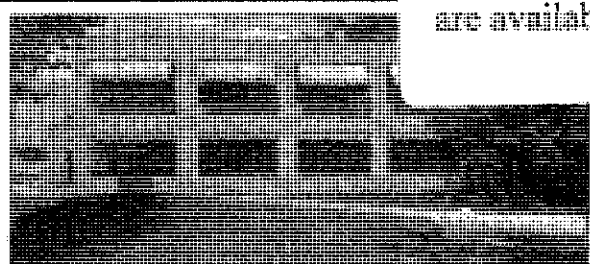


Women's
museum moves
forward

OBSERVER LIFE - SECTION C



Sports
week 8

SECTION B



Take a
look at this
season's
bridal
couture



PINK PAGE
C10

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10/16

SUNDAY
October 16, 2005

District to move ESL out

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

Livonia Public Schools will pull its English as a Second Language classes out of a Westland-based school this week - and a second program later this month, due to the persistent parental concerns.

A group of parents with children attending Johnson Elementary School have vocally opposed the adult programs which were placed in the building this school year.

As a result, district officials have made arrangements to move both programs back to Dickinson Center on Newburgh Road. In addition to other district programs, the ESL classes and Regional Educational Media Center (REMC) were taken out of Dickinson last summer when the property was leased in its entirety to a broadcast arts school. Now, two rooms will be reclaimed at the center for those two programs.

"It is a non-K-12 building," said Jay Young, director of community education in the district. "That's the point (parents) made. If we'd had the space, they would be in non-K-12 buildings."

The shift for ESL classes is expected to occur this Wednesday. Followed by the REMC move at the end of month, said Young.

For the past few weeks the Livonia Public Schools Board of Education and administrators have been hearing complaints from parents who did not want adult classes and REMC to continue to be held in the elementary building. Parents called it a safety issue.

The ESL office and staff will remain at Johnson along with the Shared Time office," Young said. "The vacated ESL room will remain furnished and may be used by staff for meetings and as an assignment preparation area."

'My daddy has cancer'

Family's desperate battle leads to fund-raiser

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

On the surface, it seems like a typical autumn for Duane and Stacy Suess of Westland.

They've put up Halloween decorations at their home on Hawthorn. Their daughter Kayla, 8, and son Kyler, 3, are in school.

They're a nice family with a nice home in a nice neighborhood. It seems like Duane Suess, 29, and Stacy, 25, are living the American Dream.

On the surface, But things are terribly wrong for this young Westland family. For two years, Duane has been desperately battling cancer of the head and neck with every weapon possible - surgery, chemotherapy, radiation.

"There's a 50/50 chance they can cure it," Duane said, speaking quietly as he sat in the living room of the Suess home.

Stacy cries much more than a young mother should. She apologizes for it.

Kayla, a third-grader at Edison Elementary School, wants to be a doctor when she grows up. "My daddy has cancer, and I want to help people like him," she said.

Kyler, who attends preschool at the Stottlemeyer Early Childhood Center, becomes frustrated when his mother tries to help him build a toy train track.

"His daddy is the only one who can build the best train track, but most of the time he's not up to it," Stacy said.

Duane's cancer typically strikes older men who are smokers and heavy drinkers. He is neither.

Duane is receiving treatment at the Karmanos Cancer Institute in Detroit. But the Suess family needs help.

Time after time, Westland residents have shown their compassion by donating money in the aftermath of tragedies such as 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina.

Now, residents in Westland and beyond have a chance to help by attending a benefit scheduled for 2-7 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 6, at Club Canton, 39651 Michigan Ave. east of Haggerty Road.

PLEASE SEE FUND-RAISER, A7

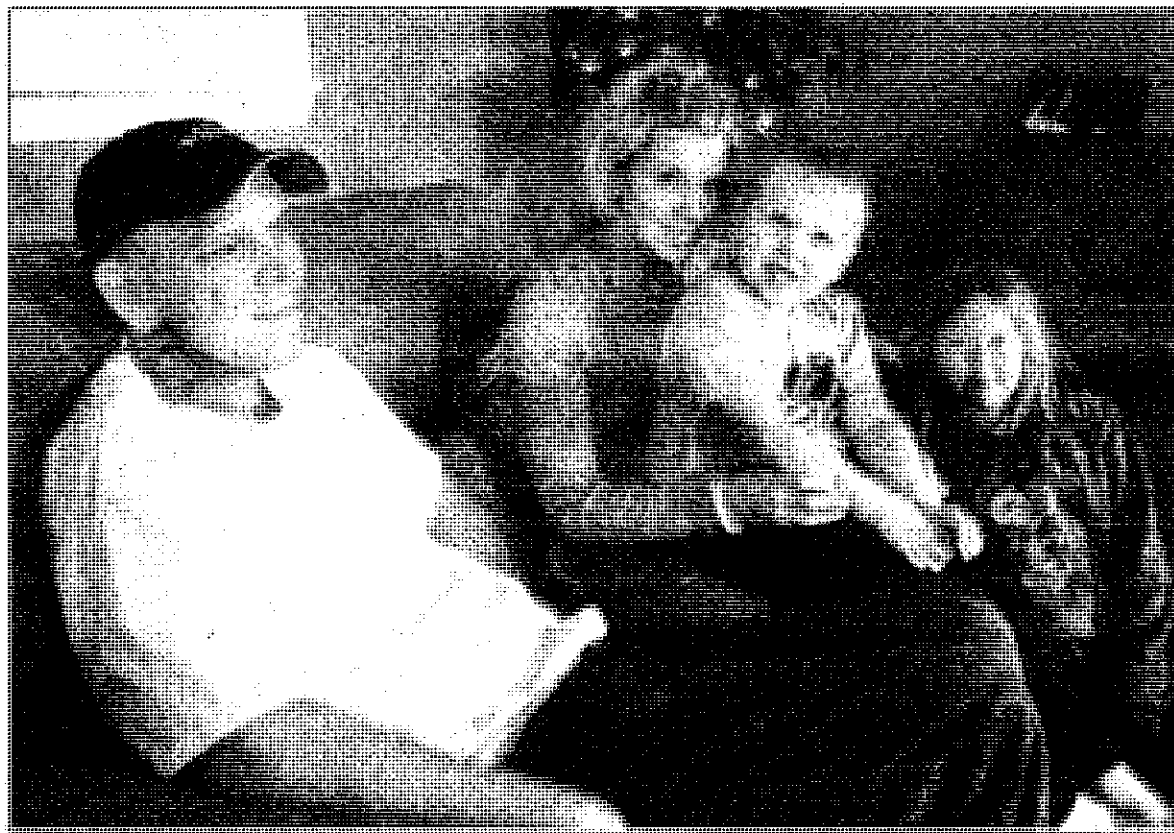


Duane Suess

For two years, Duane has been desperately battling cancer of the head and neck with every weapon possible - surgery, chemotherapy, radiation.



