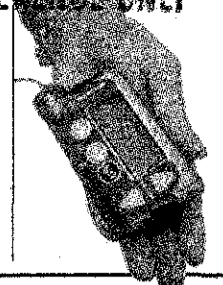


12/18

Christmas traditions
Celebrations focus on family, church, food
OBSERVER LIFE - SECTION C

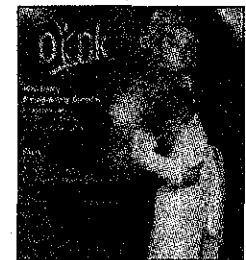


REFERENCE ONLY



Insulin pumps changing diabetic children's lives
HEALTH, PAGE C10

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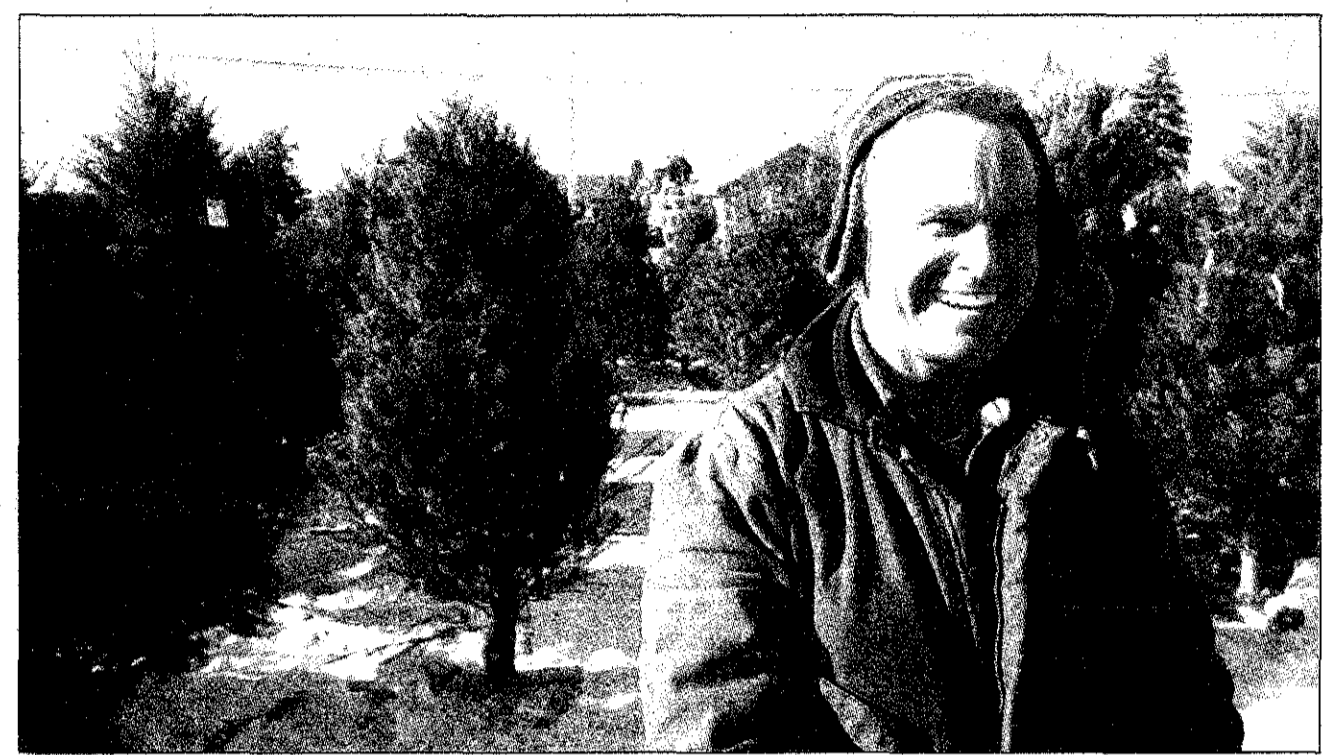
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WESTLAND Observer

SUNDAY
December 18, 2005

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PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

John Wagatha of Westland thinks he may have the oldest Christmas tree lot in the city. He's been selling trees at locations along Wayne Road for 27 years.

Oh, Christmas tree ...

After 26 years, lot finds demand is still there for real thing

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

"A nice easy load, that's what we like to see," said Mike Silvers, looking out the window of the 1976 Airstream travel trailer. "We love to see pickup trucks come in," agreed Rodney Scott. "Just put them in the back and away they go." The pickup truck belonged to Westland resident Mike Bess who was at the North Star Christmas tree lot on Wayne Road at Warren Monday afternoon to get a tree. "I came here last year, that was my first time here," said Bess, handing John Wagatha \$35 for a tree. "I came because it's fairly close to where I live and I got a postcard." Postcard? Yep, it's one of the marketing tools Wagatha



PLEASE SEE TREES, A8 Hank Kobylarz of Wayne and his wife, Brigid, picked out a Fraser fir at the tree lot.

Driver appreciates couple's act of kindness

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

Diane Diem has been trying to explain random acts of kindness to the young girl she mentors through the Westland Youth Assistance Program. Now, she now has a real life example. "I know they did something good, and they know they did something good," Diem said of young couple who helped her when her car stopped running at a gas station last week. Diem's car needed a battery, but her husband hadn't gotten around to changing it the night before. It quit running at a hardware store the next day, and Diem called AAA Road Service to come out and jump-start it.

AAA told her to keep it running, but she needed gas, so she stopped at a station at Ann Arbor Trail and Middlebelt. The station attendant thought that, if she did it quickly, Diem could turn the car off, pump the gas and restart the car, but that didn't work. So as she was preparing to call AAA for the second time, the young man came to her assistance. "The husband said, 'Turn off your phone, we'll help you,'" Diem said. "He said he had cables in his car, and he'd do it." But then he realized he was driving his aunt's car, so he sent his wife home to get the cables while he waited with Diem at the station. She came back 10 minutes later. "I would have thought they'd give me a jump, but not take the time to go home and get the cables," Diem

said. "He knew I wasn't in dire need, but he insisted. That helped me out because I'm only allowed four calls a year to AAA for assistance." Diem is touched even more by the kindness of the couple whom she knows only as Don and Jennifer. They were newlyweds, and Jennifer had just lost her mother and stepfather who had died of carbon monoxide poisoning in their RV. So when she explains random acts of kindness to the youth she is mentoring she can point to Don and Jennifer. "I know there are very, very kind people in the world, but there should be more people like them," she said. "To be stranded and cold ... 'This is what we do,' that's what he said. They were so nice."

smason@hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2112

Judge orders teens to trial in carjacking

BY LEANNE ROGERS
STAFF WRITER

Stopped at a red light on Warren at Merriman in the early hours of Nov. 20, Adeeb Naura knew there was a problem when he saw two men appear at the driver's and front passenger windows. "I noticed the people on each side of the vehicle. I noticed them when there was a gun pointed at my head," said Adeeb Naura, a Westland resident, who was carjacked and robbed as he and his brother returned home from an evening at nightclubs. Testifying in Westland 18th District Court Friday, Adeeb Naura identified Ernest Young, 19, as the man who robbed him at gunpoint and drove off in Naura's vehicle. Young is charged in the carjacking along with Damien Thomas, 17, Roxanne Silvia, 17, and Cory Donald, 16, all of Detroit. All four were ordered bound over for trial on multiple felony charges following the preliminary examination. Ordered out of his 1995 BMW, Adeeb Naura said he was told to lie down on the pavement and robbed of nearly \$600 in cash. "When I was on the ground, I

couldn't see what was happening with my brother," Adeeb Naura said. "Then I saw my brother when I looked under the car. Two people got into the vehicle, made a U-turn and went eastbound on Warren." The BMW was followed by a 1998 Chevrolet Malibu which also made a U-turn and headed east on Warren, Adeeb Naura said. While Adeeb Naura testified that he wasn't able to identify the man who came up to the passenger side of the BMW or the Malibu driver, he said there was a woman passenger in the Chevy. "She was saying their (the suspects) names and 'Let's go. Let's get out of here,'" said Adeeb Naura. The brother, Mahdy Naura had similar testimony and identified Thomas as the man who forced him out of the vehicle at gunpoint. He said Thomas also took \$260 in cash from him. Mahdy Naura also identified Young as the man who robbed his brother, testifying he could see Young in profile as he was on the ground with Adeeb Naura. Dearborn Heights Police Officer

PLEASE SEE CARJACKING, A4

Recall meeting attracts crowd

BY DAVE VARGA
STAFF WRITER

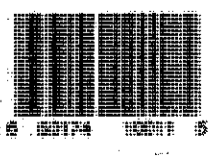
More than 100 people gathered in Livonia Wednesday to share plans and questions on collecting more than 10,000 signatures on petitions to recall five school board members. Set up by the grassroots Citizens For Livonia's Future, the meeting came just over a week after the Livonia Board of Education voted 6-1 to approve the Legacy Initiative, a plan to close seven schools, reconfigure grades for elementary schools, increase busing and trim \$1.5-\$2 million next year. "The reason we are meeting now is to show them that we mean business," said Salem Samaan. "This not only affects the kids, but it affects the property values." Jodi Hamilton outlined recall process. They would have 90 days to gather signatures; at least 10,000 signatures of registered voters must be validated (based on 25 percent of votes in the last governor's election); and each board member being recalled must be named on a sepa-

rate petition - so recall backers must sign five times. Five board members targeted are Dan Lessard, Rob Freeman, Cynthia Markarian, Lynda Scheel and Kevin Whitehead. Joanne Morgan won't be included, since her position is up for election in May; Tom Bailey cast the only vote opposed to the plan. One audience member asked about recalling the superintendent. While that's not possible, Hamilton said: "If we unseat the board and reseat it, they can unseat him." That drew loud applause. Hamilton said they would try to gather 12,000-13,000 names on each petition. The first step, though, is to work on petition language, which must be approved by an election commission, before signatures are sought. Committee members didn't have a definitive answer on the idea of getting signatures to initiate a ballot referendum for residents to vote on the plan. According to Patrice Mang, "it doesn't look like you can

PLEASE SEE RECALL, A4

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Volume 41
Number 59



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Coming Thursday in Filter

Where will you party on New Year's Eve? The next Filter will offer some ideas.

AROUND WESTLAND

Legion meets

American Legion Westland Post 251 meets at 7 p.m. the first Tuesday of every month at the Westland V.F.W. Post 3323 at Wayne Road and Avondale just north of Palmer Road.

Membership is open to all veterans, providing they meet the eligibility dates. For information call 734-326-2607.

