Joy Manor, 28999 Joy, east of Middlebelt in Westland.



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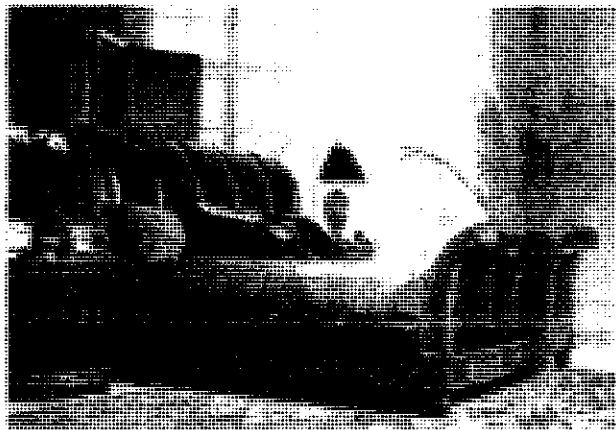
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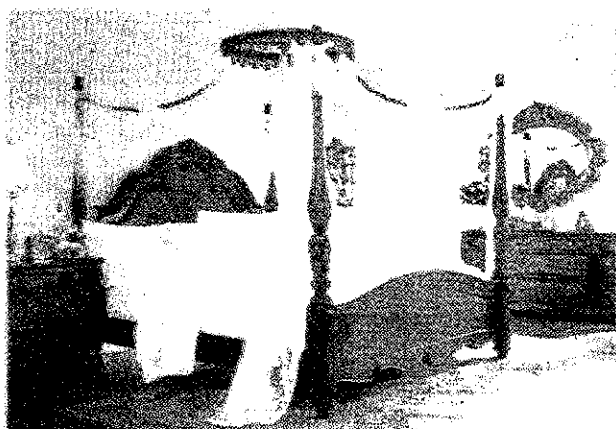
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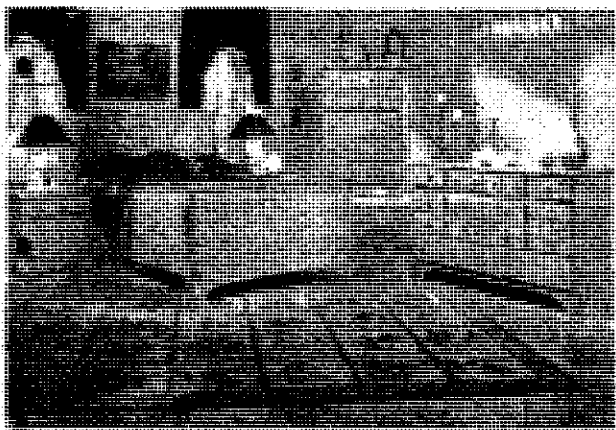
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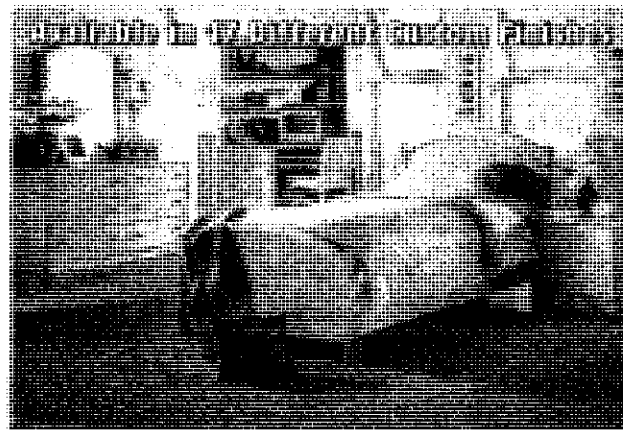
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53" Double Dresser & Mirror \$418
48" Computer Desk & Hutch \$428



