

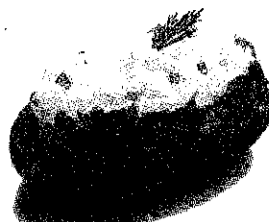


WESTLAND	
MAYOR	
✓ Sandra Cicirelli (I)	8,991
Elenor Swistak	1,022
CITY COUNCIL	
(Top 3 get 4-year terms, 4th place gets 2-year term)	
✓ Charles Pickering (I)	6,438
✓ Robert Stottlemeyer (I)	5,554
✓ Cheryl Graundstadt (I)	5,396
✓ Michael Kehrer (I)	4,890
Lori Brist	4,836
Robert Thomas	3,981
Normie June Brazier	3,213
James Davis	1,690

Spud spin

Variations on the versatile potato

TASTE, PAGE B7



Harvest festival
embraces American
Indian traditions

FILTER - INSERTED SECTION



WESTLAND Observer

THURSDAY
November 10, 2005

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Voters favor incumbents for mayor, council



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

City Councilman William Wild, not up for re-election, watches with incumbent candidate Charles Pickering as returns were being posted at an election gathering at the Bova VFW Post 9885. Pickering, the top vote-getter, had reason to smile.

Pickering is top vote-getter in Tuesday's council race

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Westland voters spurned any notion of a political shake-up Tuesday by returning all four incumbent city council candidates to office.

Some political observers speculated that local voters, worried about the economy, job uncertainties and war, simply wanted stability on the home front. Others said Tuesday's outcome indicated confidence in city leaders.

Voters gave Charles Pickering a first-place victory for the first time since he was elected to the council in 1988. Incumbents Robert Stottlemeyer, Cheryl Graundstadt and Michael Kehrer also defended their seats, although their victories became certain only after absentee vote totals were reported around 11 p.m.

In all, 18.4 percent of Westland's 55,484 registered voters cast ballots in city elections, just shy of the 20 per-

cent mark predicted by Clerk Eileen DeHart.

To some, the biggest surprise came when council candidate Robert Thomas — the city's longest-serving mayor with three consecutive, four-year terms ending in 2001 — placed sixth among eight candidates.

"I'm surprised and shocked," said Thomas, who joined 200-300 people for an election night party at the VFW Bova Post 9885 on Hix Road. "The voters elected me as mayor but wouldn't even put me on council. I can't figure it out."

"It's a big letdown and very disheartening, but life goes on," Thomas said, adding that he had expected to finish no lower than second place.

Pickering ranked first with 6,438 votes, followed by Stottlemeyer's 5,554, Graundstadt's 5,396 and Kehrer's 4,890.

Until absentee vote totals came in, Kehrer had trailed in fifth place behind Westland Chamber of Commerce

President Lori Brist, who ultimately placed fifth with 4,636 votes. Rounding out the field of eight were Thomas with 3,981 votes, Normie June Brazier with 3,213 and James Davis with 1,690.

Pickering, who served as mayor in 1982-85 before he became a never-defeated councilman, savored his victory and attributed it to his dedication to Westland.

"Being the top vote-getter is a very good feeling," said Pickering, a 62-year-old Realtor. "I think the people in Westland know who I am and what I've done, and I think they appreciate my long-term service."

Stottlemeyer, a 69-year-old retired firefighter, fared even better than he did when he finished fourth in the 2003 council race.

"I'm going to work even harder for you," he told the crowd at the VFW hall. "I think we've got a good city,

PLEASE SEE INCUMBENTS, A7

Cicirelli: 'Overwhelmed' by her victory

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Mayor Sandra Cicirelli won re-election Tuesday by steamrolling challenger Elenor Swistak with the biggest landslide mayoral victory in Westland's 39-year history as a city.

"I'm overwhelmed by this kind of victory," Cicirelli said, after defeating Swistak by a nearly 9-to-1 vote margin. "This is beyond my expectations."

Cicirelli, 53, clinched her second four-year mayoral term by amassing 89.4 percent of votes compared to just over 10 percent for Swistak.

Cicirelli, an attorney who already made history in 2001 by becoming the first woman elected as Westland mayor, accumulated 8,991 votes compared to Swistak's 1,022.

A former 12-year council member,

Cicirelli celebrated her historic victory at the VFW Bova Post 9885 on Hix Road — election night headquarters for a crowd of 200-300 people that included many city employees.

"I'm really grateful for all the support," she told the *Observer*. "This will motivate me to work even harder."

Swistak, a 67-year-old retired claims adjuster for AAA of Michigan, also helped make history by challenging Cicirelli in the first Westland mayoral contest between two women. The job pays \$93,178 a year.

"I'm already a winner," Swistak had declared even before the election, vowing to remain a local government watchdog regardless of Tuesday's results.

Cicirelli defeated Swistak in all 42 voting precincts and trounced her in absentee voting. In all, 18.4 percent of Westland's 55,484 registered voters cast

ballots in Tuesday's election.

Cicirelli won re-election on the same night that voters returned four Westland City Council incumbents to office. The mayor and others indicated that the results show that residents have confidence in local leaders.

Said council President Charles Pickering, "This is a compliment to everybody on the city council and to the mayor and her administration."

Swistak had accused the Cicirelli administration of wasteful spending and had vowed that, if elected, she would show more fiscal restraint.

Cicirelli, however, said she and her administrative team managed to increase the city's budget surplus and improve services despite cuts in revenue from Lansing.

PLEASE SEE MAYOR, A7



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Westland Mayor Sandra Cicirelli had plenty to smile about with her landslide victory in Tuesday's election. She received nearly 90 percent of votes cast in the mayor's race and won a second term.

Curtain call

Curtis Sieczkowski (left, foreground) and Anna Clark rehearse the wedding scene of the cast members Amber Fernitz (behind, from left) Ashley Johnson and Jessica Syria. For more about the John Glenn Theatrical Guild production of 'Parlor Games' this weekend, see Page A3.



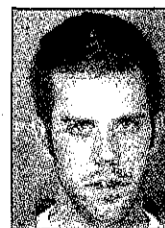
TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Note leads police to robbery suspect

BY CAROL MARSHALL
STAFF WRITER

A Plymouth Township woman helped police catch a man they believe to be a serial bank robber responsible for holdups in Canton, Westland and Dearborn.

According to police, Russell A. Rasmussen, a 28-year-old Garden City man, had borrowed the woman's car and didn't bother to return it. She called police to report the car was missing, and when Dearborn Heights police



Rasmussen

"The note looked like the holdup notes used in the bank robberies," Canton Police Sgt. Rick Pomorski said.

There had been three bank robberies in three days last week, in

Westland, Dearborn and the final robbery in Canton Nov. 3 at the Charter One bank on Ford Road.

"She called Plymouth Township police and they called me to tell me that they had something I needed to see," Pomorski said. He read the note and passed it along to the Dearborn Police Department, which was already analyzing the notes from the three robberies.

The note from the woman's car matched the others, and police had

PLEASE SEE ROBBERY, A6

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Number 48



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Career technical teachers team across communities

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

Livonia Public Schools and Wayne-Westland Community Schools came together Thursday to support career technical teachers and to foster links within the business community.

Franklin High School hosted the Career Technical Program's regular advisory committee meeting, which for the first time incorporated teachers and businesses from both communities.

The meetings are regulated by the state, and are not new to either district. They are organized during the year to match career technical teachers with professionals currently working in related fields.

Janet Haas, principal of Livonia Career Technical Center, said the meetings provide teachers with important professional development opportunities.

"This is how they stay current," she said. School districts have not hosted joint meetings, Haas said, but it made sense that Livonia and Westland would do so. Livonia Public Schools School District includes a northern portion of Westland.

"I'm really excited about bringing the schools together," said Haas. "It's a great opportunity and a new dimension."

Ginny Kowalski, principal of the William D. Ford Career Technical Center in Westland, agreed. She said by joining at Livonia's meeting, all of the instructors can share ideas and see how other programs are run.

She said the advisory committee meetings allow teachers an opportunity to make sure they are using up-to-date technology, tools and equipment, and teaching the skills students need now in the business world.

Kristen Lesondak, an art director at Campbell-Ewald, became a member of the advisory committee more than two years ago. She had been a student at the Livonia Career Technical Center and later attended the Center for Creative Studies, before entering the advertising world.

Lesondak believes in the program and said it helped her find her "niche" in high school, and gave her an advantage in her profession.

More than 175 people attended the event, which included dinner and highlighted the skills of Franklin's Culinary Arts program. Following the meal, the groups met in a smaller, classroom setting to share ideas within their area of study or career field.

Ruth Ann Albus, marketing director for DFCU Financial in Dearborn, also is a member of the advisory committee, and has been for two years. Her company has also provided internship opportunities to career technical students.

"It's very important for businesses and the educational community to work together for the benefit of students," said Albus, a Garden City resident.

Gary Bradt, executive chef at Livonia's Embassy Suites Hotel, attended his first advisory committee meeting after hearing about the opportunity from Haas.

"I said, 'Sign me up.' Anything to help out the kids. Years ago, I was right there in their shoes."

In March, Wayne-Westland Community Schools' William B. Ford Center will host Livonia's program for another joint advisory meeting.

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



PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Franklin students Matt Burt and Dave Booth refill appetizer trays. Rick Hamrick admires their work during the advisory committee meeting for career technical teachers from Livonia and Westland schools.



Shirley Byrd teaches at the William D. Ford Center and attended the first joint meeting for career technical teachers in Westland and Livonia.



Ginny Kowalski is principal of the William D. Ford Center in Westland. Her school will host the next joint meeting between career technical teachers in Livonia and Westland.

More than 175 people attended the event, which included dinner and highlighted the skills of Franklin's Culinary Arts program. Following the meal, the groups met in a smaller, classroom setting to share ideas within their area of study or career field.

Dunk n Dogs now serves more pets

FOR DOGS WITH DOWNTIME

Dunk n Dogs, one of the area's first self-serve doggie wash businesses, has relocated and expanded its services in Livonia.

The new location, 27851 Five Mile Road near Inkster, affords owner Sharon Robinet and professional groomer Kelly Wakefield an opportunity to offer more to their clients. The business basically outgrew its previous 1,100 square feet.

"The new location is three and a half times the size of the old one," said Wakefield, owner of Kelly's Klips located inside Dunk n Dogs.



The larger space allowed for two more self-service wash stations, and an enclosed drying room. In addition, Dunk n Dogs offers Doggie Day Care services from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., training courses for dogs, and puppy playtime, a social hour for dogs in which owners come along.

"Dogs are very social animals," said Wakefield. "They love to be social. For people who work all day, this is a great way for the (pets) to get out their energy."

An indoor dog play area is also available year-round for pet owners.

Dunk n Dogs hosted a grand opening celebration last weekend, complete with a pet psychic and pooch photographer.

Wakefield said more than 250 people attended. "It was a really big success," she said.