The Post 251 also will be presenting their Blue Star Banner to families who have a member currently serving in the Armed Forces.

The banner will be presented at the Westland City Council meeting at 7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 6.

Families in the Westland and Canton areas who have members currently serving in the Armed Forces to contact the post at (734) 326-2607 for more information.

Surplus food

The city of Westland will distribute surplus federal food, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 22, at the Dorsey Community Center, where city residents north of Michigan Avenue should pick up their food.

Residents south of Michigan Avenue always pick up their commodities on the third Monday of each month at St. James United Methodist Church, 30055 Annapolis between Henry Ruff and Middlebelt.

Shoppers in Taylor Towers should call their building manager for information about their day of distribution.

Food distributed in December will include beef stew, apple juice and instant potatoes. For more information call the Dorsey Center's surplus food hotline at (734) 595-0366.

The program is administered by the Wayne County Office of Senior Services.

Las Vegas Party

St. Bernardine Men's Club is sponsoring a Pinochle/Euchre Card Party on Fridays, Jan. 6, 13 and 27 and Feb. 3, 17 and 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.

Singers needed

Do you like singing Christmas and religious music? Kirk of Our Savior on Cherry Hill west of Wayne Road, Westland, is looking for singers for its adult (ages 13 and up) traditional choir for the Christmas season and beyond. All Christian faiths and all voice ranges are welcome. Rehearsals are at 7 p.m. Thursdays. For more information, call Tim at (734) 718-8733 or the church at (734) 728-1088.

Share the warmth

Westland Shopping Center and Cotton Incorporated, the marketing and research company representing upland cotton, are sponsoring the Share the Warmth program to help those affected by this year's hurricanes.

Shoppers can present receipts from cotton merchandise purchases totaling \$150 or more to the Westland Shopping Center Customer Information Center between now and Dec. 23, and a new cotton blanket will be donated to the Salvation Army on the participating shopper's behalf. The cotton blankets will be dis-



Wish you were here

The St. Damian choir and friend were sure to take their Observer along on their pilgrimage to Italy in November and picked the Colosseum as the backdrop for their Wish You Were Here snapshot. The group visited Venice, Assisi, the Isle of Capri and Rome. They also had an audience with Pope Benedict XVI and sang at the tomb of Pope John Paul II. The choir also was the main choir for Mass at St. Peter's Basilica on Nov. 15. If you go on vacation, take a picture with your Westland City Observer and send it to Sue Mason, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150.

Retiree yearns to have his songs recorded

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

"normal existence," only to give it one more try.

So it's no surprise that as a retiree, the Westland resident is once again pursuing his dreams, but this time he's focusing on another talent, his daughter Maria, and on getting demo tapes of songs he has written.

Maria, a graduate of Garden City High School, is making a name for herself on stage appearing in theatrical productions in Michigan and Ontario, Canada.

She was involved in pageants, high school theatrical productions and dance during her school years. She even won national honors as a member of dance troupe out of the Robert Lee School of Dance.

Maria Simos also was the inspiration for one Simos song, *You're Lucky to Have a Daddy Like Me*, while another one of his songs, *Eternal Flowers*, comes from his mother's flower garden.

"My mother used to have the

most beautiful garden in Detroit," Simos said. "My daughter Maria thinks *Eternal Flowers* is my best."

Simos has had nine of his songs recorded.

His song *Nita*, released under the name of Nick Simon, ended up being published as sheet music by the Shelby Music Publishing Company in Detroit.

But getting demo tapes of songs like his tribute to Princess Diana costs money, money that he doesn't have. So it's understandable that he's excited that a woman who comes to visit a relative at his American House community is "interested in helping to get his music published."

"A lot of people who hear my song think it is better than Elton John's," said Simos of his Princess Diana song. "I sent a copy of the lyrics to Buckingham Palace. I heard nothing back. The lyrics have never been published."

Simos wrote the song after

Princess Diana died in an car crash.

"You slipped away from us very fast and broke my heart in two," he said, reciting the lyrics from memory. "I love you so, who do I turn to. I'm an ordinary Joe broke up way deep inside."

Simos was a fan of Diana. He would watch her all the time on the TV.

"She was a beautiful woman," he said. "Inside, I'd be the only one worshipping and adoring her wherever she goes. She's the queen of my fondest dreams, she'll always be queen in my heart."

Until he can get demos made, all Simos can do is hope. He has plenty of certificates in his basement for all of his successes in the entertainment business, so this would be his piece of resistance.

"My father always told me, 'Don't lie, don't cheat, don't swear. Be good, be honest.'"

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Susan Rosiek
Executive Editor
(734) 953-2100
srosiek@hometownlife.com

Hugh Gallagher
Managing Editor
(734) 953-2149
hgallagher@hometownlife.com

Sue Mason
Community Editor
(734) 953-2112
smason@hometownlife.com

Frank Cibor
Retail Sales Manager
(734) 953-2177
fcibor@hometownlife.com

Cathy White
Retail Advertising Rep.
(734) 953-2073
cwhite@hometownlife.com

Newsroom (734) 953-2104 Fax (734) 591-7279
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Humane society: Give brick as a present

Are you looking for a unique holiday gift that will warm hearts and help pave the way to a better future for thousands of companion animals?

Consider purchasing a personalized brick paver for loved ones or yourself and become part of a historic revitalization project underway at the Michigan Humane Society. Funds raised from the plaza paver program will support the expansion and renovation of the state-of-the-art Berman Center for Animal Care in Westland a \$6.5 million investment in animal welfare.

Personalized pavers are available in three sizes: 4-by-8 in. for \$100; 8-by-8 in. for \$500; and 1-by-1-ft. for \$1,000.

They will be placed around the entrance plaza and throughout the grounds of the Berman Center for Animal

Care, which opened to the public in April this year. Corporate logos can also be engraved on the two larger size pavers for an additional \$40 charge.

Pavers can be ordered online at www.michiganhumane.org or by calling the Michigan Humane Society at (866) MHUMANE, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Established in 1877, the MHS is one of the oldest and largest animal welfare organizations in the country.

Primarily serving companion animals, the MHS programs include animal sheltering and adoption, behavior and training, veterinary care, reuniting lost animals with their guardians, cruelty investigation, emergency rescue, education and legislative advocacy.

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Nankin Mills Girl Scouts Katie Sheveda (left) and Jamie Brda pick out toys for children of all ages to donate to Toys for Tots.

Nankin Mills Scouts shop for Toys for Tots

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

Girls wearing green flooded the aisles at Westland's Toys R Us store Thursday evening. All the toys they chose were for charity.

The girls, all members of Girl Scout Junior Troop 404 at Nankin Mills Elementary, return to the store each year to purchase carts full of toys that they donate to the local Toys for Tots campaign.

"This is a good service project," said Lori Muir, troop leader. "It hits close to home with them."

For the fifth year, the troop created their holiday savings banks. Beginning in October, each member earns money at home by doing special chores

or going door-to-door to seek donations.

"Our parents made donations," explained Lexi Parenti, a fourth-grader and Scout. Fellow Scout Andrea Salamay said she raised money by assisting her grandmother.

Once they combined their earnings, Troop 404 had raised \$400, all of which was used to purchase toys and fill their school's Toys-For-Tots drop box.

"We're able to get a lot of toys for people," said Scout Katie Shereda.

Jamie Brda added that the shopping spree allows them to "buy things for other people who don't have as much."

At the store, the girls split up into four groups, forging a team effort for toy shopping.



PHOTOS BY TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Girl Scouts Haylee Englehart (front), Kaleigh Siczkowski, (middle) and Emily Wicker (back) work their way through the aisles at Toys R Us shopping for toys to donate to Toys for Tots.

They sought out deals and chose toys they thought children of different ages would enjoy.

"We try to get as much as we can," said LuAnn Englehart, whose daughter Haylee is a member of the troop. Englehart, a teacher at Memorial Elementary in Garden City, instituted a thumbs-up-or-thumbs-down method to deciding which toys they would purchase. Every Scout had a chance to vote on each toy before it went in the cart.

The girls came up with

their own methods to organize the shopping visit, too. Jayna Muir said she thought they could buy toddler gifts first because those were closest to the front of the store.

"They are learning so much," said Sandy Shereda, whose daughter Katie is in the troop. She said each year the children raise more and more money.

"It keeps snowballing," she said.

By the time the girls reached the cash register, their grand total came to only \$312, so they headed back to

the aisles to choose more toys. From Mr. Potato Head to a toy microwave oven, Magnetix to a Superman figure, they filled their carts. Scout Briana Denson said she thinks the Dora The Explorer game her group chose will be a favorite gift for someone this year.

Muir said she hopes all the girls learn about helping others "and putting yourself in the place of someone less fortunate" through this annual activity.

"As a troop we do a lot of service projects and field trips

together, but this project touches them," she said. "It makes them feel good to help other children."

The Scouts said they also enjoy spending time together. After the shopping trip, they all went to dinner at Buddy's in Livonia.

"We're all sisters to each other," said Kaleigh Siczkowski.

Haylee Englehart added: "We're all friends to each other, too."

scasola@hometownlife.com
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Granholt signs wine legislation

Gov. Jennifer Granholm Thursday signed legislation that will allow Michigan and out-of-state wineries to ship their products directly to customers in limited amounts.

"Protecting Michigan wineries means protecting Michigan jobs," Granholm said. "This legislation represents a compromise that will comply with the Supreme Court and, more importantly, protect our local economies."

In May, the United States Supreme Court declared unconstitutional Michigan and New York state laws regulating the sale of wine. In both cases, in-state wineries were allowed to ship directly to consumers, retailers and restaurants while

out-of-state wineries were not. The court ruled that states must treat wine producers equally. The legislation will allow licensed wineries to ship up to 1,500 nine-liter cases, or 13,500 liters total, directly to customers each year. The bills also put regulations in place to ensure that minors cannot get access to wine through direct shipment and allow the Liquor Control Commission to charge an annual license fee of up to \$100 to help fund the regulation of direct shipping vendors.

Michigan's grape and wine industry contributes more than \$75 million each year to the state's economy, according to a study conducted by Michigan State University in 2000.

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The Salvation Army Red Kettle Drive donations off 30percent

The Salvation Army Eastern Michigan Division's Red Kettle Christmas Campaign is currently \$625,000 short of its targeted pace and is on track to fall short of the \$7 million goal by at least 29 percent.

To date, the campaign has brought in \$2.66 million, just 38 percent of the total \$7 million needed to maintain current service levels in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties in 2006.

