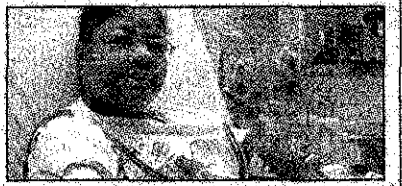


All-Observerland gymnastics team

Seniors strut down runway in latest prom fashions



Dialysis patients put their lives on hold



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SUNDAY April 9, 2006

WESTLAND Observer

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Mayor to deliver upbeat State of City address

BY DARRELL CLEM STAFF WRITER

Westland Mayor Sandra Cicirelli will deliver an upbeat message Wednesday during her fifth - and possibly last - State of the City address. "The state of the city remains strong, but it will take hard work to keep it that way," she said. Cicirelli will deliver her State of the City at 6 p.m. Wednesday at the senior citizen Friendship Center, on Newburgh south of Ford. Hundreds



Cicirelli

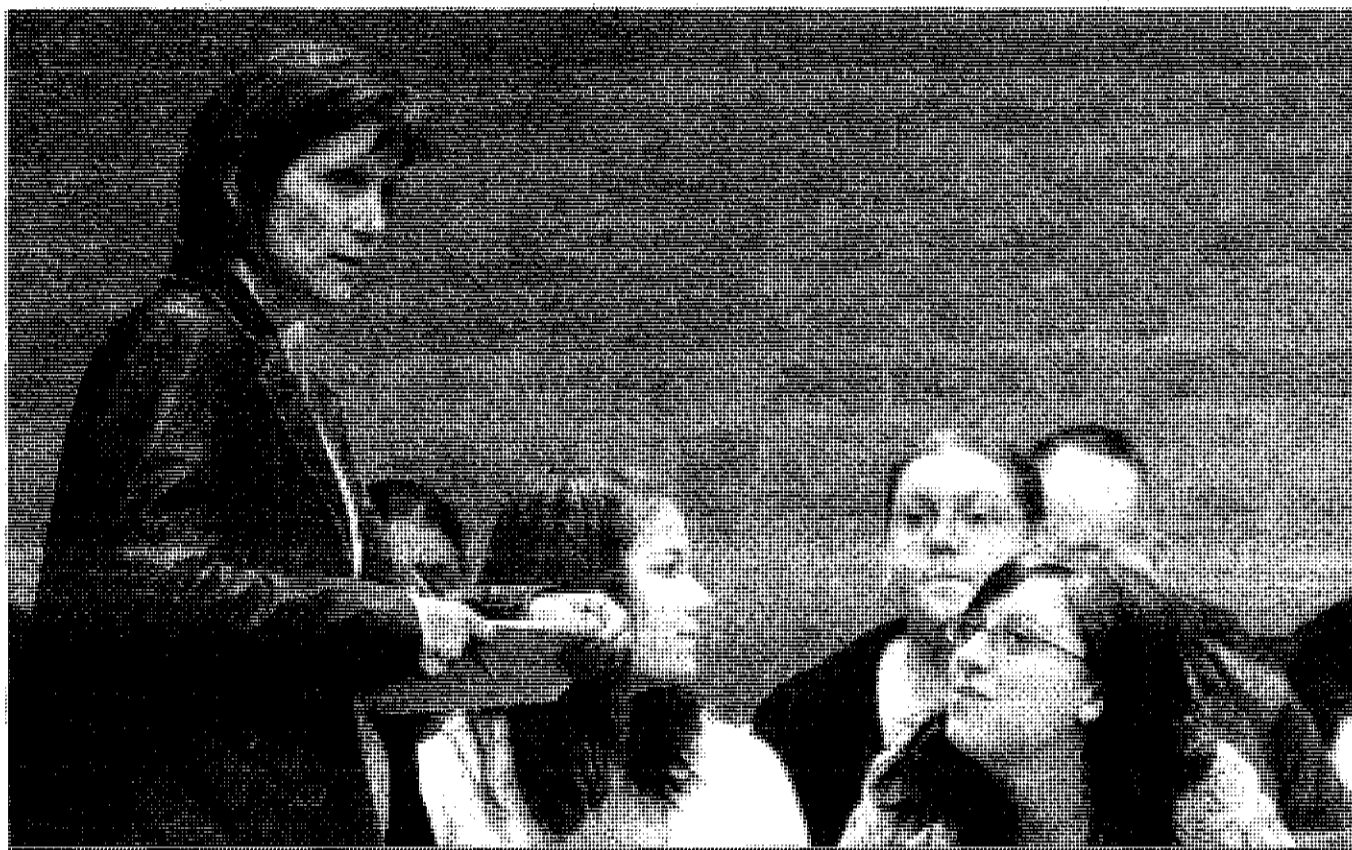
of residents typically attend the event; light refreshments will be served at 5:30 p.m. Cicirelli indicated that she will unveil some new redevelopment plans as Westland - like other Michigan communities - struggles to cope with a menacing economy. "It will be an upbeat message," she said. Cicirelli's latest State of the City

address will be her first since she started her second four-year mayoral term Jan. 1. She won re-election in November with the biggest landslide victory for any mayor since Westland became a city nearly 40 years ago. That said, she may bow out after serving one year of her second term if she runs for - and wins - a judicial seat in Westland 18th District Court. Cicirelli has strongly indicated that she will seek a judicial post as long-time Judge Gail McKnight prepares to step down at the end of the year.