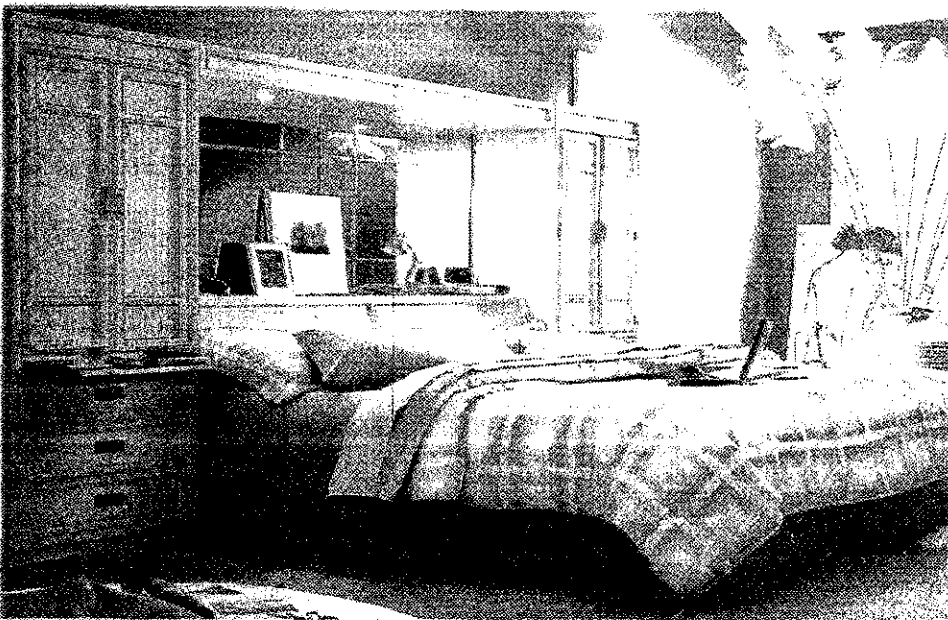
Brand New "Jackson Creek" 43-Pc. Rustic Oak Boys Bedroom Collection
Solid Wood Desk Chair \$168
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44" Student/Computer Desk \$418
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Twin Size Panel Bed \$518
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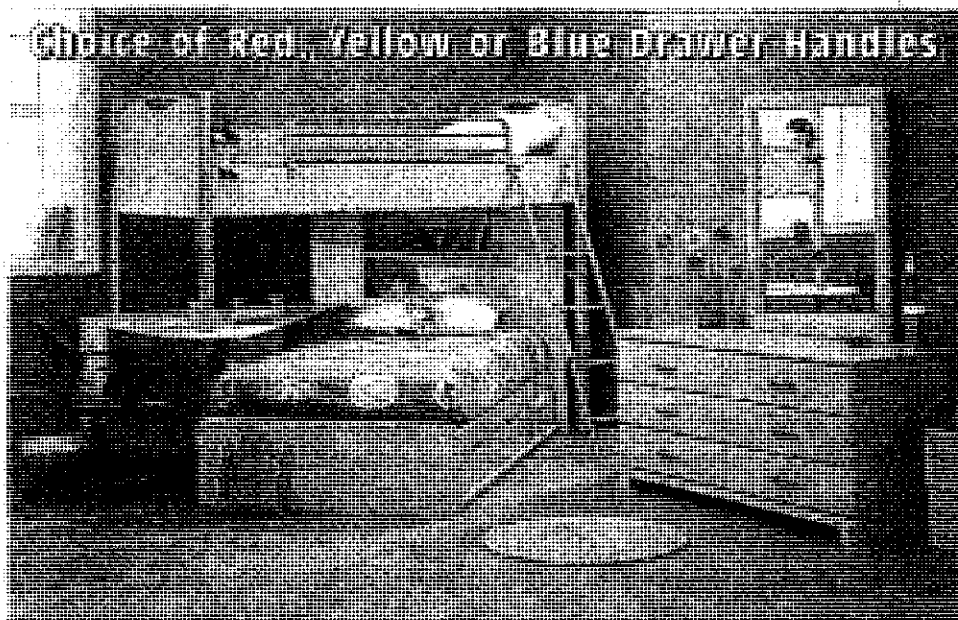
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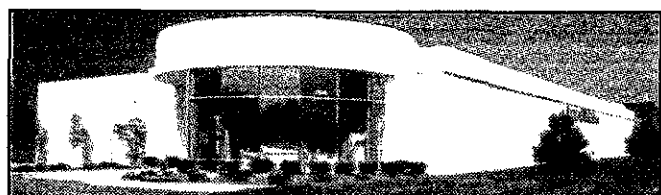
Stanley "Caroline" 102-Pc. Hand Painted Girls Bedroom Collection
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Twin Size Trunk Bed \$828



