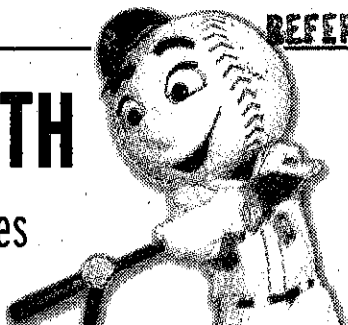


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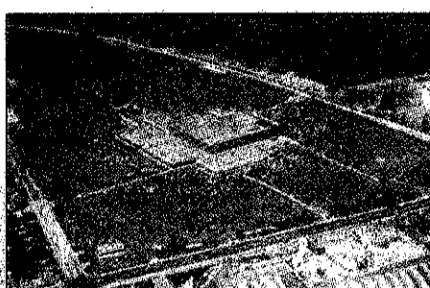
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'That was the one big tax base we had in Nankin Township. Livonia wanted to annex all the way down to Warren Road.'

Jo Johnson
Westland historian



The Algiers Drive-In and Quo Vadis Theater are visible in this aerial view taken of Westland Shopping Center shortly after it opened in 1965.

A date to remember



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A lot has changed since Westland Shopping Center opened in July 1965. Where there once was one major tenant, J.L. Hudson, there are now four, including Sears, which anchors the northwest corner of the mall.

Westland Shopping Center remains important player

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

It's the largest taxpayer in Westland. It employs hundreds of workers. It's the reason shoppers come here from miles around. It's the pulse of Westland's economy. And, it's turning 40 years old in July. Happy anniversary to Westland Shopping Center - a mall that gave a city its name. "We're the only city in the country that was named after a mall," said Denise Mills, the shopping center's marketing director. Rich in history, the mall opened on

July 29, 1965, in then-Nankin Township - 10 months before Westland became a city. As plans for the mall had earlier taken root, township residents didn't take too kindly to an attempt by neighboring Livonia to annex the area in hopes of raking in tax dollars. "Livonia wanted to grab the mall for the tax base," Westland historian Jo Johnson said. "That was the one big tax base we had in Nankin Township. Livonia wanted to annex all the way down to Warren Road." Ultimately, township leaders and residents won a petition battle that resulted in Westland becoming a city.

"We picked that name because of the mall," Johnson said. **UNDER ONE ROOF** Anchored by J.L. Hudson Co., Westland Shopping Center was built later than its sister malls, Northland and Eastland, but it had what they didn't - 44 stores under one roof. "I can confidently say that we were one of the first five enclosed malls in the nation," Mills said. Four decades later, stores have come and gone. J.L. Hudson evolved into Marshall Field's, and only one original

PLEASE SEE WESTLAND, A6

Coca-Cola High?

School districts weigh possibility of selling corporate naming rights

BY BRAD KADRICH
STAFF WRITER

With Michigan's economy continuing to languish and sales tax revenues for the funding of public education sputtering, school districts around the state are feverishly studying ways to make more money. In Plymouth-Canton, that could eventually mean the introduction of corporate dollars into the general fund budget via the sale of naming rights to new and existing facilities. The district's Board of Education Tuesday night unanimously approved a policy allowing such deals to be made. Though no one realistically expects a sudden surge of corporate dollars, the sale of naming rights could be one way for a district such as Plymouth-Canton, facing potentially severe money problems and burgeoning enrollments, to infuse the budget with much-needed cash. Plymouth-Canton's new policy doesn't signal a desire by the board to seek out such corporate donations. However, according to the district's development director, it does give the board the option to consider them if they come. "(The policy) helps the community understand there are needs, and we're looking for creative ways to provide the kind of education our residents are used to," said Tom Sklut, hired almost a year ago to help the district find innovative means of funding. "We didn't want to have to turn something down just because we didn't have a policy." Rather than use a development director in Wayne-Westland, where per-pupil funding is \$7,396, district officials make sure to apply for as many available educational grants as possible. Deputy Superintendent Charlotte Sherman said the district's

PLEASE SEE NAMING, A6

Woman killed, 2 men injured in fatal crash

BY LEANNE ROGERS
STAFF WRITER

Police are continuing to investigate a two-vehicle collision that took the life of an Allen Park woman Monday afternoon. The accident occurred at 12:45 p.m. on Merriman just north of Cherry Hill. The woman, 80, was a passenger in a Chrysler Town and Country minivan driven north on Merriman by her husband, 76. The couple, whose names were being withheld by police, were heading to a doctor's office on the west side of Merriman at Leona. After the man turned left, the van was struck broadside on the passenger door by a southbound Ford Explorer driven in the curb lane by a Romulus man, 38. "There was a pretty good impact to the passenger door and somewhat to the rear sliding door," said Garden City Police Officer Ray Glenfield, who investigated the accident. "The van rolled onto the driver's side and pinned both of the couple in the vehicle. The Fire Department had to extract them." The woman, who was unresponsive at the scene, and her husband, who suffered broken ribs, bruises and other injuries, were both transported to Garden City Hospital. The Romulus man was treated for minor injuries at Oakwood Annapolis Hospital and released. Both the drivers are expected to make full recoveries, Glenfield said, adding all three people were wearing seat belts. The Romulus man told police that he was traveling

PLEASE SEE CRASH, A6

Suspect caught in Westland break-in

BY JAY M. GROSSMAN
STAFF WRITER

A 46-year-old Ecorse man faces criminal charges after he was caught Tuesday morning trying to break into a Westland house where a 13-year-old girl was alone, police said. The suspect was arrested late Tuesday morning during an incident on Cherry Hill Road, between Wayne and Wildwood, police Lt. James Ridener said. The man remained in custody Wednesday as local authorities were compiling information for possible charges from the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office. The same man also could face home invasion charges in Franklin Village, authorities said.

Village Detective Sgt. William Castro said the man is a prime suspect in a June 22 home invasion that occurred in the 30000 block of Inkster. The homeowner, 52, had arrived home to find an intruder in her living room. Her 92-year-old mother was asleep in a bedroom. Following a brief discussion, in which the suspect claimed he was there to "buy a pickup truck," the man fled out the front door. Nothing was taken, but the homeowner nonetheless got in her car and followed him a short distance down Inkster. She was able to write down his license plate number and a description of the car. Franklin Village police used that information to develop a profile of the suspect, which they shared with the South Oakland Narcotics

Investigation Consortium. The unit is comprised of officers from Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield, Novi and the Oakland County Sheriff's Department. SONIC officers began a surveillance on the suspect, and they arrested him while he was trying to break into the Westland house, Ridener said. Castro said the suspect is already on parole for previous home invasion convictions. The case was forwarded to the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office for review and a recommendation of charges. He's being held in police custody in Westland. Staff writer Darrell Clem contributed to this story. jgrossman@oe.hometown.com | (248) 901-2529

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Coming Sunday
on the PINK page
Haute fashion at Plymouth's Art in the Park

Livonia names principal as instruction director Wayne businesses keep on moving

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

Charlotte Worthen will be the latest addition to the Livonia Public Schools administrative cabinet this year. She has been appointed as the new director of instruction. "I accept this opportunity with great enthusiasm and promise to continue to do my very best for Livonia Public Schools School District, its students, staff and community," said Worthen on Monday evening. Supt. Randy Liepa explained that Worthen will be joining the administration at a time of change. "We are going through a



Worthen

reorganization based on things happening with our budget," he said. "We're trying to do more with less and maintain a focus on instruction." Liepa said Worthen has demonstrated leadership as principal at Washington Elementary School, where she also coordinates learning specialists. Prior to becoming an administrator at the building level, Worthen worked as an elementary school teacher for 20 years.