The Salvation Army's \$7 million goal represents real need as reflected by the fact that

Detroit has been ranked our nation's poorest city. In Michigan alone last year, 1.2 million people relied on the Salvation Army for basic assistance like food, shelter, and clothing. The Salvation Army's tremendous outreach, including programs serving the elderly, homeless, addicted, and even pregnant teens, is only possible through the use of the funds raised during The Salvation Army's Red Kettle Christmas Campaign.

"Imagine what Detroit will be like next year if we have to

cut services. If people don't give a little more, we'll have to turn people away during a time when more and more people are asking for help, said Russ Russell, executive director of development for The Salvation Army.

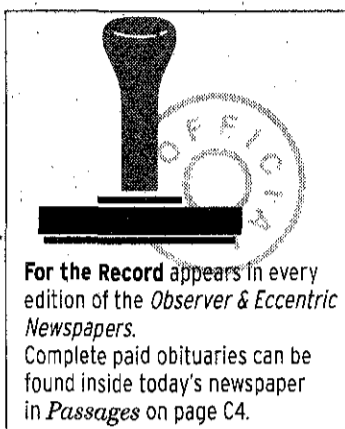
"We've got our own tsunami here at home 365 days a year. The Salvation Army helped so many around the world through tremendous disasters this year. But I'm worried that we won't be able to help our own community, which is facing a critical need."

B
Luwana Bond (nee Wheeler)
 Bond, 81, died Dec. 14.
Rorjald G. Bray
 Bray, 62, of Clarkston, died Dec. 13.
Ruth Erickson Brooks
 Brooks, 90, formerly of Birmingham, died Dec. 7.

D
James J. Dobby
 Dobby, 63, of Webberville, died Dec. 8.
Gordon F. Donaldson
 Donaldson, 66, died Dec. 15.

G
Howard E. Gray
 Gray, 89, of Farmington Hills, died Dec. 11.

H
Anna Mary Heringhausen
 Heringhausen, of Garden City, died Nov. 18.
Jack C. Hutchinson
 Hutchinson, 89, of Holland, formerly of Birmingham, died Dec. 15.



L
Edward Hodson Lerchen
 Lerchen 85, of Grand Rapids, died Dec. 14.
Eileen Frances Little
 Little, 89, of Westland, formerly of Belleville, died Dec. 4.

M
Richard S. Mayes

Mayes, 50, of Westland, died Dec. 9.
Richard N. Miller Sr.
 Miller, 80, of Livonia, died Dec. 14.

N
Lena M. Nicholson
 Nicholson, 96, of Birmingham, died Dec. 16.

O
James P. O'Donnell
 O'Donnell, 91, of Livonia, died Dec. 6.

P
Susan Peacock
 Peacock died Dec. 13.

R
Sharon E. Rea
 Rea, 58, of Plymouth, died Dec. 13.
Ralph W. Richmond
 Richmond, 49, of Westland, died Dec. 9.

S
Robert Paul Russie Sr.
 Russie, 92, died Dec. 13.

Y
Carmen Frank Yaconis
 Yaconis, 72, of Westland, died Dec. 10.

CARJACKING

FROM PAGE A1

David Greener testified that he and another officer were on patrol when they spotted the BMW.

The vehicle turned off Warren north on Gully and continued speeding through residential streets before it stopped and the driver and passenger bailed out, Greener said.

After a brief foot chase, Greener said he lost sight of the passenger from the vehicle. The driver, however, was arrested about 30 minutes later, hiding under a vehicle after being tracked by a Redford Police officer and canine.

Thomas, who is accused of being the second person in the stolen BMW, was arrested later at his Detroit home.

Donald, who is charged as an adult, and Silvia were arrested after they returned to Westland looking for their friends.

While handcuffed in the rear of a patrol car, Young still had his cell phone.

Young couldn't get the phone out of his pocket but was able to reach his direct connect Nextel cell phone enough to answer Silvia, said Westland Police Sgt. Steve Borisch.

"He told her he was in custody but thought the police were going to let him go because they hadn't found the gun," said Borisch, who interviewed Silvia twice after the suspects were arrested.

The defense attorneys for the three male defendants didn't argue over their clients being bound over for trial.

Silvia's attorney Bill McConico, however, argued that there was no probable cause to bind his client over for trial on charges including carjacking, two counts of armed robbery and felony firearm - the same as the male defendants.

"She never touched the weapon. She never left the car. She never instructed (the co-defendants) to carjack someone," said McConico. "She was simply a back seat passenger."

During her statements to Borisch, Silvia said she had pointed out the BMW to the male defendants after being impressed by the wheels. While she knew the men had a gun, Silvia told Borisch she thought they might take a radio from the vehicle.

"She had no idea they were going to carjack the BMW.

There was no criminal mind in any of this," said McConico, adding his client was only guilty of being with some bad people.

McConico said that his client, a senior at the Henry Ford Academy, is severely dyslexic, functionally illiterate and was taking pain medication for a broken neck at the time of her arrest.

Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor Luke Skywalker noted that Silvia is currently on probation for larceny in Dearborn and had similar offenses as a juvenile.

"She was driving around all night with the gun being passed around," said Skywalker. "She pointed out the BMW. She doesn't say give the car back - she says let's get out of there."

She does the scouting report." Judge C. Charles Bokos agreed with the prosecution motion to bind Silvia over for trial as charged, noting her statement to Borisch about the other defendants performing big licks - street slang for robberies.

"She continued to be in this company and she was aware of things these people were involved in," said Bokos. "She points out an attractive car that could be harmless. Conversely, then she was aiding and abetting."

There was sufficient evidence for probable cause, Bokos said, adding that perspective might be different if applying the standard of guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

Young and Thomas are free on bond, but Silvia and Donald have been in custody since their arrest.

Young and Thomas each had a bond of \$50,000/10 percent bond.

McConico sought a bond reduction for Silvia to \$5,000/5 percent. Bokos didn't agree to that but reduced her bond to \$50,000/10 percent.

"Her bond shouldn't be higher than the other defendants," said Bokos, who earlier had commented that he disagreed with the bonds set at arraignment.

Any of the defendants who are in custody are scheduled for circuit court arraignment on Dec. 28. If they are free on bond, they would be arraigned Jan. 12.

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RECALL

FROM PAGE A1

do it."

Parents also asked about marketing the recall with signs, and finding other ways to share their indignation (such as an organized student sick day or writing more letters to the board).

Someone asked about a

rumor that teachers were told to avoid the meeting and the recall.

"They are being told this," said Mang, who is a teacher in another district. "They'll deny this, but it's true."

The CFLF isn't collecting money. They'll rely on "sweat equity," Mang said.

Some wondered if a recall election in late spring or early summer would be too late.

"There is a possibility that we

cannot stop this for this fall, I'm not going to lie," Mang said.

Mang had urged each of the 100 people to find three other people to get at least 25 signatures each. "That's all it's going to take," she said.

For more on Citizens for Livonia's Future, visit Web site at www.citizensforlivoniasfuture.com.

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Michigan Humane Society offers winter animal care tips

As temperatures begin to drop, calls to the Michigan Humane Society Cruelty Hotline increase with reports of companion animals left outside with no shelter or other provisions. Sadly, when the weather becomes severe, some calls arrive too late to save an animal left to fend for himself in brutal conditions.

The MHS recommends that companion animals live indoors all year long. However, if the animal must be outside, guardians should put proper provisions in place now before it becomes a life or death situation

— and one for which they can be charged with animal cruelty law violations. Misdemeanor animal cruelty charges can carry a sentence of up to 93 days in jail, up to a \$1,000 fine, community service and loss of pet ownership for a specified amount of time.

"Even though the temperatures are just beginning to drop, there have been several cold and wet days already that could be unbearable or life-threatening for a dog left outside," said Debby MacDonald, senior cruelty investigator for the Michigan Humane Society.

The following tips will help guardians care for their companion animals responsibly during cold weather:

■ When temperatures plummet, companion animals should not be left outside for any length of time. Even large or long-haired breeds cannot withstand severe or inclement weather. Bring small or short-haired dogs in when temperatures reach 15-20 degrees Fahrenheit. Larger breeds and thick-coated dogs may remain outside, with adequate shelter, to about 0 degrees. Precipitation and severe wind chills should also be taken

into account.

■ Cats should be kept permanently indoors or at least brought into a warm, animal proofed garage during severe weather.

■ Roaming cats often seek the warmth of car engines, so knock on the car hood or honk the horn before starting your car to give them a chance to escape.

■ Increase food and water 10-20 percent for dogs left outside during the winter months. Check drinking water frequently — every few hours — to make sure it hasn't frozen.

Shelter is required by

Michigan state law for dogs who must remain outdoors for any length of time. Adequate shelter means a well-built, insulated, slant-roofed dog house. The interior should be just large enough for the dog to stand and to lie down comfortably. It should be slightly elevated from the ground for air circulation. The door should face away from prevailing winds and have a protective flap to eliminate drafts. Clean, dry straw should always be provided for bedding rather than towels, rugs or blankets that absorb moisture and may quickly freeze.

Several types of inadequate shelter frequently encountered by investigators include an unheated garage or shed, a dog house that is too large or lacks straw, or dogs simply tied out to a porch, fence or deck with no shelter at all.

If an animal is cold to the touch, or his paws and ears have turned bright red, he may be suffering from frostbite. Move the animal to a warmer area and contact your veterinarian immediately. Suspected animal cruelty should be reported immediately to the local animal control or police.

CLASS REUNIONS

As space permits, the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers print, without charge, announcements of class reunions. Send the information to Reunions, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48170. Please include the date of the reunion, one contact person, and a telephone number.

REUNIONS

Central High
Class of 1946
A 60-year reunion is planned for June 4, 2006, at Glen Oaks Country Club. Both January and June classmates will celebrate over dinner and dancing. January grads contact Al Weiss (248) 737-9313 or Esther Bornstein (248) 851-6625. June grads contact Barbara Keidan (248) 646-7199 or Saul Saulson (248) 932-5177.

Churchill High School
Class of 1995
A 10-year reunion is planned for 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 22, at 5th Avenue in Novi. For more information contact Fran Yee at fye@sussman-sikes.com.

Denby High School
Class of 1956
A 50-year reunion is planned for Sept. 16, 2006, at the Club Venetian in Madison Heights. Contact Doreen (McClennan) Weber at dajweb@juno.com or Jerry Love at (586) 739-3840.

Detroit Mackenzie
Classes Jan. June and Summer 1956
A 50-year reunion is planned for Sept. 16, 2006, at the Novi Sheraton. For more information call Harold Kappen at (734) 261-0325 or okappen@earthlink.net.

