

10/27



## On screen

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TASTE, PAGE B10



2 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 30

FALL BACK

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Bedrooms and baths, today in *Fabulous* FURNITURE 2005 Section B

THURSDAY  
October 27, 2005

# WESTLAND Observer

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Halloween USA manager Kim Jones of Westland, who dresses up like a witch or vampire while working on weekends, shows off the Creepy Greeter which watches you as you walk by.

TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## Schools get clean bill of fiscal health

BY SUE MASON  
STAFF WRITER

The Wayne-Westland Community Schools is continuing to hold its own financially in tough economic times, finishing fiscal 2005 with money in the bank.

But the amount left after all the bills have been paid continues to dwindle.

"It's times like this that you worked so hard to build up your fund equity," said Jeffrey Higgins of the district's auditing firm of Plante Moran. "It's not a solution to the problems. It buys you flexibility, but you can't live on it."

The district received an unqualified, or clean opinion about its finances from Plante Moran. It finished the year with an \$11.9 million fund equity, enough to keep schools open for 27 days, if its revenue suddenly disappeared.

According to Gary Martin, deputy superintendent for administrative and business services, the district received \$384,000 more than anticipated in revenue from local taxes and state school aid and an additional \$154,000 in interest income.

On the expense side, cost for at-risk programs was down \$315,000 and the district saved some \$1 million in employee expenses.

"And food services for the first time in a long time showed a profit and didn't need support from the budget," Martin said.

PLEASE SEE AUDIT, A7

## Dressed for the

# fright

Star Wars, Oompa Loompas are popular picks for Halloween

BY LEANNE ROGERS  
STAFF WRITER

Expect to see a lot of Yodas, Anakin Skywalker and some Oompa Loompas looking for treats this Halloween.

"Star Wars is very popular this year for adults and youths. *Napoleon Dynamite* and *Willy Wonka* are new this year - they seem to be going well," said Kim Jones, manager of the Halloween USA store on Middlebelt at Ann Arbor Trail located in a former F & M store.

Agreeing with that, Bee's Costumes owner Marlene Habitz added, "Pirates are in this year because of that movie (*Pirates of the Caribbean*). We always have princesses, *Wizard of Oz* and story characters like *Sleeping Beauty* and *Cinderella*."

For some reason, Habitz said pimp costumes are very popular at her store which moved a year ago from the south side of

PLEASE SEE DRESSED, A4

## Parks: Gentle woman 'changed America'

BY DARRELL CLEM  
STAFF WRITER

Rosa Parks, who helped fuel the civil rights movement by refusing to give up her seat to a white man on a public bus, was remembered this week as a humble woman who changed the course of history with one simple, defiant, courageous act.

"I think one of the things that all of us can learn from her is that one person can make a difference," said the Rev. Terrance McClain, Wayne-Westland school board treasurer.

"When we are passionate about what we perceive to be wrong - and when we are courageous enough to realize that taking a stand may cause us some problems - others will join in for whatever the crusade may be."

Parks, 92, died Monday at her

Detroit home - far from Montgomery, Ala., where her arrest in December 1955 led to a boycott of public buses and ultimately earned her the title of mother of the civil rights movement.

Parks, a quiet-spoken seamstress, didn't realize that her actions would thrust her into the public spotlight and make her an American icon.

"The Bible says that the meek shall inherit the earth, and she was a meek lady," said Reasther Everett, area representative for the Southeast Westland Homeowners Association. "She didn't call attention to herself - others did that. We can definitely say that she will inherit the earth. Her message has gone all over the world. She taught us that we don't have to be loud and pushy to get our message across."

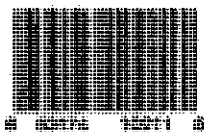


FILE PHOTO

Rosa Parks was photographed in 1993, sitting in a pew at Trinity Faith United Methodist Church in Detroit.

PLEASE SEE PARKS, A7

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### Coming Sunday in Observer Life



Felician Sisters mark 150th Anniversary

# District audit shows clean books, dwindling savings

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA  
STAFF WRITER

Livonia Public Schools earned the highest possible opinion, when its financial statements were audited by the accounting firm Plante Moran earlier this year.

"We have an unqualified opinion, which is the highest or best opinion you can attain," explained Lisa Levesque, director of business services. "We carry on the tradition of keeping very good records and being good stewards of the district."

Livonia Public School officials keep track of a budget close to \$200 million. Throughout the year the estimated budget is adjusted to account for changes in funding, often at the state level.

Fred Hailer, a partner with the firm, told board members they should be "very pleased" with the clean opinion they have again received.

"You're a large district," Hailer said. "To have us finish this audit in two months gives you another indication of how well the books are put together."

In its 2004-2005 budget, the district used \$1.6 million of its fund equity - a rainy day sav-

ings account - to cover a difference in revenue and expenses. Livonia Public Schools took in \$154 million, the bulk of which comes from the state's School Aid Fund. Expenses reached just over \$155 million, and are a growing concern as the cost of salaries and benefits continue to rise.

The district's anticipated shortfall of \$2.5 million was reduced to \$1.6 million, which was the amount covered by fund equity.

Livonia Public Schools' fund equity, according to the Plante Moran report, accounts for a total of \$9.4 million in the general fund. It is also calculated as 6.1 percent of general fund expenses.

Hailer said a more stable average for a school district is more than 14 percent. "The recommended fund balance is 16.7 percent," he said. "It wouldn't surprise me if in some future year you need to borrow. Six percent can go quite quickly."

Hailer said the foundation allowance from the state is still expected to increase by \$175 per student this year, and the district's 20j funding has not been cut. But financially, public school funding is still on shaky ground, officials noted.

"The School Aid Fund has to grow," said Hailer. "Sales tax is a big component of the School Aid Fund."

Supt. Randy Liepa added that some legislative changes which could impact the future school funding.

For example, last school year's switch from an 80:20 percent ratio for the student blended attendance count to a 75:25 percent count has not impacted the district's budget thus far, but it has the potential to do so.

The district holds student count days in September and February of the same calendar year. The attendance numbers are weighted, with the fall count posing more impact on the official total of enrolled students. That number is used to determine per-pupil state funding, or the district's foundation allowance.

Liepa said the way students are counted in Young 5 programs now also has the potential to change from a full-time to a half-time student, because it is a half-day program.

"That did not happen in this budget, but it is certainly potential for next year," said Liepa.

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Debbie Glen, Frost Middle School science teacher, works with students to study a local branch of the Rouge River Thursday.

## Students wade into Rouge testing

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA  
STAFF WRITER

About 20 eighth-graders were conspicuously missing from class at Livonia's Frost Middle School Thursday afternoon.

The students, along with their science teacher Debbie Glen, headed over to Bicentennial Park to participate in the Rouge Education Project's fall monitoring study.

"I've done it for 13 years, 10 years at this site," Glen said.



Frost Middle School eighth-graders participate in the Rouge Education Project's river monitoring day at Bicentennial Park in Livonia.

Students with an interest in science and the environment had a chance to participate, and to perform water quality tests.

"We can't teach it during class," said Glen. The eighth-grade curriculum and MEAP objectives don't focus on that aspect of science, she said. So, it's mainly an after-school venture, or club, for those who participate at Frost. Glen has been holding after-school meetings since the start of the school year to prepare for this field trip.

The group looked at the physical and chemical makeup of the river, land use, the depth and width of the river, erosion and the velocity of the water. They studied the living organisms, measured how much oxygen the water has, and how much fecal coliform was found.

"I just liked the idea of going out to study the river," said Annette Perkowski, a Frost eighth-grader. "I wanted to know about the different plants and animals that would grow here, and also how humans effected the river."

Annette said she was sur-

prised to find minnow pike swimming in the river.

Brandon Tanter, also an eighth-grader at Frost, said he likes everything about science, and that's why he chose to participate in the monitoring event.

"I wasn't expecting the water to be so clean," he said. Brandon said he preferred the field trip to being in his classroom at school. "You get better information being out here, than studying it in a book," he said.

Glen said she hopes her students obtain an appreciation for the natural environment, and that they want to keep it clean.

"I think it's a wonderful opportunity for students," said Susan Adams, whose daughter Amanda was among those working on the project. She too saw it as a chance for students to connect with and care for their surroundings.

That's certainly a focus of the program, according to Dave Tessier, a project coordinator with the Friends of the Rouge non-profit organization. Last week marked the fifth fall monitoring event, though annual monitoring has taken place in the spring for 20 years.

He said the organization is fortunate to have teachers like Glen who have been involved for such a long time, and continue the tradition. They bring both continuity and experience to the project, he said.

Rouge River monitoring programs range from grades 5-12, and involve an array of water quality and environmental tests. At the elementary level, test kits are simplified and may involve dropping a tablet into a water sample. It allows younger students to perform experiments and learn about the river.

"The data is useful to us," said Tessier. "Our hope is (this) will empower students to become better stewards of the environment."

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## Business office wins national awards

BY SUE MASON  
STAFF WRITER

For the sixth consecutive year, the Wayne-Westland Community Schools has received national recognition for its financial accounting practices.

The district received a Excellence in Financing Awards from the Government Finance Officers Association and Association of School Business Officials.

"We are one of three districts in the state to receive both awards and only a few hundred in the country," said Gary Martin, deputy superintendent of administrative and business services. "The entire business office works hard in achieving this."

The ASBO certificate of excellence and the GFOA certificate of achievement of excellence recognize the work done by the district's business office in the preparation and issuance of the comprehensive annual financial report for fiscal 2004.

According to Martin, participation in the programs was a "rewarding experience" for the business office. It increased the district's financial reporting credibility, he added.

"These are nice plaques and we will hang them proudly in the business office," he said. "This is a true honor and great accomplishment for this district," said Superintendent Greg Baracy in praising the business office. "The comprehensive reporting they provide

to the (school) board and these two organizations and full disclosure is something you don't find that often.

"There is no question about the finances of this district and they are available for review."

"The printouts you provide weekly are meticulous," trustee Terrance McClain told Martin. "You are very ethical, honest and upfront. I'm glad we have you on our team."

Joining school officials in honoring members of the business office was Jeffrey Higgins of the district's auditing firm of Plante Moran.

"These are truly meaningful awards that demonstrate a commitment to provide comprehensive financial reporting," he said.

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# Teens face trial for robbery

BY DARRELL CLEM  
STAFF WRITER

Two local teenagers face trial for multiple criminal charges amid accusations they robbed an 80-year-old woman inside the garage of her Westland condominium.

Ajuan Hogan, 18, of Wayne and Cortne Diaz, 18, of Westland face trial in Wayne County Circuit Court for an armed robbery that occurred about 9 p.m. Sept. 14 at Colonial Estates condominiums, on Newburgh south of Joy.

Hogan and Diaz face a for-

mal arraignment today in circuit court - two weeks after Westland District Judge Gail McKnight ordered them to stand trial during a preliminary hearing.

The victim was robbed of her purse after one of the suspects followed her into her garage and threatened her with a gun, police Sgt. Steve Borisch has said.

The other suspect waited in a getaway van that was earlier stolen on Hively Street, Borisch said.

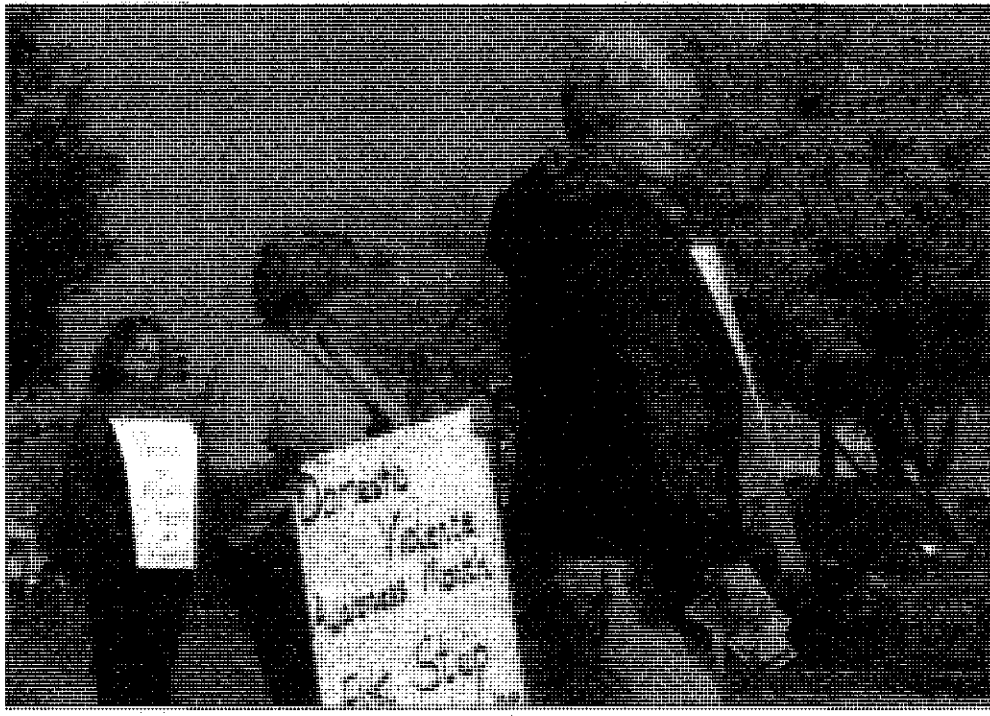
Police spotted a getaway van shortly after the robbery and trailed it to nearby Westwood

Apartments. The men escaped on foot, but police found paper work inside the vehicle that helped lead them to the suspects, police Lt. James Ridener has said.