Stacy and Duane Suess talk about their struggles as Duane battles a cancer that's rare for someone his age, 29.



PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Duane and Stacy Suess, with their children Kyler, 3, and Kayla, 8, share a moment in the living room of their Westland home. A fund-raiser is planned to help the family after Duane Suess came down with cancer.

Kehrer: Budget, services, infrastructure top issues

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Westland City Council incumbent Michael Kehrer cited budget concerns, maintaining services and improving the city's infrastructure as the top three issues that city officials need to address.

Kehrer, 51, is seeking his second council term after serving four years. He is one of eight candidates competing for a \$12,150-a-year seat in the Nov. 8 election.

On the budget, he said the city has run a "tight ship," but that city leaders will need to monitor and pressure state and federal governments for the return of tax dollars allotted to the city.

Referring to his other top issues, Kehrer said, "The mayor and our



Kehrer

department directors deserve a lot of credit for combining services and coming up with imaginative ways to maintain our services. We will need even more of this type of thinking in the future."

To address infrastructure issues, he said the city will need to proceed on fixing up or tearing down vacant and blighted properties.

Moreover, "our roads survey and plan allowed us to grab over a million dollars in grants and also gave us the necessary tool to take advantage of new regulations for federal and state matching funds."

PLEASE SEE KEHRER, A5



MEET YOUR CANDIDATES

In today's Observer, we continue a series about the eight candidates competing for four seats in the Nov. 8 Westland City Council race. Voters will choose among four incumbents - Cheryl Graunstadt, Michael Kehrer, Charles Pickering and Robert Stottlemeyer - and four challengers: Normie June Brazier, Lori Brist, James Davis and Robert Thomas. The top three vote-getters will earn four-year terms. Fourth-place finisher will win a two-year term.

Pickering: Top issues are trash contract, budget

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Westland City Council incumbent Charles Pickering identified his top three issues as a new trash-hauling contract, ensuring a balanced budget and continuing a path of controlled development.

Pickering, 62, has the longest history as a council member among the current council, and he is seeking another term. He is one of eight candidates competing for four seats at stake in the Nov. 8 election.

When asked to name the top three issues facing city leaders, Pickering said: "Approving the next long-term contract with a rubbish hauler. I am aware of our needs and the concerns of our citizens.

"Continue to have balanced



Pickering

budgets, while addressing and maintaining our necessary services. Continue to strive for a healthy fund balance.

"Continuing controlled growth of development, including residential."

Pickering, the current council president and a Realtor, served as mayor in 1982-85. He has been a council member since 1988, other than stepping down from April 1999 through the end of 2001.

Widowed after 35 years of marriage, Pickering has two adult daughters and five grandchildren.

PLEASE SEE PICKERING, A5

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INDEX

APARTMENTS E8
AUTOMOTIVE E11
COMMUNITY LIFE C1
HEALTH C10
JOBS D1
OBITUARIES C4
PERSPECTIVES A7
PINK PAGE C10
NEW HOMES E4
SERVICE GUIDE E7
SPORTS B1

**Coming Thursday
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U2!
How well do you know them?

Top and bottom

Shop offers vision checks, eyeglasses and Klingbeil skates

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

As Michael Fearon sees it, he takes care of his clientele from the top of their heads to the tip of their toes.

On one side of his business, Prestige Eyewear in Garden City, he examines eyes and fits people with glasses. On the other side he takes measurements and does tracings in fitting people with ice skates ... Klingbeil ice skates, to be exact. "It used to be the surface area for my optical business, my brother did the lens grinding," said Fearon. "When he wanted to get out eight years ago, I had already started sharpening and selling skates, so I turned it into my fitting and work area."

His involvement in skating started when he and his wife took ice dancing lessons at the Garden City Civic Arena. Within two years, he was president of the club.

At the time, it was difficult to find places to sharpen skates, so he went out to Colorado, bought the equipment and learned how to use it from "a guy who was a genius."

One thing led to another and soon parents were asking Fearon where they could get their children fitted for skates.

"It was hit and miss, so I went to New York and learned from Klingbeil who's been making custom boots for more than 50 years," said Fearon. "Now, I jump back and forth, but probably spend 60 percent of the time over here. I think I'm the only one around who fits and sizes ice skates."

"I believe I'm the only one who stocks the boots. The Jones Skate Shop out of the Detroit Skating Club sells skates but doesn't stock them."

On the east side of the building is the optical business, on the west side, the back room is stocked with skate boots and at least a dozen different blades styles.



PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Michele and John Schroeder watch as Michael Fearon fits their daughter Casey with new skate boots in the skate shop he operates inside his business, Prestige Eyewear.

Most popular is the Pattern 99, a traditional skating boot, but he also has the latest Klingbeil that weighs 6 ounces less. There's Paramount blades with an aluminum chassis and stainless steel blades and the top-of-the-line Gold Seal. Pair it up with a boot and it can cost \$1,000, Fearon said.

"At any one time I have 150 boots in stock," said Fearon. "Often I have the sizes available and can put them together in a day or so instead of ordering them and having to wait a week."

Michele Schroeder knows Fearon very well, she carries her cards in her pocket, passing them out when someone asks about skates.

"I've known him for years, since he was president of the skating club," said the Dearborn resident. "He said these are winners and I believe him."

Schroeder is a coach for the Garden City club. She has seven

students, including her four daughters. She also partners with another of the club's coaches.

She was at Prestige several weeks ago to have her daughter Casey and herself fitted for new skates.

"She keeps outgrowing them," said her father John who watched Fearon do tracings of Casey's feet. "She gets a new pair every year, 18 months. Luckily, we get to pass them down."

"At least we save a ton of money on coaching fees." Casey has been skating for five years and has won medals in preliminary ladies and juvenile. A fan of Michelle Kwan and Sarah Cohen, she has her eye on being a household name in the skating world.

Currently, she practices one-two hours a day five days a week, in the mornings from 6-7 a.m., depending on the day, at the Garden City arena. But she's "in negotiations" with her par-

ents to be homeschooled.

"It's so I have more time to skate," she said. "I get B's all the time and I'm on the honor roll," she said. "If I don't do the honor roll I don't get to go away to compete."

"She hasn't convinced us yet," said John.

Michele was on her way to trying out for the Olympic team when she was bumped by another skater while doing a jump. She ended up falling to the ice and breaking both ankles.