Wakefield's grooming business is just 2 years old, and she's already established 400 regular clients. She keeps pets for no longer than an hour and a half, unlike other groomers who may keep them for up to 5 hours.

The cost of services varies. Self-serve dog washes range from \$8-\$18, while day care costs \$25 per day.

Packages are also available for doggie day care. And doggy play time costs \$5 for the first dog, \$2 for the second.

For more information, call Dunk n Dogs at (734) 266-0813 or visit the Web at dunkndogs.com.

Meetings offer info on new drug program

Senior citizens with questions about the new Medicare prescription drug benefit can get answers at a series of informational presentations sponsored by State Sen. Laura M. Toy, R-Livonia.

The meetings for Medicare recipients and their families will be held at area senior centers.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for residents of the 6th Senate District to learn more about the new Medicare prescription drug coverage," Toy said. "I'm glad to make this important information available to my constituents in Garden City, Livonia, Redford Township, and Westland."

The first presentation is 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 15, at the Redford Township Senior Center, 12121 Hemingway.

There also will be presentations 12:30-1:30 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 21, at the

Livonia Senior Center, 15218 Farmington, and 3-4 p.m. Monday, Nov. 21, at the Maplewood Senior Center in Garden City, 31735 Maplewood.

"I encourage anyone on Medicare to come and to bring a friend or family member to help learn which option is right for them," Toy said.

Starting on Nov. 15, beneficiaries can enroll in the Medicare drug plan of their choice.

There are a number of different plans and everyone with Medicare must make a decision about their drug coverage.

Working with the Michigan Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program, Toy has arranged for an expert to visit each of the centers to discuss the new prescription drug benefit and provide information that will help those with Medicare decide which plan is

right for them. All presentations are free of charge and will last about an hour.

"I would also like to acknowledge the support of Congressman Thaddeus McCotter," Toy said. "He has been instrumental in ensuring that area seniors are kept informed of the enhancements being made to Medicare to help people with their prescription drug costs."

The new prescription drug insurance through Medicare gives individuals without coverage the chance to join an affordable plan and people who already have minimal coverage the opportunity to receive additional savings on their prescriptions.

For more information about these presentations or to obtain an informational pamphlet about the new Medicare prescription drug benefit, call Toy's office at (517) 373-1707.

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Joke's on who?

John Glenn Theatrical Guild presents comedy, 'Parlor Games'

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

A joker who fakes his own death to hear what others will say about him finds the joke really is on him in the John Glenn High School Theatrical Guild's production of *Parlor Games* this weekend.

The thespians, under the direction of Sheri Grove and Jennifer Arquette, are taking to the stage for three 7 p.m. performances this evening, Friday and Saturday, in the high school auditorium.

"I thought the script was fun, fast-paced and who doesn't like a comedy," said Grove, the high school drama teacher.

In the play, practical joker Mort McNulty hosts his own wake which attracts a variety of guests - some there on purpose - who with the right amount of suggestion and imagination, convince themselves that he is dead and that his wife Tricia is in denial. The mistaken identities,

Tickets for show cost \$5 for students and \$7 for adults. They're available at the door. John Glenn High School is at 36105 Marquette, west of Wayne Road.

chases and jokes within jokes culminate with Tricia turning the wake into a birthday party for Mort.

The cast includes Janell Agius, Sean Barone, Michelle Canales, Alison Closser, Salina DeLaRosa, Melanie DeViv, Amber Fernitz, Dominique France, Ashley Johnson, Rachel Piro, Brad Shankin, Curtis Sieczkowski, Jessica Syria, Erin Ziedman and Brandon O'Sullivan.

Closser and Sieczkowski are also serving as assistant directors, while Daniel Fowler and Jason Rouse are the technical

directors, Anna Clark is stage manager and Alison Werth, assistant stage manager.

A senior, this is the first time Closser has served as an assistant director. Grove selected her assistants from essays she had the seven or eight hopefuls compose. She has been in the theatrical productions at the high school since her freshman year.

"It's kind of different," she said. "I've never gotten to sit back and watch a show. I've always been in it. It's nice to get to sit back and watch, it's nice to have input."

According to Grove, the production is a "big building block for the program" which lost a lot of its seniors with graduation last June. A bulk of this fall's cast are freshmen and underclassmen. One of the challenges has been memorizing the lines.

"It's been a big learning opportunity for myself, the staff and cast," she said. "It's a fast-paced show with a lot of changes and interaction."

As the technical directors, Fowler and Rouse have had to fabric three caskets as well as come up with seating to make the main set resemble a funeral parlor. The plywood caskets were their own design and were made by members of the crew.

Helping behind the scenes are crew members Stephanie Brennan, Chelsea Caruso, Jessica Dotson, Sarah Drum, Jackie Garrett, Jessica Gomez, Ashley Hasset, Sam Hatfield, Amanda Howard, Dawn Kathonen, Areanna Luckett, Breanna Luckett, Chris Lunday, Jeff Pringle, Sarah Pruet, Zack Rogers, Kat Savoie, Aimee Sexton, Kaitlyn Sutton, April Thomas, Megan Walker, Chelsey Young, Lauren Orzech, Hayley Orzech, Dayna Krushlin and Aaron B. Jackson.

To work out the opening night butterflies, the guild did free performances of the play Wednesday for senior citizens and students from Marshall



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

John Glenn High School thespians Brandon O'Sullivan (from left), Salina DeLaRosa, Sean Barone, Ashley Johnson, Curtis Sieczkowski and Amber Fernitz rehearse a scene from *Parlor Games*.

and Stevenson Middle School. The latter performances, according to Grove, help build interest in the high school drama program.

"It's a more realistic run-through for the cast and helps build our program with the middle school students," she

added. Tickets for show cost \$5 for students and \$7 for adults. They're available at the door. John Glenn High School is at 36105 Marquette, west of Wayne Road.

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2 people injured in car accident

A 7-year-old Westland girl was in good, stable condition at the University of Michigan Hospital in Ann Arbor Tuesday evening after being injured in a two-car crash in the north end of Westland earlier in the day.

The youngster suffered a head injury in the accident which happened around 3:30 p.m. Tuesday in the intersection of Middlebelt and Ann Arbor Trail.

Believing the child had sustained a skull fracture, firefighters had her airlifted to the U-M Hospital. However, doctors determined she had sustained less serious bruising, or hematoma.

The accident involved a 2005 Jaguar driven by a Novi man and a 1995 Chevy Cavalier, driven by the child's mother, a Westland resident. According to police Officer

Jack McIntosh, the Jaguar was traveling southbound on Middlebelt when it collided with a northbound Cavalier which was making a left turn on to Ann Arbor Trail on an amber light.

"It was a near head-on impact with the Jaguar," said McIntosh. "The woman was following a pickup truck that had turned."

Neither driver was injured in the accident.

However, the Novi man's wife, a passenger in the car, suffered a sprained ankle and broken right arm.

The child was in the back seat of the Cavalier and police have been led to believe that she was unrestrained at the time of the crash, McIntosh said.

Charges are pending in the case, he added.

Benefit raises \$15,000 for Sues family bills

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

A Westland mother's efforts to raise money to help her cancer-stricken son have brought in more than \$20,000, she said.

"I just wish I could put a Band-Aid on him and make it better, but this is all I can do," said Jeannie Mazur, mother of 29-year-old Duane Sues.

A benefit Sunday at a Canton Township bar, Club Canton, raised \$15,000, pushing the total over the \$20,000 mark, Mazur said.

She estimated the crowd at more than 300 people and said, "The bar was totally full. Everybody was so giving."

The Sues family has received help from Westland, Garden City, Livonia, Plymouth, Canton, Redford, Farmington Hills, Wayne, Dearborn and other communities.

"I appreciate it so much," Mazur said, adding that the money will be used for medical bills.

Sues is battling head and neck cancer - rare for someone just 29 years old.

He became so sick he had to quit his job as a self-employed carpet installer in August.

His medical expenses have increased as he struggles to provide for his 25-year-old wife, Stacy, and their two children, Kyle, 3, and Kayla, 8.

In October, Sues told the *Observer* he was receiving \$2,000 a month in disability insurance but hardly making ends meet with a \$1,200 monthly mortgage and medical expenses.

His wife said she had to quit her part-time job to care for him.

Sues, who has undergone surgery, radiation and

chemotherapy, attended Sunday's fund-raiser even though his condition has worsened.

"I am praying for a miracle for him," said Susan Schaefer, who stopped by the fund-raiser and who recently visited the Sues family at their home.

Schaefer knew Duane Sues in passing because Sues had worked with her son, a construction manager, and had installed carpet for her not only at her local home, but also at her condominium near Cedar Point in Ohio.

"He went above and beyond the call of duty," Schaefer said. "He was a great worker."

She had heard he was battling cancer but didn't know how much his health had deteriorated. She learned of his situation from an *Observer* story, in which Sues said doctors had told him that he had a 50/50 chance of surviving.

"I have asked just about everybody I know to pray for a miracle that he will be allowed to stay here on this earth for a little longer, without cancer, to raise his children and be the husband that I know he wants to be," Schaefer said.

Help has come in many ways.

Employees at Edison Elementary School, which Kayla attends, raised money and bought gift certificates that the family could use for groceries, Mazur said.

An anonymous donor paid for the preschool education that 3-year-old Kyle is receiving at the Stottlemeyer Early Childhood Center.

"Everybody has been so giving," Mazur said.

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8159 Challis, Suite C
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CANTON
42447 Ford Rd.
(corner of Ford & Lilley
Rds., Canton Corners)
734-844-0481</p> <p>DEARBORN
24417 Ford Rd.
(just west of Telegraph)
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14128 Woodward
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313-869-7392</p> <p>FARMINGTON HILLS
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(lower level play area)
PONTIAC/WATERFORD
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Summit Place Mall)
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248-853-0550</p> <p>ROYAL OAK
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248-549-4177</p> <p>ST. CLAIR SHORES
26401 Harper Ave.
(at 10 1/2 Mile)
586-777-4010</p> <p>SOUTHFIELD
28117 Telegraph Rd.
(South of 12 Mile Rd.)
248-358-3700</p> <p>STERLING HEIGHTS
45111 Park Ave.
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Utica Park Plaza)
586-997-6500</p> <p>Lakeside Mall
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TAYLOR
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TROY
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(Troy Sports Center)
248-526-0040</p> <p>Oakland Mall
(inside Main Entrance,
next to Food Court)</p> | <p>WESTLAND
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District tells residents concerns are being heard

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

Trustee Tom Bailey's e-mail in-box has been filling up quickly, since the announcement of the Legacy Initiative proposal last month.

The plan details the closing of seven school buildings, altering attendance boundaries, and restructuring fifth and sixth grades into upper elementary schools, to save more than \$1.5 million a year.

"I have not been swamped," he announced at Monday's board meeting. "I thank you for your comments and letters. I am reading each and every one of them."

The school board, administration and demographics committee members are sharing the same message, that is "we're listening."