Hogan and Diaz are jailed in lieu of \$100,000 bonds. If convicted as charged, they could face penalties ranging up to life in prison.

Both suspects face trial for armed robbery, first-degree home invasion and vehicle theft charges. Diaz has additional charges of fleeing from police and driving with a suspended license.

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BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## Silent witness

A group of about 20 women, volunteers and staff from First Step, stand to bear witness to abuse suffered by people in domestic relationships. The Thursday noon event was designed to bring attention to Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Catherine Bunker, Sarah Stalker, and First Step Associate Director Amy Youngquist stand along Main Street at Ann Arbor Trail. A nonprofit agency, First Step provides shelter, courtroom support, crisis counseling and other services to the victims of domestic violence and sexual assault throughout western Wayne County.

# Students collect \$27,000 for Hurricane Katrina relief

BY SUE MASON  
STAFF WRITER

A lemonade stand, cans and bottle drives, coin collections. Students in the Wayne-Westland Community Schools proved they care by raising some \$27,000 to benefit the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

And it was Cain Bracey, a student at Vandenberg Elementary School, who put a face on the fund raising by being honored at this month's school board meeting for his efforts.

Cain saw the news reports and was moved to open up a lemonade stand. His mother made the lemonade and he sold it from a front yard stand he set up during his parents' garage sale, raising \$56 which he gave to his school's fundraiser.

"I saw the sad pictures on TV and it made me want to help," he told the board. "I was close to selling out of lemonade."

All together, Vandenberg raised \$356.

"One of the marks of a leader is to know who can do what to get the job done," trustee Terrance McClain told the youngsters. "I want to thank you for your compassion."

In Westland, fourth-grader Marcus Ference raised \$100 by going door-to-door with his mother as part of Jefferson-Barns Elementary's pennies and pop cans drive. And fellow student Tyler Barber and his mom collected

money in their apartment complex after putting up signs about the drive.

In the end, the Jefferson-Barns collection brought in a \$50 check from one family, \$70 in pop cans and \$122 cash in paper money and coins. There also were 204 quarters (\$51), 312 dimes (\$31.20), 291 nickels (\$14.55) and 17,889 pennies (\$178.89) for a grand total of \$517.64.

Superintendent Greg Baracy praised Wayne-Westland students, calling it an "amazing effort."

"As you all have been aware this was the largest natural disaster in U.S. history, and the response of students, parents and staff has been heroic," he said.

"All of our schools can be very proud," added trustee Skip Monit. "My home school was Taft and theirs was the largest contribution."

For the record, Taft Elementary raised \$3,202.09 in a penny war. The school donated the money to Scholastic's "Books for Kids."

Fund raising at the other schools included:

- \$1,600 in cash donations at Edison Elementary.
- \$380.53 raised in a change drive at Elliott Elementary.
- \$724.70 through a Change for Change drive at P.D. Graham Elementary.
- \$638 in a change drive at Hicks Elementary. The final also reflects a match by DTE Energy.
- \$511.03 in a change drive

at Hoover Elementary.

■ \$800 in a bottled water sale and change drive at Kettering Elementary.

■ \$359.97 in a penny drive at Lincoln Elementary.

■ \$1,332.08 in a change drive at Patchin Elementary.

■ \$1,000 through Oprah's Angel Network at Roosevelt-McGrath Elementary.

■ \$1,700 in fund raising at Walker-Winter Elementary.

■ \$373 in a change drive at Wildwood Elementary.

■ \$1,815 with students and staff at Franklin Middle School paying a \$1 each to wear a hat for Crazy Hat Day.

■ \$105.48 in a change collection at Marshall Middle School.

■ \$2,500 raised at Stevenson Middle School.

■ \$1,841.20 raised at John Glenn High School.

■ \$2,500 raised at Wayne Memorial High School.


■ \$2,500 raised at the William D. Ford Career Technical Center.

■ \$505 raised at the district's central office.

Students at Madison and Schweitzer elementaries partnered with Redford Township, its police department, to collect goods for the hurricane victims. The donations were transported by Men on the Move.

"I think this is a wonderful to recognize these outstanding Hurricane Katrina activities," said trustee Martha Pitsenbarger.

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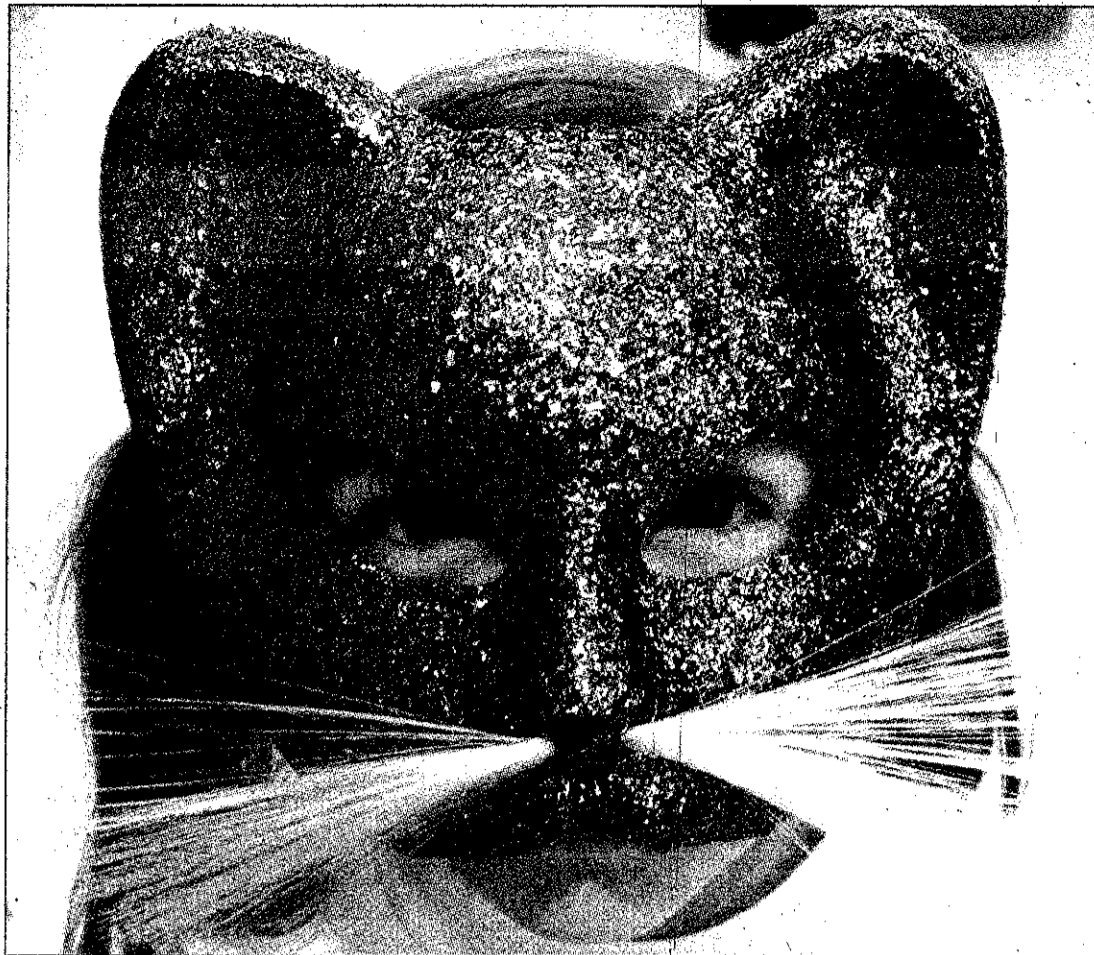


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Cat's Meow - Caitlyn Shevli, 5, of Dearborn tried on a cat mask during a visit to Halloween USA.

**DRESSED**

FROM PAGE A1

Warren just east of Venoy to a new location on the north side of Warren.

"We have pretty snappy velvet suits - wild zebra pants, red, white and purple. You can always talk a guy into playing that role," said Habitz.

Halloween USA has close to 100 stores in Michigan, Indiana and Ohio which open Oct. 1 and close after the holiday. Along with costumes, accessories and makeup, the stores also offer a variety of Halloween decorations.

"I think people get into Halloween more and more each year," said Jones, who is usually a witch or vampire when store employees dress in costumes on the weekends. "We have a lot of decorations

like scene setters that look like brick or woods - you put them over the garage door or windows."

On a recent day off from school, Alan Shevli, 10, of Dearborn, his sister Caitlyn, 5, and their grandmother Cindy Abbas spent some time browsing through the Halloween costumes and accessories.

Unlike some people who wait until the last minute to sort out costumes, Alan and Caitlyn were prepared for Halloween. Alan was looking for teeth to complete his vampire costume while Caitlyn was dressing as a University of Michigan cheerleader.

"I never knew they had so much stuff. I put stuff up at home, but not too elaborate anymore," said Abbas. "I have lights and some pumpkins. The kids enjoy it, that's what it is really about."

Unlike the seasonal Halloween USA stores, Bee's Costumes is open throughout the year, selling costumes for dancers and figure skaters. The store rents costumes as well as the ready-to-purchase costumes for Halloween.

"We're weaning off the Halloween sales with the bagged ready-to-wear costumes. Halloween USA has hurt us. My (Halloween) sales have steadily declined for the last five years," said Habitz. "The cities lease out buildings for six weeks and it hurts those of us who are here all year."

The Halloween USA stores are open daily through Oct. 31. Bee's Costumes will have extended hours through Halloween including noon-4 p.m. today (Oct. 23) and Sunday, Oct. 30.

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**Taking care of veterans**

2-day event aimed at helping homeless vets

BY BRAD KADRICH  
STAFF WRITER

Maj. Bill Hogg knows the Salvation Army's efforts to help U.S. veterans dates back before World War I.

That's why Hogg, commander of the Plymouth Salvation Army representing Plymouth, Canton, Northville and Belleville, felt right at home supporting last week's two-day Southeastern Michigan Veterans Stand Down at the UAW facility on Michigan Avenue in Canton.

The event, started in 1996, is designed primarily to help homeless veterans get away from life on the streets, at least for a little while, get a nice meal and some help with other needs.

"(The stand down) helps the veterans get back in contact society," Hogg said. "It takes them away from the stresses of the street."

The first Stand Down took place in 1996 and, according to Michael Bethune, president of Southeastern Michigan Veterans Stand Down, the two-day event is designed not only to feed the homeless veterans, but to allow them to have other needs tended.

They get their medical needs met, are given warm clothing to help them get through the upcoming winter and have other social needs taken care of.

Among the groups represented at this week's event were the Veterans Administration, a huge partner in the event, according to Bethune; the Social Security Administration; the American Red Cross, Alcoholics Anonymous; and a variety of health-care professionals.

The event, which used to be held in Detroit, is now moved around to allow it to reach homeless veterans in areas outside the city.

"Ours isn't a black-and-white thing, it's a veterans thing," Bethune said. "We started moving it around to accommodate veterans not only in the city of Detroit,



PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER  
Johnny O'Clock Henderson gave the Veterans Stand Down event a thumbs-up at the UAW facility in Canton.



Army Reserve MSgt. Ed Stokes serves lunch to veteran Grantonio Grant during the two-day Veterans Stand Down at the UAW facility in Canton.

but in areas beyond the city. We want to give the homeless a day of rest."