Fearon attracts skaters from around the metropolitan area, across the state and from other states. His clientele includes the skaters from clubs in Flint, Lansing, Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids as well as the Crystalites Synchronized team from Ann Arbor and the Bowling Green Skating Club.

Prestige Eyewear is at 27854 Ford Road, Garden City. For more information, call (734) 525-1145.

AROUND WESTLAND

Katrina help

Today, the Canton Construction Co. will have a truck parked at St. Damian Church and School, 30055 Joy Road, between Middlebelt and Merriman, to collect donations for Hurricane Katrina victims.

Items collected include canned goods, cleaning supplies, gently used books, teddy bears and other donations - but no clothing.

The collection is being organized with St. Joseph Catholic Church in Gulfport, Miss. Hours for the collection will continue 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. today (Sunday).

Civil War talk

Local historian Daryl A. Bailey will present Beyond the Pomp and Circumstance: Civil War Prison Camps, at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 19, in Hall D of the Friendship Center, 1119 N. Newburgh.

Many of the images appearing in Bailey's presentation are actual photographs taken during the Civil War. Some of them are very graphic in nature and could be upsetting to some viewers.

Bailey, the great grandson of a federal prisoner of war, will give an overview of Andersonville and Johnson Island. He will also show the difference in treatment between officers and enlisted men. Bailey is a former chairman of the Westland Historical Commission, the managing editor of *The Nankin Historian* and the co-author of *Images of America: Westland*.

Call Ruth Dale (734) 425-1955 or email Bailey at NankinHistorian@comcast.net.

More history

The Abraham Lincoln Civil War Roundtable presents Dr. Weldon Petz, nationally recognized Lincoln and Civil War scholar, speaking on the history of the Lincoln Memorial titled, "From Swamp to Glory."

The event takes place at 8 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 20, in the Plymouth Historical Museum,

155 S. Main in downtown Plymouth. Admission is free, and the public is invited.

Petz began collecting Lincoln memorabilia at the age of 11. He was influenced by a great-uncle who played the coronet in the 5th New York regimental band and played at Gettysburg when Lincoln delivered the Gettysburg Address.

Petz is one of the founders of the Abraham Lincoln Roundtable. He is a former teacher and administrator for Farmington Public Schools. A large part of his Lincoln collection now has a permanent home at the Plymouth Historical Museum.

50th church

Palmer Road Baptist Church will celebrate its 50th anniversary with a special luncheon and service on Oct. 23.

The church, at 33740 Palmer Road west of Venoy, will have its 50th anniversary service at 11 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 23. Pastor Church Ozment and his congregation have invited the public to join in the celebration.

There will be special speakers including former Pastor James Severance. Special music presentations and a fellowship luncheon will follow the service.

For more information, call (734) 729-2434.

Coffee with Glenn

State Rep. Glenn Anderson, D-Westland, has announced that his next local coffee hour will be 9-10:30 a.m. Monday, Oct. 17, at the Westland Big Boy restaurant at 6360 Wayne Road at Hunter.

Citizens are welcome.

CORRECTION



Sean Baligian

The name of the columnist for the Pick the Pros feature in Thursday's sports section should have read Sean Baligian.

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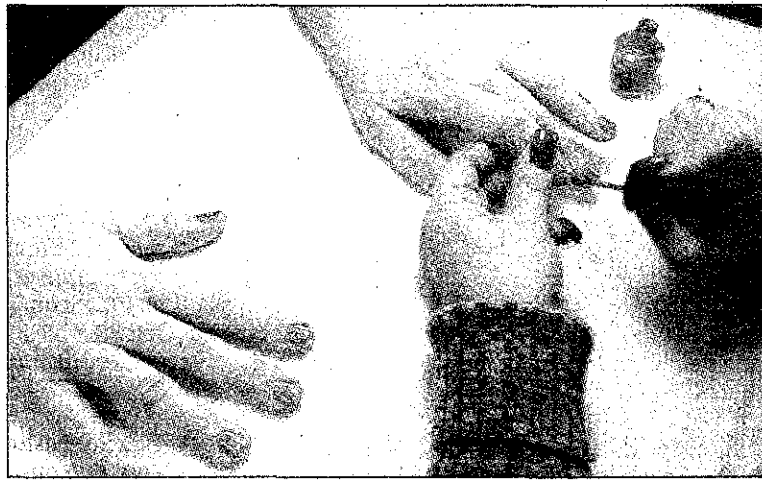
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The Choice Can Be Yours™

Clients who referred friends or relatives to either the salon or the fitness center were eligible to compete for the crown as Queen for a Day. The title came complete with a crown and a day of pampering at both Busy Lady Fitness and Salon Techniques - all followed by dinner at a local restaurant.



While being pampered at Salon Techniques, Sher Walker chooses a new shade of nail polish.



PHOTOS BY TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Queen for a Day winner Sher Walker gets her hair done by Tina Garza, along with a simultaneous manicure, all at Salon Techniques Thursday. Walker won the contest for bringing in the most business at Busy Lady Fitness, a nearby workout center where she is a member. For more on the story, please turn to Page A3.

Businesses crown 'Queens for a Day' as part of contest

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER



Westland resident Sher Walker enjoys her cut and color, being handled by Tina Garza, an owner of Salon Techniques in Livonia.

Who doesn't love to be pampered? Just ask Sher Walker of Westland.

Livonia business owners Ellen Judge-Gonzalez and Tina Garza based a local contest around that very idea as they co-sponsored the Queen for a Day promotion earlier this month.

Judge-Gonzalez owns Busy Lady Fitness, along with her mother, Margaret A. Judge. And Garza co-owns Salon Techniques with Marcella Morris. The women joined forces more than two months ago to promote business along the Plymouth Road corridor, which they share.

"I think it's important to keep it in this area," said Judge-Gonzalez. "We have to take a combined approach. I think it works (when) businesses are willing to work together."

Clients who referred friends or relatives

to either the salon or the fitness center were eligible to compete for the crown as Queen for a Day. The title came complete with a crown and a day of pampering at both Busy Lady Fitness and Salon Techniques - all followed by dinner at a local restaurant.

On Oct. 1, Holly New was crowned as the first queen. She's a longtime client of the salon, where stylist Jenny Preston does her hair.

Walker, the Westland winner, earned the title on Oct. 13, as a member of Busy Lady Fitness.

"When I saw this, I said, 'That's exactly what I want,'" Walker recalled. She encouraged as many friends as she could to sign up - and her plan worked.

Judge-Gonzalez explained that the person who brought in the most people - to each business - won the contest.

Garza estimated the contest took

about two months to coordinate Queen for a Day. Two winners were ultimately chosen.

"We thought it was a fun way to highlight businesses on the Plymouth Road corridor," said Judge-Gonzalez.