But some parents like Laura Flavin, a Livonia resident, don't feel their voices are being heard.

Flavin visited the polls at Roosevelt Elementary on election day to discuss the Legacy proposal with voters.

She said she's attended every informational meeting but answers are not forthcoming.

"We're asking for information, and we're not getting it," Flavin said.

She currently has a seventh-grader attending Riley Middle School who has special needs. She's still awaiting answers about where her child will attend school next year, if Riley becomes an upper elementary building.

Gail Hieronymus is a mother of three LPS students. Her 5-year-old also has special needs and attends Buchanan. Though it is one of the schools likely to retain special education programs, she thinks the plan "puts a lot of stress" on families throughout the district.



Parents carried signs and showed opposition Tuesday to the Livonia Public Schools' Legacy Plan, which would close seven schools next fall.

STUDENTS ARE TALKING

Rachel Rouse, a fifth-grader in Livonia Public Schools, spoke up during Monday night's board meeting to tell trustees that she doesn't mind the changes.

"I would go to a 5-6 school," she said, standing just as tall as the podium. "I'll be in sixth grade."

She said even though she will lose one recess a day, she's excited at the idea of having foreign language or music.

But some students don't feel as confident about changing schools.

School children were among the more than 30 people who held picket signs outside of the board office Tuesday morning.

Hieronymus said when she answered she was against placing sixth-graders in a middle school, she didn't know it could lead to the establishment of upper elementary schools or the closing of seven schools altogether.

DIVIDING THE DISTRICT

"There's gotta be another way to do this without upsetting the entire city," said Hieronymus, while standing along Farmington Road. Every few minutes passing drivers would honk their horns in acknowledgment.

A PTA member and former PTA president, Hieronymus filled out a survey last year when the demographics committee began seeking parents' opinions. Now, she questions the way the survey was presented.

Flavin said the current proposal tears the school district apart. "They're sectioning us off," she said.

Colleen Summers, also a Roosevelt parent, said her neighborhood seems to be most impacted by the proposal because students from elementary through high school would be moved to different buildings.

"We've gotten everything taken away from us," she said. "DO THEIR BEST"

On Monday, Supt. Randy Liepa said the demographics committee members are receiving feedback to the district's proposed Legacy Initiative.

"We've already had two public presentations to provide (opportunities) for feedback," he said. "(The committee has) received approximately 300 yellow cards and 300 blue sheets since (Oct. 20th.)"

The cards and blue sheets

LEGACY INITIATIVE TALK

The Demographics Committee will present its proposal for the first time to the Livonia Public Schools Board of Education at 7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 14, in the administration building, 15125 Farmington Road.

The board will host a public hearing at 7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 21, at Churchill High School, 8900 Newburgh Road, to hear community comments.

The board's regular meeting, originally scheduled for Nov. 21, has been moved to Tuesday, Nov. 22, at the board office to accommodate the public hearing.

All meetings will be cablecast on LPS cable Channels 15 & 19 in Livonia and Westland. For more, see the district's Web site at <http://www.livonia.k12.mi.us/great/nov05.pdf>

were meant to be efficient ways of taking questions and comments from all residents in the district who wish to respond to the proposal before it is formally presented to the school board on Monday, Nov. 14.

In addition, Liepa estimated the committee has received about 500 e-mail messages on the topic.

"They are busy reading each and every one of them," he said. "They are trying to do their best to summarize the data and finalize their work. We continue to move forward. Everyone is working very hard to do their best with the plan."

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Parents ask: What about our special ed students?

BY DAVE VARGA
STAFF WRITER

For Jolene Marinelli, an information session at Frost School about major changes proposed for Livonia Public Schools raised a new concern.

She heard that the special education program at Churchill may be considered for being moved to Franklin to help balance enrollment, and her daughter is a first-year Churchill High School student in the special education program.

School officials had said that other high school students would be allowed to continue through graduation at their current school, and Marinelli is among those who believe that should cover special education high school students.

"It's discrimination," she said. "They never said, no child but special education would be removed. They said no child will be removed."

about where special education programs will end up has also left many parents frustrated.

One of those is Linda Smith, who has a fifth-grader in special education. "It seems nobody knows what they're going to do with our special education community," she said. "They should be ashamed."

A pamphlet with nine-pages of questions and answers put together in answer to initial concerns received by the school district included a question about the location of special education center programs.

"While final decisions have not been made, special education centers will be housed at schools that have not merged, as they will have more room," the report said. "For example, the Buchanan program can more than likely stay there. The Webster center will also stay. The Tyler, Coolidge and Cooper programs could possibly go to schools such as Cass, Johnson or Garfield. For the 5-6 centers, they could go to Riley."

Smith wondered why the proposal says precisely where all students go - except special education. It makes it look like they're not really being considered, she said.

"These are the children that are going to have the most difficult time with this change and they don't know?" she asked.

Superintendent Randy Liepa said the demographics committee left those specific locations out of the original plan purposefully. "We wanted to make sure that it wasn't just the committee saying, well here's the best place for the special education kids," Liepa said.

Committee members wanted to hear from parents about the locations that "make sense educationally" for special education programs.

**STATE OF WISCONSIN
CIRCUIT COURT
MILWAUKEE COUNTY**

WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A.,
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Plaintiff,

vs.

NATALIE R. TANDY-TRICE
and JOHN DOE
unknown spouse of
Natalie R. Tandy-Trice
26029 Continental Circle
Taylor, Michigan 48180
OR
P.O. Box 100913
Milwaukee, WI 53210

JANE DOE and/or JOHN DOE
unknown tenants
2617 West Medford Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53206

Defendants.

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You are hereby notified that the plaintiff named above has filed a lawsuit or other legal action against you. The complaint, which is also served upon you, states the nature and basis of the legal action.

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and to O'Dess and Associates, S.C., Plaintiff's attorneys, whose address is:

O'Dess and Associates, S.C.
1414 Underwood Avenue, Suite 403
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin 53213

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POSTAL PERIODICAL REQUIREMENTS
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THE GOLD STANDARD IN SELF STORAGE

Cheer for the hometeam, read today's **SPORTS** section

Upset parents want answers, changes

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

Aspects of the Livonia Public Schools Legacy Initiative have been met with plenty of parental opposition around the community over the past few weeks.

Groups of concerned parents are gathering at each others' homes. Web sites and forums have been established online. A petition calling for time to revise the Legacy plan is circulating. And lawn signs opposing the plan are popping up around town.

"The negative voices are very loud," said Elaine Koons, a demographics committee member. "There are lots and lots of positive voices, too."

The Legacy Initiative aims to save the district about \$2 million next year by closing seven school buildings, merging school communities, and establishing a lower and upper elementary structure, among other changes.

Now that Michelle Pinkowski, a parent of two Taylor students, has seen the plan, she wants the facts. She wants to understand the research and reasoning behind it.

"We're past the emotional side," Pinkowski said. "Now explain to me how you got here."

And she's not alone. Parents Denise Beaudoin, Julie Borg, Lisa DiDomenico and Kelly DeLuca are all coping with the proposed changes and seeking more information. Pinkowski said she's sent 25 yellow "question cards" to the committee, but hasn't received a response.

Elaine Koons, a member of the demographics committee, said they are listening. "We are taking every concern very seriously," she said.

But committee members won't rush to give responses. "We can't knee-jerk," said Koons. "We have to stay on our thoughtful course."

GOING THE DISTANCE

The distance to school remains a top concern among parents speaking out against the plan. Maria Turchan is a mother of three LPS students - one attends fourth grade at Adams, another attends seventh grade at Riley and her oldest is a freshman at Franklin High School.

Under the new plan, her youngest would attend upper elementary school at Cooper, a four- to five-mile traveling distance from home. "It's too far," she said. "And there are environmental issues."

Cooper is located across the street from the former Cooper School which was built on a landfill and closed in 1991 due to contaminants.

Turchan said her son would potentially be traveling two miles farther on a bus than her high schooler rides. "There are going to be a lot of tired, hungry, crabby 10- and 11-year-olds," she predicted.

Carrie Cole, a mother of three, shared similar concerns about placing her children on a bus to Riley, for grades five and six. Though the district has announced bus rides would not exceed 45 minutes, she said two hours a day on a bus is unacceptable.

The district's demographics committee has agreed to take another look at the transportation plan. Under the Legacy proposal an additional 3,700 students would be bused to school.

But Koons said: "I personally don't think the bus routes are that long. We're used to being a closer distance to schools. Some kids are bused (that far) now. For me, what children are getting in the program is so important that it's worth it."

UPPER ELEMENTARY PLAN

Beaudoin isn't convinced the proposed additional 30 minutes of physical education, foreign language once a week and a choice between technology or music is enough to warrant a long bus ride to an upper elementary.

She also said the addition of a grade 5-6 school will force children to move too often. Pinkowski agreed young children need more stability than the plan provides.

Though DeLuca doesn't support the upper elementary concept, she would like to see the

addition of at least one more 5-6 building to offset some travel time and the larger population at those buildings. "We want to work with them, not against them," she said of the committee, "and find the best plan."

Borg noted she would have liked to see several cost-savings models rather than a plan that seems to leave little room for changes.

"It should be about negotiating with the people," Borg said.

Koons said the committee is listening to concerns, and trying to make sure "we haven't

missed anything."

PROPERTY VALUE IMPACT

For some parents, the closing of an elementary school has brought up fears of a different kind. Kristin Kenney, a parent of two McKinley students, said she's concerned about the impact it would have on property values.

"My property value has decreased \$15,000 since 2002," she wrote in a letter to the *Observer*. "I can only imagine how much my value will decrease after losing my local

elementary school that is in walking distance."

But Koons noted that not all prospective home-buyers look for a house near an elementary school. "It's a change," she said. "It brings up all of these questions... We have to work through it together."

"This is a good plan. I am standing 100 percent behind it."

But Turchan isn't as confident in the proposal. She isn't sure how she'll manage school starting and ending times with children attending several different buildings

across the district.

She said it's already a challenge for her 9-year-old son to complete his homework and eat dinner after school, before he participates in sports in the evening.

By increasing bus travel time, Turchan said she's worried she'll see less of her children.

Pinkowski said the plan will make it more difficult for parents with children in multiple schools to participate in school activities themselves.

According to the district's Web site, "the committee will take into consideration concerns about start times for different grade levels in multiple schools. Thus, start times could change."

Mary Pierson said she is "very upset, saddened and distraught by the thought of this proposed change."

In a letter to the board and the *Observer*, she wrote: "I am not sure how (the district) expects parents to get their children to after-school activities on time when K-4 and 5-6 buildings are slated for the same pick-up and drop-off times. This just doesn't work when you have multiple children in two different locations."

Borg said she's "fighting" for her kids. "I understand there needs to be change," Borg said. "This is too drastic, too fast for our children."