Bethune said the group contacts homeless shelters and other agencies in advance of the event, but publicity for the event is "word-of-mouth, believe it or not." Transportation is provided by military units at Selfridge Air National Guard Base.

That's how 73-year-old Johnny O'Clock Henderson heard about the event.

Henderson, a mortar instrument operator who still remembers his service number, was undergoing dialysis at the VA facility in downtown Detroit and overheard people there talking about it. And there he was Wednesday, in line for the barbecue luncheon and talking to fellow veterans.

"This is nice," said Henderson, who received an honorable discharge after serving two years in the U.S. Army back in the 1950s. "It's good for them to take care of veterans like this."

Wallace Edmonds of

Detroit, who takes dialysis at the same VA facility as Henderson, agreed the event was nice, but wishes it had been made more public to give more veterans a chance to take advantage.

"This is good if enough information gets out where veterans can find out about it," said Edmonds, 67, who was stationed in Germany from 1958-1960. "I wouldn't have found out about it if I hadn't been going to dialysis three times a week."

Bethune said the group does fund-raisers throughout the year to help foot the \$18,000 tab for the Stand Down, which he said draws some 350 people, not all veterans.

"We also get non-veterans, but we don't turn them down," said Bethune, pointing out the non-veterans get everything but the clothing, which is saved for veterans. "We feed them and help them. It's about good will toward your fellow man, no matter who he or she is."

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- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>B</b><br>William E. Barrett IV<br>Barrett died Oct. 23.                      | <b>J</b><br>Pearl C. Janke<br>Janke, 64, died Oct. 18.                                  |
| <b>K</b><br>Gerald K. "Jerry" Beck<br>Beck, 69, died Oct. 21.                   | <b>K</b><br>Patricia A. Kelly<br>Kelly, of Seattle, Wash., died Oct. 13.                |
| <b>C</b><br>Ernestine "Granny" Colvin<br>Colvin, 92, died Oct. 19.              | <b>M</b><br>Arthur A. Koglin<br>Koglin, 89, died Oct. 17.                               |
| <b>F</b><br>Kim Forster<br>Forster, 42, of Plymouth, died Oct. 20.              | <b>M</b><br>Frank L. Moncher<br>Moncher, 86, formerly of Bloomfield Hills, died Oct. 2. |
| <b>G</b><br>Cora Feely Graham<br>Graham, 89, of Bloomfield Hills, died Oct. 21. | <b>O</b><br>Kylie Nicole Olson<br>Olson, 16 months, of Birmingham, died                 |

For the Record appears in every edition of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. Complete paid obituaries can be found inside today's newspaper in *Passages* on page C10.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>S</b><br>Clarence M. "Bud" Shelton<br>Shelton, 78, of Bloomfield Hills, died Oct. 22. | <b>W</b><br>Agnes J. Winekoff<br>Winekoff, of Westland, died Oct. 23. |
|--|---|

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Town Hall

Mayor Sandra Cicirelli will have her next Town Hall meeting at 6 p.m. today, Oct. 27, at Hayes Elementary School, 30600 Louise, south of Ann Arbor Trail and east of Merriman. All residents are welcome to make comments or ask questions of Cicirelli and her administration.

Texas hold 'em

St. Theodore Catholic Church, 8200 N. Wayne, will sponsor a Texas Hold 'Em tournament 7-11 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 12, at the church's social hall. Doors will open at 6 p.m. Cost is \$40 to buy in. Tickets must be bought in advance by calling (734) 564-8220 or (734) 421-9315. Participants must be at least 18 to play and at least age 21 to drink. There will be a 50/50 raffle and refreshments.

Tickets will not be sold at the door. The event is being sponsored by St. Theodore's Men's Club and Confraternity of Christian Women.

Get Smart seminar

As part of its Get Smart Seminars, Westland Convalescent Center will have Mark McCauley and Mary Schneider from the American Association for Wartime Veterans discuss V.A. Benefits for Wartime Veterans 2:30-4 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 10, at the center, 36137 W. Warren.

This informative session will include topics on V.A. Benefits for Wartime Veterans, including what benefits are available for wartime veterans; what is improved pension with aid and attendance; how can you substantially reduce the cost of a stay in a long term care facility; are you eligible if you are a surviving spouse of a wartime veteran and how do you apply for this entitlement.

Westland Convalescent Center is on Warren between Wayne and Central City Parkway in Westland. Call Judy Bianchi at (734) 728-6100.

Toy Show

Space is available for the Westland Rotary toy show 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 6, at Joy Manor, 28999 Joy, Westland. Tables are available in advance for \$30. The day-of-show price is \$35.

The show will feature new and antique toys, collectibles, slot cars, model cars, and more. There also will be lucky door raffle prizes and refreshments will be available. Admission will be \$3 with children under age 12 free. Call Mary McGaw at (734) 748-8515.

Haunted House

The Westland Jaycees is spooking up the neighborhood with their haunted house in the east parking lot of the Bailey Recreation Center.

Ghouls, ghosts and screams await older children, teens and adults 7-10:30 p.m. Sunday-Thursday and 7 p.m. to midnight Friday and Saturday. Call (734) 637-8415.

Mad Science

Kids also can get spooky with Mad Science of Oakland and Macomb Counties, in a Friday, Oct. 28, program sponsored by the Westland Parks and Recreation Department.

Count Eggbert and Countess Eggberta will be at the Bailey Center for a special science and magic show that includes the melting wicked witch, bubbling potions, flying eyeballs, spider web cotton candy, hover craft demo, vortex generators and more. And kids will need to watch for foggy dry-ice storms, bubbling potions, giant balls floating in midair, flashy reactions that go poof.

The show for kids age 10 years of age and under is 6:15-7:30 p.m., and there will be a show for those 7 years of age and up 7:45-9 p.m.

Cost is \$5 per person. Pre-registration is encouraged, but not required. For more information, call Mad Science of Oakland and Macomb Counties at (248) 293-0983 or e-mail them at madscioakland@yahoo.com.

Candy check

Halloween may be several weeks off, but parents concerned about their kids' candy can get it checked at 18th District Court Halloween night, Oct. 31. The checks will be done 6:30-20 p.m. at the court, 36675 Ford, behind the police station. For more information, call (734) 595-8720.

Halloween parties

And for adults, the Wayne

Ford Civic League is hosting its annual Halloween Bash at 8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 29, at the hall, 645 N. Wayne Road.

The bash, which runs until 2 a.m., includes spook-tacular sounds, dancing and karaoke. There will be first-, second- and third-place cash prizes for the best costumes. Winners to be announced at the witching hour of midnight.

Tickets for this B.Y.O.B. event are \$20 for individuals and \$35 for couples. Price includes all-you-can-eat buffet dinner, beer and snacks. Tickets are available by calling (734) 728-5010. Participants must be 21 or older to attend.

The Civic League also is hosting a Halloween Senior Dinner

Dance at noon Sunday, Oct. 23rd. There will be spook-tacular sounds and dancing to the music of Solitaire.

Price includes buffet dinner, beer and wine. There will be first-, second- and third-place cash prizes for the best costumes. Winners to be announced at 3 p.m.

Tickets are \$8 for members and \$10 for non-members. Tickets are available at the door. Call (734) 728-5010 for more information. Participants must be 60 years or older to attend.

Mark your calendars

As a fund-raiser for the VA Hospital and PAC projects, the Ladies Auxiliary of the Harris Kehrer VFW Post 3323 will be

host a chili cook-off and bake sale auction at 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 29, at the post at 1055 S. Wayne Road, Westland. Call (734) 721-9879 after 5 p.m. for more information.

On Saturday, Nov. 5 and 19, the auxiliary will be holding marathon bingos noon to 5 p.m.

Las Vegas Party

St. Bernardine Men's Club is sponsoring a Pinochle/Euchre Card Party on Fridays, Oct. 28, Nov. 4, Nov. 18, Dec. 2, Dec. 16, Jan. 6, Jan. 13, Jan. 27, Feb. 3, Feb. 17 and Feb. 24, at the church, southwest corner Ann Arbor Trail and Merriman in Westland.

Participants don't need a partner to play. Snacks and soft

drinks are included in the \$5 charge. Games start at 7:30 p.m.

Craft show tables

Tables and/or space is still available for an indoor fall craft show Saturday, Nov. 19, at the Wayne Ford Civic League, 1645 N. Wayne Road, Westland. Tables and/or space costs \$35 for a 12-foot table/area.

Electricity is an additional \$5. Call (734) 728-5010 and speak with Terri for more information.

Crafters are needed for the annual Holiday craft show at Hawthorne Valley on Nov. 27. For information, call Sue or Paul at (734) 844-3128.

Edison Elementary will have its Holiday Bazaar 6-9 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 16, at the school, 34505 Hunter at Wildwood, Westland. There will be 25 vendors, door prizes and bake sale. Admission is \$2. Children will not be allowed in the show area, however, there will be baby-sitting and crafts for available. Proceeds will benefit the Edison PTO.

Car donation

People with a car to donate can give it to Veterans Haven. The organization is accepting cars, running or not running, that are given to veterans to provide them with transportation to work, school of medical needs. To donate, call Veterans Haven at (734) 728-0527 or go to vetshaveninfo.org.

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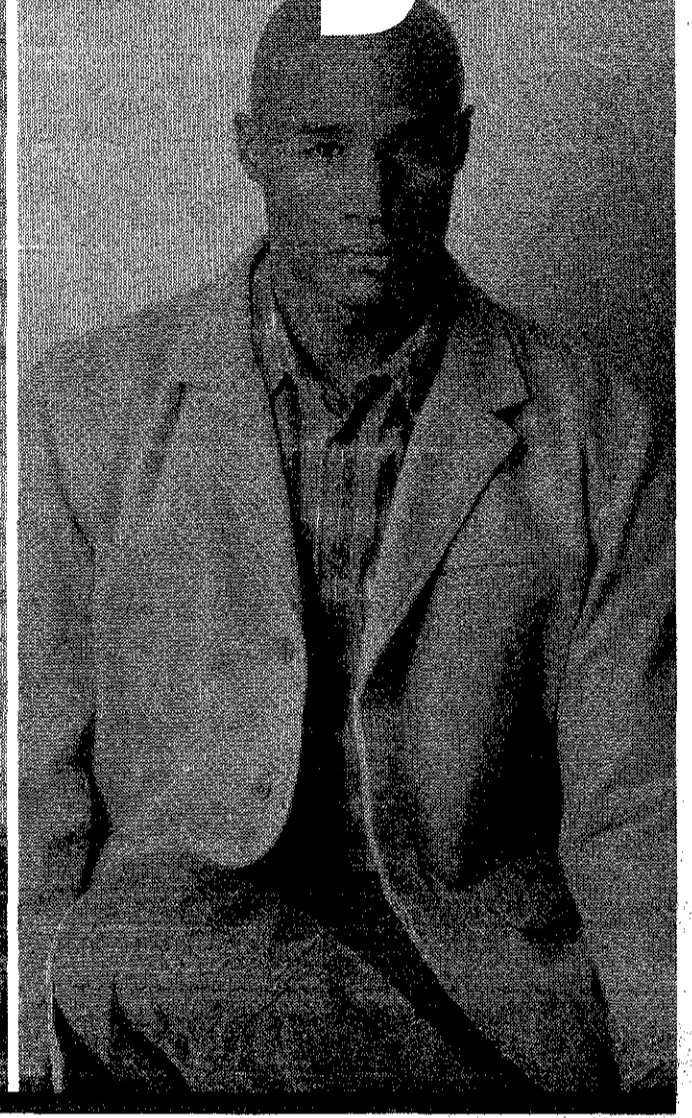
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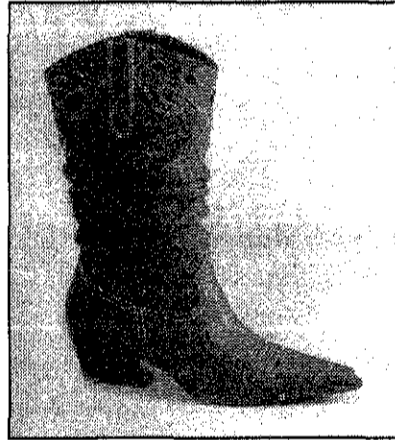
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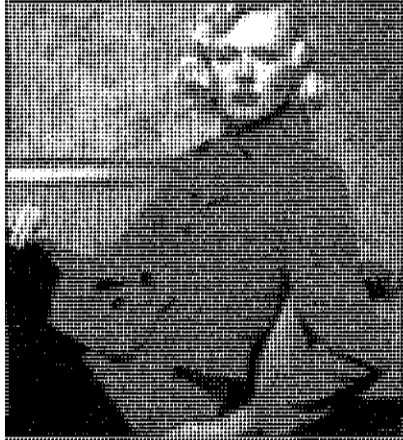
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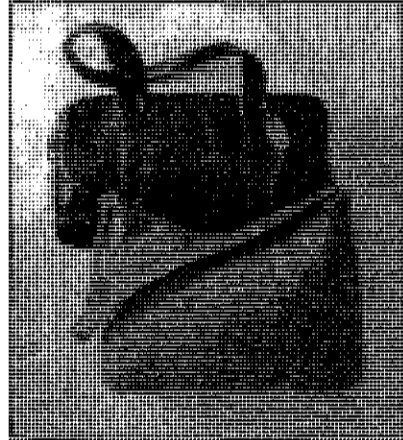
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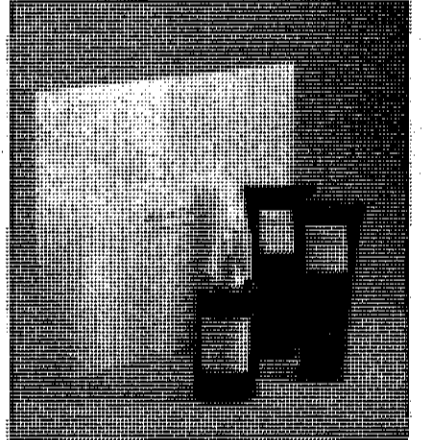
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Listings for the Community Calendar should be submitted in writing. They can be mailed to Sue Mason at 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150, by fax at (734) 591-7279 or by e-mail at smason@oe.hometownlife.com. For more information, call (734) 953-2112.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Party for Peace**  
The Citizens for Peace will celebrate its second anniversary at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 8, at Unity of Livonia by watching the keynote speech that Patch Adams gave at the Department of Peace Conference in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 11. A video of comedian Swami Beyondananda presenting his humorous ideas on the Top 11 Ways to Create World Peace will also be shown. All are welcome. Colleen Mills, (734) 425-0079.

