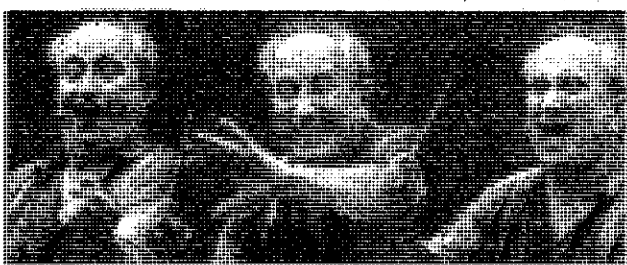


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Police look for leads, tips in random shootings

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Vandals who fired random shots in a north Westland neighborhood may be linked to a similar incident in Garden City, authorities said Friday. Gunshots rang out early Sept. 15 on Fremont, Beatrice and Gladys, shattering the early morning quiet of a Westland neighborhood shortly after shots were heard at Pierce and

Moeller in Garden City.

The gunshots in Westland happened about 4 a.m. and again at 6 a.m. Vandals drove along residential streets near Middlebelt and Ann Arbor Trail and opened fire on parked vehicles and stop signs, although one house also was struck.

Shots started earlier, about 2:43 a.m., in Garden City, where bullets struck a stop sign.

On Thursday, Westland Deputy

Police Chief Marc Stobbe announced that a reward of up to \$1,000 is being offered for information leading to an arrest in the shootings.

The reward is being offered by Crime Stoppers of Michigan, and the tip can be made anonymously by calling (800) SPEAK-UP, or (800) 773-2587.

"They can call seven days a week, 24 hours a day," Stobbe said.

No one has been hurt during any of

the shootings, but the incidents rattled nerves in usually quiet neighborhoods in Westland and Garden City. Authorities continue to investigate the incidents.

"We're doing all that we can," Stobbe said. "We're interviewing people and following up on all leads. We're working with other police agencies who may have had similar incidents."

The shootings have proved frustrat-

ing for local authorities.

"We don't have any leads," police Sgt. Michael Willard said Thursday.

Police have no description of potential suspects. But they have learned that the car used in the drive-by shootings in Westland may be a 1990s-model, gold-colored vehicle, possibly a Mercury Cougar or a Ford Thunderbird.

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PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Gary Martin and Scott Focius of Buckmaster Contracting Co. give the interior of the Perrinsville School a fresh coat of paint.

Perrinsville School ready for students

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

A one-room, historic schoolhouse in Westland has received a facelift as historians prepare it for a new round of educational visits by local students.

Built in 1856, the quaint, charming Perrinsville Schoolhouse - complete with a bell tower - gives students an opportunity to see how pupils were schooled in the late 1800s.

Visiting teachers use old-fashioned lesson manuals to teach subjects ranging from mathematics to geography. Students learn from 1890-era reading books, and they also sing the songs and play the games of their ancestors.

Historians who worked tirelessly for the school's restoration became concerned when they started noticing damage to the building, which sits on the north side of Warren Road west of Merriman.

Historians worried about cracks that developed inside the building, and they realized that the school also needed new paint to spruce it up.

Using \$3,200 donated by a local historical group, the Friends of the Museum, Perrinsville's protectors recently arranged for workers to make repairs. "They repaired the cracks and painted

over them," said historian Virginia Braun, who has helped lead Perrinsville restoration efforts. "The ceiling had a lot of cracks because it's drywall. All of those cracks used to show, but now it looks really, really good."

Workers also used a cream-colored paint to complete the facelift.

"It looks all fresh and clean," Braun said, "and we're ready for school classes to come in."

Local historian Ruth Dale said fliers have been sent to third- and fourth-grade teachers in the Wayne-Westland, Livonia and Garden City school districts, informing them that Perrinsville is available for visits.

Students pay \$3 each to attend the school for a day - money that historians use to help pay for the building's upkeep.

The reading books used at the school are geared toward third- and fourth-grade students, although historians said teachers at other grade levels also are welcome to use the school for a day.

The school remains in its original location, and some former teachers and students have been known to visit during special events there.

The school is available for visits Monday through Friday. Teachers who want to arrange a visit or who want more information may call (734) 427-4648.

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Painter Gary Martin touches up around one of the windows in the school.

3 schools receive district's Golden Apple Encore Award

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

For the third time in 17 months' time, the Wayne-Westland school board has recognized three elementary schools for outstanding academic achievement.

Receiving the board's Golden Apple Encore Award were Elliott, Roosevelt-McGrath and Taft-Galloway Elementary schools which increased their state standardized tests scores by more than 60 points over three consecutive years.

"Significant achievement doesn't happen by chance, it happens because of many hours of effort and the dedication and commitment of the staffs, parents and administrators put in," said Superintendent Greg Baracy in introducing the awards.

The Golden Apple Award was started under then-Gov. John Engler to recognize schools that improved their MEAP test scores. At the time, the awards came with \$10,000 to further school improvement.

When the state discontinued the awards several years ago, Wayne-Westland decided to present its own Golden Apples along with a stipend, \$10,000 for first-time recipients and \$5,000 for repeat winners.