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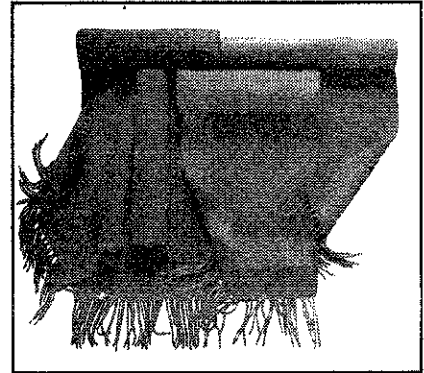
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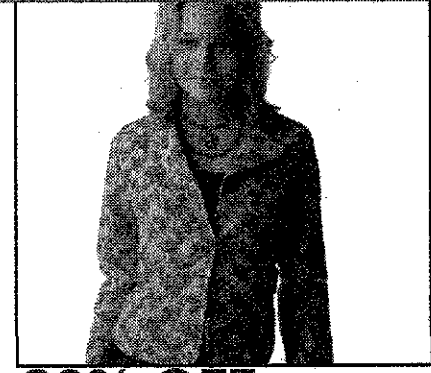
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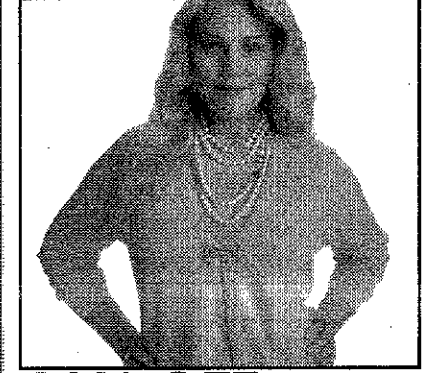
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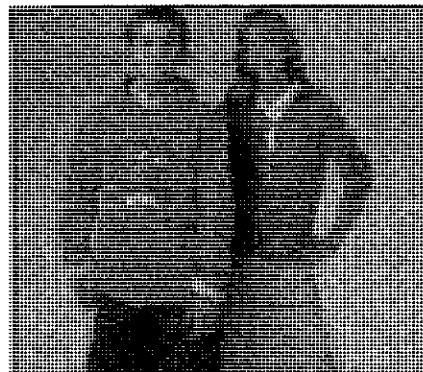
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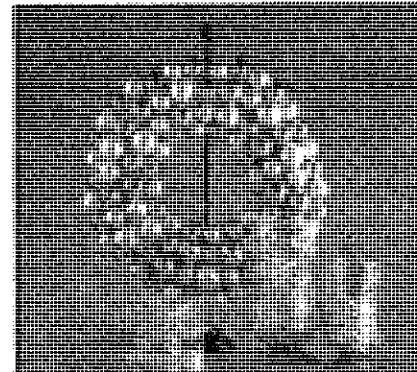
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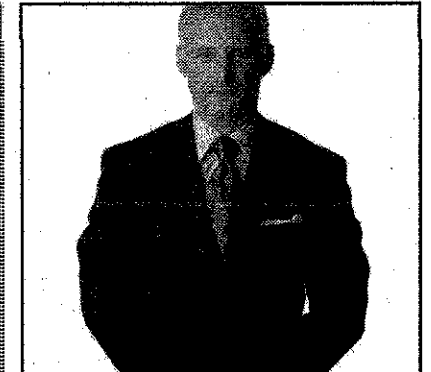
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UPCOMING EVENTS

In concert

Salem United Church of Christ is sponsoring a concert in "The Basement" Coffee House. Sticks & Stones, with Doug Johnson and Variable, with Chris Hutchinson appear Nov. 11. The performances runs 7-10 p.m. Admission is free. Espresso and cappuccino, as well as coffee, tea and soda along with a variety of snack items, are available. Proceeds are donated to Habitat for Humanity. The church is at 33424 Oakland Ave., north of Grand River and west of Farmington Road, in Farmington. For more information, call (248) 474-6880.

Scandinavian bazaar

The Finnish Center in Farmington Hills hosts a Scandinavian Holiday Bazaar 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 12. The event features crafts, imports, deli goods, a bake sale and raffles. Refreshments will be available. The Finnish Center is located at 35200 W. 8 Mile between Farmington and Newburgh roads. For more information, call (248) 478-6939.

Bowl with Santa

Santa is making an early stop in Livonia to help raise funds for O.U.R. Camp, a summer day camp for children with special needs. The "Bowl with Santa" event takes place 2-5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 19, at Merri-Bowl in Livonia. Parents can bring their kids to enjoy an afternoon of bowling with Santa. Cost is \$10 per bowler or \$35 for a group of four. Fee includes two games of bowling (bumpers available), shoes, hot dog and pop. Pre-registration recommended, space is limited. All proceeds benefit O.U.R. Camp. Merri-Bowl is located at 30950 Five Mile Road at Merriman. For more information or to register, call Jan Slattery, (734) 414-0231, or write Bowling with Santa, P.O. Box 6059, Plymouth, MI 48170.

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.

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.

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.

AIM

Anxiety or panic attacks? AIM (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.

Fibromyalgia

The Garden City area chapter of the Great Lakes Fibromyalgia and CFS Association Support Group meets 1-3 p.m. the first Thursday of each month at Merriman Road Baptist Church on Merriman south of Ford. There are guest speakers and discussion on a variety of topics. There is no membership fee, however a small donation is greatly appreciated. For additional information, call Tina Wing at (734) 338-2226 or Lucy Rowley at (734) 462-1768.

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. For information, call Jo Johnson, (734) 522-3918.

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) 591-6694 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 XXIII 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, 31117 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. An 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.

Visually Impaired

The Visually Impaired Persons (VIPs) support group meets 12:30 p.m. every Friday at the Friendship Center, 1119 N. Newburgh, Westland. Participants

share information and meet others. Those interested in joining can be scheduled on a bus route for transportation. For information, call (734) 722-7632.

Choir

The Senior Choir, under the leadership of Robert Cassidy, is open to those who like to sing. It meets 9:30 a.m. Thursday. For information, call the Friendship Center, (734) 722-7632.

Hearing checks

Every third Tuesday of each month, a representative from Personalized Hearing Care of Westland will check and clean hearing aids free, 2-3 p.m. by appointment only. Call (734) 722-7632 for more information.

Exercise

Simply Jazzercise is designed for exercisers older than 40. The program provides a low to moderate workout. The exercise improves strength, flexibility, balance, posture, coordination and cardiovascular endurance. It incorporates simple dance routines with walking or jogging patterns and resistance exercises. Wear loose-fitting clothing and comfortable shoes. Light weights and an exercise mat are suggested. Classes are 10:15 a.m. Monday, 5 p.m. Wednesday, 10:15 a.m. Friday, at \$3 per person per class. Sign up at the front desk at the Westland Friendship Center or call (734) 722-7632.

Travel Group

The Friendship Travel Group meets 1 p.m. the second Friday of each month (unless a large event is scheduled) in the Westland Friendship Center, 1119 N. Newburgh. Programs include celebration of birthdays, door prizes, description of new classes or programs, speakers from tour companies, overview of day/overnight trips and refreshments. Call (734) 722-7632.

Dyer Center

The Wayne-Westland school district's Dyer Senior Adult Center offers activities Monday-Thursday at the center, on Marquette between Wayne and Newburgh roads. Mondays, Senior Chorus at 1:30 p.m.; Tuesdays, arts, crafts and needlework at 9:30 a.m.; Wednesdays, kitchen band, 10 a.m., bingo at 1 p.m.; Thursdays, ceramics, arts, crafts at 9:30 a.m.

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.mihometown.com/oe/PlymouthCantonVVA for more information.

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-260). Call Capt. Dane Hansen, deputy commander/recruiter, at (734) 485-3021 or visit the Web site www.members.home.net/capliberators/.

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 Annapolis in Wayne. An 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.

Tutorial 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.

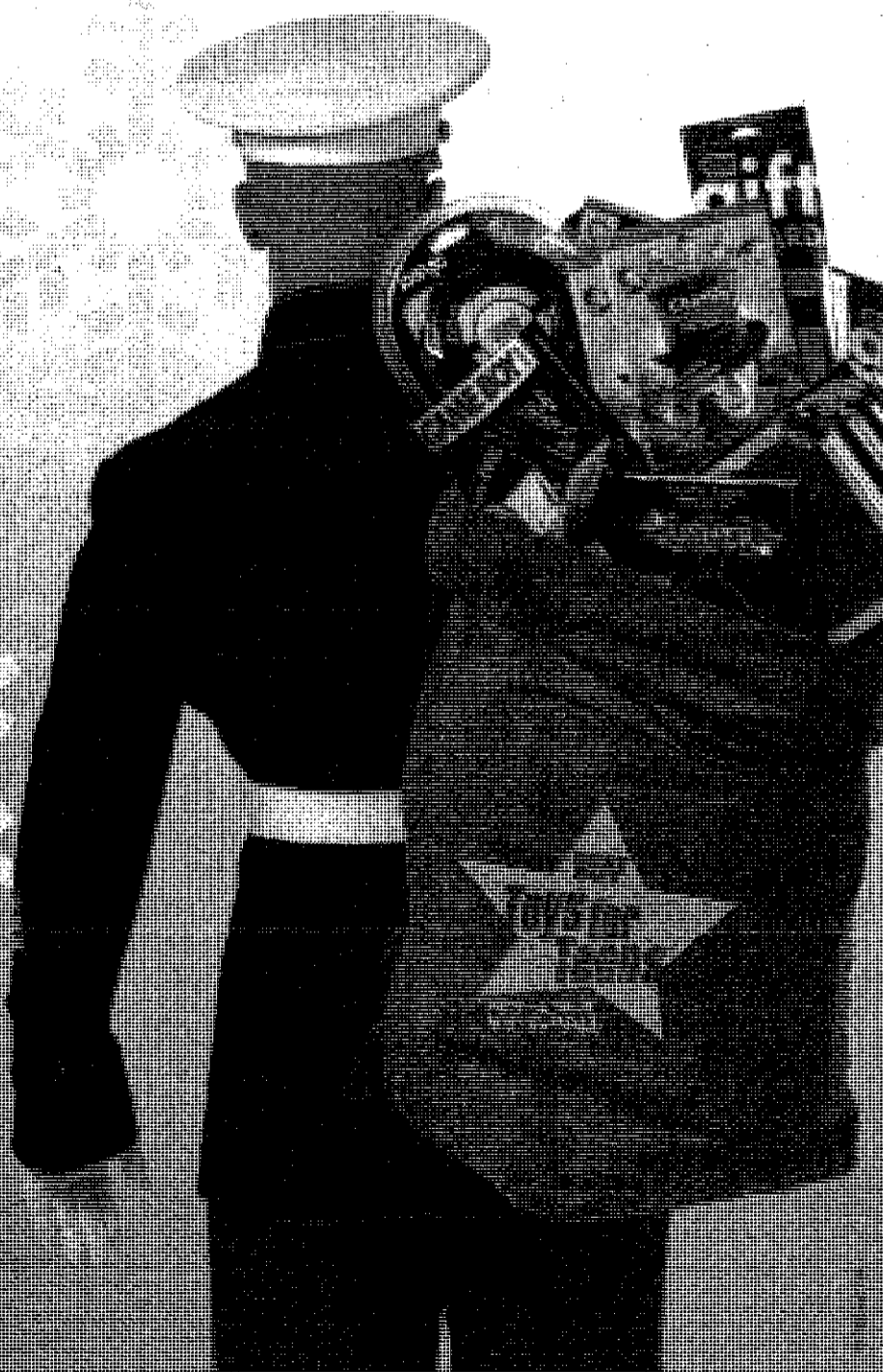
M.O.M.S. Club of Canton/ Westland is a nonprofit support group for stay-at-home mothers. There are weekly events, Mom's Night Out, age-oriented play groups and more. For information, call Wendy, (734) 398-6957.