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Titanium Swivel Chair \$118
Square Top Vertical Mirror \$118
One Drawer Night Stand \$118
Twin Size Panel Bed \$268
54" Double Dresser \$278
58" Computer Desk \$278
Five Drawer High Chest \$278
Two Door Computer Hutch \$278
Three Drawer Storage Bed \$288
TV/Entertainment Unit \$298
Full Size Panel Bed \$328
Unique Corner Loft w/desk \$888



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OUR VIEWS

Elect Markarian, King to board seats

Of the five committed, caring, quality candidates willing to give of their time and expertise to serve on Livonia Public Schools Board of Education, we've chosen to endorse Cynthia Markarian and Steve King for the four-year seats.

Both Markarian and King are parents in the district, an important perspective for how their decisions will impact the school community.

Markarian was chosen by fellow board members from among numerous applicants to fill a board vacancy last year and she's shown growth in the role, earning board certification and demonstrating a knack for asking insightful questions. An information technology vice president at DFCU financial and mother of three, Markarian shows an understanding of the issues facing the board and educators, plus a willingness to be a new voice for the district to state lawmakers. She also touts the need to restore reading recovery specialists and the elementary music program.

A Livonian nearly his entire life, King brings a diverse background of experiences, jobs and volunteer work in town. He brings a common-sense viewpoint, with a plethora of ideas and a renewed sense of urgency to look at new places to save money — all with a goal of protecting classroom teachers' jobs and bringing back more arts and physical education class time to the elementary grades. He abhors test-driven teaching and sees a need to "at least look at" outsourcing food service and other non-educational jobs, again to protect and improve the educational program.

Incumbent Dan Lessard should be proud of the nine years he's served on the school board. He's been a regional leader in school board organizations and has been a strident defender of local control and the state stepping up school funding. However, there's value in bringing in new viewpoints, new discerning evaluations of the issues before the board. It's also possible that different local voices will find a new, better way to get state lawmakers to hear the message of school funding needs.

We congratulate all five candidates — including spirited challengers William Fried and Frank Kalinski — for sharing their viewpoints with the community and for facing each other in three community forums. We urge Livonia voters to elect Cynthia Markarian and Steve King to the Livonia Board of Education on May 3.

We can all support the environment

Friday is Earth Day and no matter what your political preference or religious belief, the environment is an issue we can all support.

We salute the early champions of conservation and the voices who lobbied for clean water and clear air legislation throughout the decades that has improved the quality of life for all.

Local Earth Day events for many years centered around recycling — bottles, cans, plastic and paper.

In our high-tech world, it's also about recycling and reusing the new tools of life in 2005 — cell phones. So don't toss that old phone in the trash.

Earth Day 2005 is the perfect time to start making a difference. Whether you take a walk and enjoy nature, plant a tree, or renew a pledge to reuse and recycle household items — include that old cell phone, too — take time to reflect and enjoy the outdoors and pledge to preserve Mother Earth.