Cicirelli has delayed any formal announcement until after her State of the City address, saying her first order of business is reporting on the city's health - both economic and otherwise. In other developments Wednesday, Cicirelli will continue a Salute to Excellence Awards tradition started by former three-term Mayor Robert Thomas. This year, Cicirelli will present awards to the following recipients: Penny Tolentino, Mother of the Year.

Howard "Bud" Prough, Father of the Year. Andrea Griffin, Teacher of the Year, from Schweitzer Elementary School. Sara Michael, High School Senior of the Year, from Wayne Memorial High School. Helen Comstock, Senior Citizen of the Year for Leadership. Beverly and Frank Kaminski, Senior Citizens of the Year for Service.

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



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Teacher Tammie Colling talks with students she brought to Westland District Court as part of a criminal justice program at the Livonia Career Technical Center.

Students see justice system up close

BY DARRELL CLEM STAFF WRITER

Livonia student Paul Walters shook his head Thursday after watching a 22-year-old woman appear in Westland District Court for charges of fleeing from police and hitting an ambulance while driving drunk. "It's kind of appalling," he said. The defendant was accused of hitting an ambulance and causing minor injuries to two emergency medical technicians while they were stopped at a traffic light. Walters and 21 other students went to court Thursday as part of their criminal justice program at the Livonia Career Technical Center, on Newburgh north of Joy.

"We're seeing what we've learned in action," said Walters, who hopes someday to have an FBI career. Teachers Tammie Colling and Eric Painter brought students to court to watch cases ranging from a minor in possession of alcohol to a 39-year-old man accused of trying to solicit a 15-year-old girl for sex over the Internet. "This augments the classroom lessons," Colling said. Students have visited crime scenes and learned about investigations from Michigan State Police. On Thursday, they watched Westland 18th District Judges C. Charles Bokos and Gail McKnight handle a busy court docket. "Everything seems like it's going smoothly," Walters said, standing outside of a courtroom.

Students in their junior and senior years from Westland, Livonia and Canton attend the career technical center's criminal justice program, Colling said. She's no stranger to law enforcement herself. She works part time as a Northfield Township police officer. "It allows me to stay current," she said. Thursday's visit was only one courtroom experience that the criminal justice students will receive this school year. They also will be visiting the higher-level Wayne County Circuit Court, where cases from the district level are sent for disposition. "What we do at the career center is, we learn it, and then we do it," Colling said. dclem@hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2110

Shop owner faces trial in online sex case

BY DARRELL CLEM STAFF WRITER

A Westland smoke shop owner, believing he was having an online chat with a 15-year-old girl, invited her to his home for dinner and sex in a bathtub, an Internet crimes investigator testified Thursday. Jonathan Nunoo, 39, didn't realize he was chatting with Wayne County Sheriff Cpl. William Liczbinski when he stated that "you will love it in the water - just you and me," Liczbinski said. The corporal's testimony convinced Westland District Judge C. Charles Bokos to order Nunoo to stand trial for two counts of using the Internet to commit a crime and one count of child sexually abusive activity. "There's no doubt in my mind

that Mr. Nunoo thought he was dealing with a minor all along," Bokos said, sending the case to Wayne County Circuit Court for trial. Nunoo was arrested about 5:20 p.m. March 15 when he went to Town & Country Lanes bowling alley, believing he was meeting a 15-year-old girl in the parking lot, Liczbinski testified. Nunoo, owner of All-Star Smoke Shop on Wayne Road south of Marquette, is a Westland resident and native of Ghana who legally came to the United States a decade ago using a green card. He has no prior criminal record, defense attorney Bertram Johnson said. Nunoo's legal troubles started after Westland police sent an undercover decoy - a teenage girl

PLEASE SEE SEX CASE, A3



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Jonathan Nunoo (left) accused of trying to have sex with a 15-year-old girl, appears in court with his attorney, Bertram Johnson.

Point of pride: MEAP scores at, better than state scores

BY SUE MASON STAFF WRITER

When it comes to points of pride, the Wayne-Westland school district has a sheet full of them, from Edison Elementary School, its Michigan Blue Ribbon Exemplary School, to the Standard & Poors recognition of that

school and Adams Middle School as benchmark schools for performance on state standardize tests. The sheet is a "did you know that ..." piece that promotes the good things happening in the district that has been battling to escape from the shadows of a failing grade slapped on it by a member of the print media.