"We had several schools in the middle of the process when the state chose to discontinue the award along with the monetary piece that goes with it," said Baracy. "We had staffs in the middle of very comprehensive, intense school improvement activities

PLEASE SEE AWARD, A4

Charges pile up in pizza delivery robbery cases

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Three defendants now face trial after the plot thickened for two armed Westland robberies that targeted pizza delivery workers.

One defendant also is accused of threatening witnesses and saying he would have killed police officers - if he still had a gun when they came to arrest him, authorities said.

The armed robberies occurred when fake pizza orders were made Aug. 23 at Ravencrest Condominiums,

on Newburgh near Marquette, and Aug. 29 in the 400 area of Farmington.

No shots were fired in either incident, but police Sgt. David Heater said that a loaded .45-caliber semiautomatic pistol was used.

"It's a very powerful gun, and we're very fortunate that no one was hurt," he said.

Three defendants who appeared earlier this month in Westland District Court have waived their preliminary hearings - a move that sent their cases to Wayne County Circuit Court for trial.

PLEASE SEE ROBBERY, A5

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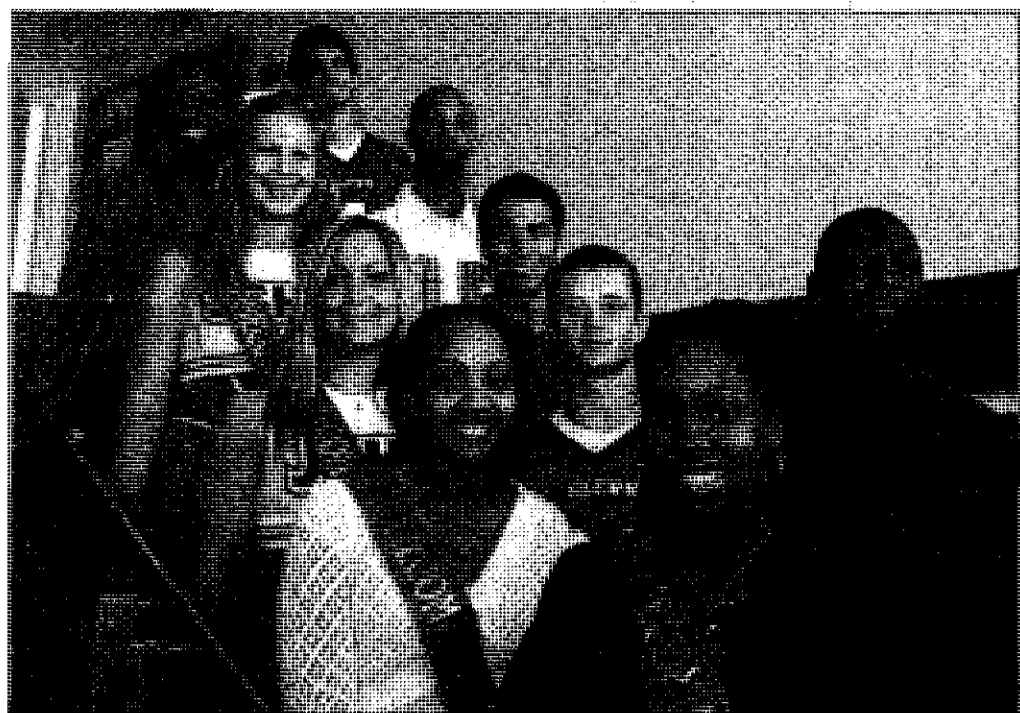
INDEX

APARTMENTS	E9
AUTOMOTIVE	F5
CLASSIFIED INDEX	D2
CROSSWORD PUZZLE	E7
COMMUNITY LIFE	C1
HEALTH	C6
JOBS	D1
OBITUARIES	C4
PERSPECTIVES	A7
NEW HOMES	E4
SERVICE GUIDE	F2
SPORTS	B1

Coming Thursday in Filter

Watching The Game?

U-M and MSU football teams square off in East Lansing Saturday. Turn to Filter to learn where to catch the action.



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Who will it be?

Students at John Glenn High School will make the final decision on who will reign over this weekend's homecoming festivities. Vying for the honor of being queen are Homecoming Court members Asia Rush (from left), Brittany Smith, Amanda Eck, Kelly Borowiak and Jennifer Stevenson. King candidates are Brandon Pitt (from left), Chris Hylton, Josh Rogers, Curtis Adams and Gary Walker. The winners will be announced during halftime festivities Friday evening.

Girl Scouts need adult volunteers

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Girl Scouts of the Huron Valley Council serves 1 in 5 girls in Livingston, Monroe, Washtenaw and western Wayne and Oakland counties. Call (800) 49-SCOUT, or visit the Web site at www.gshvc.org.

For the Children, United Way collect school goods

United Way for Southeastern Michigan, in partnership with For the Kids Foundation, is leading a drive to collect school supplies for young Hurricane Katrina survivors who are now living in southeast Michigan and attending school in Wayne, Oakland or Macomb counties.