Edsel Ford High School
A 50th anniversary will be held over the next year with a series of special events. Final activity will be a "Black and White Ball" on Saturday, May 20, 2006. About the activities www.geocities.com/edsel50th. To contact the committee email edsel50@gmail.com.

Epiphany Grade School
Class of 1966
A 40-year reunion is in the planning stages for the summer of 2006. Contact Dorothy at (248) 477-9478 or dzsnyder@hotmail.com.

Franklin High School
Class of 1969
Is planning a reunion for 2007. Please contact Kathy Nisun (248) 363-5679 or e-mail: Kaynihilu@aol.com or Kathy Shoebridge @ Klivingston@nu-core.com.

Garden City West
Class of 1970
A 35-year reunion is planned for April 1, 2006, at Mama Mia Restaurant on Plymouth Road in Livonia. Contact Gordon Adams at (586) 949-7462 for information and reservations.

Grosse Pointe North
Class of 1991
Call (800) 677-7800, visit www.taylorreunions.com or e-mail: info@taylorreunions.com.

Livonia Franklin
Class of 1969
A reunion is in the pre-planning stages for 2007. For more information contact Kathy Nisun (248) 363-5679, or Email: Kaynihilu@aol.com.

St. Mary of Redford
High School class of 1956
Grade School class of 1952
Looking for graduates. Contact (734) 525-5888 or Email: kheenan@glls.net.

Utica High School
Class of 1981
A 25th reunion is being planned for the fall of 2006. Please send updated address information and inquires to: Todd Richter (trichter26@comcast.net)

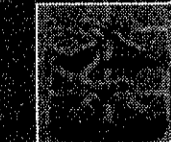
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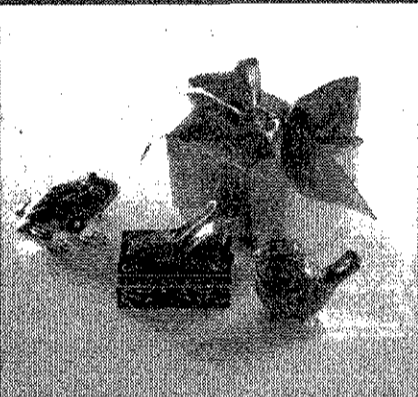
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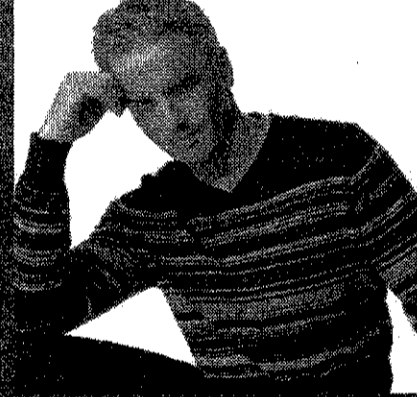
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Home alone?

St. Dunstan's ready to serve its annual Christmas dinner

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

It's a tradition that dates back more than 30 years.

On Christmas Day, members of St. Dunstan Church in Garden City welcome anyone who will be alone for the holiday to come to the church for dinner - turkey and ham and all the fixings.

It used to be that 200 people would show up, but over the years, the number has dipped to where, a week before Christmas, only 50 people have signed up to attend.

"We expect 150 every year, so we'll cook for 150," said Mary Shurge, a member of St. Dunstan's who helps with the dinner. "I'm not sure why the number is diminishing. It could be that a lot of the senior communities probably now have their own dinners."

The dinner has been a tradition at St. Dunstan's for almost four decades and attracts guests from around the Detroit metropolitan area as the result of notices sent to area churches. It's believed to be the only dinner that is actually held on Christmas Day, and estimates

are that 75 percent of the guests are from outside St. Dunstan's parish.

Shurge and her husband, John, and two children were introduced to the dinner in 1966 when they were invited to attend by then pastor Rev. "Mack" Makulski. They were back the next year as volunteers.

Doors will open at 1 p.m. and dinner will be served at 1:30 p.m. Guests will have an opportunity to sit and talk and be entertained by St. Dunstan pastor, the Rev. Don Demmer.

"He's great," said Shurge. "He comes over and talks to everyone. He makes them all feel at home."

While there are no planned activities after the dinner, Shurge stressed that there's no need for guests to eat and run. In fact, she says, "we'll come up with something to keep them happy."

There's no charge for the dinner although reservations are requested. People interested in attending the dinner need only call the St. Dunstan rectory at (734) 425-6720.

"We'd like them to phone in, even if it's Christmas Eve," Shurge said

Elementary students share in season of giving

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

Take a second look next time you hear the sound of a Salvation Army bell and red kettle, there might be a local elementary student standing there, collecting money for those in need.

Students at both Roosevelt Elementary and Johnson Elementary schools have taken on the organization's traditional Red Kettle campaign. At Roosevelt, classes of students have signed up to spend a day each collecting for the Salvation Army.

At Johnson, students and their parents spend time after school and on weekends ringing the bell for donations.

Danielle Daniels, a second-grade teacher at Roosevelt, came up with the project. She and her husband, Joel, have been coordinating volunteers in charge of the kettle outside the Michaels craft store on Middlebelt near I-96.

"This is the first year we have done this," said Daniels. "In the past, students are encouraged to participate in community service through Youth Making a Difference, but we wanted the children to know that we supported community service so much that we would allow them to use school time to complete the project."

She said students from the schools have been collecting between \$200 and \$400 per day for the cause.

"We hope the children will realize that there is more to life than just their own family and Roosevelt," said Daniels. "There are people in need in our own community and we need to step out and help those in need."

Visit the local Roosevelt and Johnson school children now through Dec. 20. Daniels said they are still seeking volunteers interested in collecting at the kettle from Dec. 21-24. Anyone interested in more information can call (734) 261-0081.

NOT-SO-SECRET SANTA

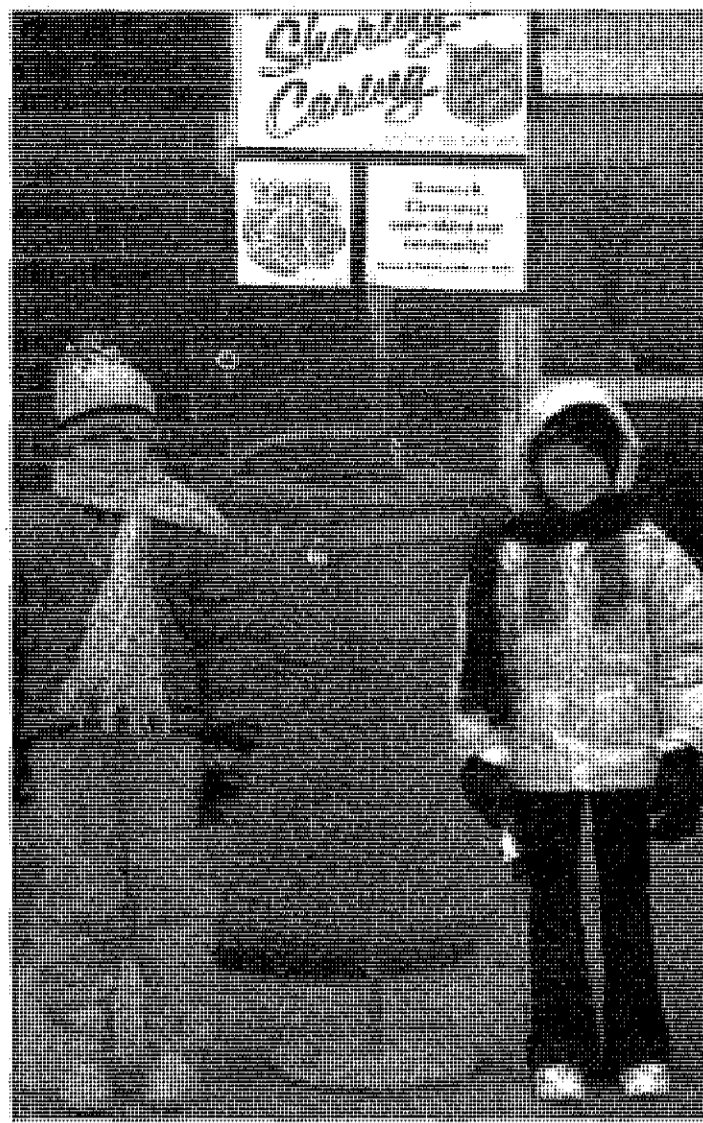
Presents are about to pile up at Kennedy Elementary School in Livonia. Instead of hosting a gift exchange each holiday season, the school staff and students choose to "adopt" local families who are in need.

The program originated more than 15 years ago with teachers David Higer and Bruce Sachs, who is now retired.

Their idea caught on, according to Julie Juenemann, elementary student assistance program provider.

"Now nearly every Kennedy classroom adopts a family to help at Christmas," she said. "The Kennedy staff adopts a family, too. In addition, there are always Kennedy families and staff members' families and friends who ask if they can help a family in need."

This year, 10 families will



Laura Danila and Gabriela Molloy, second-grade students at Roosevelt Elementary, help collect money for the Salvation Army. Students at both Roosevelt and Johnson schools participated in a project to oversee this red kettle outside the Michaels store at Middlebelt and I-96 in Livonia.

benefit from the program, many of them are homeless.

"I just really want their Christmas to be happy and special," said Roxanne Moore, a sixth-grader. "I want to get them something to keep them nice and warm."

Juenemann said each participant adds a special touch to this project. Jennie Macoit's first-grade class leaves presents under a tree in the school lobby, for example.

Tara Daraskavich's fourth-grade students sell their own, hand-made holiday greeting

cards to raise additional money for the families they adopt.

And some classes even bake cookies for the families. Sue Bird, media specialist, called it "a wonderful lesson for the kids. Everyone needs warm fuzzies at Christmas," she said.

Lynne Curnow, a Kennedy parent, agreed. She said students are "learning to give back" by participating in this holiday program.

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WAYNE-WESTLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOLS WESTLAND, MICHIGAN 48185 ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Sealed bids for Wayne-Westland Community Schools' Bid Package #19,

Consisting of: Wayne Memorial H.S. Athletics Program Addition, Wayne Memorial H.S. Gym Air Conditioning, Wayne Memorial H.S. Toilet Room Remodeling, David Hicks Elevator Addition

will be received until 1:30 P.M. local time on Tuesday, January 10, 2006 at which time they will be opened and read publicly at Wayne-Westland Community School Board of Education Office, located at 36745 Marquette, Westland, Michigan 48185. Bids received after this time and date will be returned unopened.

Faxed proposals will not be accepted.