Walker started her day with a massage at Busy Lady Fitness, followed by a full makeover at Salon Techniques. She had her hair cut and colored and was given a full manicure at the salon.

And the gifts just didn't stop coming, Walker said. She received a gift basket complete with chocolates, along with a mug, a T-shirt and a variety of styling products. By late afternoon, Walker opted to take off her light-up crown - because she didn't want to mess up her hair.

Garza complimented Walker on the transformation. "It was really good," she said. "It was a big change for her."

Walker agreed. "I don't feel like a different person. I feel like this is how

it should be."

After about two hours at Salon Techniques, Walker was ready for the last phase of the event, dinner at La Bistecca.

"It's important to keep things fun," said Judge-Gonzalez.

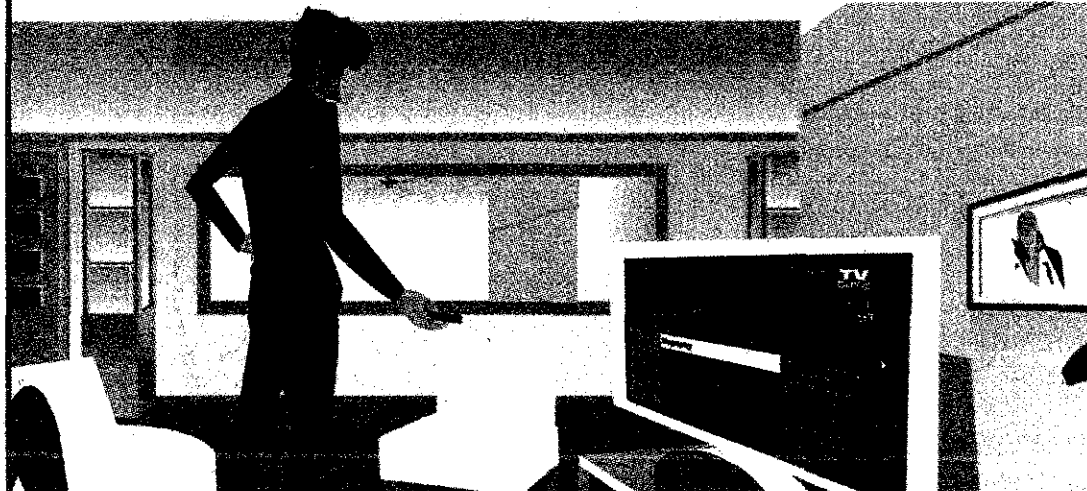
Margaret Judge said she's enjoyed seeing how happy the clients have been during the promotion. Contests are rather common at Busy Lady Fitness, she said, as are social outings among their members.

"This is something I want to do again," admitted Walker.

For more information contact either business. Busy Lady Fitness is located at 10833 Farmington Road, south of Plymouth. Call the circuit workout center at (734) 513-6102. Salon Techniques is located at 31615 Plymouth Road and can be reached at (734) 427-5780.

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PICKERING

FROM PAGE A1

Here's how he responded to other questions posed by the *Observer*:

Why are you running for a Westland City Council seat, and what are your best qualifications?

I am running for re-election for city council to continue my public service in Westland's government.

My best qualifications are my 34 years of serving Westland's government, knowledge, proven experience, independent strong voice, my reputation of being conservative in spending and taxation.

If the city's financial position were to worsen and budget cuts became necessary, how would you trim spending?

Over the last four years, in spite of losing over \$2 million in revenue sharing from the state, we have continued to provide necessary services without layoffs and increased

our fund balance from \$200,000 to over \$2 million. If revenues are not sufficient, we will need to look at the cost of personnel, but only after exhausting all aspects of looking at other revenue sources.

What can be done to attract new businesses and new residents to Westland?

We have budgeted an economic development director in this year's budget. This person needs to take a proactive approach to contacting businesses and developers to encourage them to come to Westland.

We have experienced a great amount of new development around the city for the last several years. There is not a lot of vacant land left in Westland. We need to concentrate on redevelopment of key areas in the city.

Many residents say the city needs to be cleaned up, and a new blight ordinance has been approved to help with that. Will it work, and how long will it be before residents notice a difference?

The blight ordinance will

work. However, it will take time before we see the results.

The ordinance has quickened the due process, by giving the violators a schedule to follow. It also puts the burden of proof on the violator. This process should shorten the time for a resolution of the problem. When the budget allows, we need to add enforcement officers.

How would you rate the city of Westland for the services it provides to residents — poor, average, above average or excellent? What improvements or changes need to be made?

I rate our services as above average. I believe that our level of services is based upon our current tax and fee structure. To reach excellent services, we would have to increase taxes, which I do not support. The one thing that Westland benefits from is our community involvement from citizens and community organizations. They do a great job in supporting the city and its residents. I support their efforts.

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

KEHRER

FROM PAGE A1

Kehrer, an excavation site inspector, is married and has three children and two grandchildren. He attended John Glenn High School, Western Michigan University and Eastern Michigan University.

His community involvement includes the Westland City Council, Westland Jaycees, VFW Harris-Kehrer Post Men's Auxiliary and being a precinct delegate. He is a past member of Environmental & Energy Quality Commission and the Westland Cable Commission.

Here's how Kehrer responded to other questions posed by the *Observer*:

Why are you running for a Westland City Council seat, and what are your best qualifications?

I ran for city council in 2001 because I did not want to sit by and watch other people pick the direction our city was headed. I wanted to take an active part. I believed that I had some good ideas to help and I wanted them implemented. Some of my goals have been accomplished, but there is more work to be done.

If the city's financial position were to worsen and budget cuts became necessary, how would you trim spending?

We have done an excellent

job cutting expenses the last four years. The next round of cuts — if they are necessary — will be very tough.

Some will say that we can save money from the incinerator/monolith bond payoffs coming up, but most of that money will be eaten up on future trash-hauling contracts. There is also little undesignated money in the tax districts (TIFA, LDFA, etc.) as suggested by others.

We will have to do more savings on "in-house" items like some of the proposals that are ready to be implemented by the technology committee.

What can be done to attract new businesses and new residents to Westland?

Our new restaurants, active retail sites and excellent major road conditions will help us attract and retain our citizens. Our home values are doing quite well, too. Everything you need is right here in Westland.

Our planning and building departments have already shown progress in the last few years. And with the help of our new economic development director, things should be even better.

Many residents say the city needs to be cleaned up, and a new blight ordinance has been approved to help with that. Will it work, and how long will it be before residents notice a difference?

Yes, the new ordinance will work. It will allow us to act faster on vacant and blighted properties. But please remember that property owners have rights, too. That's why it takes a while to show progress on some of these properties.