"She will make an outstanding person to come in and work with," Liepa said, "while we maintain our focus on instruction." Worthen called her new post "an honor" and brought her family members to the meeting Monday night where she earned the official appointment and unanimous board approval. "We have been experiencing some very challenging times in education," Worthen said. "If you like change as I do, these times are very exciting. I'm very proud to be part of an organization where the leadership is committed to improving student learning, even in

these tough times." The current executive director of instruction, Marlene Bihlmeyer, will retire at the end of the month. Worthen will take on her new position as of July 1. "Washington is surely going to feel the loss of a wonderful principal and a good friend, too," said Joanne Morgan, board member. Trustee Robert Freeman responded: "Washington's loss is going to be the district's gain, especially in the area of literacy. I want to welcome her on board." scasola@oe.homecomm.net | (734) 953-2054

ON THE FLOOR

Thomas Rosochacki started Plymouth Floor Covering in Livonia in 1976. The business became a staple of the community and remained in the same location for next 24 years - until he retired in 2000. But according to his son Don Rosochacki, the businessman decided to come out of retirement and return with Floors to Go in Livonia. "Livonia has gone through many changes over the past 29 years, as has the floor covering business with the introduction of the large box stores, but my fathers' commitment to providing excellent workmanship and the customer service only found at a Mom and Pop run business has not changed," said Don Rosochacki. Mike Stout, a longtime employee, said Floors to Go offers all lines of floor covering, from carpeting to ceramic tile, laminate and hardwood floors. Area rugs are also sold at the store. Stout installed flooring for 27 years and now works in sales. He said Rosochacki's personality and dedicated installation crews are reasons for the businesses long history of success in Livonia. Floors to Go is located at 33825 Plymouth Road. Hours are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday and Thursday, and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. For more information, call (734) 427-1400.



opened Park Avenue Grooming in Plymouth earlier this month after having worked together as groomers in the past. "We wanted to have our own shop," said Youtsey. "We had our own ideas of what we wanted to do." Together, they specialize in hand-scissored cuts for bichon frises and shitzus, but all dogs are welcome. Youtsey said there seem to be a lot of bichon frises in the area. New customers will receive \$5 off services when they visit the business. Visit during holidays at Park Avenue and customers will have an opportunity to have their pet's picture taken by The Pooch Photographer. "We are veterinary recommended and offer all natural shampoos," said Youtsey. The shop sells medications as well as all-natural dog foods for pets with allergies and other health problems. Services range from nail trims to baths to full service trims for dogs and cats. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Park Avenue Grooming are in the Parkway Veterinary Clinic at 41395 Wilcox in Plymouth. The clinic also boards pets, and Youtsey said grooming services are available for boarded pets as well. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (734) 453-4677.

Livonia teachers get 1-year contract

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

The Livonia Education Association, a teachers bargaining group for Livonia Public Schools, has ratified and signed a one-year contract with the district. "This is probably the earliest we have been able to bring a contract to the Board of Education in the last many years," said Randy Liepa, superintendent. "I want to commend both bargaining teams. We tried a little bit of a different process which worked rather well. It helped keep us focused on the

issues. There was a great deal of respect on both sides of the table." The teachers will receive a 2.1 percent raise and have accepted a switch in their health care plan which will now be a PPO 1 plan through Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. "It is the best PPO," said Stephen Smith, assistant superintendent of human resources. "It includes most of the doctors we had under the old system, and all of the hospitals in Michigan." The district's LEA members also agreed to an increase in prescription co-pays, which will rise from \$5 to \$10. Smith

called that a big savings in health care for Livonia Public Schools. Liepa added: "There is a new calendar for the school year." The new calendar takes into account time for professional development, in addition the teachers also agreed to spend 12 hours beyond regular school hours involved in training. Smith said the school day will also be extended by an hour or more a week. "That will give them enough time to have a February break," he said, referring to a longer mid-winter break. Bargaining began in March

and ended in May, with about 100 hours at the table. That doesn't include preparation time on both sides. "I think it worked out well for both sides," said Smith. "It would've been nice to get longer than a one-year contract." He said that was due to the uncertainty in state funding for the coming year. The contract was ratified on June 16, and signed on June 20. It extends through Aug. 15, 2006. "We have a good relationship with the teachers union," said Smith. "It was a positive experience. I think our whole team would say that."

Troupe presents theater fund-raiser

The Stage Door theatre troupe is working with the Wayne Park and Recreation Department on a fund-raiser in an effort to allow the group to continue its work of bringing quality, entertaining theatre to the State Wayne Theatre. This fund-raiser will be a Theatrical Concert of Andrew Lloyd Webber's spellbinding musical, *Jesus Christ Superstar*. It will be performed by a cast

of more than 40 performers from Wayne, Westland, Dearborn, Garden City, Canton, Plymouth and Livonia. Daniel Cooney and Michael Lanning, direct from New York, will be leading the cast, bringing their Broadway savvy to the production. Cooney, a native of Westland, also will serve as director for the show and as well as appearing on stage as Jesus. Daniel has previously

been seen in the Broadway productions and national tours of such shows as *Les Miserable*, *Evita* and *Fiddler on the Roof*. He is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama. Lanning will play the role of Judas. He is a vocalist in the Trans-Siberian Orchestra and was a part of the original cast of *The Civil War* on Broadway. The cast also features local talent in lead roles, including Emily Tyrybon and John Sartor.

The performances will be at 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, July 7-9, and a 2 p.m. matinee on Sunday, July 10, at the Stage IV Theatre inside the State Wayne Theatre at 35310 Michigan Ave., Wayne. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$18 for students and seniors, and \$10 for children ages 6-12. The show is not recommended for children under age 6. For more information, call the Wayne Community Center at (734) 721-7400.

GROOM ON THE MOVE

Does your dog deserve Park Avenue treatment? The owners of a new grooming business say yes. Julie Heatley and Tina Youtsey

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.

Event gives ID kits to parents

They came to Bobby's Bouncers to play on the inflatable playsets, but the event had a serious note. Some 150 children and their parents received child identification kits from Westland police during a free, June 20 party at Bobby's Bouncers, on Michigan Avenue in Wayne. "These kits gave parents the ability to fingerprint their children and the ability to take a DNA sample from their child - both in the privacy of their own homes," Westland Police Chief Daniel Pfannes said. "I would classify the event as a success," he said. "We distributed approximately 150 identification kits."

The event was part of Operation Child Identification. The children enjoyed pizza, pop and inflatable playsets, and they received junior police badges. "Every parent I spoke to provided positive feedback," Pfannes said. He commended Westland Mayor Sandra Cicirelli, Wayne Mayor Al Haidous, the Westland Police Officers Association, the Wayne Police Department and Bobby's Bouncers for helping the Westland Police Department with the event. "It is always rewarding when you can take part in an initiative that may help protect our children," Pfannes said.

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BERNHARDT

1st year sets strong foundation for JROTC

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

As Master Sgt. Benjamin Brown sees it, the first year of John Glenn High School's JROTC program was nothing less than "fantastic." The students responded well and had a great time and "set a strong foundation for the future."

His is an opinion shared by his Wayne Memorial High School counterpart, Master Sgt. Steven LaHaine.

"It was well-received by the students, the community and the schools," said LaHaine. "Everyone has been really supportive of us. They've been very accommodating."

More than 300 students signed up for the program at the two schools and both programs held on to a vast majority of their cadets. At Wayne High, LaHaine and 1st Sgt. Marcus Jones worked with 137 cadets. At Glenn, Brown, the senior Army instructor, and Master Sgt. Jay Hudson finished the year with 118 cadets.

Both Brown and LaHaine expect similar numbers for the 2005-2006 school year.

One of the returning cadets is Ryan Bies, a cadet sergeant first class who will be the battalion commander at Wayne High next year.

"It was better than I thought it would be," said Bies, who received the Superior Junior Cadet Decoration at Wayne JROTC's awards ceremony last month. "It wasn't all sitting around. There was a lot more discipline and hands-on work."

"It was an interesting program and I learned things I can use in the future."

Bies wasn't expecting to get the top cadet spot, but according to LaHaine, he was a "superior cadet."

"I figured one of the others would get it," said Bies who plans to join the Army or the Air Force. "I'm hoping to go to West Point."

Bies replaces Karl Heinrich who like Bies was surprised when he was tapped to be this year's battalion commander.

"I thought I was doing good job, but I thought there were



Members of the John Glenn High School JROTC program served cookies to senior citizens as one of their community-supported activities.

others more qualified," said Heinrich.

Heinrich plans to take ROTC at Eastern Michigan University and enter the military as a second lieutenant. He got involved in the JROTC after hearing about the programs from friends at another school.

"They said it was the best thing in their life," he said. "Now, I know that. They give you a push to do better and I needed that."