This Bid Package will consist of a separate sealed bid for the following Bid Divisions:

- 101 Site Excavation / Site Utilities
- 102 Asphalt Paving
- 103 Selective Demolition
- 104 Concrete Footings & Foundations
- 105 Concrete Flatwork
- 106 Masonry
- 107 Steel
- 108 Carpentry & General Trades
- 109A Membrane Roofing
- 109B Metal Roofing
- 110 Manufactured Wall Panel System
- 111 Caulking
- 112 Hollow Metal / Wood Doors / Finish Hardware (Supply)
- 114 Aluminum Glass & Glazing
- 115 Metal Studs & Drywall
- 116 Hard Tile
- 117 Acoustical Ceilings & Treatment
- 118 VCT Flooring
- 120 Painting
- 122 Signage
- 124 Wood Flooring
- 125 Toilet Partitions
- 126 Metal Lockers
- 128 Casework
- 130 Window Treatments
- 131 Athletic Equipment
- 132 Rubber Sports Flooring
- 136 Gymnasium Bleachers
- 137 Food Service Equipment
- 138 Elevators
- 139 Cross Corridor Fire Doors
- 140 Plumbing
- 141 Fire Protection
- 142 HVAC
- 143 Electrical
- 149 Fencing
- 155 Landscaping

Bidding documents prepared by TMP Associates, Inc. will be available for public inspection at the office of the Construction Manager, McCarthy & Smith, Inc., 24317 Indoplex Circle, Farmington Hills, MI 48335; the FW Dodge Plan Room, Southfield; the Construction Association of Michigan Plan Room, Bloomfield Hills; and the Daily Construction Reports Plan Room, Detroit.

Bidders may obtain one (1) set of bidding documents, beginning Wednesday, December 14, 2005, by contacting the Construction Manager, McCarthy & Smith, Inc., at (248) 427-8400. Additional plans may be ordered and purchased directly from Dunn Blue Reprographics Technology, (248) 353-2950. Bids are to be submitted in a sealed envelope supplied by the Construction Manager, McCarthy & Smith, Inc. The bid division(s) being bid is/are to be identified on the outside of the envelope.

There will be a pre-bid meeting at 11:00 am on Wednesday, December 28, 2005 at the construction trailer located at Wayne Memorial High School, (3001 Fourth Street, Wayne, MI 48184) The purpose of the meeting will be to review the project sites and to answer any questions that bidders may have. Bidders are strongly encouraged to attend.

A sworn and notarized statement disclosing any familial relationship existing between the bidder and any member of the school board, school superintendents, or chief executive must accompany each bid. A board shall not accept a bid that does not include this statement. This statement is on the proposal execution form.

Each bid shall be accompanied by a Bid Bond in the amount of five (5) percent of the amount of the bid, payable to Wayne-Westland Community Schools, as a guarantee that if the proposal is accepted, the bidder will execute the contract and file the required bonds within ten (10) days after notice of award of contract.

If awarded a contract, the successful bidder will be required to furnish a Performance Bond and Labor and Material Payment Bond. Wayne-Westland Community Schools reserve the right to reject any or all bids received and to waive any informalities and irregularities in the bidding.

This project is to be bid at the prevailing wage rate.

Publish: December 15 and 16, 2005

Consideration must in giving a gift of a pet

Is there anything cuter than an adorable puppy or cuddly kitten wearing a big red bow and licking the face of a child Christmas morning?

Few gifts are as irresistible, but unfortunately, many of these companion animals are purchased on impulse and end up in animal shelters several days, weeks or months later when the initial excitement has faded and reality sets in.

"Surprising a family member or loved one with the gift of a companion animal during the holidays often seems like a great idea," said Jennifer Rowell, manager of the Michigan Humane Society Detroit shelter. "Yet, many people don't realize that animal guardianship is a lifetime commitment - that includes medical care, food and training - and a big investment of time

and love. So it's imperative for the primary caregiver of the animal to be involved in the decision and not be surprised with a new four-legged friend."

There are many factors to consider when adopting a companion animal. Does anyone in the family have allergies? Is everyone ready to make the 10-15-year commitment required to care for a dog or cat?

Is the person able to afford food and medical care? What is the family's lifestyle and activity level?

The Michigan Humane Society recommends that the entire family be involved in the decision to adopt and be clear in advance on who will handle which responsibilities.

Bringing a companion animal home during the holiday season can be stressful for

everyone, especially the animal who will need time to adjust to his new surroundings.

Consider adopting before the holidays or waiting until after the hustle and bustle of the season has ended.

"Adding the responsibility of a companion animal to one's life is a big decision and a personal choice," said Amy Popp, spokesperson for the Michigan Humane Society. "However, if you're determined to give the gift of a companion animal, there are many creative ways to do it, while still letting the recipient pick the perfect animal themselves."

The Michigan Humane Society suggests considering the following gift giving options:

■ Create a gift certificate for a shelter adoption fee, dog training classes or other products and services that a new animal guardian can put to use. Then, arrange to visit the shelter with the recipient to see them fall in love with the animal of their choice.

■ Give a dog or cat "starter kit" filled with the necessary

supplies, such as food, bowls, a collar and leash or kitty litter.

■ Present children with a gift basket, including a stuffed dog or cat, books about how to care for a companion animal and a note explaining that everyone will go together to pick out their new four-legged family member after the holidays.

■ Make a donation in honor of your loved one to an animal welfare organization, such as the Michigan Humane Society.

For more information about responsible animal guardianship or other gift-giving ideas, contact the Michigan Humane Society at (866) MHUMANE 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday or visit the Web site at www.michiganhumane.org.

The Michigan Humane Society (MHS) is a private, nonprofit organization which cares for more than 100,000 animals each year at its three metro Detroit adoption and veterinary medical centers in Detroit, Rochester Hills and at its new, state-of-the-art Berman Center for Animal Care in Westland.



CITY OF GARDEN CITY

To all residents and interested parties, The Council minutes will be available for review on the internet at

www.gardencitymi.org

You can access this information at the Garden City Library or City Hall during regular Business hours or in the Police Station Lobby 24 hours a day.

ALLYSON M. BETTIS, Treasurer/City Clerk

Publish: December 11, 18 and 25, 2005

CE0284427

Notice of Public Sale of Personal Property

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Section 4 of the Self Service Storage Facility Act, State of Michigan, the undersigned will sell at public auction by competitive bidding. Sales are for cash only. Removal within 24 hours. For sale and storage units, which rent and fees are past due.

On the premises where said property has been stored and which are located at Public Storage, 20080 Allen Road, Trenton, Michigan 48183 (734) 479-5790, on December 28, 2005 at 9:30 a.m. Personal property described below in the matter of:

- 023 - Steven Quails - automobile
- 1025 - Nicole Hellems - bags, mattresses, headboard, stereo, totes
- 1134 - Jim Ferguson - bags, boxes, pictures, TV, furniture
- 157 - Al Sobolewski - sofa, love seat, shelving, patio furniture, area rug
- 304 - Susan Burkhardt - boxes, shelf, totes, microwave
- 404 - Jennie Dominguez - mattress, boxes, monitor, tool box, power scooter
- 507 - Brian Psykala - bags, bike, boxes, lamp, pictures
- 513 - Roy Poore - boxes, bags, books
- 529 - Cecelia Alford - boxes, dresser, chest of drawers, lamp, pots and pans
- 615 - Thomas Roethlisberger - boxes, totes
- 642 - Lisa Alexander - boxes, bakers rack, mini stereo, kids toys, entertainment center
- 709 - Steven Young - boxes, lawn equipment
- 710 - Raymond Nutter - bed frame, mattress, books, computer, tool box, totes

Publish: December 18 and 22, 2005

Notice of Public Sale of Personal Property

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Section 4 of the Self Service Storage Facility Act, State of Michigan, the undersigned will sell at public auction by competitive bidding. Sales are for cash only. Removal within 24 hours. For sale and storage units, which rent and fees are past due.

On the premises where said property has been stored and which are located at Public Storage, 3650 Enterprise Dr., Allen Park, Michigan 48101, (313) 441-3117, on December 28, 2005 at 10:30 a.m. Personal property described below in the matter of:

- B001 - Valerie Edgerton - boxes, bags, chest of drawers, sofa, microwave, rug
- B002 - William Stone - stereo, camper
- B072 - Michael Kowalski - household items
- B151 - Yolanda Bright - air conditioner, entertainment center, freezer, stove, refrigerator
- B186 - Tommeia Baldwin - headboard, mattress, China cabinet, dresser
- B199 - Susan Rohr - boxes, dresser, microwave, power tools, snack table
- B217 - Kwana Felton - household items
- B227 - Kelly White - sofa, love seat, microwave
- B265 - Steven Weaver - bags, boxes, speakers, stereo
- B289 - Carol Boissonault - sofa, love seat
- B335 - Kasla Grauman - bags, bike, boxes, totes, suit case
- B374 - Marshawn Robinson - bags, boxes, lamp, end tables
- C003 - Candy Gabbard - TV, mattress, bike, boxes, totes, toys
- C007 - Lela Dow - air conditioner, bags, boxes, computer, desk, exercise equipment
- C039 - Charles Toth - boxes
- D029 - Amanda Thornsberry - bags, bed frame, bike, stool, table, totes, TV
- D041 - Nathan Williams - household items
- E050 - Scott Stevens - bags, boxes, power tools, speakers
- F047 - Brian Thiel - household items

Publish: December 18 and 22, 2005



House bills provides tuition funding for vets and families

Legislation has been introduced to provide tuition funding for veterans, their families and the families of first responders killed in the line of duty. "The men and women who serve in uniform and on the front lines of public safety make tremendous sacrifices every day," said State Rep. Jim Plakas, D-Garden City. "This legislation is a small measure of what we can give back to them. What we owe them, we can never fully repay. By helping them and their families with college tuition, it is our small way of saying thanks for their courage, service and sacrifice." The four-bill legislation introduced by House Democrats would:

- Provide a full tuition waiver for children of first-responders killed in the line of duty.

- Provide up to \$2,500 in tuition waivers for veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Stabilize tuition funding for children of disabled veterans or those killed in the line of duty.
- Increase tuition funding for children of disabled veterans or those killed in the line of duty so that it is fully funded at any Michigan public university.

A Korean War veteran who served in the U.S. Army Counter Intelligence Corps, Plakas said he has had close relationships with emergency responders as a former member of the Garden City Hospital board of trustees.

"I have had the honor and privilege to work alongside brave men and women who as only that they are allowed to

serve their country and their community," said Plakas. "They ask for nothing in return. Their selflessness is a tribute to our troops and to our first-responders. This legislation is just a small way for us, as a state, to recognize what they have given us."