**Craft show**  
Reserve a table now for the Wayne Senior Activity Center pre-holiday arts and crafts show 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 3, at the senior center, 35000 Sims, Wayne. Cost is \$25 per table, electricity provided. For more information, call Lucy at (734) 721-7460.

**Basketball clinics**  
The Westland Parks and Recreation Department and Hoops Stars Basketball will sponsor a six-week Hoops Stars Basketball Clinic 5:30-6:30 p.m. Nov. 8-Dec. 6 at the Bailey Recreation Center, 36651 Ford.  
The clinic is for youngsters ages 7-13 and in grades 1-8. Participants will learn the fundamentals of basketball, such as dribbling, passing, shooting and defense. There also will be challenging games and drills and an opportunity to play in a 5-on-5 full court game. Kids need to bring a water bottle and wear comfortable clothing and athletic shoes. The clinic costs \$42 for residents and \$45 for non-residents. Register at the Bailey Center. For more information, call Ron Levin at (248) 496-3268.

**Drama and dance**  
The Westland Therapeutic Recreation Program and the Shoe String Theatre are offering a drama and movement program for children with special needs. The class will be 5-6 p.m. Fridays Nov. 4-Dec. 16. Each week there will be a different theme based on a children's

story. Drama, music, movement and dance will teach youngsters gross motor, listening and focusing skills while letting children use their imaginations. The class will be held at the Bailey Recreation Center, 36651 Ford. Cost is \$30 for residents and \$31 for non-residents. Scholarships are available for Westland residents. For more information, call (734) 722-7620.

**Starfish programs**  
Starfish Family Services Great Parents, Great Start teachers help prepare children, ages 2-4 years for preschool and school in their own home. Fun, learning activities help children grow and learn and parents learn tips, too. The program is open to families in western Wayne County, if they qualify. Call (734) 595-0411, Ext. 104, for more information. Starfish also has an ongoing, free Pregnancy Support Group, offering pregnant women a chance to talk with other pregnant women, meet with a prenatal nurse, hear baby's heart beat and learn about nutrition, pain management and other topics. Groups to be held in Wayne, Westland and Inkster areas. To register, (734) 595-0411, Ext. 104.

**ORGANIZATIONS**

**Vietnam Vets**  
The Plymouth-Canton Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 528, meet at 7:30 p.m. the second Monday of every month at the Plymouth VFW Post 6695, on S. Mill Street, just north of Ann Arbor Road. If you served in the U.S. military between 1964 and 1975, even, if not, "in country" (combat zone) you are still eligible to become a member. Visit the Web site at www.mhometown.com/oe/PlymouthCantonVVA.

**Friends of library**  
The Friends of the William P. Faust Public Library organization meets at 2 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month at the library, 6123 Central City Parkway, Call (734) 326-6123. Meetings last about one hour and are open to the public. The group also holds a book sale during regular library hours at the library.

**In Harmony**  
The Wayne Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society meets at 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays at Kirk of Our Savior

Presbyterian Church, 36660 Cherry Hill, west of Wayne Road, Westland. Gentlemen interested in the chapter's Renaissance Chorus or who enjoy quartetting can call membership chairman Bob Wolf at (734) 421-1652, or attend a rehearsal.

**Civil Air Patrol**  
Emergency service is just one of the congressionally mandated missions of the Civil Air Patrol, which includes ground and air search-and-rescue operations. The Civil Air Patrol, which is the official U.S. Air Force auxiliary, is made up of civilian volunteers. To learn more about CAP or training as an air crew or ground team member, contact the Willow Run Composite Squadron (MI-26D). Call Capt. Dane Hansen, deputy commander/recruiter, at (734) 485-3021 or visit the Web site www.members.home.net/capiliberators/.

**Habitat help**  
The Western Wayne affiliate of Habitat for Humanity is seeking volunteers to help with building homes, office duties and fund-raising. No experience necessary. Training will be provided. For information, call (734) 459-7744.

**Veteran's Haven**  
Veteran's Haven operates a car, boat, camper and real estate-donation program. Donations are tax-deductible. For information, call (734) 728-0527. Food is distributed to veterans once a month throughout the month and there is a supplemental food program 9 a.m. to noon Wednesdays. The Veteran Haven's Outreach Center 4924 S. Wayne Road two blocks south of Ann Arbor in Wayne. Any honorably discharged Veteran that is in need or homeless and wants a better quality of life can call (734) 728-0527.

**Pet-A-Pet**  
The Pet-A-Pet animal visitation program provides pet therapy with the help of volunteers. Pets should be friendly, well-behaved and must have current vaccinations. There is a \$5 membership fee. Volunteer opportunities are available at Hope Nursing Care Center, 6:30 p.m. the third Tuesday of the month (Marie Johnson, (734) 326-1200), and Marquette House, 10:30 a.m. the second Wednesday of the month (Lorna Johnson, (734) 425-1681). There are also openings at Garden City Hospital, 3 p.m.

the fourth Thursday of the month (Stacy Suida, (734) 458-4392).

**Zonta Club**  
The Zonta Club of Northwest Wayne County, a service club to advance the status of women, meets every month on the fourth Monday at the Holiday Inn, Livonia. For more information, call Pat Harris at (734) 420-2920

**Franklin PTSA**  
The Franklin High School PTSA is seeking members. Membership is open to those who care about the schools and the community. Members need not have a student in the school. Price is \$3 for students, \$5 for adults. Checks should be made payable to Franklin PTSA and sent to 31000 Joy, Livonia MI 48150.

**Tutoring program**  
A tutoring program for students is offered at the Salvation Army Wayne-Westland Corps Community Center, 2300 Venoy in Westland. The program, 3:45-5:15 p.m. Mondays and Tuesdays, is for students 9 and older in Wayne, Westland and Romulus. For information on participating or volunteering, call Tyrone Peterson, (734) 722-3660. Tutors need to have at least a high school education.

**M.O.M.S.**  
M.O.M.S. Club of Canton/ Westland is a nonprofit support group for stay-at-home mothers. Membership is open to those who care about the schools and the community. Members need not have a student in the school. Price is \$3 for students, \$5 for adults. Checks should be made payable to Franklin PTSA and sent to 31000 Joy, Livonia MI 48150.

(Agoraphobics In Motion) meets at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays at Faith Lutheran Church, 30000 Five Mile, between Middlebelt and Merriman in Livonia. AIM is a support group for those working on recovery from anxiety disorder or phobias. Call (248) 547-0400.

**Grief support**  
Angela Hospice offers ongoing grief support groups every second and fourth Tuesday of the month. All groups are free of charge and open to the community. Call bereavement coordinator Ruth Favor at Angela Hospice, (734) 464-7810.

**Childbirth classes**  
Garden City Hospital, on Inkster Road at Maplewood, is sponsoring classes for parents of newborns, weekend childbirth instruction, a refresher childbirth education course and a new support group for expectant teens. For information on programs, call (734) 458-4330.

**Childbirth Association**  
Classes for childbirth preparation are offered at several Wayne County locations. Morning and evening classes are available. Registering new classes every month. Newborn care classes and Cesarean birth preparation are also offered. Call (734) 459-7477.

**Friends of Museum**  
Friends of the Westland Historical Museum meet at 7 p.m. each month except December at the Collins House, located at the museum complex, 857 N. Wayne Road. Call Jim Franklin at (734) 595-8119. Everyone is welcome. welcome.

**BINGO**

**VFW Bingo**  
Veterans of Foreign Wars 3323 Auxiliary has bingo 6:30 p.m. every Thursday at 1055 S. Wayne Road, Westland. There is a snack bar. The post has bingo at 1 p.m. every Sunday at the same place. Call (734) 326-3323.

**Dems hold bingo**  
The Metro Wayne Democratic Club has bingo 10:45 a.m. every Monday at the Wayne Ford Civic League, on Wayne Road south of Ford in Westland. For information, call Jan or Cliff at (734) 591-1694 or Cliff at (734) 729-8681.

**St. Mel Church**  
Bingo begins at 6:45 p.m. Fridays in St. Mel Church activities building, on Inkster Road north of Warren. Doors open at 4 p.m. Food is available.

**Shamrock Bingo**  
Bingo begins at 11 a.m. Wednesdays at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 35100 Van Born, east of Wayne Road in Wayne. Doors open at 9 a.m. Food is available. Proceeds go to charity. Call (734) 728-3020.

**K of C Bingo**  
Pope John XIII Assembly of the Knights of Columbus Council 1536 hosts bingo games at 6:45 p.m. Thursdays. The games are in the Livonia Elks Lodge, 3117 Plymouth Road, one block east of Merriman in Livonia. Call (734) 425-2246.

**Metro Wayne**  
The Metro Wayne Democratic Club offers a bingo at the Wayne-Ford Civic League on Fridays. Doors open at 9 a.m. with bingo starting at 10:45 a.m. All you-can-eat breakfast buffet is available for \$3. For more information, call Cliff Johnson at (734) 729-8681.

**FOR SENIORS**

**Friendship Center**  
The Senior Resources Department (Friendship Center), 1119 N. Newburgh, Westland, offers a variety of programs for older adults. The Web site www.ci.westland.mi.us offers more information. Call (734) 722-7632.

**Crochet & Knit**  
A crochet and knit group meets 9:30 a.m. every Thursday at the Friendship Center on Newburgh near Marquette. Beverly Kaminski is the instructor. Participants should bring a type "G" crochet hook. Those interested can sign up at the center's front desk or call (734) 722-7632.

**HISTORIC**

**Pioneer trek**  
The Nankin Township Pioneer Trek has been designed to introduce travelers to the history of the area. Travelers will visit sites that affected the development of Westland as a community. Those who complete the trek will receive an embroidered patch. To start the trek, first visit the Westland Historical Museum and pick up a packet. The museum is at 857 N. Wayne Road and is open 1-4 p.m. Saturdays, except before a holiday. The trek is sponsored by the Westland Historical Commission and the Friends of the Westland Museum. For information, call (734) 326-1110.

**Friends of Eloise**  
The Friends of Eloise group meets 7 p.m. the third Tuesday of the month in the dining room of the Kay Beard Building, on Michigan between Middlebelt and Merriman. All are welcome. Call Jo Johnson, (734) 522-3918.