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Children's Foundation



ROBBERY

FROM PAGE A1

themselves a suspect.

Rasmussen was arrested Monday and charged Tuesday with felony bank robbery at the 35th District Court in Plymouth. If found guilty he could spend up to life in prison. Rasmussen also was charged as a habitual offender. If Rasmussen is found guilty of the bank robbery, this will be

his fourth felony conviction.

Rasmussen was reported on Oct. 11, 2005, by Washtenaw County and Ann Arbor police for absconding from parole, according to the Michigan Department of Corrections records. Among his prior convictions are unarmed robbery, for which he was convicted in 1998, and third-degree fleeing and auto theft, for which he was convicted in 2000. He was released from prison in April. Rasmussen pleaded not

guilty to the bank robbery charge. He's being held on \$600,000 cash bond and has been turned over to Dearborn, where similar charges are pending. He will also likely be charged in the Westland bank robbery, according to Pomorski. Rasmussen is due back in court for his preliminary exam Nov. 18.

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At the polls

Luke Patalocco, 2, sits on the lap of his mother April Franquist as she votes in Precinct 29 at Edison Elementary. At far right, his father Brian Patalocco looks over his ballot.

PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



For Gerald Zink (left), Tuesday's election marked the first time he voted in Westland. He watches as his friend, Edward Carlson, with the help of caregiver Marlene Johnson, votes in Precinct 18 at Schweitzer Elementary. Carlson votes regularly in elections.



Mike Guoin, the father of Westland City Council candidate Lori Brist, works the precinct at Schweitzer Elementary School during voting Tuesday.

INCUMBENTS

FROM PAGE A1

and we need to carry on."

Graunstadt, a 48-year-old part-time development director for a law center, slipped to a third-place finish from her top vote-getter status in 2001.

"I feel very honored just as I did the first time I was elected," she said.

Like others, she speculated that a decision by voters to return all four candidates to office indicated a certain level of satisfaction with local government.

"Overall, I do get the sense that the community appears for the most part to be OK with local government," Graunstadt said. "I think the majority of the public is focusing on bigger issues, such as the economy, jobs and the war - really big issues that are impacting their families and their future."

Kehrer, a 51-year-old excavation site inspector, sighed with relief Tuesday after

absentee vote totals pushed him into a fourth-place victory.

"I'd like to say, 'Whew!'" Kehrer told the VFW hall crowd, wiping his hand across his forehead.

Kehrer earlier said it appears that voters had confidence in the incumbents, partly because the city has made strides despite such obstacles as cuts in state revenues.

"I think the citizens think that the current council is doing a good job," he said.

Brist, the 38-year-old chamber president, held onto fourth-place for some two hours before she lost to Kehrer with absentee vote totals.

Brist indicated that her defeat wasn't bad considering it was her first bid for public office.

"It just wasn't meant to be," she said.

The winners in Tuesday's council election will join holdovers James Godbout, Richard LeBlanc and William Wild.

dciem@hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2110



Incumbent Councilman Michael Kehrer had to wait until the absentee ballot totals were in to know he would serve another two years on council.



Lori Brist gets a hug from Councilman James Godbout after ending up in fourth place with vote totals from the polls. She lost after absentee votes left her in fifth place.

PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

MAYOR

FROM PAGE A1

Cicirelli commanded a huge lead in early vote totals and never lost momentum as she easily sailed to victory. She had faced a much tighter race in 2001, when she defeated Councilman Richard LeBlanc.

During an election night interview, Cicirelli cited several issues that she wants to

address during her new mayoral term, which will officially begin Jan. 1. Among her goals:

- Continue to trim spending when possible, amid continued fears that the city could face a new round of cuts in state-shared revenue.

- Focus on redevelopment efforts and on luring tenants to several empty "big box" stores around Westland Shopping Center.

- Enforce the city's new

blight ordinance and use it to clean up dilapidated areas.

- Expand services, including a program that sends firefighters into local neighborhoods to provide a fire-safety inspection for homeowners who want it.

Cicirelli said her administration, despite budget cuts, was able to improve services during her first term. "I want to continue to do that."

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AROUND WESTLAND

Seniors dinner dance

The Wayne Ford Civic League is hosting a Senior Dinner Dance at noon Sunday, Nov. 13, at the league hall, 1645 N. Wayne Road, Westland. The dinner dance costs \$8 for members and \$10 for non-members. Price includes buffet dinner, beer and wine and dancing to the music of The Meltones. Call (734) 728-5010 for more information. Participants must be 60 years or older to attend.

Indoor flea market

Vendors can get tables for \$25 each at an indoor flea market being held Saturday, Nov. 12, at the Harris-Kehrer VFW Post 3323, 1055 S. Wayne Road at Avondale.

The flea market will be open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Send name, address, e-mail address, number of tables requested and a check VFW Post 3323, 1055 S. Wayne Road, Westland 48186, attention: flea market. Checks should be made payable to VFW Post 3323.

For more information, call Richard Eberhart at (734) 812-7078.

Stack of books

Churchill High School will host a fund-raiser for its library this weekend, at the Barnes and Noble Book Fair. Bring a voucher to the store, at Haggerty and Six Mile, between 9 a.m. and 11 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 12, to help the school raise money.

Purchases of books, magazines, music, calendars, games and other accessories will all count toward the school fund-raiser. Gift card purchase or Barnes and Noble member purchases and cafe food and beverages will not count.

For more information, or to obtain a voucher, call Churchill High School at (734) 744-2650.

Surplus food

The City of Westland will be distributing surplus federal food 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 17, at the Dorsey Community Center, 32715 Dorsey.

Eligible residents living north of Michigan Avenue will pick up their commodities on the

third Monday of the month at St. James United Methodist Church, 30055 Annapolis between Henry Ruff and Middlebelt.

Seniors living in Taylor Towers should call the building manager for the date of the distribution at their facility.

Administered by the Wayne County Office of Senior Services, the program this month food will distribute corn cereal Shelf Life milk and vegetable oil.

For more information, call the surplus food hotline at (734) 595-0366.

Dinner and a show

Livonia native Suzanne V. (Swales) Barcewicz is now appearing in a Neil Simon play, *Plaza Suite*, at Hawthorne Garden Dinner Theatre, at Merriman and Joy roads.

The show goes on at 7 p.m. each Saturday in November. Cocktails are served beginning at 6 p.m. Tickets for dinner and the show cost \$27.

Barcewicz, a Bentley High graduate who now lives in West Bloomfield with her husband and three children, is a long-time member of Ridgedale Players in Troy, where she starred in such productions as *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *I Hate Hamlet* and *Catch Me if You Can*. Her parents are Harold and Carol Swales of Livonia.

Barcewicz has also written and directed many children's plays with the Ridgedale Players. To catch *Plaza Suite*, call (734) 422-3440.

Open house

T.O.P.S. (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) Chapter MI-53 in Westland will host an open house 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Wednesday Nov. 16, at St. John's Episcopal Church, 555 S. Wayne Road. The event is free and open to the public. Women, men, teens, preteens and seniors interested in losing weight are invited to attend.

Gail Washburn, a T.O.P.S. member who lost 108 pounds and has kept it off for almost two years, will speak about her weight loss success with T.O.P.S.

For more information about T.O.P.S., visit the Web site www.tops.org.

Scrapbookers unite

Livonia Public Schools Foundation is counting on scrapbookers to attend its second Crop for Our Kids event. Keep on Cropping is set for 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 12, at Franklin High School, 31000 Joy Road.

Registration is \$25, with all proceeds supporting the foundation. The event is limited to 50 people. It includes a six-foot workspace, continental breakfast, door and raffle prizes, and several scrap and stamp vendors onhand.

To participate, send your name, address, phone number or e-mail address, along with a check for \$25 per person payable to LPS Foundation, and mail it to Jay Young, 15125 Farmington Road, Livonia, MI 48154. Contact Michele Fuher with questions at mfuher@hotmail.com.

Shopping event

The Westland Chamber of Commerce is teaming up with Westland Shopping Center and Marshall Field's to sponsor an exclusive half-day shopping event Friday, Nov. 18.

Participants will enjoy discounts and give-aways at participating stores and will be able to sign up for a free holiday eye makeover by Clinique. Clinique also will do a holiday makeup presentation during the continental breakfast.

The day starts with the continental breakfast, provided by Panera Bread, at 9:30 a.m. at Marshall Fields. It will end at noon with lunch and door prizes at the Lakeshore Grill.

The shopping extravaganza costs \$25 per person and is limited to the first 100 people to respond. To reserve a spot, call the chamber at (734) 326-7222.

Holiday party

Westland senior citizens are invited to the Holiday Extravaganza, a Christmas party, at the Westland senior Friendship Center, Thursday, Dec. 15.

Doors will open at 11:30 a.m.,

with the "fabulous feast" will be served at noon. There will be a chance to have pictures taken with Santa and Mrs. Claus, dancing to the music of the Tommie James Trio and gifts galore.

Tickets cost \$8 for members and \$10 for guests. They're available at the Friendship center, 1119 N. Newburgh, Westland.

Taste Fest

Tickets are on sale for the Westland Chamber of Commerce's seventh annual Holiday Taste Fest which will be at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 6, at the Hellenic Cultural Center at 36375 Joy Road, east of Newburgh.

Participants for this year's Holiday Taste Fest, including Fire Mountain, Le Cakery Bake Shop, LongHorn Steakhouse, Marvaso's Italian Grille, Max & Erma's, Red Robin, Souper Sandwich Carver, Westland Big Boy, UNO Chicago Grill, Applebee's, La Shish, the William D. Ford Career Technical Center culinary arts program, the Hellenic Cultural Center and, from Canton, Taj Mahal.

Admission is \$20 for adults and \$15 for senior citizens (55 and over) and children (12 and under). Tickets are on sale 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at the chamber office, on Ford Road east of Newburgh.

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) 564-8222 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.

Las Vegas Party

St. Bernardine Men's Club is sponsoring a Pinochle/Euchre

Card Party on Fridays, 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

The Village of Westland will be having its Fall Bazaar and Bake Sale 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 19, at complex, 32001 Cherry Hill between Venoy and Merriman in Westland.