Items, such as pencils, pens, crayons, highlighters, notepads, drawing papers, construction paper, glue sticks, rulers, hand held calculators, scientific calculators, pocket folders, binders, Trapper Keepers, scissors, pocket dictionaries and children's dictionaries and backpacks are needed.

All supplies are requested by Friday, Oct. 7, and can be dropped off 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday, at any of the following locations:

■ United Way for Southeastern Michigan downtown office, 1212 Griswold at State Street, Detroit
■ N. Yatooma & Associates,

219 Elm St., Birmingham.

■ United Way for Southeastern Michigan Macomb office, 178 Cass Ave., Mt. Clemens.

■ ACCESS, 2651 Saulino Court, Dearborn.

■ Oakland Christian Church, 5100 N. Adams, Oakland Township.

United Way has worked with community partners to identify at least 200 youth who have relocated to the metro Detroit area from Louisiana and Mississippi and are currently enrolled in school.

The items will be sorted and distributed to ensure that these children have the basic supplies necessary to succeed in school. White Star Trucking Co. will be delivering the supplies to a central location for sorting and distribution.

For more information, call Patricia McCann at United Way at (313) 226-9416 or Judy Vindici at For the Kids Foundation at (888) 987-5437.

Memorial scholarship comes in nick of time for its winner

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Melissa Maylone of Westland fell short of the tuition money she needed for her senior year at Wayne State University.

"My tuition went up this year, and I needed \$1,000 to pay for the rest of my school this year," she said.

Maylone, a social work major and 2001 graduate of Wayne Memorial High School, thought she might have to try for a loan.

Then, she got a call that she had won a \$1,000 scholarship given by Norman's Market, in memory of the late owner, Dale Freese, who died of brain cancer last year at age 59.

Rick Ziolkowski, part-owner of the market that opened in 1950, said Maylone received the first of what will be an annual scholarship.

"Dale believed in giving back to the community," Ziolkowski said. "That's part of the reason we decided to start the scholarship fund."

Maylone, 22, won over seven other applicants.

"It was such a blessing," she said. "It was perfect timing."

Maylone was given the scholarship at Norman's Market on Sept. 8 - the day that Freese would have celebrated his birthday.

Freese's father, Norman, started the market in 1950. It is located on Wayne Road, north of Palmer.

Dale Freese took over the store in 1974 and was its owner



Melissa Maylone holds a scholarship award she received from Norman's Market, in memory of late owner Dale Freese. Maylone is flanked by part-owner Rick Ziolkowski and Dale Freese's wife, Kathy.

until he died last year. He made Ziolkowski a partner six years ago.

Maylone won her scholarship after writing a paper and partly due to her potential for success.

She was chosen by a committee that included Ziolkowski, Dale Freese's wife, Kathy, and son Jamie Freese.

"It's going to be a yearly thing," Ziolkowski said. "Next year, we're hoping to give more than one scholarship."

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Melissa Maylone was given the scholarship at Norman's Market on Sept. 8 - the day that Dale Freese would have celebrated his birthday.

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State opts for ACT in testing high school achievement

BY TONY BRUSCATO
STAFF WRITER

Beginning with the Class of 2008, all Michigan 11th-graders will be required to take the American College Test (ACT) and a work skills assessment exam in place of the high school MEAP tests.

The switch to the nationally recognized college entrance examination implements a key recommendation of the Cherry Commission on Higher Education and Economic Growth, which Gov. Jennifer Granholm has charged to find ways to double the number of college graduates in Michigan.

"To compete in a global economy, our students must continue their education beyond high school," said Granholm. "To make this expectation a reality,

we must give students the tools they need to succeed, including the opportunity to take a college entrance exam."

The Michigan Merit Exam will be administered during a two-day period each spring. The first day will have students taking the ACT, with a second day devoted to WorkKeys, a work skills assessment program, with additional assessment tests in English language arts, math, science and social studies.

"The fact is we've built our curriculums around Michigan state benchmarks. The ACT does, in some cases, an even better job of addressing the benchmarks than the MEAP does," said Bill Zolkowski, principal of Thurston High School in the South Redford school district. "Once we get over the difficulty of change, I think it's going to

end up being even better." Mike Bender, director of secondary education for Plymouth-Canton Schools, believes using the Michigan Merit Exam, which includes the ACT, will streamline the student assessment process.

"Being able to use the Michigan Merit Exam for more than one purpose is a plus," said Bender. "It will be used as a students' college entrance exam as well as for the state exam. We will also be able to use it to meet Adequate Yearly Progress standards."

The new assessments still need approval from the U.S. Department of Education to be used to determine Adequate Yearly Progress as required by the federal No Child Left Behind law.

The change in tests is man-

dated by Granholm, but not all administrators are ready to get on the bandwagon. Wayne-Westland Community Schools Superintendent Greg Baracy said the process hasn't been well thought out.

"Conceptually, it might work in some districts and some schools, but it's not a good fit for Wayne-Westland," said Baracy. "We want to be accountable, we want to raise the standards and we want to do right by our students, but they all have different learning styles. We need the resources to deal with a differentiated instruction for thousands of students."