**FOR YOUR HEALTH**

**TOPS**  
TOPS (Taking Off Pounds Sensibly) meets every Wednesday at St. John's Episcopal Church, 555 S. Wayne Road, Westland. Weigh-in is 6:30-7:15 p.m., with the meeting 7:30-8:30 p.m. For more information, call Rosalie at (734) 728-0299.

**Menopause & More**  
A Menopause & More support group for women meets 7-9 p.m. the first Wednesday of the month in Classroom 2 of the west addition of the Marian Women Center of St. Mary Mercy Hospital, 36475 Five Mile, Livonia. No registration is necessary, and the group is free of charge. For more information, call (734) 655-1100.

**Support group**  
A support group for people with chronic illness meets on Fridays every other week, at the Westside Mental Health Services, 32932 W. Warren, Suite 103, Westland. The support group is a service of Awareness Counseling Services. There is a \$10 for each meeting which will be facilitated by a professional. For more information, call (734) 513-8295 or (313) 562-2800.

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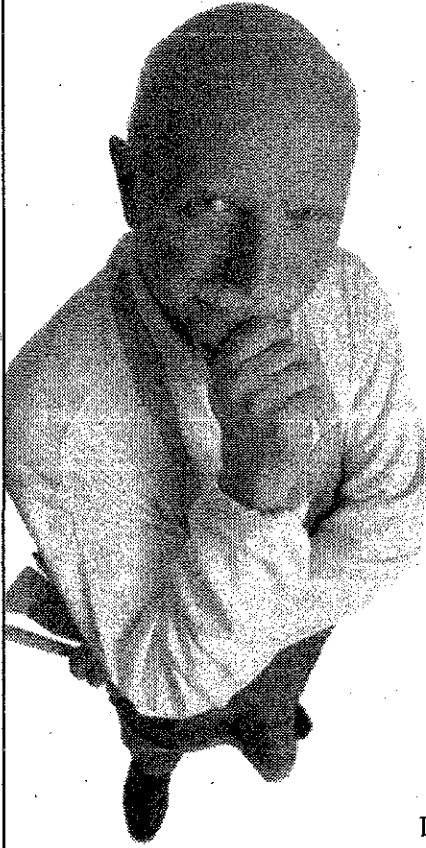
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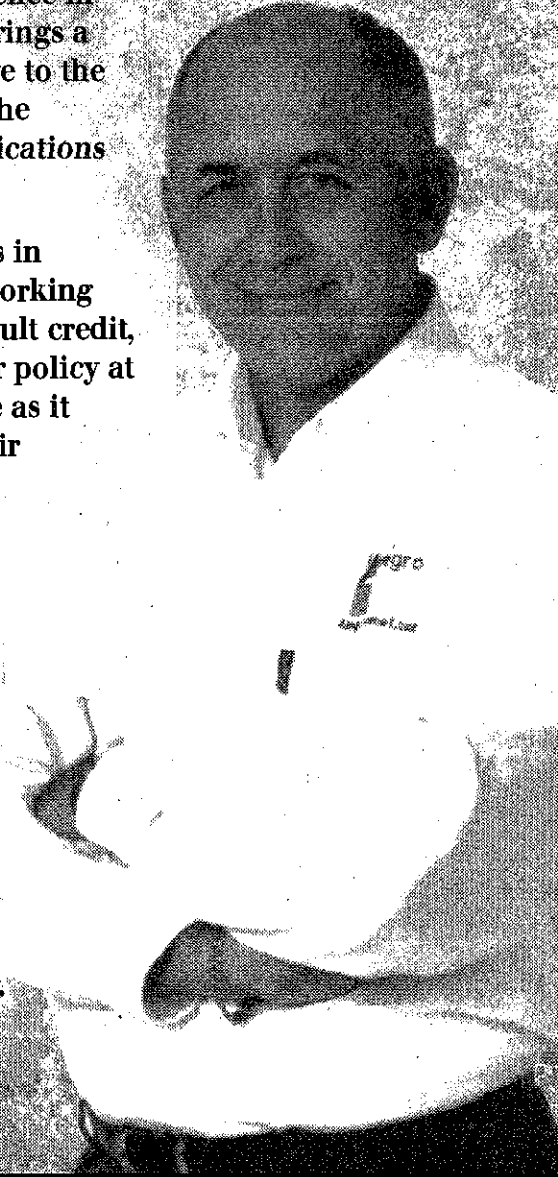
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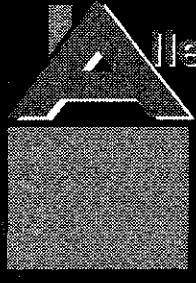
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PARKS

FROM PAGE A1

Garden City Clerk/Treasurer Allyson Bettis wasn't born when Parks refused to give up her seat, but she heard about it from her parents and their friends.

"It was definitely something my parents talked about, they still talk about it," she said. "It was a significant part of their lives, of all our lives. It shows that one little thing like a lady being tired and fed up, changed America, changed our lives."

U.S. Rep. John Dingell, D-Michigan, knew Parks and called her "a wonderful citizen of our state."

"When Rosa Parks refused to leave her bus seat, the world stopped," Dingell said in a prepared statement. "That brave act inspired millions - black and white - to recognize that we are all created equal and all deserve to have the same rights protected by law."

"She was a great, decent, courageous lady," Dingell said, "and I know God will be kind to her soul."

In a 1993 interview with the Observer, Parks said her fondest memories were of her mother, Leona.

"My mother believed in free-

dom and equality, even though we didn't have any then," she said.

Parks also fondly remembered the Mount Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church she had attended in Alabama, saying, "It was founded by former slaves. I loved that church."

Parks' death has prompted an outpouring of emotion worldwide - not only from government leaders but from everyday people who say that Parks gave others the courage to face their own struggles.

"I remember very well when she refused to give up her seat," Everett said. "I thought at that time, here is a courageous person who had been told over and over not to sit in certain seats, but she decided that day that she wasn't moving."

Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano issued a statement saying the world has joined this area in mourning "a gentle giant."

"As the mother of the civil rights movement, Mrs. Parks' quiet dignity, strength and grace changed this nation forever, and we are all better for it," he said. "She embodied the words 'freedom' and 'justice' and not just through words but through actions. Her commitment to

peace and equality will forever serve as an example of the best of this country."

The Detroit area is "honored" that Parks made this her long-time home, Ficano said. "Her living legacy will always be treasured and remembered. Mrs. Parks lived her life as an example for us all."

State Rep. Jim Plakas, D-Garden City, issued a statement saying that "Rosa Parks sat down on the bus so we as a nation can stand up today."

"She took a stand for justice, civil rights and equality for all," Plakas said. "With her one act of civil disobedience, she brought our nation together to fight injustice and inequality. Her entire life was dedicated to civil rights and the fight for equality. We are a better, stronger America because of Rosa Parks."

During the 1993 interview with the Observer, Parks said race relations have improved but still need work.

"I try to always be optimistic that we have a better opportunity to do away with racism and prejudice," she said. "Within ourselves, we have to make up our minds that we will not hate people because of their race, religion or whatever."

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AUDIT

FROM PAGE A1

But the problem facing the district is one school officials have been talking about for a long time: flat state school aid for three years and two years prorations as well as increases in retirement costs and health care.

According to Higgins, retirement costs, which were at 16.4 percent as on Oct. 1, will eat up \$85 of the \$175 per pupil increase the district receives from the state this budget year.

He added that the state aid increases the district has

received have been less than 2.25 percent since Proposal A was passed and have been significantly lower than the rate of inflation.

"The district has done a terrific job in planning for a time when it gets more dire," he said. "Because of that, you've been able to plan and make cuts. But something has to be done about Proposal A."

Higgins added that some schools benefited in the beginning under Proposal A, but now all districts "are in the same boat."

"If the state is not able or willing to do something on the revenue side, it makes it diffi-

cult for schools on the expenditure side," he said.

Superintendent Greg Baracy pointed out that the district has implemented some \$15 million in cuts and that the cost of doing business in the district is in double digits.

"It's time that the leaders in Lansing step up before districts start going into bankruptcy," he said. "They have an obligation to adequately fund education. If you look at the four things mentioned, we're in the hole \$250 million and that doesn't include any other aspects of our operation."

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# District governor praises local Rotary efforts

BY JULIE BROWN  
STAFF WRITER

District Gov. Jim Karolyi didn't get lost on his way to Westland Rotary's luncheon last Thursday. He's been here often before.

"I can come here without worrying about where the sign is," said Karolyi, who arrived with wife Jill for the annual district governor's visit Oct. 20. The Rotarians meet 12:15 p.m. each Thursday at Joy Manor on Joy east of Middlebelt.

Karolyi, a Canton resident and semiretired pediatrician, praised local Rotarians for their efforts to serve the community.

He cited such Westland endeavors as the Toy Show fund-raiser, Rotary Park, Salvation Army support, scholarships for college students, coats for needy kids and ongoing work with Jefferson-Barns and Lincoln elementaries, "which is very commendable."

"You do many, many things that exemplify Service Above Self," Karolyi said. "We're primarily here to serve our communities."

Karolyi cited the international president's emphases, including literacy and water management. Membership is also a concern, with the service organization boasting some 1.2 million members worldwide.

"More members means more Service Above Self," said District 6400's Karolyi.

Recruiting more women and putting them in leadership roles is another concern of the international president, who's from Sweden, as are youth programs that aim at promoting world peace and understanding, he said.

Karolyi also touched on the organization's master's degree programs at local universities, offering Peace Scholar degrees.

"They are the future peace-makers of the world," he said.

Rotarian Mary McGaw also was recognized as a Paul Harris Fellow, for foundation support. Member Don

Douglass, already a Fellow, contributed in the name of his late wife, a Wayne-Westland elementary teacher, and was lauded for his continued support.

After Karolyi spoke, member Capt. Matt O'Neil of the Wayne-Westland Salvation Army described his recent trip south to aid Hurricane Katrina victims in the Biloxi, Miss., area, where he and others did pastoral care.

"I have seen Rotary tents down there," O'Neil said.

The shelter boxes, done with other organizations, included such essentials as water purification tablets and pots and pans.

# Co-op Credit Union gets 'Best To Work' for honor

Co-op Services Credit Union has been named as one of "Metropolitan Detroit's 101 Best and Brightest Companies To Work For," an annual award sponsored by the Michigan Business & Professional Association.

"A few years ago we established a mission to become an 'employer of choice' and implemented several new training and communication programs to achieve this goal," said Anthony Carnarvon, CEO of Co-op Services Credit Union. "Our staff has worked very hard and is very deserving of this recognition."

Companies selected for this award are required to fill out an extensive survey and are awarded points based on a variety of best practices in human resource management.

Co-op Services Credit Union has more than 100 employees and recently celebrated its 50th anniversary.

"With the programs we've implemented, it has also helped us to improve the level of service that we deliver both internally and externally to our members," added Carnarvon.

Headquartered in Livonia, Co-op Services Credit Union has approximately 43,000 members and maintains branch offices in Dearborn, Livonia, Walled Lake, Westland and Downriver.

Members also have access to any of 23 Family Service Center shared branches located throughout Michigan.

For more information visit the credit union Web site at [www.cscu.org](http://www.cscu.org) or call (800) 321-8570.

## CLUBS IN ACTION

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

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

**Hospital retirees**  
The Oakwood-Annapolis Retirees meet

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

**Silver Strings Dulcimer**  
Musicians and listeners are welcome to stop by and visit a traditional music jam 7-9 p.m. the first and third Thursday of the month at Good Hope Lutheran Church, 28680 Cherry Hill, Garden City. Acoustic instruments include hammered and mountain dulcimer, guitar, banjo, fiddle, harmonica, concertina, autoharp, recorder, pennywhistle, ukulele and upright bass. Call (734) 482-2902 or check out the Web site at <http://geocities.com/ssd>

society.

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

**Spirit of Detroit**  
Spirit of Detroit Chorus rehearsals are 7-10 p.m. every Tuesday at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Five Mile and Inkster. The group is for women who love to sing. It is active in chorus competition. For information, call (734) 721-7742.

**Sweet Adelines**  
The County Connection Chorus of Sweet Adelines International is looking for women who love to sing. The group sings a cappella music in bar-

bershop style. Rehearsals are 6:45 p.m. Tuesdays at UAW Local 898 at 8975 Textile, Ypsilanti. For more information, call (734) 480-8843 or visit [www.sweetadelines.org](http://www.sweetadelines.org).