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.

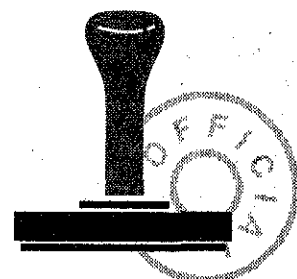
Edison Elementary will have its Holiday Bazaar 6-9 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 16, at the school, 34505 Hunter at Wildwood, Westland. There will be 25 vendors, door prizes and bake sale.

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 date, the agency has given away more than 250 vehicles and three fully furnished mobile homes to needy veterans. To donate, call Veterans Haven at (734) 728-0527 or go to vetshaveninfo.org on the Internet.



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

F
Helen M. Feys
Feys died Nov. 7.

H
John Walter Hagen
Hagen, 81, of Harrison, formerly of Birmingham, died Nov. 1.

Phyllis M. Henderson
Henderson, 86, of Beverly Hills, died Oct. 30.

M
Kathryn Grace "Norton" (nee Knopsider) McFadden
McFadden died Nov. 1.

Sarah (Sally) McKenna
McKenna, 68, formerly of Plymouth, died Nov. 1.

Wilson Morgan
Morgan, 77, of Cedaredge, Colo., died Oct. 27.

N
Keith A. Nesbitt
Nesbitt, 81, died Oct. 27.

O
Frank E. Ostrow
Ostrow, 89, of Bloomfield, died Oct. 31.

P
Gerald E. "Jerry" Peeling
Peeling, 69, died Nov. 2.

Sister Mary Agnese Pilarski
Pilarski, 84, died Nov. 6.

S
Hazel F. Spence
Spence, 90, of Westland, died Oct. 31.

V
Mary Louise Kern Viger
Viger, 85, of Grosse Pointe Farms, died Nov. 2.

W
Joel "Jimmy" Weiner
Weiner, 65, of Bloomfield Hills, died Nov. 6.

Z
Jay J. Van Zoeren, M.D.
Van Zoeren, M.D., 81, of Bloomfield Hills, died Oct. 29.

Chester W. Zawacki
Zawacki, 88, of Beaverton, Ore., formerly of Birmingham, died Oct. 31.

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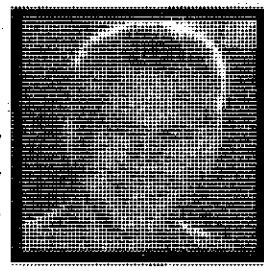
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Fun evening to raise money for Livonia Symphony

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER

After 20 years of playing violin with the Livonia Symphony Orchestra, Linda Brucksieker still looks forward to its annual fund-raiser. On Friday, Nov. 18, the Farmington Hills resident join hundreds of guests at a dinner auction at Laurel Manor in Livonia. The only difference is Brucksieker will pause in the midst of all the fun to perform *Music of the Seas*. This year the orchestra has chosen to highlight selections from Titanic and *Showboat* along with standards such as *Moon River* and classical music by Handel. The festivities begin when doors open at 5:30 p.m.

"I like it because you can invite your friends and neighbors and have a party with our music as a background, and you're doing something for the orchestra and doing a little bit of Christmas shopping at the same time," said Linda Brucksieker, orchestra librarian.

June Kendall likes to compare the fund-raiser to a wedding reception with the addition of a silent auction offering Detroit Tigers' tickets for next season, gift baskets, jewelry, and sports memorabilia including printed material from the 1984 World Series won by the Tigers.

"There's a lot of mixing. It's not just a concert where you sit. It's the visiting that makes it a unique evening, people competing for prize auction items," said June Kendall, a Westland resident and retired Livonia Public Schools teacher. Kendall became involved with the orchestra seven years ago when several of the American Association of University Women volunteered to usher at concerts. For the last year, Kendall's served on the Livonia Symphony Society board of directors.

Kendall and dozens of others, who volunteered for the



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Conductor Volodymyr Shesiuk takes great joy in leading the Livonia Symphony Orchestra. On Nov. 18, they'll perform *Music of the Seas* at a fund-raising dinner and auction at Laurel Manor in Livonia.

Livonia Town Hall series, made it possible to fund the opening concert this season. Even though series president Dee Dee Ditmar was able to present LSO president Tom Bjorklund with a check for \$15,000, the money is not enough to keep the orchestra afloat. The LSO still needs to raise much of the \$100,000 needed for annual operating expenses.

Last year's fund-raiser brought in \$9,000, buoying the spirits of board members. 100 more people bought tickets to the fund-raiser than the previous year in response to the Save Our Symphony (SOS) campaign.

"We hope to raise as much money as possible," said Tom Bjorklund. "Tickets sales don't come close to covering the cost of any symphony in the country. We receive large contributions from Livonia Town Hall, civic organizations, the community foundation, arts commission, and money from fund-raisers such as the golf outing along with a lot of individual contributions from people who send us \$20, \$100, or \$1,000. This year we didn't apply for grants because we're

lacking volunteer services of a good grant writer. We would love to have somebody who has that expertise help us out."

Conductor Volodymyr Shesiuk is counting on the support of the community. He's hoping to draw a larger audience base after moving the 2005-2006 concert series to Clarenceville High School in Livonia.

"I only hope we will have some money to keep the orchestra on track," said Volodymyr Shesiuk, a Garden City resident. "We want to see people who support the orchestra and thank these people (at the fund-raiser). It's so important for us. We're looking forward to this night. We hope to have more people from Farmington Hills attend the concerts because it's a shorter distance to drive."

Music of the Seas begins at 6 p.m. Friday, Nov. 18, with a dinner and a silent auction followed by the concert at Laurel Manor, 39000 Schoolcraft Livonia.

Tickets are \$50, and available by calling June Kendall (734) 425-1881.

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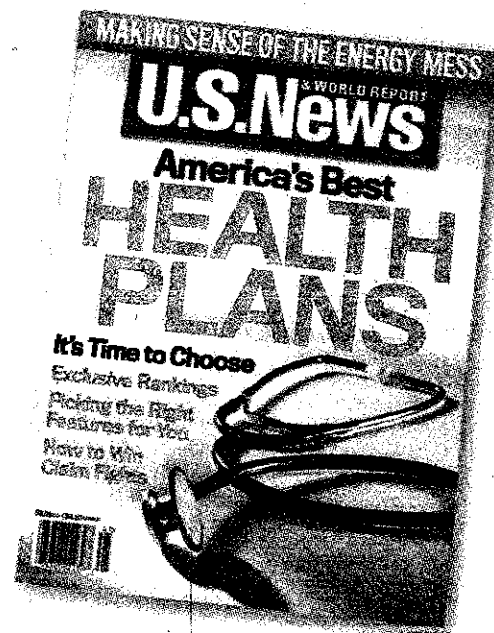
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OUR VIEWS

Our veterans deserve thanks

According to the U.S. population clock, there were an estimated 297,615,099 people living in this country as of Nov. 8.

That's a lot of people ... a lot of people who are living in the land of the free and the home of the brave because of the men and women who have served this country as members of the military.

Tomorrow is Veterans Day, a time when we, as Americans, pause to honor those who have served so valiantly, those who lived and those who have died in service to this country and the world.

Veterans Day started out as a remembrance of the signing of the Armistice which ended World War I. At 5 a.m. on Nov. 11, 1918, the Germans signed the order that called for all shooting to cease. The day started with a laying down of arms and ended with impromptu celebrations worldwide.

Modern day observances are more sedate, but the reason is still there — to remember the valor and sacrifice of our military forces. And there's a lot of that going on right now in Afghanistan and Iraq and other parts of the world where our troops are championing the cause of freedom.

Last week we celebrated the life of Rosa Parks, whose one simple act of defiance changed a country. Tomorrow, we must come together as a nation and celebrate the legacy of our veterans. It was because of their commitment to keeping this country free that Mrs. Parks was able to take her stand.

The men and women who serve in our armed forces today serve by choice. By enlisting, they are showing the faith in and love of this country, the same faith and love displayed by our veterans over the years.

On this Veterans Day, we encourage residents, young and old alike, to take the time to thank a veteran. A hug, a handshake, a few kind words, whatever the gesture, let them know we do appreciate what they have done for us and for those who will come after us.

Locals 'get in the game' for Super Bowl XL party

Are you ready for some football? (And no, we don't mean the Detroit Lions.)

A weeklong — at least — party?

Whatever your answer, there are more than 10,000 volunteers, organizers and businesses who are making sure everyone and everything is ready for Super Bowl XL.

The countdown is on — 87 days left until kickoff as of today.

But it's not just Ford Field in downtown Detroit that will see action.

"Super" cities like Troy, Southfield, Rochester, Farmington and Farmington Hills are busy planning events geared to local residents and out-of-towners housed in area hotels. Local residents can "get in the game spirit" if not the game.

Volunteers (8,000 strong from throughout the state and Canada and nearly 500 from Southfield and Canton alone) are getting ready, too, with training sessions this week in Troy and later this month in Canton.

Hotel rooms in metro Detroit and beyond — more than 25,000 — are booked, representing revenue of more than \$20 million, according to organizers and local chambers of commerce.

Livonia hotels in the Six/Seven Mile/I-275 corridor alone will house some 2,500 credentialed media.