The death or disability of a veteran or first-responder can inflict heavy financial hardships, Plakas noted.

"The families of veterans and first-responders can be devastated, leaving them with little financial resources," said Plakas.

"The tuition program in this legislation will offer much-needed relief and allow the children of our brave men and women to pursue their goals. We owe it to them, and to the memory of their parents."

Auditions set for Lions Clubs Band

The Lions Clubs of Michigan are seeking area high school students to participate in their annual All-State Band program. The Internationally acclaimed youth activity has represented the Lions of Michigan for nearly 30 years at the International Association of Lions Clubs International Convention. Since its inception, the Lions of Michigan All-State Band has had more than 300 Michigan communities represented by area musicians.

"Our program strives to provide our members with musical and sociological growth, travel and education and exposure to serving those less fortunate, the motto of Lions Clubs," said Roger Weyersberg, director.

He added that the Lions Band program is developed to compliment the students' own music program and to return them as "improved performers through excellent music literature and high-quality instruction."

"We also strive to have the students return as better leaders in their own program," said Weyersberg.

The band program seeks individuals of all performance levels, including visual and drill teams.

The band will conduct its

"Our program strives to provide our members with musical and sociological growth, travel and education and exposure to serving those less fortunate, the motto of Lions Clubs."

Roger Weyersberg
director

annual auditions on Saturday, Jan. 14, at Haslett High School. It will hold a rehearsal weekend in April and May and, prior to departing on its 10-day tour, the band will hold band camp at Michigan State University June 22-25.

This year's band tour will take students to Gettysburg, Hershey and Philadelphia, Pa., Boston and Salem, Mass., and Cleveland, Ohio.

"Our tour is directed by the location of the International Association Convention, which is scheduled for Boston June 29-July 4," said Brian Shepard, chief executive officer of the Lions Band Program.

Past tours have taken the band to such locations as Hong

Kong, Tokyo, Sidney, Beijing and Honolulu.

"The band has provided past students with travel experiences that many may never have had a chance to do otherwise," Shepard said.

Performances include such venues as hospitals or public parks. The band also will perform in the International Parade and have an opportunity to perform in a mass band concert with other Lions Band programs attending the convention.

Students are responsible for their portion of the tour cost. Students pay for no administrative cost of the program. This year's tour cost is \$1,875. The tour cost includes all meals, including rehearsal weekends, lodging, and transportation while on tour and travel uniforms.

For more tour information or an application visit the Web site at www.lionsofmi.com/pages/all_state_band.htm, call (517) 887-6640, Ext. 13/15 or send an e-mail to lions@acd.net.

Lions Clubs International is the world's largest service club organization.

The Lions of Michigan All State Band Charities, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)3 Organization.

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TREES

FROM PAGE A1

employs to get customers in to buy trees. The other is offering tickets to a free raffle of a 19-inch color TV he gives away on Christmas Eve.

"That's how I get my mailing list," said Wagatha. "Years ago, when I started, someone stopped at the lot and suggested we do that, so my brother started asking customers if they wanted to get on a mailing list."

The cards go out far and near - Brighton, Milford, Monroe even the Flint area to Livonia, Plymouth and Garden City.

"I start addressing the cards on Halloween," Wagatha said. "I do it while the trick-or-treaters are coming to the door."

BEST LOCATION

Business has been brisk at the lot set up near the defunct Quo Vadis Theater. As of Monday, Wagatha has sold 656 of the 1,100 trees delivered there just before Thanksgiving. "It's the best location, I hear that from the customers," the Westland resident said. "It's set up on concrete so it's not muddy and there's plenty of access."

Wagatha has been setting up his tree lot along Wayne Road for 26 years. The Westland resident operates the lot with his silent-partner brother Duke who tends to two other tree lots in Ann Arbor. His brother lives in Messick south of

John Wagatha has been setting up his tree lot along Wayne Road for 26 years. The Westland resident operates the lot with his silent-partner brother Duke who tends to two other tree lots in Ann Arbor. His brother lives in Messick south of Traverse City and grows the blue spruce that they sell on their lots.

Traverse City and grows the blue spruce that they sell on their lots. The other trees - Fraser fir, Douglas fir, Scotch pine and balsam, to name a few - are purchased from other growers like Wade Sherburne in that area.

"He's our main supplier," said Wagatha. "What trees he doesn't have, he locates for us."

The lot also sells wreaths, tree stands and tree disposal bags and to the rear is the warming tent where the baled trees are unwrapped and left to warm up so their branches droop. That's also where the "Charlie Brown" Christmas trees are kept. Wagatha has been giving kids the free trees, actually a pine bough stuck in a hole drilled in a piece of tree stump, for about 10 years.

Work starts the week before Thanksgiving after the trees have been delivered. The men build the racks for the trees,



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Mike Silvers trims the bottom off two trees for a customer. He works in the Christmas tree fields April through November then comes to Westland from his hometown of Messick to sell trees with John Wagatha.

string the lights and get ready to open the day after Thanksgiving.

Silvers and Scott are from Messick and end up living in the trailer on the lot until Dec. 23 when they go home to be with their families. But they're back the day after Christmas to begin tearing things down.

With their departure, it falls on Wagatha to handle the tree sales through Christmas Eve. "I'll be out here until 5-6 p.m. Christmas Eve," he said. "I sold 14 trees on Christmas Eve last year. Someone has to be open and I'll be here, if I still have trees."

Wagatha is confident he'll sell most, if not all of the trees. He points to the past weekend where they were selling faster than they could unbalance them.

By Wagatha's count, they sold 250 trees on Saturday and Sunday.

"It must be that there's less competition, or people are buying real trees instead of artificial," he said. "Last year I had 140 trees left, the year before it was eight."

MOVING AROUND

The theater parking lot is a fairly new location for Wagatha. He started at Wayne and Parkgrove next to the Art Van, then moved to Wayne and Hunter when the furniture store decided to expand. But Wagatha lost that spot, too, when CVS decided to move out of the strip mall at the corner and build a free-standing building in that spot.

When he lost that location, a

regional manager with National Amusements (Showcase Cinemas) helped him get the land next to the theater.

Customers like the spot and so do Silvers and Scott. They'll use the trailer's gas stove "once in awhile," but by and large, get their meals at the nearby McDonald's, Arby's and Capital Coney Island restaurants. There's also a coin laundry close by and Chatters Bar where they go on occasion for a drink.

The trailer also has a bathroom, but the men make use of a portable toilet that sits about 20 yards away and take advantage of the day rates at the Forum Fitness Club at Ford and Wildwood to get showered.

They both admit it's a cold trip to the bathroom at 3 a.m. In fact, Scott lists the cold

and the snow as the drawbacks of the job.

Both he and Silvers work in the Christmas tree business April through November then when the field work ends, hire on to work at a tree lot during December. Scott has worked lots in Texas, Oklahoma and New Orleans, This is his first year working with Wagatha. Silvers has been working the Westland lot for three years.

"I'd rather be in Texas where it's warmer, but I'd rather be here when I leave to go home," Scott said. "It's only four hours from here and 24 hours from Texas."

"I could have come down years ago," Silvers added. "I didn't think I'd like it, but I do. It's the best time. I have fun with the customers."

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Back Pain?

Westland, MI - According to a recently released back pain relief report, most back pain sufferers have no idea how to eliminate their pain. Some use heat, others ice. From sleeping on the floor, to pillows underneath the legs, back pain relief techniques vary. But thanks to a free report, local back pain sufferers finally know exactly what to do. To get a copy of the free "Back Pain Relief Report", call toll-free, **1-888-744-2225**. (Toll-free, 24 hour recorded message)

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AAA moves fast to secure racing sponsorship

Good-bye, Viagra. Hello, AAA.

With the end of the NASCAR NEXTEL Cup Series last month, AAA, including AAA of Michigan, took over as the primary sponsor of Roush Racing's No. 6 Ford for the 2006 NEXTEL Cup season, replacing Pfizer Pharmaceuticals.

"This national sponsorship builds on the success The Auto

Club Group had this year with our motor sports partnership with Roush Racing," said Charles H. Podowski, ACG president/CEO. "We are proud of the success we achieved in our first NASCAR NEXTEL season. AAA's national involvement in NASCAR fits very nicely with our safety heritage and our ability to contribute to the success of a sport that has become one of the top national

sports."

"I think AAA can do a lot for the sport and be a cornerstone of our sponsorship group for years to come," said team owner Jack Roush of Northville.

NASCAR legend Mark Martin will return as driver. Martin, fourth in this year's chase for the championship and 10th in modern era victories, will extend his Salute to

You farewell tour an additional season before yielding the ride to Todd Kluever for 2007.

AAA helped sponsor fellow Rouse driver Carl Edwards' 99 Ford this year. Edwards finished third overall, trailing only Roush teammate Greg Biffle and NEXTEL Cup series champion Tony Stewart.

Podowski noted that many of the safety features taken for granted on today's passenger

vehicles were introduced and perfected in race cars, including lap-and-shoulder safety belts and hydraulic brakes.

Under terms of the agreement, Martin will pilot the No. 6 AAA car in 36 NASCAR Cup Series races in 2006, including two races at Michigan International Speedway on June 18 and Aug. 20.

Additionally, AAA will sponsor the No. 6 AAA show car and

simulator race car tour in the Midwest region.

The show car and race car tour, which proved to be a great attraction this year, will kick-off the new season at the Detroit International Auto Show on Jan. 8. The vehicles also will make stops at AAA locations and major public events across the Midwest in 2006. Roush Racing is based in part, in Livonia.

Local cable channel reaching out

BY WAYNE PEAL
STAFF WRITER

It's a new name and new mission for the former TV Orient, the Southfield-based television operation which remains North America's only Arabic-interest cable network.

The new name, MBN America, reflects the network's increased coverage area and its desire to "build a bridge" between Arabic communities in the U.S. and throughout the world.

"We are available everywhere in North America, in the U.S., Canada and Mexico," CEO and President Wally Jadan said of its current position on Comcast digital cable — Channel 667 locally. Radio broadcasts are also available on 690-AM.

The network is also negotiating to expand its coverage by satellite into the Middle East, as well as northern Africa and southern Europe within the coming year.

Though two-thirds of its current programs are broadcast in Arabic languages, that, too, will change.

"We are working toward being 50/50 in English," Jadan said.

Its planned live coverage of the Dec. 15 Iraqi elections, complete with reaction from the metro area, is hoped to be seen as a breakthrough event for the newly-renamed network.

Serving more than 550,000 people of Middle Eastern descent in metro Detroit, and an estimated 3.5 million throughout the continent, MBN America hopes to someday become as much a cable staple as Univision, the Latin American cable network.