The city must be responsible and follow regulations carefully. We should be able to show faster results within the next year and then even better results progressively in each year after that.

How would you rate the city of Westland for the services it provides to residents — poor, average, above average or excellent? What improvements or changes need to be made?

Excellent to above average. Our police and fire are top-notch and second to none from the individual officers and firefighters right up to the leadership in both departments.

Our parks are in excellent shape and well-maintained. The only cities around us with better facilities have special millages to help pay for them.

My regular job besides council has me driving all over Wayne County, and believe me, we have above-average roads, facilities and well above average services for our citizens. Our major roads are some of the first to be plowed in the winter.

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"One of the ways we point to the growth and success of our program is the fact that we have so many alumni who are involved in all areas of dance," Rickard added.

Her former students have performed in Tokyo Disney and Universal Studios, Las Vegas and Atlantic City, in nationally televised commercials, at the Country Music Awards international auto shows and national ballet companies.

Rickard has a teaching staff of six who are certified with Dance Masters of America and Cecchetti Council America and offers instruction in ballet, jazz, tap, hip-hop, pointe and acro. The studio is at 5950 N Hix, north of Ford. For more information, call (734) 595-1414.

It was a busy summer for students at Encore Dance Academy, where trips to three national competitions resulted in top honors.

The academy's senior group, Seniorita; junior groups Tribute and Le Hot Jazz, and mini duet, Beauty and the Beast, earned first place overall high scores in their respective divisions at AAA National Competition in Orlando, Fla.

Earlier this summer at Dance USA in Las Vegas, Nev., Kiah Furcean was named Senior Division grand champion over all of the senior competitors, including soloists, duets, trios and groups.

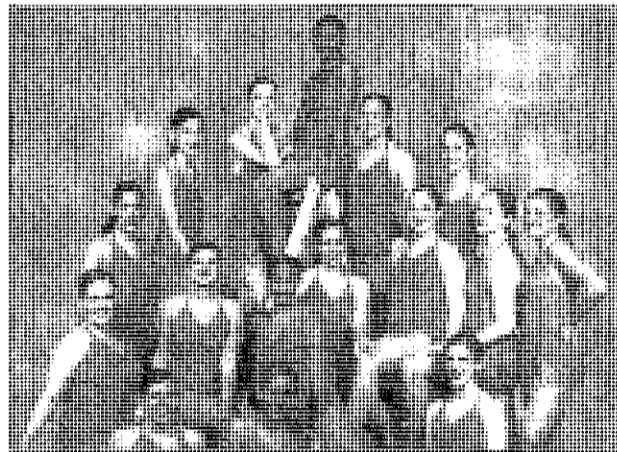
In Orlando, Hanna Beck-Sawyer earned a second place runner-up Junior Elite dance champion over more than 100 other junior competition routines at the Footloose International Dance Competition.

"The kids worked so hard for this opportunity and it was thrilling to see them doing their best and having fun in the process," said academy owner and director Jennifer Rickard.

Rickard, who has been a dance instructor for 25 years and opened her first studio in Westland 19 years ago, said the focus of the academy isn't on competition, but to provide students with the best dance education possible.



Beauty and the Beast



The Senioritas

Sun shines on Madonna partnership with Ilitches

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

The nuns really do have some pull. As soon as Mike Ilitch stepped to the podium during Saturday's renaming ceremony of Madonna University's baseball field to "Ilitch Ballpark," dark clouds separated and rays of sunshine beamed down on proceedings taking place near the mound.

Ilitch, owner of the Detroit Tigers and Red Wings, duly noted the sun's timely arrival and called it a "good omen" for the future success of MU's Crusaders, the facility and perhaps, even his beleaguered major league baseball team.

Moments later, Mike and Marian Ilitch, with the blessings of Madonna University President Sister Rose Marie Kujawa, flipped the switch that lit up the new state-of-the-art Ilitch Ballpark scoreboard and officially signaled the beginning of what could be a prosperous future for all involved. Quickly filling the brisk air were congratulatory cheers from the gathering of MU baseball players, alums and family members, plus Livonia and university dignitaries, Detroit Tigers legends Willie Horton and Gates Brown and current team GM-President David Dombrowski.

The Ilitches, wearing Madonna University jerseys, then threw ceremonial first pitches to current Crusaders Justin Fabian and Nick Hippler.

A reception and baseball game between the MU alumni and this year's version followed to cap off a day-long celebration of youth, community and baseball.

That celebration, according to Sister Kujawa, "captures what we had envisioned for the field when it was inaugurated three years ago."

SECOND HOME

It was apparent in Mike Ilitch's comments that he hasn't forgotten his

business and community roots, firmly planted decades ago with his first Little Caesars on Ford Road in Garden City.

"When I'm out in Livonia, Garden City, Westland, whenever I'm out on the west side, I feel like it's a second home for me," he said. "I remember when we put a store down the street, our 13th store, at Five Mile and Levan 40-some years ago. How time flies. But it's flying great today. We're honored to have the privilege to be here with all of you."

The Ilitches were honored with the ballpark renaming because of "their generous support of the university and lifelong commitment to youth and sports."

Dignitaries and onlookers shared excitement about the celebration.

"It's just a great setting and it's beautiful for the Ilitch family," Dombrowski said. "And (with) what they have done for the community, just to see them honored like this and see their name on the ballpark is tremendous."

Westland resident Del Reddy, a longtime business associate of Gordie and Colleen Howe, talked about the similarity between the Ilitches and Howes as down-to-earth people.

"They're always cognizant of grassroots and that it starts with youth and they seem to do what's right about sports and what's right about life," Reddy said. "I think the Ilitch family epitomizes that and I always go back to what the Howes represent. But I think they're in the same ballpark."

MU athletics director Bryan Rizzo said the Ilitches donated an undisclosed amount of money for future ballpark improvements as well as naming rights.

Mike Ilitch, who also holds an honor degree from Madonna, indicated that "Marian and I are looking forward to being more active with the university."

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Mike Ilitch throws the second pitch - his spouse, Marian, threw the first. Behind him, Madonna President Sr. Rose Marie Kujawa offers a bit of coaching, while Crusaders team members look on.

BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

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Hometown Observer & Eccentric

FUND-RAISER

FROM PAGE A1

"It's so sad what they're going through," said Duane's mother, Jeannie Mazur, who organized the benefit. For a \$10 door charge, the event will include a live disc jockey and food. Other money will be raised from T-shirt sales, raffles and a cash bar.

Those who can't attend but who want to help may send checks payable to Duane Sues to 7414 Hawthorn, Westland, MI, 48185.

Duane learned of his cancer in October 2003.