**T.O.P.S.**  
Take Off Pounds Sensibly No. M128, a support group for sensible weight loss, meets 6:30 p.m. Tuesdays at Good Shepherd Reformed Church, Wayne Road and Hunter in Westland. Call Jackie at (734) 722-7225.

Take Off Pounds Sensibly No. M153 meets at 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays at St. John Episcopal Church, 555 S. Wayne Road, Westland. Call (734) 721-5023. Call Rosalie at (734) 728-0299 for more information.

# Human rights film fest set

A Human Rights Film Festival, "Four Nights in November," will be offered by the Citizens for Peace and Madonna University on Wednesdays, Nov. 2, 9, 16 and 30. All movies will begin at 7:30 p.m. in Madonna University's Kresge Hall.

The first film, to be shown Nov. 2, is *Oil Factor: Behind the War on Terror*. Narrated by Ed Asner, this film explores why Iraq was attacked by the U.S., even though it was not a threat, but has the second largest oil reserves in the world.

*Forsaken Cries*, an Amnesty International Film showing on Nov. 9, documents why and who is responsible for the killing of close to one million people in a planned and systematic genocide in Rwanda, and why the international community failed to respond. The carnage continues today in Sudan's Darfur region.


Of special interest to Livonia residents is *Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price*. Set

for 7:30 p.m. Nov. 16. This behind the scenes look at the world's biggest corporation is scheduled to be seen simultaneously throughout the country by more than 1,900 groups.

On Nov. 30, the movie *Slavery: A Global Investigation* reveals the plight of an estimated 27 million people who are held in bondage - more slaves than at any other time in history. They are working in factories, building roads, weaving carpets. If they are children, they may be forced to be soldiers or become sex slaves. Opportunities for discussion will follow each film. A \$5 donation per film is requested.

There is ample, free, well-lit parking available at the Madonna University campus, located at the intersection of the I-96 freeway (Schoolcraft) and Levan Road in Livonia. The public is invited to all of these films.

For information, call Colleen Mills, (734) 425-0079.



**City of Garden City  
County of Wayne  
State of Michigan**

**Board of Canvassers Meeting**


**Wednesday, November 9, 2005**

This is your official notification of a Board of Canvassers meeting which is scheduled for Wednesday, November 9, 2005 AT 1:00 P.M. in the Civic Center, 6000 Middlebelt Road, Garden City, Michigan to consider the following:

1. Approval of the May 4, 2005 Board Minutes.
2. Canvass and certify results of the City General Election of November 8, 2005.
3. Adjournment.

Allyson M. Bettis  
City Clerk-Treasurer

Publish: October 27 & 30, 2005



**NOTICE OF  
PUBLIC ACCURACY TEST**

A public accuracy test will be conducted at the time and location listed, for the purpose of testing the accuracy of the tabulating equipment and programs which will be used to tabulate voted ballots for the City General Election to be held on Tuesday, November 8, 2005 in Garden City, Wayne County, Michigan.

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

Date: November 2, 2005  
Wednesday

Time: 10:00 a.m.

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

Publish: October 27 & 30, 2005



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# Author's optimistic about Holy Land peace

BY JULIE BROWN  
STAFF WRITER

Dorothy Drummond remembers her third trip to the Holy Land, seeing Arab dwellers and Israeli soldiers in close proximity in Jerusalem. She wondered why peace could only be maintained at gunpoint, and why the entire world is involved in the conflict in the place so holy to Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Drummond, a retired geography professor at Indiana State University, kept a journal which her family and friends urged her to publish. She expanded it with considerable historical detail and *Holy Land, Whose Land* from Fairhurst Press, now in its second revised edition, is the result.

"I am optimistic," she said of peace in the region where the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has cost so many lives. "I think we have a chance for peace now." She cited the successor to Yasser Arafat, Mahmoud Abbas, who was elected by 67 percent of his people.

"That's such a promising thing," said Drummond, a Terre Haute, Ind., resident who recently spoke to the Plymouth A.M. Rotary. "I think that's just a wonderful affirmation."

On Oct. 20, Abbas met with President George W. Bush in Washington, D.C. Drummond has great hope that Abbas can subdue more militant elements of the Palestinians, and come to the table with Israel's Ariel Sharon, with the U.S. playing a vital role as peacemaker.

She's visited the Holy Land three times, the first in 1958 when Israel was 10 years old. She and her husband, also an Indiana State faculty member (he had basketball's Larry Bird as a student), were returning from a Fulbright program. "That was a very good experience."

Her more recent visits include 1994 and 2000, seeing Jordan and Israel. Drummond found a lot of material on the Middle East, but noted there's not much offering a complete account for the layperson.

She kept in mind the college freshmen she's taught, people who are bright but have to digest a lot of information. Drummond, of a Christian background, wrote to keep interest.

She has sympathies for both sides in the conflict, and believes the U.S. should serve as peacemaker. Drummond said broadcast sound bites need to be accurate.

"You can condense anything meaningfully. You have to start by being knowledgeable." Her book includes a number of maps.



Dorothy Drummond has been pleased with reaction to her book on the Holy Land, where she has visited three times.

She recently spoke to high school teachers in Birmingham, Ala., who were interested in incorporating her book into their curriculum. She agreed high school students and older Americans should learn about the region, as it's involved in the 9/11 attacks, airport security, and other policy issues of our time.

Drummond, former president of the National Council for Geographic Education, has been pleased with reaction to her book, the current edition of which came out shortly before Arafat's death. The book, subtitled *Modern Dilemma, Ancient Roots*, is available in The Book Cellar & Cafe on Ann Arbor Trail in Plymouth and other area bookstores. Information can also be found online at [www.dorothydrummond.com](http://www.dorothydrummond.com).

"It's all involved in this very critical issue," she said, urging people to become more informed about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

She predicted the withdrawal from the Gaza in her book, and has seen other long-term trends she continues to follow.

# Science teachers hold convention

The Metropolitan Detroit Science Teachers Association (MDSTA) will hold its annual convention, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 29, at Lawrence Technological University on the corner of 10 mile and the Lodge Expressway in Southfield, Michigan.

This year over 600 teachers and college students are expected to attend. At the conference, participants have a choice of over 110 seminars to attend and view the products and services of over 45 vendors. A few of the talks will include: Grant writing, environmental topics, chemistry inquiry, glow in the dark demonstrations, GPS

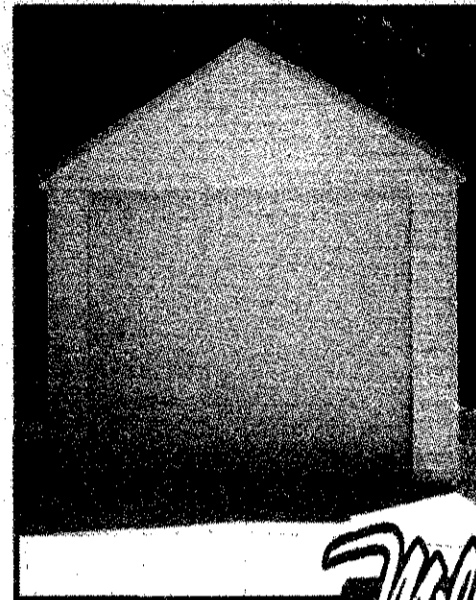
in the classroom, learn about a free trip to Japan and the U.S. Naval Academy to study oceanography, or even various conservation and environmental programs. Keynote speakers include Dr. Nancy Songer from the University of Michigan and Mr. David Bydlowski from RESA and Science Explosion.

Professional registration of \$50 includes a one-year membership in MDSTA, while a student registration is only \$25. On site registration is an additional \$10. Register online at [www.mdsta.org](http://www.mdsta.org), or on the day of the convention.

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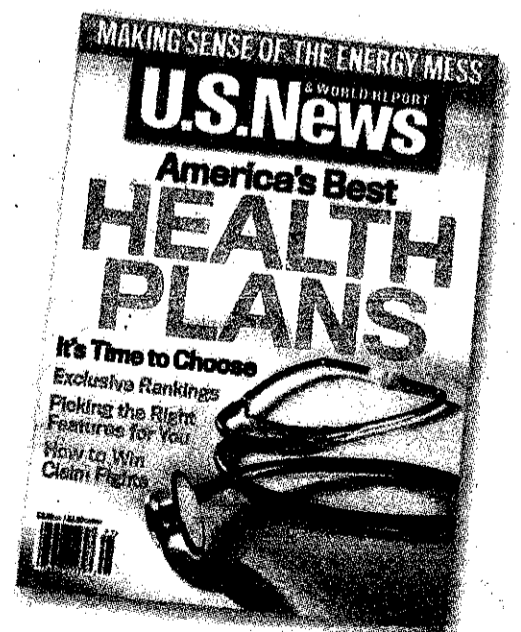
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OUR VIEWS

## Consider benefits of school plan

The Livonia Public Schools' so-called Legacy Initiative is a proposal that, if approved, will bring about a seismic shift in the district's landscape.

There are some concerns, but many positive aspects to the proposal and it will be interesting to see how it's received by the community. We hope district parents take the time to consider the benefits of these proposed changes, knowing that major district change is needed.

There's no denying the massiveness of this plan. First, the long-touted concept of neighborhood schools has been sacrificed, replaced by the concept of spending dwindling school dollars to keep or bring back educational programs that parents and staff feel are best for the youngsters. We agree with the committee that, when it comes to a choice, spending money to educate kids is better than spending money to heat, light, maintain and staff a building.

Of course, closing schools is a big deal for many people in this district, especially those who see a school just down the block from their house and want it to stay open. Unfortunately, the days of neighborhood schools have fallen victim to sinking enrollments and school district revenue that can't keep pace with health care and retirement costs for staff.

It may sound like an oxymoron but this plan does find a positive side to closing seven schools. It protects the lower class sizes and teaching staff, while restoring opportunities for more foreign language, music and physical education classes that had been lost to previous years' budget cuts.

Creating new upper elementary schools for grades five-six creates those extra opportunities, allowing the district to better utilize teachers and providing a way to move sixth-graders out of the lower elementary schools but not into the middle schools. That is something that staff and parents have said is important across the district. The fact that these new buildings will be run like elementary buildings also seems an important factor.

Yes, more children will spend more time on school buses - and those details are among the biggest concerns and questions for parents, as they should be.

What shouldn't be questioned, though, is the actual municipality of the building children will be attending. Livonia Public Schools is a quality district, with quality schools and staff, whether it's in north Livonia, south Livonia or Westland. The fact that two of the upper elementary buildings are across Joy Road and actually located in Westland - and we've heard this concern already - is not a reasonable concern. These are the same students who would be grouped together in high school anyway.

Overall, it seems that this committee took some bold steps and found creative solutions to this most difficult task. They focused on keeping and improving some of the best things about the district, while listening to the priorities of district parents. One key issue is keeping school communities together.

This plan is expected to save \$1.5 million to \$2 million or more each year and keep the district from facing massive and disruptive program cuts and school closing proposals every year at budget time. By facing the pain all at once and spreading it equally across the district, the school system can get on with the business of educating kids.

While this plan is considered and the community responds, we hope parents, staff and school officials will keep in mind what's best for all our students.