Garden City Superintendent Richard Witkowski was a bit more cautious.

"We don't have a lot of information on it, but we'll do what we have to do and administer

what they give us," said Witkowski. "I'm holding my breath to see what we have to pay, if anything. If they require it, it seems Headlee should kick in and the state would have to pay for it."

The state is expected to pick up the tab for all the tests, as well as a one re-test for each student. Currently, high school students pay \$70 to take the college entrance examination on a Saturday.

Livonia Public Schools Superintendent Randy Liepa said while there are still many unanswered questions, his district is attempting to be proactive.

"We're trying to work with what the state has come up," said Liepa. "We're looking at (instituting) a ninth- and 10th-grade ACT-type assessment. The

goal is to consolidate some of the testing time."

For the past several years, Plymouth-Canton sophomores have been taking the 10th-grade version of the ACT. And for the first time Tuesday, ninth-graders were given a pre-ACT test.

"We'll give the results to the ninth grade teachers, who will interpret them and help those individual students who need help," said Cyndi Burnstein, Salem High School English teacher. "We should be able to track the students and curriculum over time and make necessary improvements."

"The students will benefit from the exploratory tests, which will make them more prepared for the ACT in their junior year," she said.

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ROBBERY

FROM PAGE A1

Christopher Lee Allen, a 19-year-old Westland man, faces trial for two counts of armed robbery and two counts of felony firearms. He is the accused gunman.

Daniel Garrett, a 21-year-old Canton man, faces trial for the same charges. He is accused of providing the gun and driving the getaway vehicle during both holdups.

Brandon Myers, a 19-year-old Canton man, faces trial only for the Ravenscrest robbery. He is charged with one count of armed robbery and one count of felony firearms.

Myers is accused of calling in the Ravenscrest pizza order and of allowing his vehicle to be used. He also is accused of accompanying the gunman to

the pizza worker's car.

All three defendants, if convicted, could face penalties ranging up to life in prison. Not-guilty pleas have been entered in court as they await their trials.

In the meantime, Allen is jailed in lieu of a \$100,000 cash bond. Myers is jailed on a \$250,000 cash bond.

Garrett has the highest bond at \$500,000, partly because he has a more extensive criminal history and because he made threats to witnesses and to police, Heater has said in court.

"He had made threats that he would have shot police officers if he had had the gun at the time of his arrest," Heater said. "Now, he denies saying that."

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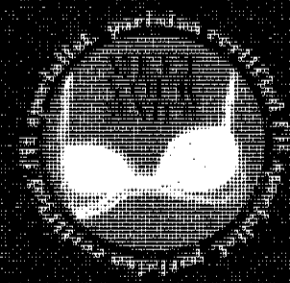
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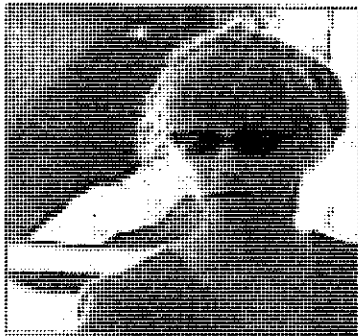
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Police seek help in identifying robbery suspect

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

Garden City Police are hoping someone can help them identify a woman who robbed the LaSalle Bank at 6071 Middlebelt Tuesday morning. According to Detective Sgt. Ron Umbarger, the woman entered the bank around 9 a.m. and handed a teller a note asking for \$7,000. The clerk gave some money to the woman who did not produce a weapon. An alarm was triggered, however, the woman was gone by the time police officers arrived.



Garden City police are looking for information about this woman wanted in connection with the robbery of the LaSalle Bank on Middlebelt Sept. 20.

Umbarger said the woman left the bank on foot and walked to the area of Middlebelt and Elmwood where she discarded the green sweater and blue skirt she had been wearing between two parked cars. "I believe the suspect had a vehicle north of the location, that's my hunch," said Umbarger. "But we checked with neighbors and didn't turn up anyone who had seen her." Umbarger added that the teller believed the woman was wearing rolled up jeans under the clothing. She described her as 33-43 years old, thin, about 5 feet 2 inches tall, with long, straight light brown or strawberry blond hair. "She looked like an average-

dressed woman," Umbarger said. "She was wearing heels with ankle straps. The teller said it appeared she was having difficulty walking in them." Police also are looking into robberies earlier this year in Monroe County and the Ann Arbor area in which the suspect wore a hat and scarf to disguise her appearance. The suspect in the Garden City robbery wore dark sunglasses.

"We have no suspect, no get-away car, no descriptions," said Umbarger. "We need help identifying her." People with information about the suspect or the robbery can call Umbarger at (734) 793-1717. smason@oe.hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2112

Rotarians find fellowship, fun at picnic

BY JULIE BROWN
STAFF WRITER

It's not surprising the clouds parted Thursday at lunchtime for Garden City and Westland Rotarians. The warmth of friendship helped the skies to turn blue. The Garden City club invited the Westland club to its Garden City Rotary Park for a picnic.