NATIONAL PROGRAM

In March of 2004, the Wayne-Westland school board voted to offer JROTC at the two high schools after the district received approval to offer the national program.

JROTC is a cost-sharing program with the Army and the school district coming together to make it work. The Army for its part, provides the uniforms, books and salaries for the instructors, while the district provides the class-

rooms. At Wayne High, the program is based in the high school's art annex, while at Glenn, the program has rooms at the east end of the building by the auditorium.

"They learn basic life skills that they can use anywhere in life," said Brown. "They take what they learn in the classroom and go outside where they have meaningful applications."

The program focuses on leadership, American history, citizenship and life skills. Its mission, according to LaHaine, is "to motivate young people to be better citizens."

"We don't recruit, we don't put them in the Army," he added. "There's no quota and our job isn't dependent on getting recruits."

Brown, a Westland resident, brings 22 years of active duty experience and 15 years of experience as a JROTC instructor. LaHaine also has 20 years of active service. His last duty station was with the

SROTC program at the University of Maine.

"I liked what I was doing in the military and decided I wanted to do it in retirement," he said.

COMMUNITY WORK

Brown's cadets participated in six community-supported activities, including writing letters to soldiers, planting flowers at an assisted living facility and helped with the Madison Elementary School carnival.

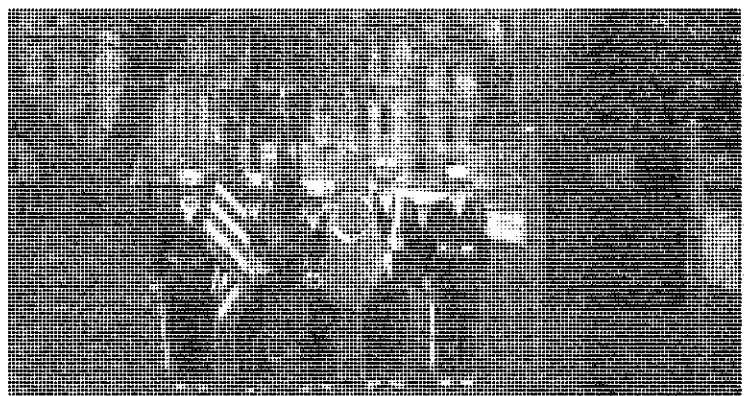
The drill team collected seven-eight trophies and cadets collected a large number of individual medals in competition against schools that have had the JROTC program from eight-10 years.

"I've been at this 15 years and I wasn't surprised they did so well, but I didn't expect such success right away," he said. "I knew we were doing well, but not as well as we did."

At Wayne High, the cadets competed in five drill/color



Cadets did physical fitness training and learned map and compass use and first aid as part of Wayne's JROTC Raider adventure team.



The Wayne Memorial High School JROTC color guard stands at attention on the lawn of the State Capitol in Lansing.

guard competitions, snagging 13 trophies, including three first-place honors and the Commander's Cup for best overall team at the Southgate Anderson drill competition.

"And we did it with cadets who'd only been around a year," LaHaine said. "They come here for one hour a day. They do drilling on Wednesday, physical fitness on Friday and academics on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday."

They also did community service projects like supplying help for the Stamp Out Hunger program in Inkster, helping offload donations at St. Mary's clothing bank and making Easter baskets for senior citizens.

Both high schools had 33 cadets attend the JROTC summer camp at the D-Bar-A

Scout Camp in Metamora earlier this month where they did an overnight bivouac and learned map reading and rose to the sound of the bugle every morning.

Both instructors admit that the job of running the program will get easier as it matures. By the time, the program completes its first four-year cycle, cadets will be doing more of the planning and execution.

"As they mature in the program, their responsibilities will increase," said Brown. "They'll do scheduling, instruct the younger students and decide the projects they'll do during the year."

"The program is designed to have cadets stay and develop," added LaHaine. "Its leadership opportunities are unique to it."

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Heritage Park to host Great Lakes model boat show

BY CAROL MARSHALL
STAFF WRITER

In just a few weeks, more than 50 competitors will gather at Heritage Park and the buzz and "ding-ding" sounds of model boats will fill one of the park's ponds.

"Usually the way it works is you spend a whole day on the water in a regatta or a fun run, then spend the next two weeks fixing the ship," said Larry Weisman of West Bloomfield. Weisman is one of the 30 members in the Michigan Scale Model Boat Club, which will host the Annual Great Lakes Scale Model Boat Show and Regatta in Canton July 16-17.

It's the first time in the four years the club has been meeting with other clubs from Ohio and Indiana that it will host the regatta in Michigan.

The Michigan members, who come from communities throughout southeast Michigan and as far away as Hillsdale and Kalamazoo, meet monthly to socialize and work on their museum-quality scale replicas of ships and boats. Each boat can take up to two years to build, at a cost of a few hundred dollars to thousands of dollars.

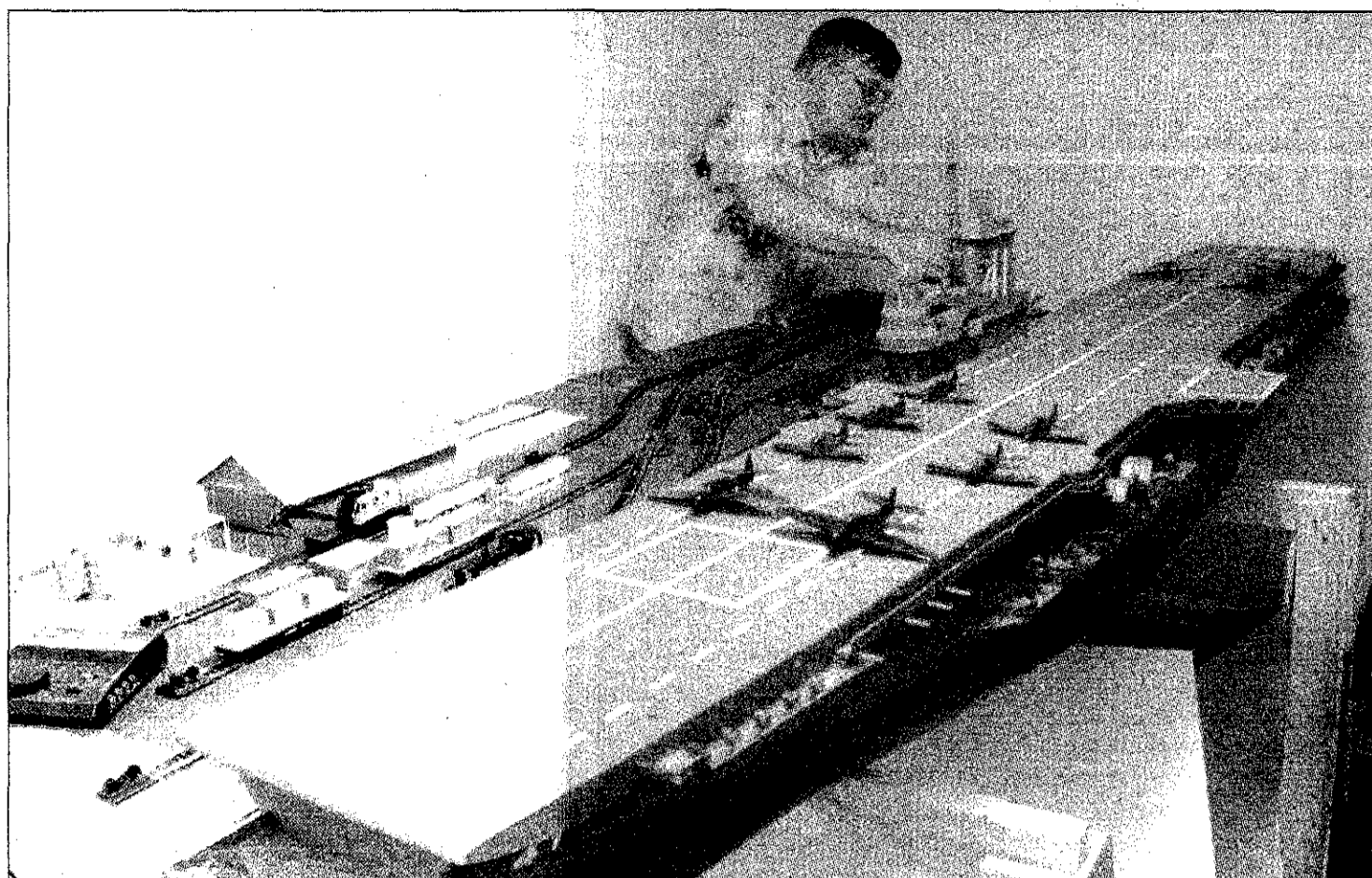
Club members say building the model boats is a hobby with an appeal that's hard to explain.