## Lawmakers should focus on problems, not getting re-elected

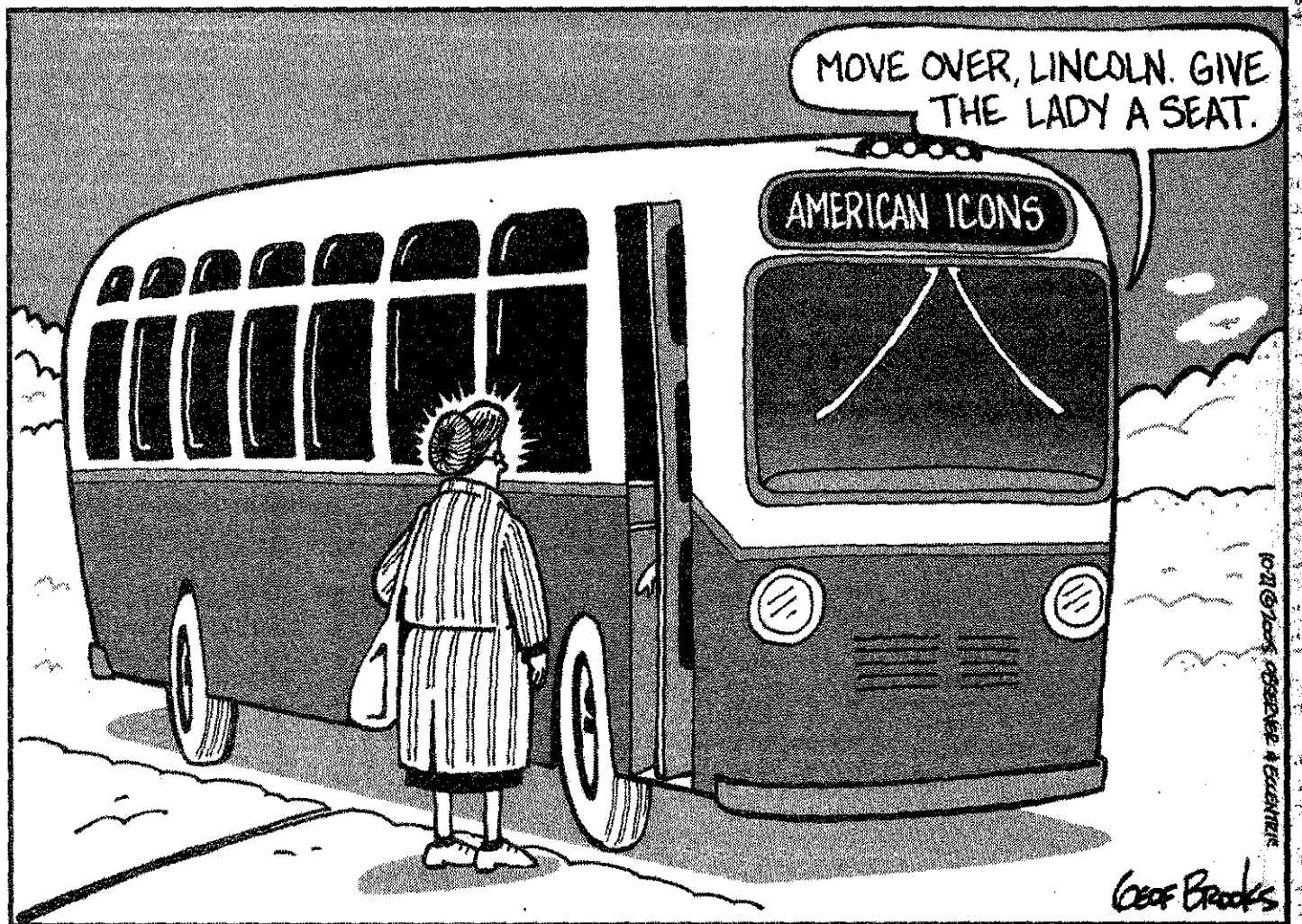
Now that the state Legislature has avoided (at least temporarily) the latest budget crisis and is settling in for its new session, it is time to help set some priorities for our elected officials.

With bad economic news a seemingly daily occurrence for our state, the first thing our leaders in Lansing need to do is pledge to actually do their jobs and not spend the time between now and next November trying to get re-elected.

What is needed is a comprehensive, bipartisan effort to solve the many critical issues facing our state. This will be even more difficult to do in an election year, but our state simply cannot afford to wait out another election cycle to take on these challenges.

Despite pledges from Democrats and Republicans alike, structural deficiencies in the state budget have not been resolved. The state is still spending more money than it takes in. We don't expect either side to discuss tax increases during an election year, but somebody needs to have the political intestinal fortitude to at least begin the conversation of what can be done long term to correct this issue.

Instead of enduring another round of political claptrap and attack ads, it is time for this state's voters to demand better representative government, and make those politicians who refuse to do so pay with their jobs.



Rosa Parks 1913-2005

### LETTERS

#### Swistak is well-qualified

Once again it's time to vote for the Westland council and mayor. Again it's a hard decision for many of us to make. Unfortunately, I fear the voter turnout will not be as it should be in a country as ours. Every person old enough to vote should be registered and should vote. We are losing so many of our rights only because so few of us stand up and speak out with that vote.

All though it's wonderful to see all the flag waving it would be better to see all the wavers at the polls. Remember to vote Nov. 8.

As usual it's a hard decision as to who to vote for. Elenor Swistak is more than qualified. She is a no nonsense, administrator when it comes to a matter of business, yet she does have a very good sense of humor. She is also a kind and caring person. All good qualities for mayor.

She also has a degree in accounting, was the first female claims adjuster for AAA, worked in engineering for Michigan Bell and many, many other qualities. Most important is she is constantly learning and researching so many things. In other words she is master at multitasking.

She gets my vote and I'm sure many, many others.

After attending Meet the Candidates I'm even more determined to see the Good Ole Boy politicking out of Westland. So when you vote please know the candidates and vote informed and not by name recognition. The same old politicians voted in over and over is not good government. Just because it's always been that way doesn't mean it should stay that way.

We need fresh new ideas and faces to progress as a community. If you look around business as usual is not working. So get out and vote. You can make the difference.

Judy McKinney  
concerned voter

#### Cuts will hurt middle class

Congressional Republicans want us to believe that the federal programs they are trying to cut in this week's budget process don't affect most of us; this is simply not true.

Among other things, they are aiming to cut billions of dollars from student loans. As a college student from a low-income family, this will directly impact me and my mother (who is also trying to complete her college education).

Republicans also want to slash Medicaid funding, which would further inhibit my ability to complete college and make meaningful contributions to my community, as I would have to take on a third job to pay for more of my paraplegic father's medical expenses.

Congress should reject the Republican budget because it goes against so many basic American values, directly discouraging the pursuit of higher education, indirectly discouraging civil participation by preventing the upkeep of our citizens'

health and education, and keeping middle/working-class families from having any chance to pursue happiness.

Nancy E. Hetrick  
Westland

#### No one wins with LPS plan

Demographics Committee: We are parents of two children who currently attend Kennedy Elementary School. Our son is in the fourth grade and will be effected by the move to Johnson School.

The most rewarding investment we make is in regards to our children's welfare and education. It is our responsibility as parents to raise our children in a safe and inspiring environment. The largest monetary investment we make is the purchase of our home.

Most residents have chosen their home purchase for the same reasons. It was our impression that the city of Livonia allowed condos to be built so that empty nesters who still wanted to reside in Livonia could do so; and new families could purchase the homes. What will happen to the value of our homes in the Kennedy and Hull Elementary area - they will decrease in value! New families that are looking to move to the Livonia area will do so because of the school district; they will not be looking to send their children to a school in Westland. Where does that leave us?

We can understand the fiscal responsibility that the school district is facing, we appreciate the district's concern of putting the children's education first and foremost; we do not oppose the changes in the curriculum or the move of fifth and sixth graders to another school. However, it is unnerving that our children will be sent to a school five miles away in Westland! If we wanted to buy a house in Westland, we would have!

We chose to purchase in Livonia because of the excellent reputation of the school district. We chose our home because of the proximity of Kennedy Elementary School. We want our children to experience walking to and from school, a safe and friendly community, playing with the neighborhood children after school. Twelve minutes have been added to the school day this year, and next year our 10- and 11-year-olds will have another 90 minutes of their day taken from them due to a bus schedule. This does not seem fair!

Our children will not be bused five miles away to a neighboring city! The city will either lose us as residents (which means losing our tax money) or the school district will lose the funding for our two children. Either way, no one seems to win.

Craig and Cindi Armbruster  
Livonia

#### History questioned

It is unfortunate that Leonard Poger (Oct. 13 letter) is more concerned about spreading revisionism than truth when discussing the tragic Palestinian-Israeli conflict. He implies the tiring argument that Jordan is Palestine by going into a

historical rendition of how Jordan was split off from Palestine by the British.

That's true, but the Middle East, in general, was an experiment for many colonial powers in terms of carving up land or setting up boundaries without concern for indigenous peoples. Need we bring up Britain's conquest of Iraq and the subsequent problems raised?

Jordan is a sovereign country and Palestinians completely respect this. It would be helpful for Poger to remember that none of today's Palestinian refugees came from areas within Jordan. But they were forced out of their homes in areas affected by Israel's creation in 1948 and offensive war in 1967.

Interestingly, he expects Arab states to pay for the actions of Israel when he discusses Palestinian refugees. Nobody has taught the world more about righting the wrongs of the past than the Jewish people, and they should be applauded for their continued demands for justice.

What I find puzzling is why this Palestinian demand for justice is denied by Israel and her supporters? Or is justice a luxury for select groups?

As to the "many opportunities" to create a Palestinian state, I find this amusing. The 1947 UN Partition Plan Poger refers to would have allotted about 53 percent of the land for a Jewish state even though there was less than 10 percent Jewish ownership. And about 45 percent of the land would have gone to the Palestinian Arabs who owned at least 90 percent of the land. Is it any wonder that it was rejected?

Finally, it is important to note that despite these facts, Palestinians have accepted Israel's existence on 78 percent of what was Palestine. They are merely asking for the remaining 22 percent as set forth in UN Resolution 242. I'd say that's pretty generous. But instead we see the expansion of Israeli settlements and a huge wall cutting far into Palestinian West Bank towns. For the sake of Palestine and Israel's children, this greed must stop.

Sherri Muzher  
Mason

### SHARE YOUR OPINIONS

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

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### QUOTABLE

"We're not talking about substance abusers, we're talking about friends and families, people who have lost their jobs, seniors who have too much of the month left at the end of the check."

- The Rev. Michael Enersen, about the closing of a warming center for the homeless and soup kitchen at Full Gospel Temple in Westland last week

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# Economic apocalypse descends on Michigan

What is shaping up as a likely economic apocalypse is descending on Michigan:

■ Northwest Airlines and Delphi Corp. are already in Chapter 11 bankruptcy. It would be surprising if their example wasn't followed by at least some other supply chain companies — and perhaps even auto manufacturers.

■ The labor contracts between the auto industry and the United Auto Workers are in the process of being drastically renegotiated, whether through collective bargaining or by order of the bankruptcy court. The system that for decades

provided high wages, gold-plated health care coverage and generous pensions is ending.

■ The city of Detroit and the Detroit school system are teetering on the brink of insolvency.

Economic life as we have come to know it is changing, drastically and quickly. For the auto industry, at least, an era is ending. And what's fascinating is not how fast things are moving now, but how long it's taken for an economic system based on an unsustainable business model to come unglued.

That now-obsolete model was based on a work force with high costs and low skills, which the industry was able to afford thanks to high production and closed markets. Those days have ended.

What is happening just now is the consequence of a perfect storm hitting the auto industry much faster and much harder than anybody expected. Some of the elements are:

■ Double-digit increases in the cost of health care.

■ Sharply increased material costs for items such as steel, metals and plastics. Much of this is the result of rapidly rising demand from China and India.

■ A spike in the price of oil, the result of worldwide demand outstripping supply, aggravated by the effects of Hurricane Katrina.

■ The related rapid rise in the cost of gasoline. This has led to plummeting demand for trucks and SUVs, the domestic auto industry's most profitable offerings.

Every storm is heralded by a thunderbolt. In this case, it was Delphi CEO Steve Miller's decision to put his company into bankruptcy — and his admirable candor about why. His assertion that the way the entire domestic auto industry has done business is simply not sustainable focused intense attention on the crisis.

Within the next few days, General Motors obtained billion-dollar health cost rollbacks from the UAW. So what does it all mean?

First, it means the end of a long, stable era for Michigan. For more than half a century, the auto industry and the UAW collaborated in a business model that consisted of the manufacturers sup-

plying vehicles at a given cost and quality to essentially a closed domestic market. The union built the cars, and got ever-increasing wages and health care and pension benefits in return.

Once foreign manufacturers figured out how vulnerable the U.S. auto market was to competition, they built new manufacturing plants that paid workers at industry-wide scale, but avoided the vast "legacy costs" of health care and pensions.

These competitive pressures are now breaking down this cozy system. Some of the demolition is happening immediately; more will take place when existing labor contracts are renegotiated in 2007.

Second, the new reality almost certainly deals a death blow to the remnants of private "defined benefit" health care and pension plans. In a defined benefit system, the employer undertakes to provide workers and retirees with a certain level of health care and pension payments, regardless of cost.

This will be replaced by "defined contribution" plans, in which employers contribute a defined amount to these plans. Any shortfalls in cost or coverage are thereby shifted to the workers or retirees.