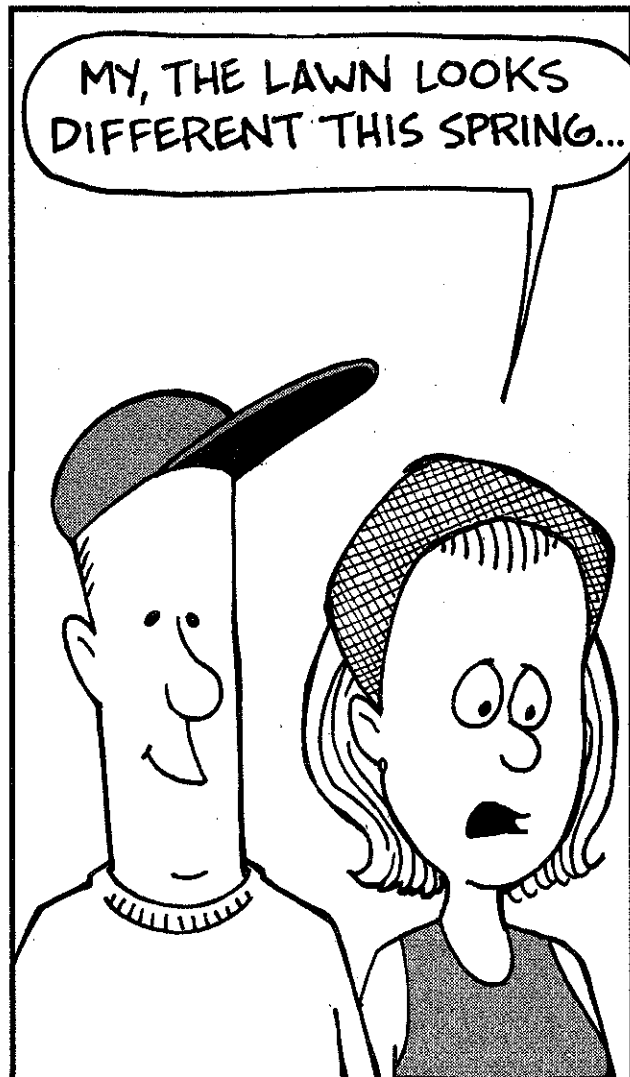
Listen up: Vote is May 3

The first real test of Michigan's election consolidation law is less than two weeks away, and we're hoping for good things.

School districts throughout our *Observer & Eccentric* communities will elect members to their local school boards and some will vote on funding issues May 3 — not in mid-June, as has been the case in years past.

State officials hoped to increase voter turnout by consolidating elections to four set dates every year, while eliminating so-called "stealth" elections when, for instance, only school district supporters would show up to vote. They also moved all election responsibility to local municipalities and standardized voting sites, again to help get more people involved in the process.

The May 3 school board elections — now held before the start of the summer vacation season — will be the first real trial of those theories. And, given the usual single-digit turnout in our towns, we certainly hope voters will be paying attention.



LETTERS

Thanks for the help

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the many wonderful, thoughtful people who came to the aide of one of my students, myself and some other staff members of my school at the Westland Mall on Tuesday, March 15.

I am a teacher at Burger School for Students with Autism in Garden City. My classroom of preschool students, along with several other classrooms from our school, went to the mall to have lunch and see the Easter Bunny on this day. Community experiences are important to our students to teach them how to behave in social situations such as these.

My classroom had just finished seeing the Easter Bunny when one of my students began to have an extreme bloody nose. I carry tissues and moistened wipes with me on all of our community experiences. However, in this case, there was not time to get into my bag to retrieve these items.

My student was beginning to panic and I was being very careful to attend to him by calming him down and also trying to stop his bloody nose. Before I knew it, strangers were coming to us and handing me tissues and moistened wipes out of their pockets and purses.

I was going through all of these supplies very quickly because of the large amount of blood that was coming from my student's nose. Nevertheless, there seemed to be an endless supply of these items being handed to me.

I never even saw the faces of these strangers as I was attending to my student's care. I would like to say thank you from the bottom of my heart for all of their help and thoughtfulness in a frenzied situation.