"For me, it's the satisfaction of building. I like the challenge of it," said Troy resident George Gormly, who joined the club two years ago after figuring out that model airplanes have a tendency to crash, and boats may be more his speed.

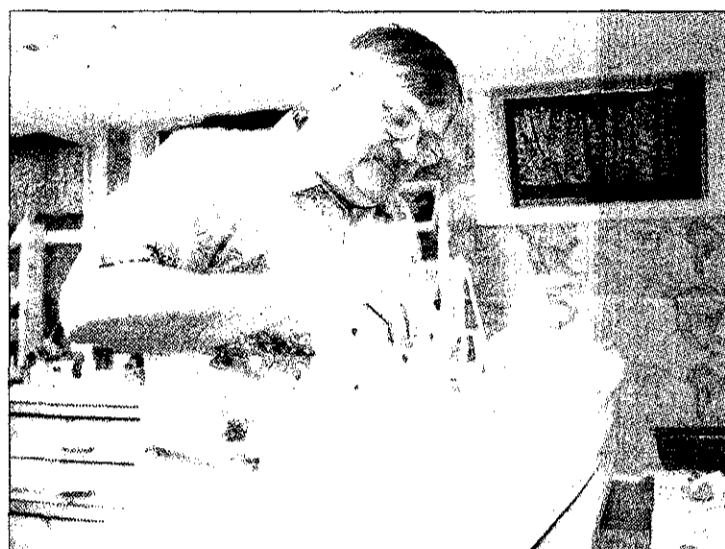
"So I joined this club, and I thought it was the nicest bunch of guys I've ever met. Someone explained to me that it's because they're all patient people. You can't do this and lack patience," Gormly said.

Other members say the ships are terrific ego-boosters.

"Sometimes it takes me two years to build a ship, and all of the frustration that goes with that, but when I put it in the water and everyone says, 'Ooooh and ahhhhh', I know why I built it," said Canton resident Andrew Paris.



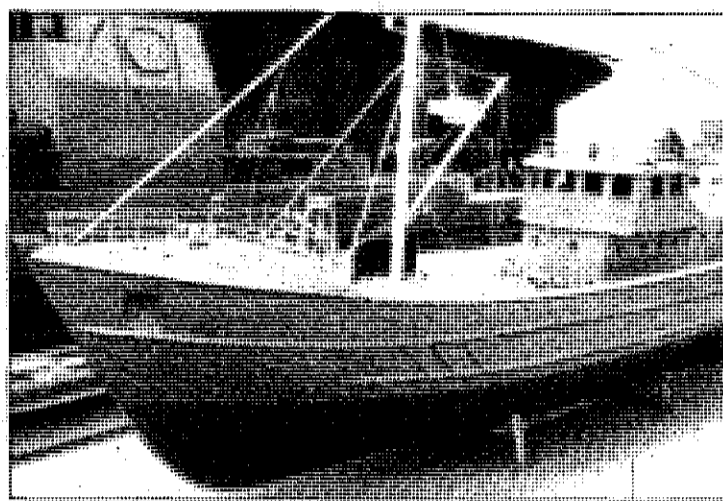
Andy Paris has built a drydock for the USS Midway, configured as it was in 1946.



Andrew Paris will spend countless hours before this 1:96 scale model of the Prinz Eugen is seaworthy.

Paris has been building model ships for more than 40 years, and his 35-year marriage has survived his hobby, which takes up a good deal of time and most of the base-

ment. The boats at the regatta will be judged on construction and the accuracy of the details. The boats will also be put through a series of courses on the lake near the amphitheater



Not all of Andy Paris's fleet is military. This model of a fishing trawler is smaller than his battleships and aircraft carrier, but is no less detailed.

in Heritage Park.

The regatta is open to the public and there is no admission charge.

"At one point, people will be able to play with some of the boats," said Gormly.

For more information about

the event or about the boat club, call George Gormly at (248) 879-1866, or visit online at <http://michiganmodelboats.com/2005GLSMBRS>.

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Golf outing supports hospice programs

Friends of Angela Hospice came out to support the organization at its 17th-annual golf outing sponsored recently by Phillips Service Industries at Fox Hills Golf and Banquet Center in Plymouth.

More than 150 golfers joined hospice president Sister Mary Giovanni on the greens to raise money for the hospice's programs serving terminally ill children and adults.

"Though we had some rain in the afternoon, the event still went very well," said Sister Mary Giovanni. "I'm so grateful to all of our golfers and sponsors

FUND-RAISER

for making this event so successful."

More than \$30,000 was raised through the participants, sponsorships, raffles, on-the-course games, and silent auction.

This money will go to fund the hospice's specialized programs for terminally ill patients and their loved ones, including home and inpatient hospice, pediatric and prenatal hospice programs, bereavement care and spiritual support.

"Our mission is to provide compassionate care to the patients and families we serve," said Sister Mary Giovanni. "Events like the golf outing provide a way for individuals and businesses in the community to join us in this mission."

Other events benefiting Angela Hospice include the recent fourth-annual Classic Car Show at Livonia Church of Christ and the third-annual Mary Angela Run set for Aug. 14 at Oakland Community College.

For information on these events or to learn more about the work of Angela Hospice, visit www.angelahospice.org or call toll free (866) 464-7810.



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ACHIEVERS

Ashlee M. Erickson of Westland is attending the week-long Michigan Freedom Academy held at Phelps Collins Air National Guard Base near Alpena.

The daughter of David and Cheryl Bocian of Westland, she will be entering John Glenn High School as a junior this fall.

The Michigan Freedom Academy is sponsored by the Michigan Freedom Foundation, a group of business and military leaders interested in exposing high school students to a greater awareness of their obligations and responsibilities inherent to a free and democratic society.

The academy has four primary objectives: To promote a sense of patriotism, further the desire to lead, enhance one's appreciation for freedom, and provide a better understanding of a citizen's civic responsibility.

Receiving degrees at from Schoolcraft College at the end of the winter 2005 semester were Westland residents:

Gena Lynn Aird, Tabira Ali, Tracy Lynn Allen, Rodenc Aslani, Sherry Louise Bailey, Lisa M. Baker, Suzanne Marie Balan, Meagan Elizabeth Bales, Jacki Marie Belcher, Thomas John Bennett, Lisa L. Blaharski, Jill Annette Blakley, Wendy Susan Bodin, Sarah Ann Bolish, Maureen Elizabeth Brannon, Angie Denise Brazier.

Jamone Bridges, Sarah Ann Brown, Joanna Lynne Buchanan, Amanda Lynn Budnick, Kelly Susan Burns, Scott S Cavin, Donna Helen Chapman, Dawn Marie Cheetam, Maria Andreea Cioban, Jamie Lyn Clark, Pauline Conley, Kimberly Anne Corney, John Patrick Coury, Lisa Cox, Sarah J Coy, Dawn Marie Dalton, Joshua Scott Davidson.

Julie Marie Davis, Diana Lee Dawson, Gina Lynn Deiro, Erin J. Demers, Shawn L. Dillon, Cristian Daniel Dragoi, Robert Alan Duminske, Estera Dumiter, Paul David Duncan, Katie Durling, Freda Musa Farhat, Andrea Lynn Feltz, Laura Marie Fenner, Edward Daniel Findysz, Lucy Ann Finney, Kathleen M. Fitzgerald, Antoinette Michelle Fulton.

Sarah Marie Garbutt, Megan Renee Giacchina, Daniel Adam Gietzen, Amanda Noel Gilbo, Kristen Nicole Glenski, Matthew Godbout, David

Andrew Gonzales, Deborah Ordett Goodling, Meredith Lynn Gorecki, Lynette Lyn Grzebyk, Liliane Checko Guembou, Michael Ervin Hamernik, Kathy Jean Hamilton, Roxanne Nicole Hammons.