"Just for a little camaraderie, just for a nice gesture," said Peggy Sexton, Garden City club secretary. "It's all about fellowship. We're happy to host."

About 30 people enjoyed burgers, brats and hot dogs prepared on the grill, along with fried chicken, potatoes, salads and desserts. Todd Blevins, Westland club president, appreciated the hospitality.

The Garden City club invited the Westland club to its Garden City Rotary Park for a picnic.

"I think it's a great idea," Blevins said of the picnic. "I think it's good that we get to know the other clubs. They have a great facility here."

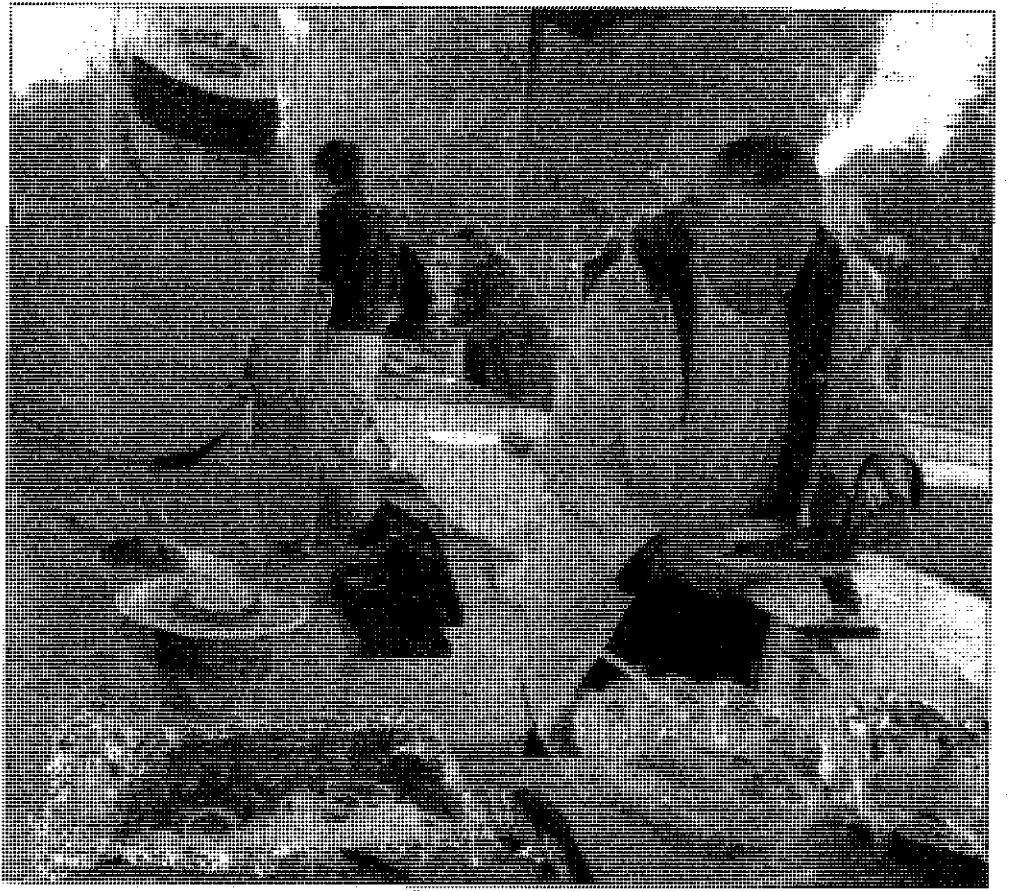
The park on Marquette in Garden City was an ideal spot for the gathering, even when the grill set off the sprinklers, getting some participants wet.

The clubs have met in the past. "I would like to see that," Blevins said of joint projects. "The Dearborn Heights club has asked us to join them, too, on a couple of occasions."

Thursday's picnic was organized by former club president Mary Ann Snodgrass, said Richard Witkowski, Garden City club president and school superintendent. Witkowski, who took a few minutes to welcome the visitors, spent some time manning the grill.

"I hope you enjoy yourselves," Witkowski said. "Mingle a little bit."

Margaret Harlow of the Westland club was the contact on that side, Blevins said. Sexton was a bit worried about the weather when she woke up Thursday. "I knew we had a pavilion," she said. Westland also has a Rotary Park in that city.



PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Garden City Rotarian Gene Zylinski (left) and Westland Rotarian Don Douglass fill up their plates at the food table.



Garden City Rotary members Gary Murrell (from left) and Jim Kerwin enjoy in the fun, as Richard Witkowski barbecues dogs and hamburgers for Garden City and Westland Rotarians.