"That's our goal, we will be full service with not only news, but entertainment programming, sports, movies and fashion as well," Jadan said.

Making the task especially challenging, he noted, is the fact that the Arabic world is made up of people from a variety of ethnic groups, each with its own perspectives on issues, and own language.

"Sometimes, I will send three different reporters to cover a story," Jadan said.

The network seeks to highlight the role of Arab Americans in U.S. society, a role he says is often misinterpreted by Arabic media outlets.

"People in Arabic counties hear how we're isolated here and that's not the case," Jadan said. "We're active in our communities, we're involved."

To that end, its home community is very much interested in keeping MBN America.

"Southfield prides itself on its diversity and on the fact that it's the broadcast center for metro Detroit — we have everyone but WDIV (Channel 4)," said Mayor Brenda Lawrence, whose serves on the network's advisory board. "So, naturally, we're very interested in helping MBN stay in Southfield."

For now, that won't be an issue. Jadan says the network will remain at its Southfield Road studios for the time being.

Long-range plans, he added, call for a "two- to two-and-one-half-acre site" to accommodate modernized studios and equipment.

The name change and expanded role comes at a time when Al-Jazeera, the Arabic-language network based in Qatar, is reportedly planning expanded English-language broadcasts. Other Arabic networks might follow.

But Jadan says there's a key difference between any other network and his own.

"We're here," he said of its North American base of operation. "And we're the only one that is here."

Happy Holidays

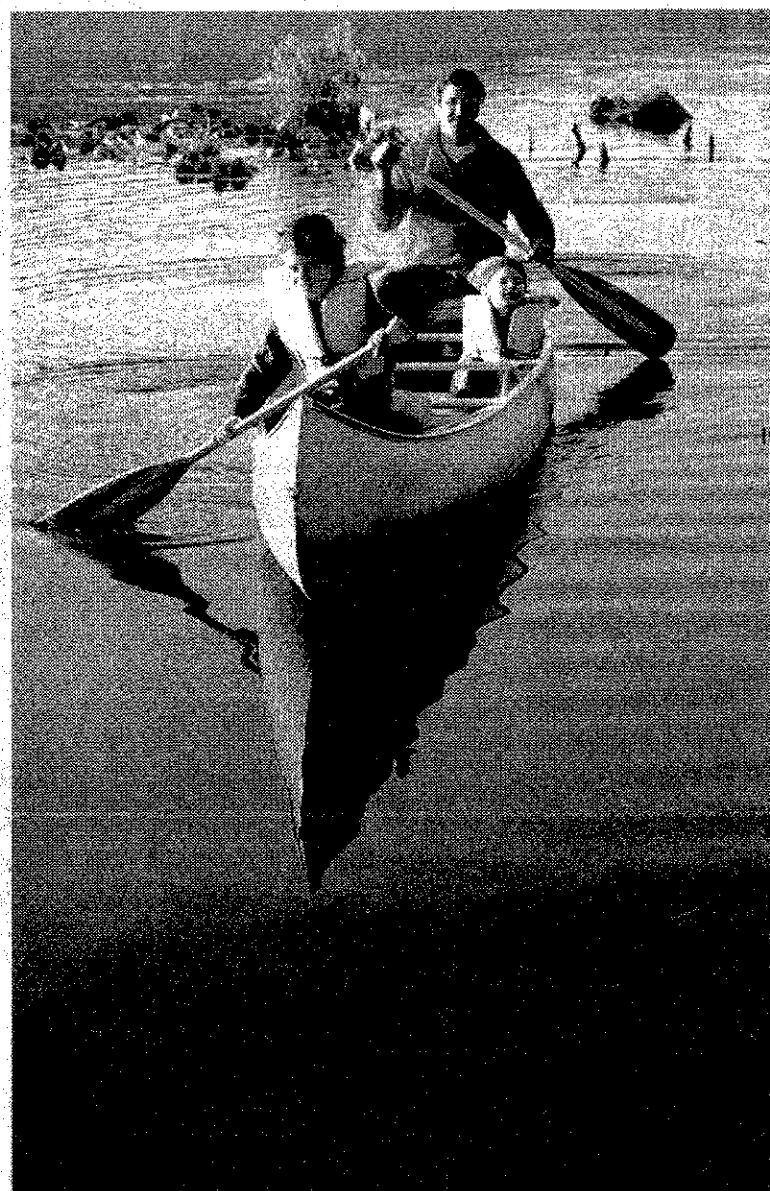
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Senate candidates face off at 'showdown'

BY ALEX LUNDBERG
STAFF WRITER

Republican candidates to challenge Democrat Debbie Stabenow next November faced off Dec. 5 at the "Showdown in Motown." The Rev. Keith Butler, Jerry Zandstra and Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard attended the candidate forum hosted by the 9th Congressional District Republican Party, to introduce themselves to voters and air their thoughts on the issues of the day.

The forum was moderated by Republican National Committeeman for Michigan and RNC Vice Chair Chuck Yob, who kicked off the roundtable with a question any Republican could score with — whether or not the budget could be balanced with a tax increase.

"There isn't a deficit because revenues are too low," Zandstra said. "It's there because federal government spending is out of control. It's time to return some kind of fiscally responsible leadership to Washington."

Butler agreed, citing items like the \$450 million bridge project in Alaska as signs that Congressional pork projects are the problem. The bridge funding initiative was championed by Republican Sen. Ted Stevens of Alaska.

Bouchard said the only thing higher taxes would do is tank the economy.

While all three candidates echoed traditional Republican themes — anti-abortion, anti-gay marriage, gun rights and lower taxes — they all said they'd support Arizona Sen. John McCain's anti-torture legislation. President George W. Bush has promised to veto the measure.

"There are a variety of (interrogation) methods that don't use force and with the proper training, you can bring forth information," Bouchard said.

Butler said the United States has to do everything it can to protect the nation, but not things that are outside the law. Zandstra said torture says more about the torturer and sends a



Republican Senatorial hopefuls (from left) Jerry Zandstra, Rev. Keith Butler and Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard echoed mainstream Republican themes as they addressed the 9th Congressional District Republican Party at Cross of Christ Lutheran Church Tuesday. One of the three will face Democratic Sen. Debbie Stabenow in the upcoming November election.

message to the world about who we as a nation think we are.

On the topic of curbing illegal immigration, the three agreed that it was at its heart a national security issue.

Bouchard said the problem of illegal immigration highlights failings in border control in general — you can't really protect the country if you don't know who's there.

Zandstra said the police have all the technology they need to do the job, all that's lacking is the will to use them.

"I'm in favor of increasing legal immigration," Butler said. "But if you come to this country, it's you that has to be the one that changes."

The economy, both at the state and national level, was of concern to the candidates. Zandstra said Michigan has 22 percent higher costs of doing business than any other state in the nation and therefore the state's tax structure must be changed. Butler agreed, saying Michigan's economic woes could be chalked up to taxation, litigation and regulation.

"In government, if it grows,

tax it. If it moves, regulate it," Bouchard said. "We've got to incentivize and get rid of regulation. When you look at the global economy, we don't have a level playing field here."

The candidates agreed that a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision to allow eminent domain property forfeiture for economic redevelopment was a serious breach of the public trust and proof that the court needs justices who respect property rights.

The big question of who has what it takes to beat Sen. Debbie Stabenow rounded out the discussion.

"At the end of the day, we all want to beat Debbie," Bouchard said. "I've won 14 elections in Oakland County and when Bush lost the county, I got 64 percent of the vote. I have the base that's proven to win."

"Stabenow is vulnerable on economic issues," Zandstra said. "The ideal Republican candidate is going to be strong on social issues, but also understand how the economy works."

"(Republicans) lost nine of 10 elections because we haven't

drawn enough Democrats to vote for us," Butler said. "To beat Stabenow, we have to get votes where she gets votes. I've done that."

Bill Walker of Bloomfield Township was in the minority at the roundtable. He was one of the approximately 200 attendees who didn't know who he'd vote for.

"I think all of them bring something to the party that could beat Stabenow," he said. "It's so far in advance of the election, it's hard to tell how it would go."

He said a lot of the outcome of the race next November, whoever ends up being the candidate, will have to do with the party's fortunes on the national scale.

Yob said the party has to work harder to bring home the bacon in Oakland County. The county hasn't delivered for a GOP presidential candidate since Ronald Reagan was in office.

"For some reason, we can't deliver the vote for the top of the ticket," Yob said. "This is a diverse population, a lot of people are coming up from Detroit."

INFORMATION CENTRAL

The holidays are just around the corner and so many of us are rushing to get all the last minute details put together. Some people still have to decorate; others have to finish shopping; some need to do some cooking and baking; and still others are rushing around to get their homes cleaned before the swarms of relatives descend.

So what can you do to keep the holiday spirit up while working to finish everything before the big day?

Listen to festive music of course! Don't worry about breaking the bank this season. The William P. Faust Public Library has just what you need!

Our music collection has both CDs and cassettes, and our holiday collection covers Christmas, Hanukkah and even Kwanzaa. It also runs the gamut from old classics to new versions.

Some old favorites include Gene Autry's album *Here Comes Santa Claus*, Nat King Cole's *The Christmas Song*, Bing Crosby's *White Christmas*, *Kwanzaa Music*, featuring artists like James Brown and Aretha Franklin, and *A Taste of Chanukah*.

For those of you looking to try new twists on old favorites, we have The Oak Ridge Boys' *An Inconvenient Christmas*, *Barenaked for the Holidays* by Barenaked Ladies, *The Squirrel Nut*

Zippers' Christmas Caravan and *A Reggae Christmas* performed by various artists.

This is only a small sampling of what the library has to offer. So if you need to put a little zing in the holidays, stop by and pick up some festive music. But hurry! With the holidays approaching, these won't last long!

Microsoft Word for Beginners: 10:30 a.m. Dec. 17.

Learn the basics of Microsoft Word, a word processing program that lets users create a variety of documents, including letters and resumes.

Internet 101: 2 p.m. Dec. 17.

For the very beginner, what the Internet is and how to get there.

Internet 201: 2 p.m. Dec. 22.

An "inside look" at Internet search engines.

Matinee Movie: 2 p.m. Dec. 28.

Come and enjoy a G-rated family movie in the library's community rooms. The movie will run approximately 90 minutes. All ages welcome, those under age 6 with adult.

The William P. Faust Public Library, at 6123 Central City Parkway, Westland, is open seven days a week. For more information, call (734) 326-6123.