April Denese Harper, Elizabeth A. Hartley, Cody Matthew Hawken, Patricia Sue Haxton, Jeffrey Paul Hayton, Edward Patrick Hearn, Stephanie Michelle Hendershot, Chris Harold Hendrickson, Donna Lynn Hicks, Andreea Hilma, Mark Allen Jablonski, Tammy Lee Jackson, Amy Lynn Januszkowski, Thomas Anthony Kaszubowski, Emily Klimevski.

Tatianna Michelle Klump, Juliana Kodra, Sydney Christina Korth, Darcie Kay Krause, Candice Lauraine Lawrence, Jeffrey Glenn Mallari, Jason E Mankowski, Jason Lee Manning, Thomas Anthony Maynard, Stacey Denise Mays, Deborah Owens Medico, Robert Eugene Mendal, Patricia E. Mephram, Elgerta Merdani, Jodi Marie Mifsud.

Jacqueline Migliore, Anna Mikaelian, Patricia Deanne Miller, Matthew Allen Moenaert, James Louis Montrose III, Laura R. Morrow, Christina Leigh Mufareh, Almir Neljkovic, Tina Marie Nestor, Kayla Renee Nowak, Bisham Phagoo, Albert Piloci, Cora Jennene Poe, Nancy Elizabeth Potts, Mary Angela Provot, Stephanie Ann Puhlman.

Christopher James Richard, Lisa Marie Rich, Nathan Russell Ring, Summar Dennielle Ronning, Arthur William Saffian III, Christina Lynne Sawula, Charlotte Lee Seale, Adam David Shanks, Steven M. Shaw, Sarah Elizabeth Sheridan, Amy Beth Sholler, Carrie Lynn Sinitzki, Laura Ann Stanton, Lucille Marie Suchan, Justin D. Swain, Elizabeth Maryanne Tackett.

Migena Toti, Eric Calvin Troup, Elizabeth Marie Tulppo, Lamar Eric Tyler, Sara Mae Tyree, Garrett T Vaneck, Paul Anthony Vann, Nicholas A. Veliz, Jamie Louise Vernier, Amber Mae Voss, Julie Mae Walker, Kimberly Ann Welden, William Joseph Whitlow, Michelle Renae Whittaker, Angela Susan Wiseley, Pamela Hayden Wood, Jennene Lynnette Wright and Baiyao Zheng.

Lansing connection

Area residents can keep up on the latest news from Lansing by subscribing to state Sen. Laura Toy's e-newsletter.

"The Internet is an amazing tool and a wonderful way for residents to keep in touch with their legislators," said Toy, R-Livonia.

Toy serves Michigan's 6th Senate District, including the communities of Garden City, Livonia, Redford Township, and Westland.

To subscribe, send an e-mail with your name and the subject "Newsletter" to senttoy@senate.michigan.gov, or log on to Toy's Web site at www.senate.michigan.gov/toy.

Under the Big Top

The Wayne Ford Civic League at 1645 N. Wayne Road will host the Royal Hanneford Circus Wednesday-Sunday, July 26-31.

Ringside seating will be \$18 for all ages, adult general admission will be \$12 and general admission for children 12 years and under will be \$8. Showtimes will be 11 a.m., 4

p.m., and 8 p.m.

Tickets can be purchased online at www.wayneford.org, at the league hall or by credit or debit card by calling (734) 728-5010 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

There will be real Elephant and Pony rides, kiddie carnival rides and bouncers available on site. Daily dinner specials also will be served.

There are a limited number of seats available for each show so get your tickets as soon as possible. Senior, police and firefighter discounts are available by calling the hall at (734) 728-5010.

Senior Dinner Dance

The Wayne Ford Civic League is offering a dinner for seniors noon-3:30 p.m. Sunday, July 10th, at the league hall, 1645 N. Wayne Road, Westland. Price is \$8 for members and \$10 for non-members.

There will be a buffet dinner with beer, wine, pop, and dancing to live entertainment. The dinner dance is for people age 55 and older. Call (734) 728-5010 for information.

Medical talk

Michele White, manager of American House, Westland I, and Deborah Warren, a registered nurse from The Senior Alliance, will be speaking at Westland Convalescent Center 3-4:30 p.m. Thursday, July 21, about Medicaid waiver topics.

The session will include information about what the waiver program is and how people can apply. It also will include information about what services are covered by the program and what options are available when nursing home care is no longer needed.

Westland Convalescent Center is located at 36137 W. Warren Road, between Wayne and Central City Parkway. All are invited to attend the free seminar. Please contact Judy Bianchi at (734) 728-6100 to sign up for this very special event.

Rally for a Cure

The New Hawthorne Valley Golf Course is taking part in Rally for a Cure, a breast awareness campaign. This year marks the second time the club

has pledged its support for the campaign against breast cancer - presented by Golf for Women Magazine. The organizer of the event is the Hawthorne Par Seekers.

A field of 24 players is expected for the Rally at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, July 5. Rally for a Cure activities include a closest to the pin contest, a one-year subscription to Golf for Women Magazine plus many more gifts.

Golfers interested in joining the outing can call Janet Sebok at (734) 422-9195.

Summer program

Westland Bowl in association with the Westland Parks and Recreation Department will offer free bowling for kids now through Aug. 20.

Kids up to 18 years of age will be able to bowl one free game per day during summer hours with a participation card, available at the bowling center, 5940 N. Wayne Road.

The center also is offering a free family bonus package on Saturdays. For more information, call Westland Bowl at (9734) 722-7570.

Verizon Wireless advertisement featuring Samsung A670 phones and promotional offers like 'FREE Camera Phone With Flash' and 'Add a Line For ONLY \$9.99'.

DEATHS

A Wesley Angles, 89, of Westland, died June 24.

B Joseph Horace Bourgon, 92, died June 25.

C Jan Coll, 77, died June 24.

D Richard M. Davenport, 72, formerly of Westland, died June 27.

G Ruth Garvey, 79, of Livonia, died June 25.

Cecline Yvonne Gilreath Donegan, 68, died June 24.

P Melissa Ann Pflug, 49, died June 24.

S William O. Schumann, 77, died June 25.

Mary Eleanor Seelye, 87, of Sun

For the Record appears in every edition of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. Complete paid obituaries can be found inside today's newspaper in Passages on page B5.

City Center, Fla., died June 25.

Robert D. Slusser, 72, of Farmington, died June 27.

T Viola Campbell Tetrault, died June 24.

V Bobbie Thomason Hudson Von Ebeler, formerly of Birmingham.

W Mattie Lee White, of Brownstone Township.

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Schoolcraft College looks at offering bachelor's degree

BY HUGH GALLAGHER
STAFF WRITER

The Cherry Commission report and its emphasis on increasing the number of high school graduates who pursue post-graduation training may set the stage for major changes at Schoolcraft College.

Schoolcraft President Conway Jeffress is proposing that Schoolcraft expand its two-year programs with a four-year degree program; put new emphasis on health, math and science programs; redefine core skills for college graduates; and add a new 45,000-square-foot classroom building to the Haggerty Road campus in Livonia.

"The basic issue for all community colleges is to offer access and to do so at a low cost to students," Jeffress said in an interview Friday. "In fact, when you go back to when community colleges were formed those are the only two reasons that you see consistently stated. It needs to be lower cost and provide a broader access."

The Cherry Commission on Higher Education, chaired by Lt. Gov. John Cherry, has proposed a number of recommendations for increasing post-high school training with a goal of doubling the number of students who receive a degree or certification.

NURSING DEGREE

Jeffress said the only program Schoolcraft is seriously looking at for a baccalaureate at present is the nursing program.

"The reason for that is really very simple, the real cost and the real complexity of training nurses is all in the first two years," Jeffress said.

Nurses receive their technical training in the first two years with the last two years of instruction usually concentrating on public health and management, he said.

Currently state law prevents Schoolcraft and other community colleges from offering a bachelor's degree. Jeffress said even with legislative approval for a change in the law, the school would need to get accreditation and assemble a staff.

"The faster avenue would be to make more and more agreements with four-year institutions that are more advantageous to our students," he said.