"His tonsil was the size of a golf ball," Stacy said, holding her hand to the right side of her neck. "It was shocking. It's been a long road."

Duane had a radical surgical procedure. "They ripped out a whole part of my neck."

He has had radiation and chemotherapy, but his battle is far from over.

"The tumor has shrunk some, but it's still there,"

For a \$10 door charge, the event will include a live disc jockey and food. Other money will be raised from T-shirt sales, raffles and a cash bar.

Duane said.

He wears two pain patches and takes oral medication. Even so, his pain becomes so intense at times that Stacy rushes him to the emergency room.

Duane, a carpet installer, last worked in August. He tried to continue working, but he was too tired, too weak — too sick.

"I was fortunate enough to save up a little bit of money," he said.

Still, the family's situation is rapidly deteriorating. Duane has disability insurance, and he receives about \$2,000 a month.

But his mortgage payment is \$1,200, and his prescription costs each month total hun-

dreds of dollars.

"I had a part-time job at Payless Shoes," Stacy said, "but it's hard for me to work because I never know when Duane is going to have a good day or a bad day."

Even though the Sueses try to give their children some sense of a normal life, it's difficult.

"Kayla is scared that something is going to happen to her daddy. She is having a hard time," Stacy said. "And Tyler says he doesn't like his daddy being sick."

Duane admits that he is tired most of the time. He feels lucky if he gets to spend quality time with his family two days a week.

"If I was just a single man, I wouldn't fight this hard," he said.

But he is fighting. For his family. For their American Dream. For the time when they can embrace a new autumn season with hope and the promise of life.

dclen@oe.homecomm.net | (734) 953-2100

At 75, she's making difference

BY GREG KOWALSKI STAFF WRITER

With all the attention directed toward the tragedies wrought by hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Gisela Becker admits feeling somewhat lost in the chaos.

Actually, things began to change last December with the tsunami that inundated parts of Asia.

"After the tsunami, no one was interested in Africa anymore," the Franklin Village resident said.

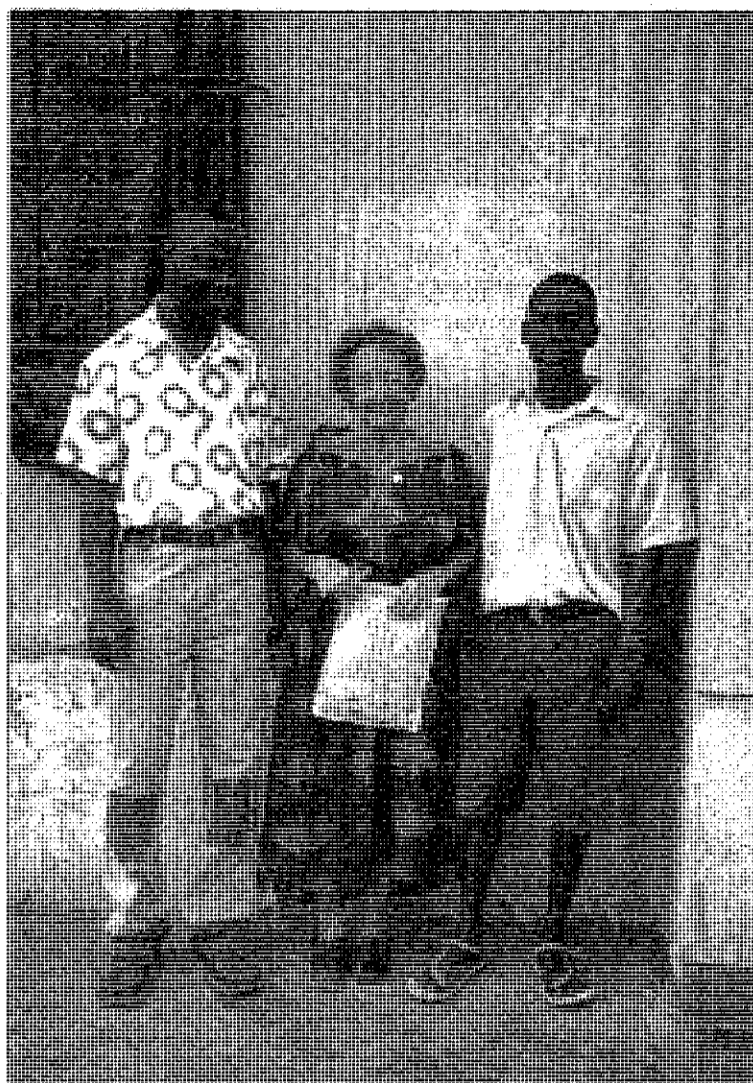
Yet, at age 75, she has lost none of the energy that propelled her to found her own charity to send aid to a village in the African nation of Ghana, which has been ravaged by another disaster: AIDS.

And she is still counting successes. Recently she sent a huge container loaded with goods, including more than two dozen hospital beds, toys and assorted equipment, to the King Jesus Charity House in Kumasi, Ghana. There and in five related orphanages some 155 children will at least get a chance to build a decent life. For most, it may be their only hope.

"Orphans turn into slaves," she said. "They don't go to school and end up sleeping in the streets."

Ghana, like many countries in Africa is being hit hard by AIDS. It kills many parents and leaves the children homeless. Other families often are afraid to take in the orphans because of the fear of AIDS, and those who do find a home often become slaves.

Becker wants to build her own orphanage. She has good start. In 1997, she founded SPANCO, the St. Paul Nonprofit Charitable Organization. She got the idea while riding a bus on a trip to Turkey. She met a 14-year-old orphan boy from Ghana who had been working in Greece. He had been deported when it was learned how young he was. He made his way to Turkey, but had nothing. She fed him



Gisela Becker stands with a teacher and student at the orphanage in Ghana.

YOU CAN HELP

For more about SPANCO, contact Gisela Becker at 32830 Haverford Drive, Franklin, MI 48025. Phone (248) 626-1834, fax (248) 626-1898, or e-mail to giesibecker@earthlink.net.

corporation.

Now she tirelessly fund-raises and seeks donations of items to send to Africa. To that she adds her own contributions. She often buys items like sewing machines and hair dryers that the orphans can use to learn a trade.

Friend Karen Couf-Choen has been helping Becker promote the charity.

"We're trying to see what kind of grants are out there," she said. But the need is great and charities are already stretched thin by dealing with a string of natural disasters.

However, Becker remains optimistic and committed.

"I'm trying to make a difference," she said.

and he told her his life story of growing up in Ghana.

Two years later, Becker traveled to Ghana and met his family. She also saw the incredible poverty there. That led her to found SPANCO, which is a recognized 501 (c)(3) nonprofit

Local man featured in 'Elizabethtown'

BY LEANNE ROGERS STAFF WRITER

It was shaping up to be almost a Naughton family reunion Friday night at the Canton Cinema.