It is reassuring to know that in this world of violence and fright, that there are still many people that are willing to help complete strangers.

Denise Palmer
Burger School teacher

What a deal

I read in the paper where Gov. Jennifer Granholm, with her swift maneuvers, got the Japanese to buy the property they wanted for one-third of what it is worth.

Good work, governor! You would make a top-notch saleswoman. I see you got a free trip to Japan for you and your family. I bet the Big Three also loves you.

What a deal! I sure hope the people of Michigan give you your just reward — one term.

Wayne Mirth
Westland

Organ donation saves lives

I am writing to bring attention to a very important and life-saving bill that Sen. Laura Tjo introduced, and Gov. Granholm signed into law at the end of last year. Our state has a disturbingly low rate of organ donation registrations, and this new law — Senate Bill 817 — seeks to rectify this alarming trend.

The bill allows a Michigan's citizens the opportunity to make a modest monetary contribution the "Organ and Tissue Donation Education Fund" while renewing our driver's licenses or state ID cards, and also encourages our participation in

the organ donor registry. I cannot overstate the degree to which this program saves the lives of countless individuals awaiting tissue and organ transplants.

As of March 1, 2005, more than 2,600 Michigan patients were currently waiting for an organ transplant, but less than 100 of them received that gift of life. Nationwide, nearly 840,000 individuals are registered in the Donor Registry.

Each year, many of us feel that it is a burden to renew our licenses, possibly stand in line, and "waste" our valuable time. Why not seize this opportunity to create new possibilities for those among us who are physically unable to drive a car, or stand in a line, and who only want to live another day to spend with their family?

I therefore encourage you to spend just a moment to place your name on the organ donor registry, and make a contribution to this new fund. What you sacrifice with a moment of your time, or a few of your dollars could very well save someone's life.

Patricia Coughlan
Livonia

Rwanda needs help now

Earlier this month it was the 11-year anniversary of the Rwanda genocide, when we remember the 800,000 people who were killed in 100 days.

Our leaders claim that "never again" will the world stay silent during genocide, yet the U.S. Administration has kept silent for seven months since declaring genocide in Darfur.

Breaking this shocking silence are voices across the U.S. calling for a multinational humanitarian intervention to support the African Union to protect the people. The violence is escalating and now famine is on the horizon in Darfur.

We can no longer tolerate the failure of the international community to help the people of Darfur. The U.S. must do everything in its power to move the UN Security Council to ensure a rapid and robust international intervention in Darfur or up to a million people could be dead by the end of this year.

Jeremy Tabor
Garden City

'Let's roll' on impeachment

You recently printed a letter from a reader who thought it would be "nice to see some positive things about the War in Iraq." She then listed 17 positive things which admittedly came from the Department of Defense Web site.

I would respectfully ask this letter writer and anyone else to read this list and choose which positive things they would be willing to give their life for. Better yet, which of these "positive things about the War in Iraq" would you ask your neighbor or their children, to lay down their lives for?

President G.W. Bush rushed this country to War in Iraq shouting that Saddam Hussein posed an imminent threat to our security. He lied!

The intelligence that Bush-Cheney received was flawed, but it was exactly what they wanted to hear. They didn't check this info two or three times, they simply ran with it. Impeachment alone would be too good for these scoundrels.

I feel that Bush, Cheney, Ashcroft, Rumsfeld, Powell, Rice and Wolfowitz deserve jail time. Serious jail time! Let their incarceration serve as a warning to future administrations. Lie about marital infidelities, we might forgive you and we might not. But when your lies put American service men and women in harm's way, we take that very, very seriously!

As per the Constitution, the healing process begins with impeachment hearings, to which I say, "Let's roll."

William McCleverty
Livonia

Stop feeding fat cats

Radical Republicans want absolute power to appoint Supreme Court justices that will favor corporate interests and the extreme right over the rest of us.