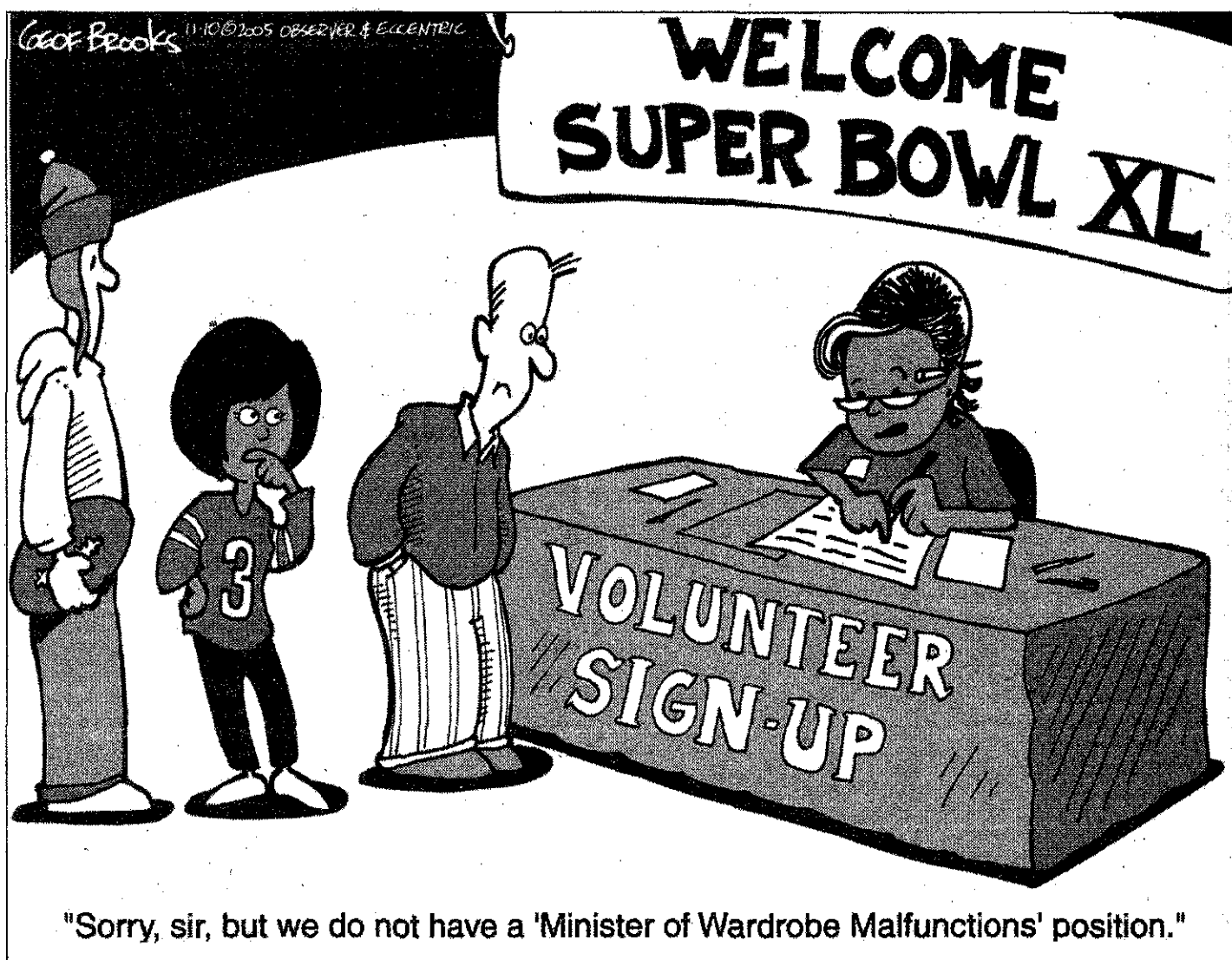
The Hyatt in Dearborn and the Centerpoint Marriott in Pontiac will house the teams, but you can be sure that team owners, celebrities and VIPs are booked at the Townsend and the Royal Park.

The new Rock Financial Showplace in Novi will host the pricey Taste of the NFL. Called a "party with a purpose," the event features chefs and a current or former NFL player from each of the 32 teams. The event raises money and awareness for hunger relief locally and nationally.

Local transportation companies, janitorial services, public relations firms and landscapers, along with florists and a host of other small and emerging businesses, are also experiencing a Super Bowl bounce.

Make no mistake about it, the Super Bowl is more than just a football game. It's an economic event and an opportunity for metro Detroit to make a positive impression on those who attend the game and those who live in south-east Michigan.

So get ready for some football and everything else Super Bowl XL has to offer.



City's well-being considered

I am writing in response to your article referring to the Full Gospel Temple soup kitchen and warming center dated Nov. 3 — "Mayor has right answer on center."

In my opinion, the mayor does not have the authority to reopen the soup kitchen or the legal right to do so. Once the ZBA makes a decision, that decision is final and the only recourse a petitioner has is through Circuit Court.

You listed safety concerns for the ZBA turning down the petition. There were more than just that one concern, and if a member of your staff had attended the meeting, you would have heard some of the other concerns.

As a ZBA commissioner for the last 25-plus years, I can say that the Zoning Board of Appeals members vote on each individual petition with their every consideration for the well being of the city of Westland as well as its residents.

Robert Williamson
Westland

Bush has much to hide

I learned early in life of the rewards of hard work. My brothers, sisters and I grew up with our family business. There were many important lessons about integrity and honesty and important principles that still today impact us all today.

We started working in the family business soon after we were able to hold hand tools. When I was 6 or 7 years old, I was repairing a piece of equipment. It was not a complicated task, something my own 6-year-old could have done today given the opportunity.

I had the equipment owner watching what I was doing very closely. He was asking a lot of questions and being very obnoxious, distracting me. I slipped over to where my Dad was working and complained. I remember him picking me up and looking me in the eye and telling me, "Don't ever worry about someone looking over your shoulder and watching you work, if you are doing the work correctly you have nothing to hide."

I can still see the face of my Dad, a much younger man than he is today, but with a principle. I think that came from his military training or his upbringing. I went back to my job with renewed determination not to get rattled or bothered by someone nosy or from other distractions and learned to focus at my task.

That principle has stuck with me through more years than I care to admit. Many times over the years I have shown people that by using these principles I can be trusted. I have looked many times over the last few years at the current administration occupying the White House and see little of this principle.

The questions of Mr. Bush's military service record revealed he may have not completed his required duty. Mr. Bush answered the questions regarding this service by saying his uncompleted duty was resolved by "working it out with the service." Any American service person, who fought and took their duty seriously is insulted by this lack of respect for the

service and soldiers who died fighting for this country.

The energy advisory board directed by Mr. Hiney determined the direction of this country's energy policy for the next five years. They may have conspired to fix an energy shortage in California. Of course, the members of the advisory board and the policies conceived are declared secret.

The detainees in Guantanamo Bay also are behind a screen of deception. The holding group has been part of the "Halliburton private military interrogation" committee and have hid under all inspections. Mr. Bush continues to promote his policy that torture can be used under his discretion to stop this "war of terrorism."

The premise of the "war" in Iraq was started to stop the terrorists connected to 9/11 and to spread democracy. There is no proof of a connection to 9/11 and Iraq. A key and important part of democracy is a fair justice system, innocence until proven guilty being a founding tenet of the democracy of the United States.

The examples go on and on. This administration has hidden all its work from public view since its first days in the White House. When details of actions are released, they show a pattern of corrupt immoral behavior. A key part of a democracy has been the transparency of the officials, elected or not, to outside scrutiny and observation from the governed.

As I had learned many years ago, if I am doing nothing wrong, I have nothing to hide. This administration has much to hide.

Allan Biber
Westland

Government action

In response to Phil Power's Oct. 13 column, "Finger pointing time is over," the only action open to any government is the application of coercion or its removal. Gov. Granholm does not even know what a governor does in a free society. But that's OK because we don't live in one. She can only judge and trade taxes for favors like her predecessors did until everything grinds to a halt.

Paul L. Gruchala
Westland

Patting wrong backs

Although the elections will be over before this is printed, I can't hold it in any longer. Chuck Pickering and Mike Kehrer are thanking the wrong people for the change in the meetings.

It was not themselves, it was the voters of Westland who voted yes on the recall. And I can't forget Trav Griffin and Sharon Scott for they did what was the right thing at the right time in my opinion. Rather than be recalled, they made the dignified move and resigned.

So knock off the pats on the back and quit taking credit where it isn't due. And while I'm mentioning this, if you don't agree remember that there's been a few times when the council president made the wrong calls toward citizens

asking one to leave while allowing the real cause of disruption to remain. How fast we forget when it's convenient

Judy McKinney
Westland

In loving memory

As I stood on the side of the road in Celina, Tenn., watching the slow moving hearse carrying the flag draped casket of Sgt. Robert Wesley Tucker and the long procession of vehicles following closely behind, the emotions swelled within me. As the tears streamed down my face I thought of the family of Sgt. Tucker and remembered the day just a short year ago that my son, Spec. Stephen Paul Downing II, took his last ride in the same familiar style.

Although this has been the most difficult and devastating experience of my life, the past year has shown me many things. First ... the love and support of family and friends is irreplaceable.

I learned that Steve touched the hearts of many. In his last letter, he wrote, "If I helped to make a positive change in the life of at least one person, then it was all worth it, and I would do it all again if I could."

I have had the honor of meeting many of Steve's comrades and friends as I welcomed his unit home to Fort Carson, Colo. Many of them sharing stories and their personal feelings about my son. Through these stories I learned that Steve did help to change the lives of many.

I learned that the pain does not go away, but the days between total emotional breakdowns do get farther apart. That the love in my heart and the thoughts on my mind are just as strong and dear as they have always been, and they are there every minute.

I hope that as you remember and pray for our true American heroes, that you also remember our Fallen Heroes and pray for their families.

And as Nov. 11 approaches, please remember to thank a Veteran for your freedoms. Our veterans deserve to know that they are appreciated and will always be remembered, loved and honored.

Stella Maynard
Burkesville, Ky.

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

"What we're dealing with here is a group of volunteers who want to make a difference and help people. Our bottom line is that we want to warm the spirit and warm the body."

— Carol Sharp, about the members of Warm Hearts, a volunteer group that helps the needy

WESTLAND
Observer

PUBLISHED THURSDAY AND SUNDAY



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

Ficano plays Marco Polo, opening a door to China

Recently, an ad agency for Toyota wanted to set an ad in the new and idyllic Cherry Hill subdivision in Canton. The ad agency wanted to line up a street full of colorful Toyotas in the all-American new urban driveways of Cherry Hill and redub the sub Toyotaville.

Some residents took exception to a Japanese car company using their town to sell "foreign" cars. They complained that with the weak condition of the American auto industry, the township shouldn't be allowing a Japanese company to do an ad in Canton, especially one proclaiming the subdivision as Toyotaville.



Hugh Gallagher

On the surface this seems like a fair complaint. America for Americans, America for Ford and General Motors (now that Chrysler is part of a German corporation). They're stealing our jobs, taking our daily bread, driving off with our claim to fame.

But pull back a little and get a global perspective. While there are many problems with our trade policies, we are long past the point of economic isolationism. Canton (named for a province in China) is a player in the international economy and it will lose some and win some in a competition that won't go away because we make Toyota back down on doing an ad.

Like a modern-day Marco Polo, Wayne County Executive Bob Ficano recently returned with a group of local businesspeople from a trip to China. One of the beneficiaries of that trip was Canton. Maybe the Tempo Group liked the familiar name of the township when it decided to set up a design and research facility there by 2007. Or maybe they appreciated the fact that metro Detroit is still a viable industrial and high-tech center and that Canton's proximity to the airport and to an educated workforce makes it an ideal place to set up shop. The Japanese auto parts supplier Yazaki must have felt the same way when it opened shop in Canton in 1986. It now employs 1,700 at its facility. Next year, the Swedish furniture megastore IKEA will entice buyers from a new Canton location (and employ many Canton and nearby residents).

Of course, Ford and General Motors have facilities in countries around the world and use parts designed and built by companies with headquarters in faraway places. Most automobiles today are like that Johnny Cash song about the car that an enterprising autoworker builds

from parts he has filched from the company over 20 years.

Other American companies and entrepreneurs have discovered China, which began emerging from behind its bamboo curtain in the 1970s. It is the world's largest market and Americans have always been good at sniffing out a profit. Dollars will go back and forth, their companies will set up facilities here and our companies will set up facilities there. It's a tide we won't be able to hold back, so we need to find the best way to ride it so that southeast Michigan benefits.