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INFORMATION CENTRAL

President Dwight D. Eisenhower once said, "Don't think you're going to conceal faults by concealing evidence that they ever existed. Don't be afraid to go in your library and read every book, as long as any document does not offend our own ideas of decency. That should be the only censorship." Eisenhower spoke these words at the Dartmouth College Commencement on June 14, 1953, and they are no less true or necessary 50 years later. Despite the number of bumper stickers that can be seen proclaiming "Freedom is not free," "Got Freedom?" and "My Son Defends Freedom," there have been book burnings held all over the United States in the 21st century. In 2001, members of the Harvest Assembly of God Church in Ohio held a burning of books, videos and CDs they deemed offensive to God. That same year, the Jesus Group wanted to hold a Harry Potter book burning in Maine, but couldn't get the necessary permits from the fire department, so instead staged a "book cutting." In 2003, members of the non-denominational Jesus Church in

Greenville, Mich., held a burning that included Shania Twain's CD *The Woman in Me*, the movie *Coneheads*, *The Book of Mormon* and, of course, *Harry Potter*. The reason for such an unlikely assortment? None of the books, music, or movies promoted God. Enter Banned Books Week. An annual event since 1982, Banned Books Week is celebrated the last week of September in an effort to remind Americans the importance of the free exchange of ideas and to encourage us all not to take our freedom for granted. As American Library Association President Michael Gorman says, "I believe the more we exercise our freedom to read and read widely, the better equipped we are to make good decisions and govern ourselves. Controversial ideas should be debated, not driven into dark alleys." Thanks to librarians, teachers and booksellers who take this idea to heart, most of the challenged books featured during Banned Books Week were not banned and remain on the shelves of bookstores and libraries. The William P. Faust library has a

display highlighting frequently challenged books as well as a display of books dealing with censorship and discussing the reasons books get banned. So stop by the library, any library, during this week and remind yourself why we call our country "The land of the free."

Teen Advisory Board: 7 p.m. Sept. 27. Help plan programs, choose prizes and materials for the Teen Collection. **Get Organized:** 7 p.m. Sept. 27. Come to a free workshop on organizing your home, office, and family. Call or stop by the reference desk to register. **Babytime Storytime:** 10:30 a.m. Oct. 1. For children up to age 24 months with a caregiver. Share stories, songs and rhymes with your little one.

Bridget Sturdy
reference librarian

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Some suburban residents yearn for small town life

When the dust finally settles on the controversial Wonderland Village development in Livonia, we can begin taking a look at the fundamental question – what kind of communities do we want.

Several residents of the Middlebelt and Plymouth Road area told city leaders that the development proposed by Bob Schostak doesn't "fit" in their neighborhood. The plan calls for a super Wal-Mart, a large Target, a third large store and a collection of small "village" stores. It would replace an indoor shopping center, a slightly smaller Target and a closed Kmart (on an adjacent site that is still to be developed).



Hugh Gallagher

The objections to the proposed site development are not without merit, but it is hard to see how this development significantly changes the commercial area near these neighborhoods.

We have a variety of community styles in our area. Plymouth, Northville and Farmington have traditional town centers all developed in the 1800s and early 1900s with modest residential

areas developed at the same time and within walking distance of the town. When they were first built, they served farm communities and the commercial district supplied the necessities – a grocery, a drugstore, a clothier, a hardware store, a doctor or two, a dentist, a lawyer, a funeral home, a blacksmith/stable (later a gas station/garage), a restaurant and tavern. Farmers came in on a Saturday to stock up and meet with neighbors. During the week, the townspeople could walk wherever they needed to go.

When people got an itching for the big city, there was an interurban to take them to Detroit. In the city they could go to Hudson's and gawk at the window displays and buy some special piece of clothing or appliances, see a vaudeville show or a movie, catch a ballgame at Bennett Park (later Briggs Stadium), hear live music at a nightclub, see masterpieces at the DIA or do research at the library.

Over time the gaps between the city and those towns began to fill. After World War II, a housing explosion took off. Builders began throwing up subdivisions with bigger houses, bigger lots, often no sidewalks and little concern about walking into "town" because "town" didn't exist. The quaint town squares were replaced by strip malls along the main drags and subregional shopping centers with national brand stores. You needed an automobile to get where you had to go.

One community blended into another. For many, Livonia was the ideal suburb. The subdivisions were attractive, the yards were large and green. Unlike other "bedroom" communities, Livonia created a strong economic base. An industrial park was created between Schoolcraft and Plymouth Road. Livonia was strategically connected by freeways and the railroad. The major through roads were wide and perfect for commercial strip development. When people began moving from west side Detroit and Dearborn, Livonia was often the first choice.

But we are beginning to see a nostalgia for a way of life that most suburban residents have never lived. The town has been making a comeback. People are beginning to see that there is something to be said for a town center where people can gather at a coffeehouse or walk the baby past store windows or walk to the library, the doctor, the dentist, the drugstore in a place that's pleasant and close.

We've watched the revival of Royal Oak as a model for creating an urban version of the town.

But, of course, those pleasant towns have gone through a transition. Plymouth, Northville and Farmington are not the primary shopping areas for their communities. They provide specialty shops and entertainment restaurants rather than the necessities. For those, people go to the outer edges of the community, to big box stores or to a closed mall.

The Royal Oaks, Ann Arbors and Birminghams have become entertainment venues rather than primary shopping places.