Although, last term Senate Democrats confirmed almost 95 percent of President Bush's judicial nominees, eliminating the filibuster is not about overcoming "obstructionism," it's about the desire for complete one-party control.

It's time for the corporatist, Christian Taliban right wing to stop its catering to fat cats and fringe groups.

Leon Juncaj
Farmington Hills

Think of people

(Phil Power's) suggestion to analyze our Michigan situation like the thinking of a CEO ("Wanted: Bold leaders to suggest sweeping changes," April 7) is excellent.

Then our Legislature would have to forget what party they represent and do what is good for the state, not think of their ego, or re-election possibility.

What might be a thought is elect people who are older and are not in office to enhance themselves. For instance, people who took early retirement. Such as educators, managers, accountants and small business owners. These people have real business sense and not theories.

I am a native Michigan citizen and very disappointed in the situation we are in. My dad would always say, "The unions will ruin this country."

I look forward to your columns on all subjects.

Tony Wisniewski
Plymouth

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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36251 Schoolcraft
Livonia, MI 48150

Fax:
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QUOTABLE

"We feel Wayne-Westland is a great place to learn, a great place to work and has great home values. Granted we don't have the \$500,000 homes, we don't have that affluence, but we do have good homes with supportive parents."

— Supt. Greg Baracy, speaking at the district's annual Realtors Luncheon last week

WESTLAND
Observer

PUBLISHED THURSDAY AND SUNDAY

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Sue Mason
Community Editor

Marty Carry
Advertising Director

Hugh Gallagher
Managing Editor

Peter Neill
General Manager

Susan Rosiek
Executive Editor

Richard Aginian
President/Publisher

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.

Controlling nuisance species needs to be region's top priority

When you look at images of Earth taken from outer space, our Michigan stands out clearly, wrapped entirely in the gorgeous blue of the Great Lakes. They define our state as nothing else. They contain fully one-quarter of all the fresh water in the world. And, I suspect, the resources their water offers holds much of the long-term economic future of our state.

But our entire ecosystem is now being threatened by the introduction of critters like the zebra mussel, the sea lamprey, the spiny water flea and a pest fish called the Eurasian ruffe. To date, there are 162 of these aquatic nuisance species (ANS), with new species being discovered every eight months. Most of them originate elsewhere and are carried to the Great Lakes in the ballast water of ocean-going freighters. Because they originate outside the Great Lakes ecosystem, when they arrive here they find few natural predators, and so they spread like ... well, zebra mussels.

Every serious study has concluded that drastic action must be taken to end these invasions to maintain the health of the lakes and to save the fishery and recreation industries. Sadly, governmental efforts to do so have run the gamut from the laughably ineffective to the scandalously foot-dragging.

The National Invasive Species Act, for example, says ballast exchange or treatment is required before ships enter the Great Lakes. But if the ship captain declares there is no ballast on board, there is no inspection and the ship sails on. Worse, the feds recently turned enforcement over to the Coast Guard, whose first priority is not, by any means, things environmental.

On the state level, Michigan's Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act gives the Department of Environmental Quality the authority to control pollution of any sort in the Great Lakes. But the DEQ says it can't enforce the act with respect to ballast water because it doesn't have the money and there is no unified basin-wide approach to the regulations.

But there are two recent pieces of good news: Last month, a federal judge in San Francisco ruled the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency must regulate discharges from ships' ballast tanks. The lawsuit arose from environmental groups in the area which are dismayed that the bay is being inundated by exotic species from abroad.

Encouragingly, however, attorneys general from all eight Great Lakes states and both political parties also filed supportive friend-of-the-court briefs. Plainly, the ruling also affects shipping in the Great Lakes.

One might have hoped the EPA would promptly have begun figuring out how to make sure ballast tanks are being treated to make sure no living organisms survive after discharge. But no such luck: the EPA says it's studying its options, which means it is likely to appeal the decision.