As John Carroll, executive director of the Detroit Regional Economic Partnership, said in an *Observer* story on Thursday, other Chinese companies will follow Tempo's lead and invest in this area.

"I see Americans wringing their hands about losing jobs to China, but this is globalization taking place," he said. "There are so many opportunities over there. So many companies are going over there to get into that market."

While we don't want to isolate southeast Michigan from this global economy, we do need to make sure that everyone benefits and not just the fat cats, the corporate managers and major stockholders who don't mind replacing American workers with sweatshops in Asia or South America.

We should embrace international trade, but we should also embrace fair trade in which other countries provide the same protections for their workers, the same environmental protections, and the same open markets that will allow our companies to sell at competitive prices.

This has been the challenge. Even a conservative free trader like U.S. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter, R-Livonia, opposed the Central America Free Trade Agreement because it didn't provide those protections. He has also been outspoken about China's trade policies which don't demand progress toward a more democratic society.

Still, we can't turn our backs on the rest of world and it is to our long-term advantage to work with other countries to promote better, fairer and more fluid trade agreements.

Ficano's excellent adventure in China might be a step in the right direction.

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

Rosa Parks gave encouragement and inspiration to take a stand

The legendary Rosa Parks was buried this week in a ceremony that celebrated her life. Almost every dignitary spoke of the gentle soul who defied injustice and changed society as a whole.

I first became aware of Rosa Parks when I was a young person living in Palestine: Both Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King were revered by the Palestinian people who viewed them as giants, standing up to their oppressors armed only with their dignity and rightful demand for human rights.

A writing assignment in high school gave me the opportunity to further explore the desegregation of the South and the courage of this woman and the organizations that backed her in her fight to be viewed as an equal human being. My admiration for Rosa Parks was further heightened upon completion of my research.

I had the privilege of meeting Rosa Parks in 1985 while visiting a friend who worked with Congressman John Conyers. You can imagine my reaction when the congressman's door opened and there stood Rosa Parks, welcoming me into his office. The moment will be etched in my mind for the rest of my life. This larger than life figure was standing in front of me with a smile on her face ushering me into the office.

As I became a frequent visitor to the congressman's office, I got to know this beautiful and gentle lady, who always had a kind word for my friend and me. We chatted about everything and anything especially the Palestinian issue and the Arab/African-American relationship.

More important, she was interested in my friend and me as young women growing up in a complex society. At the time of my meeting with her, The American Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) was under constant attack from individuals who hated Arabs. This fact was demonstrated when one of my colleagues was killed in Los Angeles as a result of his work for the eradication of discrimination against the Arab-American community. I shall always remember her kind words of encouragement and support.

I was able to observe on my various visits to Congressman Conyers' office that Rosa Parks was in her office working diligently to help the constituents with their needs. It impressed me that with all her fame and accolades she did not abandon her duties, she worked like as

hard as any other person in that office. While I was dying to ask her thoughts on that day when she defied authority, I refrained. I believe I know why she did it. As a spiritual person, she believed that her country could only prosper if all people are treated with respect and equality.

As I continue my work with the ADC, I always draw from her inspiration and conviction that we can accomplish our goals of attaining our dignity and equality without violence. Her words of wisdom always echo in my head when I receive threatening calls and letters at my office from individuals who believe that Arab is synonymous with evil. Over the years I now believe one of the most important messages that I got from Rosa Parks is that a person can shed away fear and stand alone against injustice and persevere.

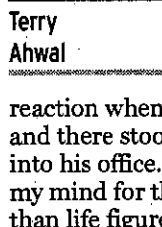
Once my friend changed jobs and Rosa Parks left Congressman Conyers' office, I lost my personal connection with Rosa Parks, but I always stayed attuned to her plans.

A few years later I was asked to speak at the opening of the institute she established to empower young women.

As I listened to her speak about her mission for making life better for young women in the community I was again struck by her ambition. Unlike other women her age who looked for a relaxing retirement, Rosa Parks chose to continue her pursuit of young women achieving their dreams.

Throughout the years Rosa Parks served as a mentor in my life. I learned that I have a responsibility to my birth country and my adopted country to work on behalf of the voiceless and condemned. Through my association with Rosa Parks, I realized that being humble is one of the noblest attributes a person can possess. I discovered and attained the belief that non-violence is more powerful than the mightiest military. I learned that you don't replace an injustice with injustice. Most of all, I learned that everyone has courage within themselves and can become a source of change when they act for the right thing at an unpopular time.

I hope that her passing will motivate each one of us to have the courage to work on eradicating injustice from the world. Her life gave us as aspiration and I hope that her death will serve as a catalyst to motivate us in extending her legacy by working toward a more peaceful and free world. Imagine the power of goodness if we all took it upon ourselves to respect others and do something good for humanity.



Terry Ahwal

Terry Ahwal lives in Canton.

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Another hurdle cleared in wine shipment battle

BY JOE BAUMAN
STAFF WRITER

Six years of legal wrangling and an estimated \$1 million in attorney fees later, Troy residents Ray and Eleanor Heald are a big step closer to being able to purchase wine directly from out-of-state producers.

The Healds, nationally renown wine writers and columnists for the *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*, called a federal judge's ruling last week allowing out-of-state wineries to ship directly to Michigan residents a victory for consumers and the U.S.

Constitution. "We take great satisfaction in a six-year effort to overturn anti-consumer wine laws in Michigan that have prevented wine consumers from obtaining wines, other than those that state wholesalers are willing to carry," Eleanor Heald said. "And additionally, opening up the state's borders so that small Michigan wineries can experience the business growth across the U.S. that they desire and deserve."

In his ruling, chief U.S. District Judge Bernard Friedman blocked a proposal by Michigan Attorney General Michael Cox to temporarily ban all direct shipments of wine to Michigan consumers, a move the Healds argued would cripple the state's growing wine industry.

Friedman's ruling enforces a May decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, which declared Michigan's alcohol laws unconstitutional since they treated in-state and out-of-state wineries differently in violation of the Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution.

"It is our hope that this order will ratchet down the rhetoric of both the Michigan Beer & Wine Wholesalers and state legislators who introduced and backed HB 4959 and SB 600, which would effectively kill the Michigan wine industry, now 42 wineries strong with more interested in opening if Michigan's new wine laws promote a healthy business environment," Eleanor Heald said. "Such expansion in the wine industry will also serve to promote Michigan tourism and bring more travel dollars into the state."

State legislators still must approve policy regulating the shipments, but Ray Heald said he hopes the new law will reflect both the U.S. Supreme Court and Friedman's rulings and not special interest groups. "Rational legislation is

forthcoming from the Michigan Senate, introduced by Sen. Michelle McManus, that will follow a model direct shipping bill adopted and implemented successfully by many states," he said.

Since the Healds prevailed in the case, it is expected the state will have to pay the plaintiffs' legal fees, earlier estimated at \$1 million, although the final tally will be set by Friedman.

TELLABRATION EVENT

If you enjoy listening to a good story, don't miss Tellabration 2005 to be held at 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 18, at the Livonia Civic Center Library, 32777 Five Mile, east of Farmington Road in Livonia. Tellabration is a world wide celebration of storytelling for adults. The event is presented by the library and the Detroit Story League.

Featured storytellers are Doris Cooney, Jean Gordon, Kathy Tarnow, and Barbara Schutzgruber. Light refreshments will be served after the storytelling. Admission is \$5 at the door. Proceeds benefit the Detroit Story League Scholarship Fund. For more information, call Cathryn Huch at (734) 421-6601.

WIN SUPER BOWL TICKETS

The Super Bowl XL Host Committee is issuing a last call for members to join Team XL. Cost is \$50. Visit the Super Bowl XL Web site at www.sbxl.org for an application and more information. In addition, to special merchandise and discounts at area businesses and restaurants, membership

gets you a chance to win prizes including two tickets to Super Bowl XL. Organizers say about 2,000 people are currently entered into the drawing. "Those are great odds on a chance to win two tickets worth \$600 each," said one host committee member. The drawing will be held in January.

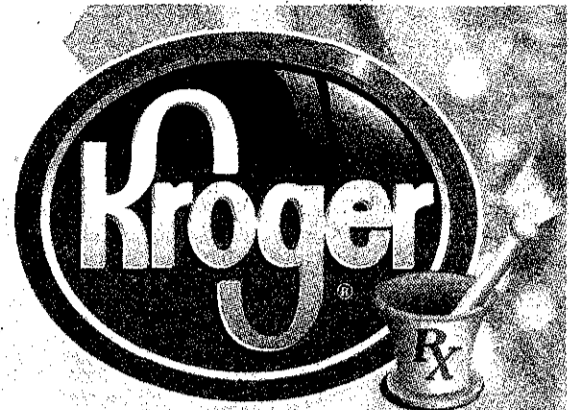
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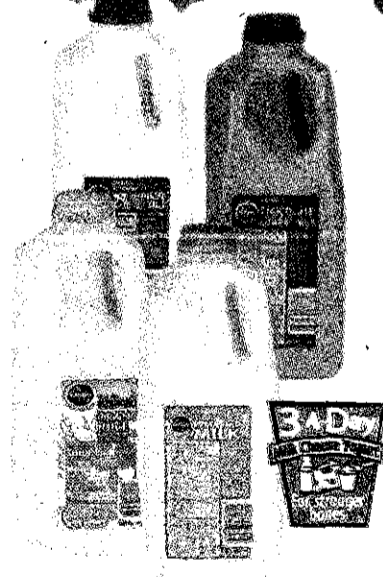
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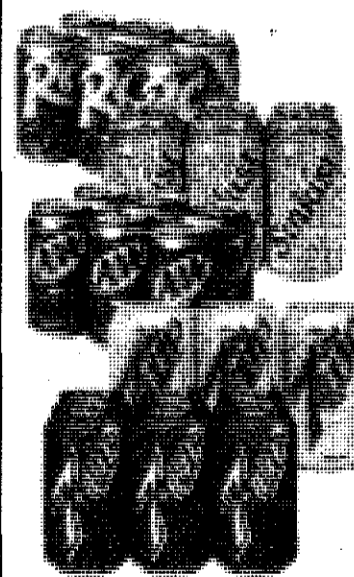


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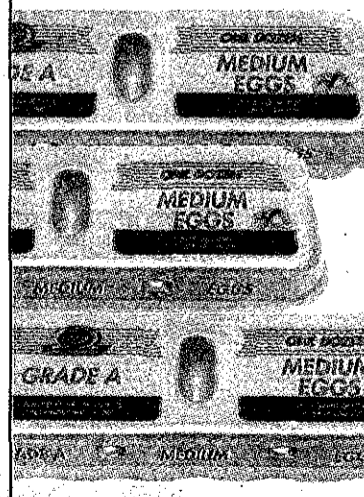


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