Schoolcraft has been working with four-year institutions on agreements in which Schoolcraft credits are fully accepted for the first two years of a four-year degree. He is working on expanding that concept to a three-one arrangement. He said the prospect of community colleges offering baccalaureate degrees is pressuring four-year institutions to accept these agreements.

Last month, Schoolcraft signed an agreement with Eastern Michigan University and last week with Madonna University.

"The issue brings me back to the access question. These new agreements, the one with Eastern will save our students \$5,000, the one with Madonna saves \$10,000 over a standard two plus two agreement," he said.

Jeffress would like to house the nursing program in a new building, with partial funding from a capital outlay bond issue from the state.

Jeffress said he was surprised to hear that capital money was available from the state this year given the current financial crisis in Lansing. He said the college was already spending reserve money on renovation of the library when he was alerted about the bond from state Sen. Laura Toy, R-Livonia, and state Rep. John Pastor, R-Livonia. He said Schoolcraft would have to borrow to make up the difference for a building budgeted at \$11 million.

"I need a building to not only take care of what I already know I need but also whatever might come along," he said.

ALLIED HEALTH

In addition to expanding Schoolcraft's nursing program, Jeffress would like to see more allied health programs, which would benefit from a new building designed to accommodate the latest technology.

"It's all that testing aspect, the ultrasounds, the CAT scans that I think are primary jobs of community college graduates," he said. "Those are programs I would like to expand."



Jeffress

Jeffress said that if Schoolcraft partners with universities to offer baccalaureate degrees, the new building might provide classroom space which would be used by instructors from the university. "I'm a very competitive person, but sometimes the best

way to compete is to collaborate," Jeffress said.

He also wants to see the college put more emphasis on math, science, engineering and foreign language so that students can compete "globally."

Jeffress said he is concerned that Schoolcraft provide students with core skills such as computer literacy that are needed by all students to compete in the job market. "There's a marvelous book,

10 Things Employers Want You To Learn in College. In that book he (author Bill Coplin) talks about issues of basic computing skills. If you go out today thinking you're going to have a secretary to do your work for you, that's not going to happen. Or thinking your job won't be outsourced," he said.

One of the recommendations made by the Cherry Commission was that commu-

nity colleges and the state's 15 four-year institutions work together on providing smoother transitions from one college to another. Jeffress said, it is important that schools need to get rid of artificial barriers that make it difficult to transfer credits from essentially identical courses.

"There is a lot of interest to make it happen. Every movement in that direction is positive," he said.

There's a lot of

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OUR VIEWS

Using fireworks: be safe, not sorry

The Fourth of July is only a few days away, but the booming and banging that's a big part of the holiday is already happening.

We're not talking about those well-organized, well-supervised fireworks that are lighting up the skies in Redford, Wayne and Detroit this week. No, we're talking about those backyard home shows that can go off from dusk and the wee hours of the morning.

Fireworks and celebrations go together, especially during the Fourth of July. But fireworks can be dangerous, causing serious burn and eye injuries. A new study by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission staff finds nearly 70 percent of all fireworks-related injuries take place around the Fourth of July holiday.

The study also found that more than 50 percent of those injuries occur to children and teenagers. The top three injury-causing fireworks are firecrackers, sparklers and rockets, which account for nearly half of all injuries.

In Michigan, legal fireworks, referred to as Class C, are flat paper caps, toy-trick noisemakers, sparklers, filter sparklers, toy snakes, toy smoke devices and fountains that are cone or cylindrical shaped and that only emit a shower of sparks, sometimes with a whistle effect. Anything that makes a loud bang, leaves the ground, spins or twirls is illegal.

Each year, fire officials urge caution in handling fireworks, but their admonitions tend to fall on deaf ears. For residents who just have to set off their own fireworks, follow these safety tips:

- Never allow children to play with or ignite fireworks.
- Read and follow all warnings and instructions.
- Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Only light fireworks on a smooth, flat surface away from the house, dry leaves, and flammable materials.
- Never try to relight fireworks that have not fully functioned.
- Keep a bucket of water in case of a malfunction or fire.

Better yet, leave the pyrotechnics to someone else. There's a fireworks display at dusk in Westland on July 4.

With war raging, pay tribute to sacrifices

The Fourth of July can be one of the most overlooked, taken-for-granted holidays we have, considered more often for its barbecues and fireworks, as a time to get away on vacation, than for its real meaning — the celebration of our independence.

But with American men and women still dying in an increasingly unpopular war in a faraway land, perhaps this year more than in others it would be best to remember what the Fourth of July actually means.

Certainly, Americans have other occasions throughout the year — Memorial Day, Veterans Day, even Flag Day — to celebrate the contributions made by their countrymen in defense of our way of life and the freedoms associated with it.

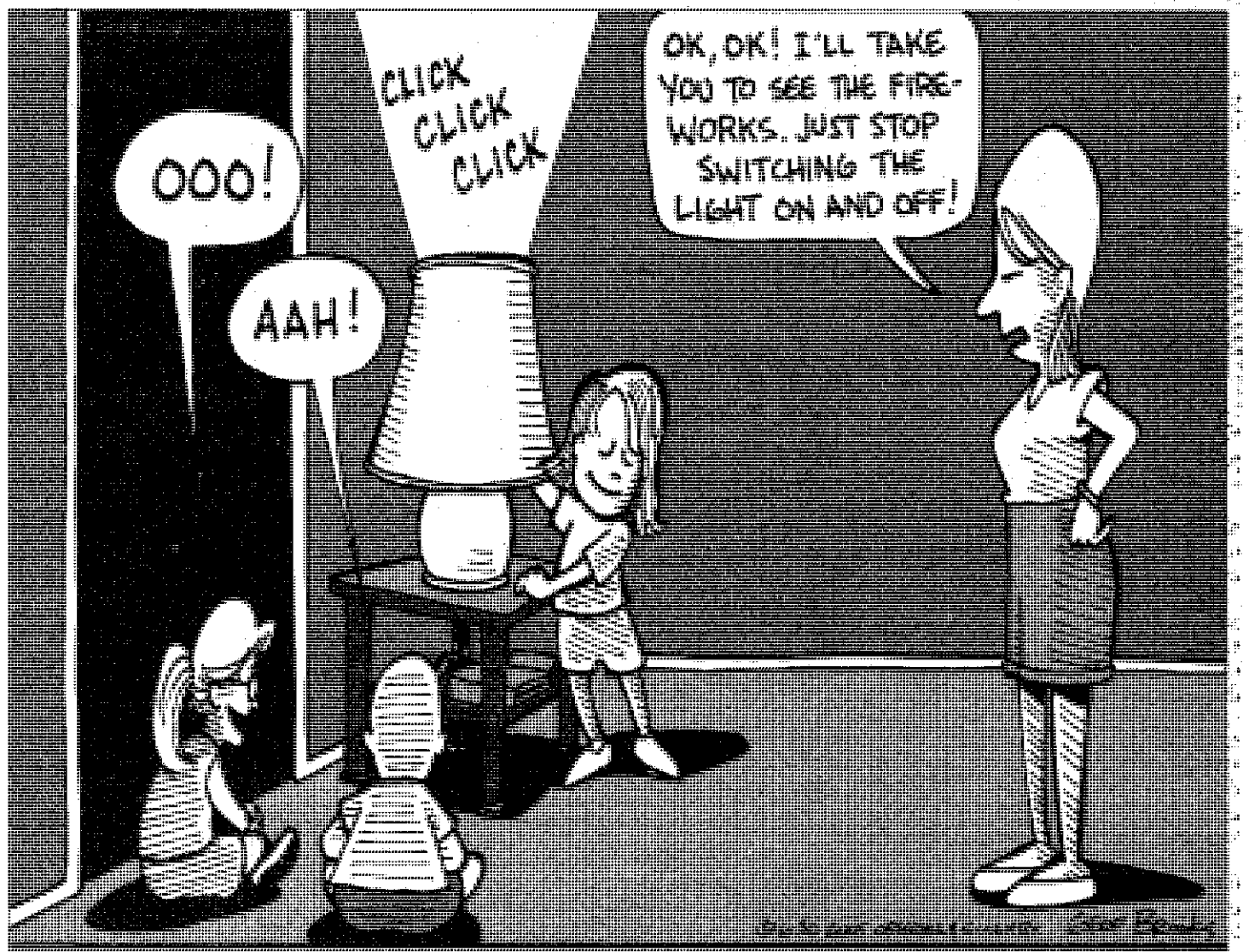
But none are as symbolic as the one we celebrate Monday. The Fourth of July is the hallmark holiday when it comes to what the United States stands for. In a year when our countrymen are still giving the ultimate sacrifice, when the numbers of killed and injured continue to rise in Iraq, when we're still trying to hunt down the biggest threat to our safety and our way of life in the mountains of Pakistan, we should spend more than a fleeting moment to realize how lucky we are.