The defined benefit model for generations has been the prevailing system for all kinds of "security blanket" social benefits, both from the private and the public sector. They include pensions, health care, Medicaid and a list that goes on and on.

Over the next few years, I suspect, defined benefit programs will become extinct, not only in Michigan, but nationwide.

The social and political consequences could be enormous. Consider, for example, the feelings of anger and disappointment of thousands of families that considered themselves solidly middle class, but who are now suddenly threatened with sharply reduced pensions and vastly increased health care expenses.

Historically, the most volatile group in any society is that which finds itself "de-classed" — i.e. pushed down from one class to another — by events beyond its control.

The UAW has pointed out, for example, that the \$10 an hour wages demanded by Delphi's Miller amount to \$20,800 a year, less than half the median income in America.

It won't do much to assuage workers' anger, but perhaps the first "defined contribution" fringe benefit the auto and parts companies should give their workers and retirees is a copy of Thomas Friedman's new book *The Earth Is Flat*.

It's the best presentation yet of how the rapidly globalizing world economy is shaking all previous assumptions about economic competition. It's a message that everybody now working anywhere needs to learn — and take to heart.

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



Phil Power

# Education system can learn a lot from 'Emperor's New Clothes'

I am quite certain most readers of this newspaper are familiar with the story about *The Emperor's New Clothes*. Remember the skillful robbers, disguised as weavers? They convinced a whole town, including the emperor, that his new clothes were beautiful. Of course, in reality, the poor emperor was dressed in nothing at all. He looked quite foolish.

America's public schools can learn much from this wonderful story written by Hans Christian Andersen.

Standardized testing is robbing our schools of something that is very precious, something that cannot be replaced. Our schools are being robbed of time. Time to learn. Time to teach. Time to think. Time to create.

The amount of time that is now spent on administering standardized tests throughout our country's public schools is robbing our children of time that can never be recovered.

In the Plymouth-Canton school district, third-grade students will spend approximately six weeks of a 42-week school year taking standardized tests. Why? For what purpose?

Those who purport to know what is best for America's schools will say it is to make sure our children are learning. Business leaders demand that schools be competitive. After all, that's how business does it. Others scream for accountability. More tests, more accountability.

It seems of late almost anything can be done to students and schools, as long as it's done in the name of "raising standards" or "accountability." Adequate yearly progress (AYP) is just one example. AYP is part of Michigan's School Report Card system.

If Tonda Elementary School, where I am principal, comes in with low MEAP scores this school year, we won't receive recognition for AYP. I guess it's irrelevant that the test was given in the fall this year instead of late winter. It doesn't matter that third-graders have to take the MEAP test now for the first time, thanks to No Child Left Behind legislation.

So what if some children who take the test are not even close to being fluent in the English language?

The special education students? Why, with all of the accommodations provided, certainly their score is an accurate measure of their cognitive development. Hey, some special education students even get to take a completely different test. I'm still not sure

what that's all about.

And, if history proves to be a good teacher, next year's MEAP test will be very different from the 2005 model.

Respected educators, neuroscientists and child psychologists from across the globe agree young learners can have as much as a three-year difference in the development of their brains. It is unrealistic to hold each learner to a specific standard or group norm that ignores what we know about neuroscience. Standardized testing does just that.

Please consider this in the context of a fourth-grade classroom here in Plymouth-Canton, where the average chronological age is 9. An educational system powered by standardized testing lumps this classroom into one pile, disregarding individual brain development, spits out scores from highest to lowest and says to a school, "Way to go" or "You have failed."

Rather than spending money on standardized testing (\$48 million was paid to an outside company to manage the MEAP test over the next three years), we could better serve our children by spending money on researching, planning, implementing and coordinating effective educational practices that help all children, in all environments, succeed in school.

We are a very busy society. We are almost frantic in our desire to do what is best, especially for our children. I suggest the public educational system in this country has become frantic. Frantic at the feet of emperors wearing new clothes.

Enough. The emperor is not wearing any clothes. We are being duped.

Consider this. "It is not enough to be busy," Henry David Thoreau once remarked. "The question is, what are we busy about?" Let's get busy doing what is right for our children, for our schools and for our future. We must respond to clever robbers and emperors dressed in new clothes.

We must question ideas, legislation, laws and programs that serve no purpose except to compare children and tear down an educational system that already struggles terribly under the weight of apathy, poor funding and misguided leadership.

We must turn away the robbers who are trying desperately to steal our children's love for learning. We must not dress our leaders in the emperor's new clothes. Instead, let's clothe them in the truths about teaching, learning and a place called school.

George Belvitch is principal at Tonda Elementary School. He can be reached at (734) 416-6100.



George Belvitch

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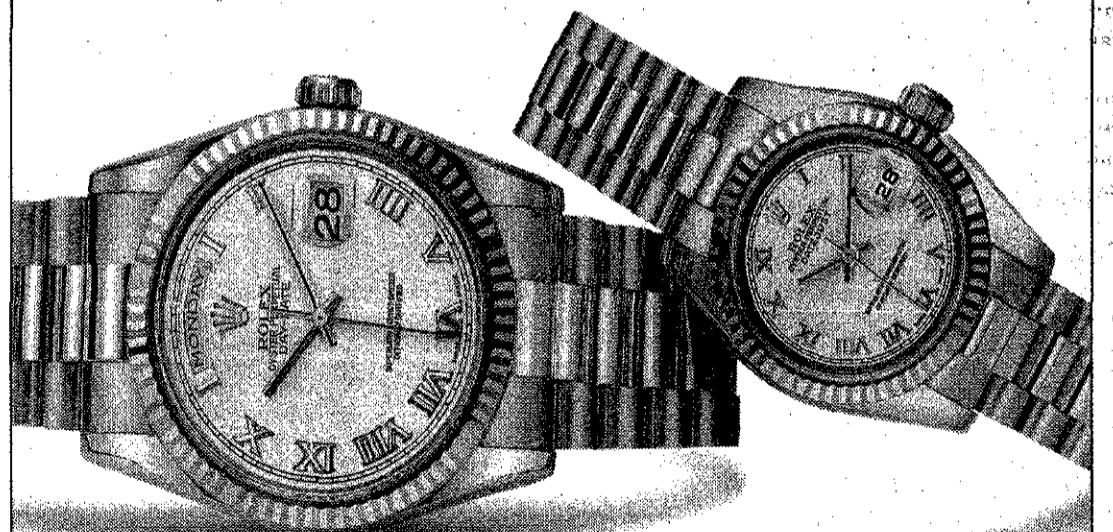
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# Agencies are ready to help with soaring home heating costs

BY ALEX LUNDBERG  
STAFF WRITER

With cold weather on the way and home heating prices guaranteed to be higher than they've been in decades, public assistance organizations are putting the word out that there's help, advice and cash available to get people through the coming Michigan winter.

The Salvation Army, the Michigan Public Service Commission and The Heat And Warmth fund held a press conference last week to let people know there are many avenues of help available to get heating assistance this year.

Salvation Army Maj. Norman Marshall said between the recent hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico and the global market for petroleum products, it's going to be expensive to heat a home this winter.

"The rising cost of utilities

will impact every Michigan household," he said. "The increase is expected to be between \$40 and \$60 (a month), but I think that's conservative."

MPSC Chairman J. Peter Lark said he would be making tours of the state to put the word out about the resources — both in terms of advice and aid — the state has to offer.

He said people are going to need all the help they can get.

"The winter energy appraisal predicts that heating costs will increase to \$187 a month, based on a 1,200- to 1,800-square-foot home," Lark said. "That's \$59 over last year, assuming we have an average winter."

Whatever passes for average (last winter was slightly warmer than the one before it) prices have been slowly marching upward since the turn of the century. The average cost to heat that hypothetical home was \$88 in 2002,

\$114 in 2003 and \$128 last year. A potential bright spot: Michigan has the eighth-lowest natural gas prices in the country.

Still, there are a lot of simple things to do to reduce the impact of higher gas prices.

"Now is the time to start planning and take easy steps to minimize the costs," Lark said. "Dial down the thermostat and put up weather stripping. A programmable thermostat costs \$40 and can save that much money in the first month."

The programmable thermostat dials itself down at night and during the day when no one is at home. Every degree cooler a house is, he said, represents a 3-percent reduction in heating cost.

He also said utility companies offer payment plans that can prevent people from being cut off in the middle of the cold season. The MPSC has given out \$150 million since

2002 in the form of grants to heating-related aid organizations and he said that only a third of the people who qualify for that aid ever ask for it.

Kathy Walgren of The Heat and Warmth fund (THAW), said her organization was created during the last energy crisis and continues to this day helping low-income people keep the heat on during the cold months.

She said when people can't pay to heat their homes the right way, they turn to more dangerous alternatives like kerosene heaters and candles. The number of people in that situation is expected to rise.

"There's the traditional group of the continually unemployed and there's the working poor," Walgren said. "But the fastest-growing segment of the 'poor' population are people who are 150 to 200 percent over the poverty line. These are people who've never looked for help before."

# Experts discuss Rouge River issues

The Rouge River, which was once a synonym for urban environmental problems, has become one of Michigan's leading examples of progressive urban land use policy over the last 15 years.

That's according to organizers of Rouge 2005, which will feature reports on the status of the river and its watershed by elected officials, environmental professionals and community leaders at a meeting at the University of Michigan-Dearborn at 9 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 29.

The meeting will end at noon with the dedication of the Rouge River Gateway Greenway Trail, a path through the campuses of Henry Ford Community College and UM-Dearborn, connecting Hines Drive and the Wayne County parks with the entertainment and shopping districts in west Dearborn.

Rouge 2005 is the 15th consecutive report to Rouge River watershed stakeholders who have worked

together to clean up the river and expand the region's capacity to make the Rouge a recreational and environmental asset to the community. The Rouge River watershed spans approximately 438 square miles, and is home to more than 1.5 million people in 48 communities and 3 counties.

"Thanks to the bipartisan work in Michigan's congressional delegation, led by

John Dingell, what once was one of the most polluted rivers in the country has become much cleaner over the past 20 years," according to Edward Bagale, vice chancellor for government relations at the University of Michigan-Dearborn and co-chair of the Rouge River Gateway Partnership.

The Rouge River Gateway Partnership is a coalition of businesses, cultural and academic institutions and governmental agencies along the Rouge River.

Much of the progress on the cleanup of the Rouge has been spurred by the Rouge River National Wet Weather Demonstration Project, a cooperative effort among federal, state and local agencies supported by grants from the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency and additional funding from local communities. The EPA grant has been managed by Wayne County since 1992 and county executive Robert Ficano will be one of the speakers at the session.

Other speakers will include Gloria Jeff, director of the Michigan Department of Transportation; Dearborn Mayor Michael Guido, and members of the state's congressional delegation.

The meeting is free and open to the public, but registration is requested. Those planning to attend should call (313) 593-5140, or send an e-mail to ebagale@umich.edu.

# Make house ready, efficient for winter

The cold is coming, but before you go out and buy a space heater for your living room, there are other smaller steps that can make your house more heat-efficient and save money during the winter.

■ Clean or replace furnace filters regularly, in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

■ Install weather stripping around doors and seal windows with plastic to keep

warm air from leaking out of the house through cracks.

■ Lower the thermostat on your water heater. A setting of 120 degrees is comfortable for most uses.

■ Add insulation to attics and walls if needed.

■ Install a programmable thermostat that automatically dials the temperature down at night and when no one is at home.

■ Insulate your hot water

storage tank and pipes, but don't cover the thermostat.

There are also multiple avenues for people who need more than weather stripping and plastic on the windows.

■ The Michigan Public Services Commission, in creating the Winter Protection Plan, has made \$41 million in grants available to seniors, people receiving assistance from the Michigan Department of Human

Services and those below 150 percent of the poverty level.

■ Michigan Home Heating Credit forms, from the Michigan Department of Treasury, will be available by the end of January wherever tax forms are located. Forms have to be filled out by Sept. 30, 2006.

Conservation tips can be found at [www.energysavers.org](http://www.energysavers.org) or by calling the MPSC at (800) 292-9555.

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**WE NEED COATS FOR KIDS!**

Please join us in this community drive to collect new or gently used coats, hats, gloves, mittens and blankets to keep kids warm this winter. All donations will be distributed to families living in public housing in Wayne County on November 5, 2005.

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