Now some of those around Plymouth and Middlebelt would like something "more like a town." They'd like someplace they can walk around and greet their neighbors, though that's never been a part of the Livonia experience.

In the long run, Livonia has to consider what it wants to be and what it can be. Unfortunately, city planning often takes a back seat to private development (property rights, you know). And sometimes, places like Livonia, Canton and Westland just grow too quickly, trying to meet a demand for housing that runs faster than careful city planning can handle.

But it's never too late to take another look, invite the community to talk about what they want and discuss the best ways to achieve it.

Hugh Gallagher is the managing editor of the Observer Newspapers. He can be reached by phone at (734) 953-2149, by e-mail at hgallagher@oe.homecomm.net or by fax at (734) 591-7279.

Banned Books Week good time to visit your library

Julie Brown recently reread *Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger, a high school English class favorite that was still a good read, 30 years later. The story of Holden Caulfield's adolescent angst remains a perennial target of those who seek to ban books, the impetus for Banned Book Week, observed Sept. 24 to Oct. 1 this year.

The American Library Association Office for Intellectual Freedom received a total of 547 challenges last year. A challenge is defined as a formal, written complaint, filed with a library or school requesting that materials be removed because of content or appropriateness. According to Judith F. Krug, director of that office, the number of challenges reflects only incidents reported.

The ALA Web site quotes its president, Carol Brey-Casiano, as concerned about removal of books like *Bless Me Ultima*, by Rudolfo Anaya from schools: "Not every book is right for every person, but providing a wide range of reading choices is vital for learning, exploration and imagination. The abilities to read, speak, think and express ourselves freely are core American values."

Anaya's award-winning book was banned from the curriculum in Norwood High School, Colo., for offensive language. Young adult novelist Chris Crutcher's books also have come under fire, including in Michigan.

Concerns about banning are found among local librarians as well. "Banned Books Week is to really let people know how important freedom of expression is," said Cathy Lichtman, teen services librarian at the Plymouth District Library. "I think we're fortunate to have access to information."

In addition to the ALA, sponsors are the American Booksellers Association, American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression, American Society of Journalists and Authors, Association of American Publishers and National Association of College Stores.

Lichtman hasn't seen big issues with book banning, but has had objections to materials in the library. "We deal with those on a case by case basis. One group or another finds them uncomfortable."

She noted the presence of classics, such as *Catcher in the Rye*, and added such books help students develop critical thinking skills and their place in the world. "I think it's absolutely important to be exposed to different ideas."

At the William P. Faust Public Library of Westland, reference librarian Bridget Sturdy has seen a few concerns raised about graphic novels and other young adult materials, which the staff takes seriously.

"I think it's very important to bring to people's attention there still are so many books people are trying to keep off the shelves. They don't really realize some parents would like to talk to their chil-

dren about these ideas," Sturdy said.

She's found books can help young people cope with body changes, and realize they're not alone in what they're going through.

The Canton Public Library also has had several challenges, said Jean Tabor, director, and has a procedure to handle those. "We take each challenge very seriously."

Materials are rarely withdrawn, she said, although they have been moved to another area in the library. She and colleagues urge parents to monitor what their children are reading and viewing. "They're really the ones who should be in charge," Tabor said. "We have a diverse community of wide varying tastes."

Three of the 10 books on the ALA "Ten Most Challenged Books of 2004" were cited for homosexual themes – the highest number in a decade. Sexual content and offensive language remain the most frequent reasons for seeking removal of books from schools and public libraries.

The books, in order of most frequently challenged, are:

■ *The Chocolate War* by Robert Cormier for sexual content, offensive language, religious viewpoint, being unsuited to age group and violence

■ *Fallen Angels* by Walter Dean Myers, for racism, offensive language and violence

■ *Arming America: The Origins of a National Gun Culture* by Michael A. Bellesiles, for inaccuracy and political viewpoint

■ *Captain Underpants* series by Dav Pilkey, for offensive language and modeling bad behavior

■ *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky, for homosexuality, sexual content and offensive language

■ *What My Mother Doesn't Know* by Sonya Sones, for sexual content and offensive language

■ *In the Night Kitchen* by Maurice Sendak, for nudity and offensive language

■ *King & King* by Linda de Haan and Stern Nijland, for homosexuality

■ *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou, for racism, homosexuality, sexual content, offensive language and unsuited to age group

■ *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck, for racism, offensive language and violence.

Off the list this year, but on for several years past, are the *Alice* series of books by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, *Go Ask Alice* by Anonymous, *It's Perfectly Normal* by Robie Harris and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain.

Certainly parents have the right to know what their children, especially young children, are reading. At the same time, it's important not to impose those decisions on others – or to discourage young people from reading in the first place. Books, even or especially banned ones, open new worlds to readers of all ages.

Julie Brown of Plymouth Township is presentation editor of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. She can be reached at (734) 953-2111 or via e-mail at jbrown@oe.homecomm.net.

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New group warns about cost of illegal immigration

BY ALEX LUNDBERG
STAFF WRITER

The Michigan Citizens for Immigration Reform wants something made clear when they discuss the issue of illegal immigration: The word illegal.