About 150 family members plus friends were planning to attend a showing of the new Cameron Crowe film Elizabethtown with a cast including Garden City native Michael Naughton.

"We're very excited. We've been waiting to see him on the big screen for a long time," said Rosemarie Wither, one of his four older sisters. "One of my aunts already got 24 tickets alone. The theater holds 300 people, but we should have about 150 family plus friends."

Naughton, 35, attended St. Raphael School and two years at Bishop Borgess before graduating from Garden City High School in 1988.

"He was in a couple of plays at the school — he was always interested in acting, but that's

Before moving to Los Angeles in 1992, Michael Naughton worked in improv comedy, did summer stock at the Barn Theatre in Marshall and entertained on the Huckleberry Railroad at Crossroads Village.

not what he studied," his mother Julia Naughton said.

Before moving to Los Angeles in 1992, Michael Naughton worked in improv comedy, did summer stock at the Barn Theatre in Marshall and entertained on the Huckleberry Railroad at Crossroads Village.

Once in Los Angeles, Michael Naughton worked with the Groundlings sketch comedy troupe and did a lot of commercials for companies

such as Avis, Honda, Budweiser, McDonald's and Pepsi.

Other roles came in television series such as Friends and Arrested Development.

In Elizabethtown, Orlando Bloom plays a man returning to Kentucky for his father's funeral. Naughton plays one of his cousins and can be seen in the trailer, as well as a group shot on the movie poster.

"He was excited about this move. It takes a long time to crack into pictures," Julia Naughton said. "I'm proud of him. He's a wonderful young man. He's kind and charitable."

In addition to her own children and their spouses, Julia Naughton said she has 56 nieces and nephews, most of whom have multiple children.

"When we get together, we have a lot of fun. This is the only time we all get together except for the summer," she said.

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Jewish Community Center struggles to pay bills

BY ALEX LUNDBERG
STAFF WRITER

With the economy still mired in a multi-year slump, gas prices on the rise and charitable giving stretched to the limit by tragedies near the Gulf of Mexico, the Jewish Community Center of Metropolitan Detroit is staring down the barrel of a considerable budget deficit.

Community Center of Metropolitan Detroit, in its own words, is "to support Jewish unity, ensure Jewish continuity and enrich Jewish life while conveying the importance of well-being within the Jewish and general community and the people of Israel."

The JCC is also a clearinghouse of public services, public education and general resources for the community at large. One does not have to be

Jewish to take advantage of what the center has to offer or to make a donation.

The Aug. 5 JCC executive director's online report said, amongst other things, that the budget is one of the most important things they're doing at Drake and Maple lately. The cash situation, the report said, is in crisis.

According to JCC Executive Director Mark Lit, the problem is structural.

"We're a nonprofit, we don't build a war chest," he said. "We raise money and then we spend it on our mission."

Part of the problem is cyclical. There's a lot of money sitting around in the spring months as membership dues for summer activities come in. That money goes out during the summer, leaving early September as a perennially cash-strapped time of year. This time, Lit said the word

"crisis" fits.

The JCC has lost about \$500,000 over the last three years, money it will have to make up with fund-raisers. But that could be difficult. Hurricanes Katrina and Rita pushed charitable giving into the stratosphere earlier this year with private sector donations to aid organizations reaching well into nine figures in the first few weeks. Americans are generous peo-

Part of the problem is cyclical. There's a lot of money sitting around in the spring months as membership dues for summer activities come in. That money goes out during the summer, leaving early September as a perennially cash-strapped time of year. This time, Lit said the word "crisis" fits.

ple, yes, but there's a limit to how much people can give. Then, Lit said, there's the economy. Times have been hard in Michigan these past few years and donations are down. The JCC gets a lot of private donations on top of its regular support from the Jewish Federation and the United Way, but private donations are mostly dedicated.

"When someone donates to our special needs program, we can't use that money to make up for the difference when the price of (heating) goes up," Lit said. "It's a big frustration."

In other words, plenty of people give money to support theater, special education and arts programs. Few donate money with the express purpose of keeping the lights on and the water bills paid. It's just not that glamorous.

"It costs \$2.9 million, 27 percent of our operating budget, to keep two facilities open," he said.

The JCC's two facilities in West Bloomfield and Oak Park are 360,000 and 60,000 square feet, respectively, and they employ around 300 people. Add to that the literal thousands of people who volunteer in various positions from time to time, in all facets of the JCC's operations, and it's a formidable operation.

The budget, he said, will have to be dealt with.

"We can try to combine all of our cultural arts programs, pool their donations and try to increase gifts," Lit said. "We're going to do a big Israel independence celebration this year and do it as a fund-raiser. We haven't done that before."

The organization is always keeping one eye turned inward, he said. Programs that aren't that popular or aren't strictly part of the mission get the ax. The same can't be said of the buildings, however. Turning off a third of a building isn't an option and closing operations like the health club or limiting hours there will just cut club revenues.

It has a strong partner, he said, in the Jewish Federation. He said that, should worst come to worst, a plea could be made for an increase in the JF's annual contribution. Before that's ever considered, he said, the JCC would have to show that serious steps have been made.

"We'd have to make the case for why the programs are important to continue," Lit said. "We'd have to show that we had gone through the fat and the flesh and now we're cutting into bone."

Jewish Federation Chief Administrative Officer Howard Neustein said the organization doesn't allocate any of its giving based on the size of a recipient's deficit.

"We allocate based on an organization's service to the community," Neustein said. "We take budget items into consideration, sometimes more or less, but not in relation to a budget deficit."



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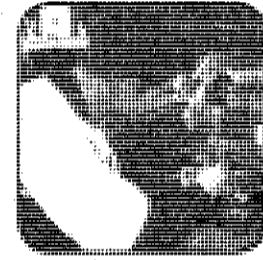
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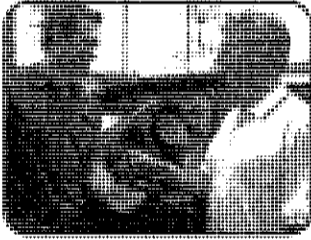
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How do you spell relief? Certainly not D-E-L-P-H-I

Sept. 11, Katrina, Rita, tsunami, Pakistan earthquake — just hearing these words and phrases brings to mind destruction, devastation, death, pain, suffering.

Today, we can add another word that conjures up some of the same images — “Delphi.”

On Oct. 8, a day that will live in infamy for working Americans, Delphi filed for bankruptcy.

This mammoth company, which employs more than 185,000 worldwide, will have an enormous impact on our state. Long after the ink on the headlines are dry, the pain will continue to be felt by the 33,000 workers, their families, communities and states that host Delphi plants.