YOUTH ASSISTANCE

The Westland Youth Assistance Program is at 36701 Ford Road in an addition to the Westland Police Department. The separate glass entrance facing City Hall and comfortable waiting area allows for private, professional, environment to assist families in Westland.

Westland youth ages 7 through 16 are referred to Youth Assistance by the police, courts, schools, parents and other agencies.

Once referred, an intake appointment is scheduled to explain the program's services to the youth and parents (guardians), and to offer them the opportunity to discuss their concerns and to ask questions. All information discussed is confidential. All services are free to Westland residents.

If the assessment determines that a youth is appropri-

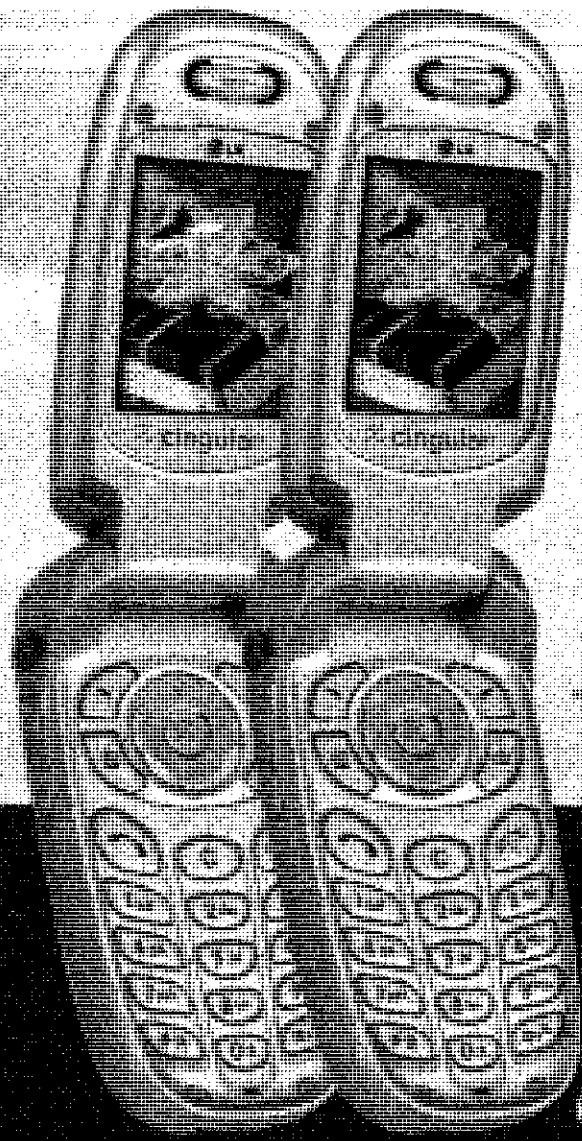
ate for Youth Assistance, the following services may be required for the youth:

- Life Choices classes.
- Drug screens.
- Supervised Community Work Service.
- Jail/prison tour.
- Team Adventure Challenge.
- Mentoring.
- Karate.
- Counseling.

The Westland Youth Assistance Program is funded by the City of Westland with additional funds from Wayne County, the Federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Target Corporation and North Bros. Ford.

Office hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Evening appointments are available by request. For information call (734) 467-7904.

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FCF02050717

In fight for freedom at home, librarians take a lead position

The congressman leaned forward over the microphone and pointed his finger menacingly.

"Let me ask you again," he said. "Are you now, or have you ever been, associated with a librarian?"

"Well, um, uh."

"Let me remind you, sir, that you are under oath and in danger of being found in contempt of Congress if you don't answer."

"OK, OK. I admit it. I'm married to a radical, militant librarian."

It's only a nightmare, it's only the phantom ghost of Christmas yet to be, but depending on how negotiations go in Congress the FBI may continue to be engaged in lethal combat with my wife and other dangerous librarians for the next four years.

Who knew that behind those glasses and conservative dress lurked the seeds of our destruction.

Or at least that's what some FBI agents seem to think.

The House voted Wednesday 251-174 to reauthorize the USA Patriot Act, following a House-Senate Conference agreement Dec. 8 that makes most provisions of the act permanent and extends two controversial provisions — on roving wiretaps and the library cause celebre Section 215. U.S. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter, R-Livonia, joined his Republican colleagues in voting for the renewal, despite having voiced reservations about some provisions on several occasions.

Sixteen provisions of the act are set to expire by Dec. 31 so congressional action is needed. On Friday the Republican leadership in the Senate was unable to get the 60 votes needed to head off a filibuster. The cloture vote was 52-47. Now intense negotiations begin to provide more safeguards for our liberties in the wake of a New York Times story Friday that the President authorized illegal spying on people in the United States without judicial warrants following 9/11.

Section 215, which allows easier access to business records including bank records, bookstore sales and library records, has become a rallying point for the nation's librarians. Supporters of the act argue that investigative agencies such as the FBI need to see these records to fight terrorism. Opponents say this is an unnecessary invasion of privacy and a potential danger to free expression by allowing government monitoring of what people read.

The section allows investigators to obtain "any tangible thing (including books, records, papers, documents and other items)" as long as they are sought in connection of a "terror investigation."

The Justice Department says the law has never been used against libraries or bookstores, but that's no guarantee that it wouldn't be used. The American Library Association and civil liberties

groups have been fighting since implementation of the act to protect library and bookstore records and to end the frightening "gag rule" that prohibits anyone who receives a Section 215 order from talking about it with anyone.

The conferece compromise allows a recipient of a 215 order to speak with an attorney and challenge the order before a judge. The FBI will be required to present facts that show they are conducting a "terror" investigation, but it still allows a lot of leeway for random investigation.

New documents released under the Freedom of Information Act show the frustration of FBI agents seeking warrants from the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court and one agent zeroes in on the true culprits.

The memo which is now a badge of honor for librarians everywhere reads: "The inability of FBI investigators to use this seemingly effective tool has had a direct and clearly adverse impact on our terrorism cases. Quite frankly, agents have spent the last two years screwing around with weak NSLs (National Security Letters) or using made up 'voluntary' NSLs literally begging people to give us information in our terrorism cases.... The fact that this new FISA tool has languish(stet) for two years — with no likely usage in the future — is nuts. While radical, militant librarians kick us around — true terrorists benefit from OIPR's (Office of Intelligence Policy and Review) failure to let us use the tools given to us."

This memo from 2003 has been exhibited by some as a testimony to the restrictions that keep overzealous FBI agents from acting. Others might also see in this memo how easy it is for government agencies to see themselves as above the law, above the Constitution and kicking and screaming to be allowed to use their powers in the "war on terror," which becomes anything they define it to be.

J. Edgar Hoover used his investigative powers in fights against Communism and organized crime to maintain himself in power and blackmail elected government officials. The FBI history, storied as it is, has this dark cloud that rains a warning when they are given too much power.

Terrorism, like Communism and Nazism before it, are terrible things, because they threaten our freedom, "our way of life." The president is always saying that "our way of life" is what terrorists are trying to destroy. Librarians and others argue that if we destroy our own freedoms, we help the terrorists get what they want.

Sacrificing freedom for safety is a poor bargain. My wife is thinking about wearing a T-shirt with "Radical Militant Librarian" on the front and "We kicked the FBI's butt" on the back.

Tom Paine would be proud.

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

New drunken driving rule is unfair to the accused

On Jan. 1, 2006, a new court rule will go into effect that will require the majority of Michigan drunken driving cases to be resolved by trial or plea of guilty within 91 days.

This is a significant change in the law, because it formalizes and shortens time limits that already exist, and does so squarely at the expense of the rights of the drunken driving accused. In fact, one may argue that as a consequence of passing this new rule, the Supreme Court has inadvertently compromised the very Constitution it is meant to uphold. This is because such short time limits make it extremely difficult and in some cases impossible for the accused to obtain a fair trial.

Our state and federal constitutions both provide that every person who is accused of a crime has a fundamental due process right to know the facts upon which the prosecutor claims the law has been broken. In the context of drunken driving, the necessary information includes, at a minimum, the narrative reports prepared by the police who arrested the alleged drunken driver, any videotapes that may exist and all the information required to show that the equipment used to test the motorist's breath or blood was working properly.

Obtaining this information takes time, in many cases several weeks, and sometimes even months.

Nevertheless, it is only after all of this necessary information is obtained, reviewed and analyzed that a defense attorney and his or her client can determine if any of the motorist's rights have been violated by the police, or if the breath or blood test is unreliable or inaccurate.

There are many reasons why problems with chemical testing may occur, but without adequate research time it is not possible to know if the results can or should support a conviction. Then, if problems that adversely impact the accuracy of the breath or blood test are uncovered, these problems must be brought to the attention of the court. This process is called "motion practice" and requires that written arguments be presented to the judge and prosecutor and sometimes that testimony be taken from witnesses in court.

Motion practice requires additional time, usually several more weeks or months. Once this process is complete, then — and only then — is it proper to set a case for trial. If the case is immediately set for trial,

there will be no time to for the defense to complete this necessary pretrial investigation.

Devising a system that will assure that the accused will obtain this information quickly enough to satisfy the court rule will require that police departments and prosecuting attorney offices hire more staff to process and disseminate the required information. Realistically, the costs involved in such an endeavor means that necessary staff additions are unlikely. Technology might solve the problem as well, but this represents an even bigger financial investment.

In response to these problems, the district judges are likely to simply set cases for trial long before all the facts are known to the drunken driving accused and, in so doing, place the burden of compliance back on the accused. In other words, the burden will be placed exactly where the Constitution dictates that it does not belong.

The court rule has not yet gone into effect, so it's not entirely clear what the overall effect will be, but it is very likely that this severely abbreviated judicial process will cause extreme pressure on the drunken driving accused to simply plead guilty to the charges. This situation places the accused in an untenable position, because the rule essentially requires that the drunken driving accused make the most important decision they will face in their case, which is the decision to plead guilty or go to trial, long before they have all the necessary information. The end result will be either the drunken driving accused pleads guilty when, in fact, he or she is not, or be forced to go to trial without adequate information or preparation.

Either way, the rule creates circumstances whereby our system of government and ultimately our Constitutional freedoms are in danger of being undermined and eroded, and for no other reason than base expediency.

It is beyond question that drunken driving is a societal problem, and that because drunken driving is such an unpopular crime there will be no public outrage over the unrealistic time limits and probable Constitutional violations this new rule creates. What should cause public concern, however, is that when the rights of the criminally accused are placed into jeopardy, as they are with this rule, every citizen is endangered, whether he or she realizes it or not.

Patrick T. Barone is with the Barone Defense Firm, which exclusively handles drunken driving cases.

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