From the war that led to the signing of our Declaration of Independence right through the war in Iraq, Americans have laid their lives on the line, at home and abroad, standing up for the rights we hold so dear today.

Not every military campaign has been a popular one. World War II brought us Rosie the Riveter, war ditties and bond drives, while Vietnam brought protests and ugly images. The Persian Gulf War sent the first President Bush's approval numbers skyrocketing, while polls suggest Americans in ever-increasing number are starting to doubt the second President Bush's decisions about America's involvement in Iraq.

As you go about your holiday, especially considering the daily reports coming out of Iraq, we urge you to take time to embrace that patriotic feeling, to honor those who have died defending it.

And to remember what it took to achieve it.



LETTERS

Flea market was success

The Friends of the Westland Historical Museum held their second annual Flea Market on the grounds of the historic Perrinsville School at Warren and Cowan Roads on June 18 in Westland. Mother Nature was kind to us, the weather was great. Thanks to my hard working committee, namely Georgia McDaniel, Virginia Braun, Edna Parker and Jim Franklin.

How can I describe Friends of the Museum, relatives and neighbors who gave a helping hand the day of the fundraiser. Imagine only a little over two hours to ready for a 10 a.m. opening. Seventeen people made it happen that morning. As soon as two large dining flies, three canopies, 24 tables, and two display boards were put in place on the schoolyard, stacked boxes that filled the teacher's platform, items and boxes that covered the double seater desks, items that lined the entire schoolroom, along with furniture items were brought outside and unpacked for the sale. At 4 p.m. the process was reversed.

My Saturday WONDER WORKERS were Jim Franklin, Georgia McDaniel, Mike Franklin, Jim Petish, Andrew Mehelich, Paul Braun, Judy Braun, Marty Johnson, Rod Dale, Ernie Johnson, Connie Hierta, Denise Johnson, Matthew Goralski, Art Goralski and Judy Braun's daughter.

Virginia Braun and Edna Parker were in charge of nourishment for the famished work crew. The next day this person took a four-hour nap and awoke just in time to catch the Pistons game.

For publicity thanks to Eric J. Rasmussen for the terrific color flyers, to U.S. Print (Dennis LeMaitre) who donated 60 laminated signs which gave date and time of sale, to the Westland Observer and Darrell Clem, to WLND and Craig Welkenbach.

Our thanks to the following city directors and departments — Friendship Center and Peggy Ellenwood, DPS and Tom Wilson, Parks and Recreation and Bob Kosowski. Thanks to the community for donated items, and to the shoppers who came to the sale. Thanks to those who helped from other communities — from my cousins Richard and Annette Ramage, from my sister Betty who donated two car loads of items, from Sandra Derscha, Jami Beaune and Mary Steele for large donations, from my friend Clois Locklear. Richard sold a *Tiny Tears* doll on eBay for us which was the largest item sold at \$59.

Leftover household items were given to the homeless shelter, all books went to Friends of the Library for their book sales, movie and audio tapes went to the Friendship Center, and the remainder of items went to Friends of the Garden City Museum for their flea market.

With the flea market over and the schoolroom back to its 1890s era, the one-room schoolhouse awaits Sunday visitors the last Sunday of the month 1-4 p.m. Come visit the past.

Thanks one and all.

Ruth Dale
chairperson
Flea Market Fund-raiser
Friends of the Westland Historical Museum

Support for mothers

Sadly, there is nothing in Michigan law to prevent discrimination against breastfeeding mothers in the workplace. That is why I am happy to see that Sen. Laura Toy, R-Livonia, is sponsoring legislation to change this.

Allowing women to breastfeed once they return to work offers benefits of mothers, their children and their employers. Studies indicate that mothers who continue to breastfeed once returning to work miss less time for work because of baby-related illnesses and have shorter absences when they do miss work, compared with mothers who do not breast-feed.

I hope this bill will become law quickly, and I applaud Sen. Toy for her work to protect the rights of nursing mothers in Michigan.

Mikale Capen
Garden City

Revise Social Security

In this deafening national debate over whether to modify Social Security, one of the greatest ironies is that those crying loudest to leave the system as is are those who are likely to be least affected by proposed changes.

As a professional portfolio manager and retirement counselor who makes his living helping people plan for and achieve financial independence, I am shocked and even humored by the sometimes inane discussion about this important topic.

But the irony I see comes from the fact that the intellectually anointed "progressives" are those who repeatedly promulgate the need for social change to evolve with modern man's ever growing knowledge and sophistication.

Yet, on this issue they sound like stodgy old conservatives defending the status quo! First modeled after Germany's "social insurance" program launched in 1889, our government welfare program has been essentially unchanged in its structure and funding over its 75-year life, despite massive changes in the demographics of the American workforce and population.

Why then do the senior liberal leadership, as well as powerful special interest groups like AARP, so vehemently oppose improving SSI? Because, very simply, money is freedom, and empowering future generations to be financially independent will reduce their power and influence.

These people and organizations derive their livelihood by fostering feelings of fear, envy and dependency. To make people financially independent would deny them their future source of power and sustenance.

Actuarial science has advanced by leaps and bounds in recent decades. There have been numerous viable proposals to begin phasing in a self-funded SSI program, yet liberals choose not to trust this science. Instead, they prefer to hurl invectives rather than offer fresh ideas. Ben Franklin warned, "Those who trade liberty for security deserve neither."

It is time to put politics aside and display some courage to progress, lest we slide ever closer to a total welfare state.

James Martin
West Bloomfield

Column refreshing

It was refreshing to read Hugh Gallagher's column ("Palestinian-Israeli conflict raises question 'What is truth?'" June 9). It's refresh-

ing because you tried to be objective and honest.

That is not the norm when it comes to most coverage of the Palestine-Israeli conflict. However, you have the moral responsibility and obligation to always seek the truth no matter how difficult that might be sometimes.

I salute your courage and look forward to continue reading your writings.

S.R. Shafie
Livonia

A different picture

Thank you, Hugh Gallagher, for your article in the June 9 issue of *Eccentric*. For a small-town, local newspaper writer, you obviously see the big picture that too many big-town, metropolitan newspaper writers miss.

The presentation that you witnessed by Alison Weir and Ali Abunimah was not meant to engender anyone's sympathy for the plight of the Palestinian people. It was, as you so eloquently put it, meant to show the disparity when reporting the "facts" of Palestinian-Israeli debacle.

If Americans only knew, we would see an entirely different picture than that painted by the mass media here at home. Thank you for the insight and for the courage to report it as you see it.

Ronald Amen
Livonia

Reasonable limits

Eleven-year-old Boy Scout Brennan Hawkins followed his father's advice exactly. "If you get lost, stay on the trail" and "Don't talk to strangers." He remained on the mountain trail for four days, leaving it to hide from strangers searching for him. A rescuer finally surprised the young lad.

Our 6-year-old son was backed against a school yard fence by a hostile group of older children. A lady driving by intervened. "Get in my car and I will drive you home." Pete remembered, "Never get into a car with strangers," but quickly decided that was safer than staying put. We were grateful to the lady and stopped advising our children, "Don't talk to strangers." They became friends with many fine people that were previously off-limits.

Hank Borgman
Farmington

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

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

QUOTABLE

"I have a real soft heart for the secretaries we'll possibly be losing. I wish there was something I could do. There is not another program I could put in place of it."

— Livonia school board trustee Tom Bailey about the elimination of five secretarial positions in the district's 2005-06 budget

State legislature fiddles as state goes up in smoke

The Roman emperor Nero is famous as the guy who supposedly fiddled while Rome burned. Perhaps we should hand out ceremonial violins to our elected masters in Lansing who are busy fiddling with partisan trench warfare while Michigan's future threatens to go up in smoke.