So while Washington dithers, it makes much more sense to try to move the action to the states that actually know where the Great Lakes are. A sensible and capable state senator, Patty Birkholz (R-Saugatuck), has introduced legislation that would authorize the Michigan DEQ to enter into an agreement with other Great Lakes states and Canadian provinces to create the Great Lakes Aquatic Nuisance Coalition. This group then would be charged with eliminating biological pollution in the Great Lakes.

"Aquatic nuisance species are a major threat to the ecosystem of the Great Lakes and they need to be stopped before they wipe out the native fish and wildlife," Birkholz says.

That coalition then could encourage states throughout the region to adopt uniform laws governing biological pollution. With a uniform standard in place, each state (or Canadian province) could enforce treatment of overseas ballast water without having to depend on the feds.

When I spoke with Birkholz last week, she was pumped up about the possibilities.

"We just had a joint meeting of the relevant House and Senate committees," she said. "Andy Buchsbaum, state head of the National Wildlife Federation, presented compelling evidence of the ANS threat. Both Steve Chester, head of the state DEQ, and Ken DeBeaussart, head of the Office of the Great Lakes, endorsed the legislation. It's great to have both the Legislature and the administration on the same page."

Birkholz is also beating the regional bushes, talking with other Great Lakes basin policy makers: "Everybody I've talked to — legislators, governors, attorneys general, conservation people — likes the idea."

Of course, the big question is where the money to pay for enforcement comes from. Birkholz fears the feds probably won't spring for it, something that is sad, but likely true, given the current priorities in Washington.

So I have a modest suggestion for this active and well-intentioned senator: raise the money by charging a steep duty on contaminated ship ballast. Require shipping companies to pay, say, \$10,000 per vial of water taken from any of their vessels.

Present the evidence of violation to a relevant attorney general — then stand back and watch the fur, or at least ballast water, fly!

Philip Power is the former chairman of Hometown Communications Network and longtime regent of the University of Michigan. He would be pleased to get your reactions to this column either at (734) 953-2047 or at ppower@homecomm.net.



Phil Power

On Earth Day, consider ways to preserve our environment

We are truly blessed to call such an amazing and beautiful state as Michigan our home. Surrounded by our greatest natural resource — the Great Lakes — we enjoy four wonderful seasons and countless recreational opportunities.

In the summertime, people swim, boat, Jet-Ski and fish in our lakes and rivers. During the winter, Michigan becomes a virtual winter wonderland with miles of trails for snowshoeing, snowmobiling and skiing, plus ice fishing. Spring and fall are perfect for walks and hikes on the shore or in the woods, camping, fishing and hunting.

This month, Michiganders join Americans across the country to celebrate Earth Day on Friday, April 22, which happens to fall during National Volunteer Week.

With the weather improving and thermometers steadily rising, this is the perfect time to get outside, get involved and make your community a better place to live.

If you are interested in helping to protect and preserve the environment in your community, here are a few simple ways you can make a difference:

- Plant a tree or another indigenous plant.
- Volunteer to help clean up a neighborhood park.
- Make sure you recycle all recyclable materials.
- Reduce the trash coming out of your home or business.

Additionally, I support and often assist with springtime Hazardous Waste Days in our communities. Hazardous Waste Days give community members an opportunity to safely dispose of any hazardous materials in their house, including oil-based paints, motor oil, pest-control chemicals, expired medicines, antifreeze and many other materials that should not be placed in your regular trash.

These events are held throughout Wayne County and encourage all of us to be more conscientious about how we can dispose of our waste in a more careful and environmentally friendly way.

Livonia will hold its Hazardous Waste Day on May 7. For more information, visit the city of Livonia Web site at www.ci.livonia.mi.us.

The Central Wayne County Sanitation

I have long been committed to protecting this state's environment and precious natural resources. In fact, as a young woman I started and ran the first environmental center in the city of Livonia, which included recycling, reusing and educational components. I also helped establish and chaired the Ecology Commission in the city of Livonia — one of the first ones in our state — back in the early 1970s.