The group, just a month old, was the guest of the North Oakland Republican Club at an informational meeting at the Deer Lake Athletic Club in Clarkston Thursday night. A crowd of about 60 came to the meeting to talk with them and the president of a national immigration reform group to discuss the situation.

MCFIR got its start after Farmington Hills resident Herbert Sherbin wrote a letter to the Farmington Observer bemoaning the effect illegal immigration was having on Michigan. The effect he mentioned specifically was generated in California.

"The 2000 census gave California three more representatives in Congress and because there are only 435 members, Michigan, Indiana and Mississippi lost representatives," he said. "The census counted illegals. It's a perversion of representative democracy."

Of course, there's a lot of inertia against true immigration reform. Perhaps one of the greatest sources of that inertia is the low cost of produce which is subsidized by illegal immigrant pickers working below the minimum wage. MCFIR Co-Founder Peg Robichaud of Canton said prices can be higher if there are people earning money at a legal wage.

"You can afford \$5 for lettuce if you're working," she said. "If you're not, you can't afford it for \$1."

What the low wage/low cost argument misses, she said, is the hidden costs illegal immigration imposes on the nation as a whole. Consumers might pay less for fruits and vegetables, but that savings is negated by the costs to hospitals and the education system which must deal with the immigrants every day.

Dan Stine, national president of the Federation for American Immigration Reform and the evening's featured speaker, has been active in immigration issues since 1982.

"There's a growing national consensus that it's time for reform," he said. "25 years ago I was talking in the woods. Today, people are starting to wake up."

He said the issue is central to national security and at the heart of terrorist attacks in this country.

"In 1986, President Reagan signed an amnesty that started a massive abuse of asylum laws. There were supposed to be employment sanctions and deportation sanctions but by 1990 no one cared," he said. "That allowed the World Trade Center bombing and, later, 9-11."

He said immigration is the most important issue facing the country, affecting public education, crime, environmental protections, congestion and labor equity. He said both political parties have failed the nation and there were powerful interests perpetuating the problem.

"Illegal immigration is lining a lot of pockets. From Fannie Mae to Wells Fargo, they're looking at illegals as the next housing market," Stine said. They're privatizing the profits while they're commonizing the costs."

MCFIR Co-Founder Edith Simmons of Southfield said the organization wants to use political pressure to get Washington to start dealing with the issue seriously.

"We're going to bombard representatives in Washington about the problem," she said. "We're going to demand they do their duty to protect the country's borders. We want workable laws that don't include amnesty."

They would also like to see an end of families using "anchor babies" — children of illegals born in the U.S. creating de facto citizenship for parents — chain migration of entire families and the free issuing of worker visas.

McCotter supports using 'God' in the Pledge

U.S. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter, R-Livonia, introduced a resolution Wednesday reaffirming Congress' support for the Pledge of Allegiance, in

response to a San Francisco federal judge striking down the recitation of the Pledge by California school children. McCotter said the ruling by

Judge Lawrence Karlton contradicts the clear implication of the holdings in various Supreme Court cases and the spirit of numerous other

Supreme Court cases in which the court has stated the voluntary recitation of the Pledge is consistent with the First Amendment.

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Bills aim to give local government flexibility

Following a series of hearings held across the state earlier this year, the Michigan Senate Republican leadership will be introducing legislation intended to give local officials more flexibility in managing their resources, announced.

"We have traveled all around the state holding hearings and everywhere we went we heard ways the Legislature could make things more efficient for local governments," said Sen. Laura Toy, R-Livonia. "The legislation we're working on will help simplify the administrative processes and relieve some of the obstacles that local units of government face."

The Government Flexibility package will give local government more authority and control of services in their units of government. The legislation is designed to remove cumbersome red tape and help streamline the operation of local governments.

As chair of the Senate Committee on Local, Urban and State Affairs, Toy held four hearings throughout the state. The committee heard testimony from more than 40 local officials.

According to Toy, legislation planned for introduction this fall will:

- Give local governments more flexibility in the administration of local tax laws by removing roadblocks that inhibit tax collection;
- Remove requirements for

city tax roll printing when the information is available on a computer database;

■ Promote pooled investment programs so local governments can combine investments with county funds to obtain the best possible rate of return;

■ Support pooled insurance programs allowing any two or more municipalities to form a group self-insurance pool;

■ Authorize the Michigan Department of Transportation to permit the use of trunkline rights-of-way in downtown areas for things such as sidewalk displays and cafes; and

■ Allow local governments to use revenue collected on delinquent property taxes on other government services.

"Having served on the Livonia City Council and as city treasurer, I have faith that local governments know best how to run their communities," Toy said. "We need to do everything in our power to help them do their jobs more effectively so they can serve their residents to the best of their ability. This much needed legislation will result in a more efficient delivery of services and savings for taxpayers."

The Senate Local, Urban and State Affairs Committee remains open to receiving more information and ideas in the future, but previous efforts canvassing the state have proven that reforms are needed, now.

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