Michigan's jobless rate is now 7.1 percent, the highest in the nation. More than 350,000 Michiganders are looking for work. Bonds issued by both GM and Ford have been downgraded to "junk" status, which means the experts think you better not depend on them.

The auto manufacturers and their "Tier One," or most important suppliers are all urgently talking with the United Auto Workers union about easing work rules, health care costs and pension obligations. In last week's column, I argued that all this is a "crisis."

When you say that to top insiders in Lansing, they agree. But publicly, you don't hear anybody sounding the alarm. In other words, our crowded theater is indeed on fire — and the people running it are sitting there and pretending to enjoy the show.

So what to do about it? The way it looks now, the already starved budget may have to be cut yet again — state revenue estimates for the fiscal year that starts October 1 are still down. But beyond that, most of the discussion rotates around taxes.

Republicans think the only way to jump-start the economy is to cut taxes, especially for businesses; Democrats prefer to modify them. Everybody agrees the Single Business Tax is outdated, hard to administer and at heart is a tax on payroll — hardly what you want in a state with high unemployment.

But the SBT is hard to give up. Reason: It's a stable tax, and produces \$2.2 billion in annual revenue, enough to fund nearly a quarter of the state's discretionary spending.

Gov. Jennifer Granholm has proposed a bunch of "revenue neutral" fixes to the SBT that would help manufacturers by reducing their personal property taxes and make up for it by nicking the insurance companies and banks. The idea was to help out the struggling manufacturing sector without upsetting the rest of the apple cart.

The automobile industry likes the idea — why not? The banks, the insurance companies, the Michigan Chamber of Commerce and most Republicans predictably think it stinks.

Some Republicans would just as soon do away with the SBT altogether; indeed, a bill introduced last week would end it totally five years from now. There's a problem, however. The SBT is such a big part of the budget picture, there's no realistic way they can make up that \$2.2 billion without increasing taxes — which the legislature is dead set against.

Readers with long memories will realize all this is the end game in a five-year GOP plan to cut taxes for businesses and individuals, a move started under Gov.

John Engler in 1999. As a result, state tax revenues are now around \$1.5 billion less each year than they were, and have fallen still more when you count the money the state loses when the economy turns down.

All this has come at considerable cost. Over the years, colleges and universities have had their funding cut by more than \$250 million, so families are paying higher tuition bills.

The state also has slashed revenue sharing for cities and townships, so local taxpayers are being asked to approve property tax hikes to pay for police and fire protection. And on and on and on.

In fact, what's amazing about the whole thing is that the legislature has largely evaded blame for the wholesale erosion of the things that make Michigan a worthwhile place to live.

Consider now the late Richard Headlee, Michigan's answer to Ronald Reagan in the conservative Republican pantheon of heroes.

Headlee, an insurance executive, gave his name to a state constitutional amendment, passed in 1978, that sets the upper limit for state revenue collection at 9.6 percent of total personal income.

Everybody thought holding that line would be difficult back then. Guess what: As of today, state revenues are \$5.7 billion under the Headlee limit! You might think that even staunch tax cutters might wonder if they had come close to overdoing it . . . but far from it.

Troll the halls of the legislature and not a member, Republican or Democrat, will talk openly about tax increases. The farthest anybody will go, always off the record, is "structural change in our tax system" . . . and then quickly change the subject.

Well, here's a way to solve the problem.

Immediately repeal — I repeat, repeal, right now, cold turkey — the SBT. The resulting hole in the budget is \$2.2 billion, far more than can be plugged by cutting spending.

Therefore, we should urge the legislature to put on the ballot for public vote the only two ways of fixing the problem: Increase the state income tax or reduce the 6 percent sales tax to, say, 4.5 percent, but impose it on services as well as goods.

Which option do you think the voters will support?

Presto! You eliminate a silly and anachronistic tax. You eliminate the big tax on business, thereby (thank you, Republican economic theorists) improving the business climate. And maybe you even start to eliminate the chronic structural budget deficit that has hobbled state policy makers for the past four years.

Of course, don't expect anybody to jump on board yet. But just wait until our crisis worsens — say Delphi or Visteon go into Chapter 11 bankruptcy — and our Neros in Lansing might just decide to put their violins down and do something constructive for a change.

Funny, but sometimes it is easier to get a little perspective when it is your own coliseum burning.

Phil Power is a longtime observer of politics, economics and education issues in Michigan. He would be pleased to hear from readers at ppower@homecomm.net.



Phil Power

Michigan must take action against growing trash problem

Michigan has a serious trash problem that's getting worse every year.

In 2004, Michigan took in more than six million tons of trash, a 17 percent increase from 2003. Imported garbage made up 28 percent of all the trash in Michigan's landfills in 2004. Wayne County alone took in more than 1.8 million tons of trash in 2004, most from Canada.

People across our nation know of Michigan as the Great Lakes State, but it's quickly becoming the Great Waste State.

Every day, hundreds of trucks loaded with trash roll across our bridges and borders from other states and Canada, further damaging our already overloaded roads.

A clear traffic hazard, Canadian trash trucks are four times more likely to be in accidents while they are in Michigan than in Ontario, *The Detroit News* reported in 2003.

Garbage from Canada and other states gobbles up our open spaces, and uses up landfills meant for our use. Leaking contaminated landfills must be cleaned up, leaving Michigan taxpayers to pick up the tab, not Canada or the other states.

House Democrats have introduced five tough anti-trash bills to fight this problem, but Republicans in the House are sandbagging our legislation, refusing to give them even a simple hearing. They're listening to the powerful trash industry and its high-paid lobbyists, content to do nothing while the trash trucks continue to threaten Michigan.

Michigan is a trash magnet because our state is cheap. The waste industry pays a paltry 21 cents a ton to dump here. Indiana charges \$3.10 a ton; Wisconsin, \$3.75; Illinois, \$4.02. Toronto officials said in April that their contract to ship trash to Michigan is the cheapest in North America.

Ohio's plan to raise its dumping charge has prompted waste haulers there to look across the border for cheaper places like Michigan. The waste industry magazine, *Waste Age*, in a 2003 article, called Michigan "an affordable disposal destination," and said "Canada is taking the opportunity to cash in . . ."

No one should "cash in" by turning our state into a dump. That's why a key piece of our anti-trash legislation attacks the economics of the

trash trade by raising our dumping charge to \$7.50 a ton. A higher dumping charge will level the financial playing field and end the garbage companies' free ride.

A year after Pennsylvania raised its dumping charge to \$7.25 a ton, garbage imports into that state went down by 14 percent. It's working in Pennsylvania, it can work here in Michigan.

Rep. John Pastor, in a recent column, said Canada and other states won't have to pay, leaving the burden of the dumping charge on Michigan citizens. He's wrong and he knows it.

Everyone will pay, and he also conveniently neglects to tell you one important point: The money from the dumping charge will go back to local communities, to all of us.

We estimate that in the first year, the dumping charge will raise \$170 million, which will be returned to local communities. Westland, for example, will likely pay \$324,000, but will get back more than \$1.5 million. Garden City would pay \$112,000, and receive \$406,000.

Rep. Pastor calls our plan a tax. But when you spend \$1 and get \$4 back, that's not a tax. That's an investment, an investment with an unprecedented return, an investment in the future of our state.

Rep. Pastor and the Republicans say Michigan can't do anything. He says we have to wait for the federal government to intervene or, with our hat in hand, plead with the Canadians to stop sending us their trash.

If Washington is the answer, then why aren't Rep. Pastor's fellow Republicans who control the Senate, House and White House tackling this problem? It boils down to money and profits. Rather than fight for Michigan, Rep. Pastor is meekly defending the garbage industry, protecting special interests while trash companies turn our beautiful state into the region's dumping ground.

Michigan needs bold leadership on this issue and the time for action is now. Charging a competitive price to dump in Michigan is a perfectly fair practice in trade and one that will stem the trash entering Michigan. You can join the battle against the trashing of Michigan, by visiting www.trash-o-meter.com.

State Rep. Glenn S. Anderson is a Democrat and has represented Westland since 2000. You can contact him by e-mail at glennanderson@house.mi.gov.

Glenn Anderson

reported in 2003.

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Glenn Anderson

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