Authority will have its Hazardous Waste Day 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, April 30, in the Garden City Park pool parking lot. It's open to residents of CWCSA member communities, including Westland and Garden City. For more information, call (313) 292-5854.

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In addition to making a difference in my local community, I also am dedicated to making sure the Senate continues to introduce legislation protecting our environment and improving the air and water quality in Michigan.

If you have concerns or ideas about how best to protect Michigan's environment, I encourage you to contact my office at (517) 373-1707 or via e-mail at senatoy@senate.michigan.gov.

Please take advantage of Earth Day to consider ways that you and your family can protect and preserve the precious natural resources of our great state!

State Sen. Laura Toy (R-Livonia) represents the communities of Redford, Livonia, Westland and Garden City in the Senate's Sixth District.



Laura Toy

2005 CAREGIVING CONFERENCES

...For Anyone Meeting the Needs of Older Adults

Learn valuable information about the services that are available to help you provide the best care.

Three Dates and Locations to Choose:

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University of Detroit Mercy School of Law
651 E. Jefferson, Detroit (use Larned St. entrance; FREE parking is located across from the entrance)
- Wednesday, April 20, 2005 • 6pm-9pm**
Summit on the Park • 46000 Summit Parkway, Canton
- Wednesday, April 27, 2005 • 6pm-9pm**
Redford Community Center • 12121 Hemingway, Redford

Conference Topics:

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- Is depression part of the problem?
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Presented by: Adult Well-Being Services, CSSWC/Retired & Senior Volunteer Program, Our Lady of the Woods Christian Service, Redford Township, The Information Center, Wayne County Neighborhood Legal Services, Elder Law Center & Wayne-Metropolitan Community Action Agency

Funded in Part by: The Senior Alliance & Detroit Area Agency on Aging

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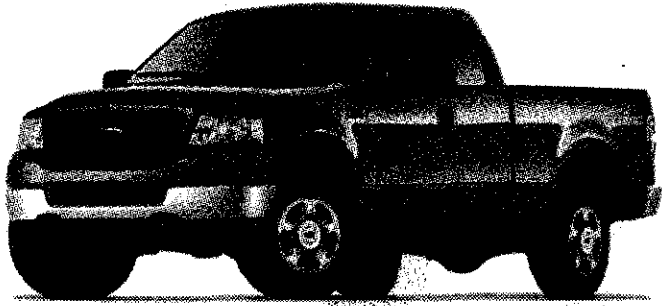
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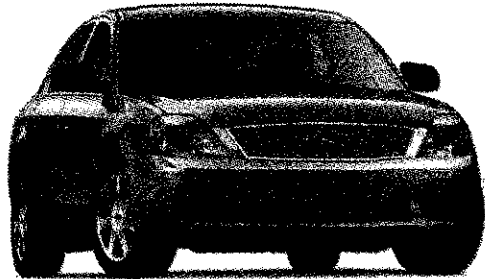
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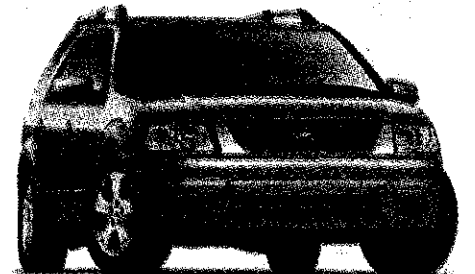
Current Ford Employee lessees can Re-Lease a 2005 Explorer XLT 4dr.

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- Can offer one-stop service for everything your car needs
- Technicians trained by Ford Motor Company

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Factory-trained knowledge of your engine to recommend the right oil and filter	YES	NO
Specialize in Ford vehicle service	YES	NO
Can offer one-stop service for everything your car needs	YES	NO
Technicians trained by Ford Motor Company	YES	NO

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