These are not merely statistics; they represent someone's mother, father, sister and brother, and their lives are being shattered and changed forever by this decision.

The real story will be the lives being turned upside down and inside out by greed, global competition and historically poor decisions made for the next quarterly profit reports, but not for the next quarter of a century.

Where is the national outcry for the families this bankruptcy will impact? Where are the national relief efforts and calls for emergency federal assistance to help ease the pain and help the impacted families and communities pummeled by this global shakeout? How are these workers, many in their late 40s and early 50s, to make the transition with their incomes eliminated or, for those fortunate enough to survive, cut in half? How do they pay their mortgage, purchase their prescription drugs and send their kids to college?

Let's be clear, Delphi is a loud wakeup call reminding us that the world is changing dramatically, and yesterday's responses will not help those impacted workers and their communities build a bridge to the future. What is happening is a global shift that poses an enormous challenge and will require great leadership, innovation and creativity to address.

Calls for trade protection policies will not hold back the rising global tide that Clyde Prestowitz, in his book, *3 Billion New Capitalists (Russia, India and China)*, tells us are our future competition. Manufacturing jobs that provide a middle-class standard of living will continue to disappear. Never-ending technological advances

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and lower labor costs overseas have stripped people and our communities of hope, jobs and their identities.

Prestowitz, a counselor to the secretary of commerce in the Reagan administration, also called for our government to prepare a disaster plan to maintain our competitiveness and transition the American work force — yet, where is the plan? More importantly, where is the response?

Where are the plans, and what will the response be to address the human suffering that this bankruptcy will cause? The hard working men and woman of Delphi need more than press releases bemoaning the change. We need leadership and immediate relief, including training and retraining programs to prepare the victims of “Delphi” and those to follow for life after the disaster.

What is taking place is America's new reality. What we make of it is up to us. Yet, this reality cannot and should not be the sole responsibility of the impacted workers. We must have a unified and cooperative response from labor, management and our government at the local, state and national levels.

Finger pointing will not put food on the table and hope in the souls of displaced Delphi workers today or in the future. We cannot pretend the storm will not hit us — because it already has.

The Delphi workers — our neighbors, friends and relatives — are standing on the tops of their roofs and the flood water is rising. Who will provide the leadership to help?

Tom Watkins, former state superintendent of schools from 2001-05, previously served as president and CEO of the Economic Council of Palm Beach County, Fla. He can be reached at tdwatkins@aol.com.

Early detection reduces breast cancer deaths

It's that appointment with your doctor you keep putting off, that exam with your doctor you just don't want to have, and you rationalize it by saying, “It won't happen to me.” But the fact is that all women are at risk for breast cancer, and living in denial or not getting screened only increases that risk.

This year, more than 211,240 women in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer, and approximately 40,410 women will lose their lives from the disease.

Right now, there are slightly more than 2 million women living in the U.S. who have been treated for breast cancer. The good news is that breast cancer death rates are going

down. This decline is probably the result of earlier detection and improved treatment, the benefits of research, education and awareness.

We can all do our part in further reducing the incidence of breast cancer by knowing our risks, getting screened and talking with our family, friends and loved ones about prevention. To help recognize the importance of an open dialogue, I would like to take this opportunity to share some tips on prevention and early detection with my friends and neighbors.

Aside from skin cancer, breast cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer in women in America; however, early detection and prompt treatment can significantly reduce the suffering and deaths caused by this disease.

The combination of monthly breast self-exams, yearly clinical breast exams, and regular mammograms beginning at age 40 is the best way to detect breast cancer in its earliest and most treatable stages.

Breast Self-Exam (BSE): Every woman should examine her breasts once a month to check for physical changes. If you are unsure of how to perform a breast self-exam, ask your health care provider to demonstrate and explain the ideal time to conduct one. It is very important for women to become familiar with their breasts and understand what feels normal. Start early, beginning at age 20.

Clinical Breast Exam (CBE): Be sure to ask your health care provider to give you a clinical breast exam each year. The exam consists of checking the breasts for any changes, lumps or other possible warning signs of breast cancer through physical touch and appearance. You should begin having clinical breast exams in your 20s and 30s.

Mammography: Beginning at age 40, all women should have an annual mammogram. It is a good idea to have a baseline mammo-

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gram at age 35. The mammogram is an “X-ray” of the breast and is the most effective method of detecting breast changes that may be cancer, long before physical symptoms can be seen or felt.

It is also important to know that while all men and women are at risk, some women are at a higher risk. What groups are these? Age itself is a risk factor for breast cancer, of which many women are not aware. About 77 percent of the women diagnosed are over the age of 50.

Also at high risk are women with a family history of breast cancer, women with inherited abnormal genes, women who have previously had cancer in one breast and obese women with sedentary lifestyles.

Breast cancer is often detected in its earliest stage as an abnormality on a mammogram before it can be felt by a woman or by her health care provider. The following may occur when a cancer has grown to the point where physical signs and symptoms are present: breast lump or thickening; swelling, redness or tenderness; skin or nipple changes in color or texture; dimpling or puckering of the skin; nipple pain, discharge, scaliness or retraction; and lumps under the armpit area.

If you experience any of these symptoms, see your health care provider immediately.

Some other common sense prevention tips (that are appropriate beyond breast cancer as well) are to eat a low-fat diet, exercise regularly and not smoke. And if you suspect that you are at high risk for the disease, talk to your health care provider. With the strides being made in prevention, there are drugs available to help prevent breast cancer for the higher-risk categories.

If you would like additional information on cancer prevention, please contact the Cancer Research and Prevention Foundation at (800) 227-CRFA or visit the Web site at www.preventcancer.org.

Rita McCotter is the wife of U.S. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter and is a member of Congressional Families Action for Cancer Awareness, a program of the Cancer Research and Prevention Foundation, and a registered nurse.

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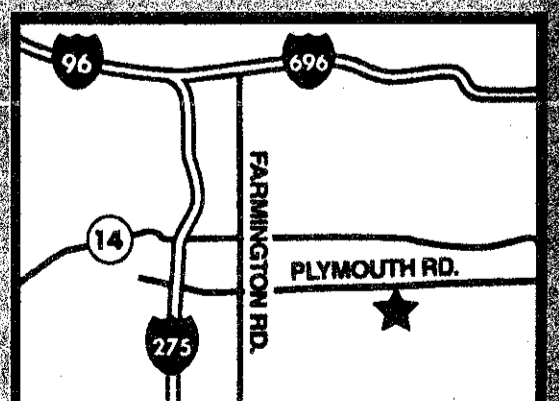
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