It now has a new point to put on the list - its elementary and middle school students are doing as well or if not better than other students in the state on the standardized MEAP tests. "Our MEAP scores are always coming up, when there's talk about this district, and I'm here to tell you that

our scores continue to improve at all grade levels," said Superintendent Greg Baracy at the district's recent Realtor Luncheon. Baracy used the annual event to release the results of the state tests administered to third- to eighth-graders last fall. MEAP scores are divided into four

performance levels - apprentice, basic, met expectations and exceeded expectations. Students who are placed in the met or exceeded expectations levels are considered to be proficient. In Wayne-Westland, third-, fifth- and sixth-graders showed proficiency

PLEASE SEE MEAP, A5

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INDEX table with categories like APARTMENTS, AUTOMOTIVE, COMMUNITY LIFE, CROSSWORD, CLASSIFIEDS, JOBS, NEW HOMES, OBITUARIES, PERSPECTIVES, REAL ESTATE, SERVICE GUIDE, SPORTS.

Coming Thursday in Filter. Rock & Rummage: Flea markets and music for hipsters. Includes an image of a person.

Fair Tax meeting

The Western Wayne County Republican Club will hold an informational meeting on the proposed Fair Tax Act...

There will be a speaker who is an expert on the fair tax idea. He will share what this could mean for everyone...

Gardening seminar

The Village of Westland, a senior citizen residential community, will host a free gardening seminar open house at 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 19.

The featured speaker will be Janet Macunovich, master gardener and co-founder of the Michigan School of Gardening.

Refreshments will be served. For reservations, call (734) 762-8926.

The Village of Westland is at 32001 Cherry Hill Road, between Merriman and Venoy.

Senior volleyball

The Westland senior citizen Friendship Center hopes to start a co-ed volleyball team to compete in Wayne County's 2006 Senior Olympics.

If interested, call Mel

Tockstein at (734) 722-0159.

That's entertainment

The Westland Friendship Center will feature impersonators of Frank Sinatra, Neil Diamond and other performers during a variety show 1-3 p.m. Friday, May 5, at the center, 1119 N. Newburgh.

Michael Carluccio as Frank Sinatra and former Westland City Councilman David James as Neil Diamond will be among the performers...

Tickets are \$6, and proceeds will go to the Westland Relay for Life - a benefit in June to help the American Cancer Society.

For more information, call the

senior center at (734) 722-7628.

Senior Dinner Dances

The Wayne Ford Civic League is hosting a Senior Dinner and Dance Sunday, April 23, at the hall, 1645 N. Wayne Road in Westland.

For more information, call (800) 543-WELL.

in Wayne is in line to host an Oakwood Healthcare System Project Healthy Living next month.

Project Healthy Living offers a wide array of helpful and practical health-related activities and provides a variety of screenings to adults 18 years and older.

Oakwood Annapolis Hospital event will be 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday-Friday, April 26-28, at Westland Shopping Center, 35000 W. Warren at Wayne Road.

Many of the health screening tests and services are offered free of charge. There is a nominal cost for some screenings and all tests are administered by healthcare professionals.

For more information, call (800) 543-WELL.

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Composters. The series includes lectures by professionals in the field, hands-on activities, field trips and a design project.

Participants will also be have the opportunity to apply the concepts learned in this class to Wayne County Department of Environment Grow Zone installation projects in Hines Drive Park.

This course will be held 6-8 p.m. Wednesday, April 12-May 31, at Wayne County Department of Environment, 3600 Commerce Court, Wayne.

Open House

St. Damian Catholic School will be having a preschool and kindergarten open house 6:30-9 p.m. Tuesday, April 25. The school has preschool programs for three-four-year-olds and full-day kindergarten, both with three- and five-day options.

Bob's of Canton advertisement featuring various meats like Pork Loin Roast, NY Strip Steaks, Chicken Breast, Hams, Leg of Lamb, and Spiral Hams with prices and contact information.

Sandtraps advertisement for an Easter Buffet featuring Fri. & Sat. Nights with DJ & Karaoke, Mon-Thurs. events, and a \$1.00 draft beer offer.

DFCU Financial advertisement with the slogan 'DFCU Financial. Same us, only BETTER' and a list of services and contact information.

NOTICE TO CUT NOXIOUS WEEDS advertisement listing various parcel numbers and providing instructions for weed removal by the City of Westland.

WOW! Magazine showcases local club and co-founder

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

Mary Denning has a sweet reputation, sweet enough to earn national recognition for herself and her favorite group, the Women of Westland.

Country Living magazine named Denning as one of six finalists in its Comfort Contest, which landed the owner of Mary Denning's Cake Shoppe mention in its May issue.

"It's kind of nice, but it would have been nicer to win the \$5,000 grand prize, we could have done a lot with that," said Denning who is the WOW president. "But it's still pretty cool."

Some 800 individuals from around the country were nominated for the comfort they bring to their communities through "good deeds, acts of kindness and volunteer efforts" by working with an established, recognized organization or charity.

Ironically, it was Denning who saw the advertisement for the contest in the magazine and told fellow WOW member Robin Cooke that the club needed to nominate someone. Cooke decided Denning was the best candidate.

"She's the unsung hero in the group," said Cooke. "She works behind the scenes and doesn't want the attention. It's amazing the amount of time she puts in."

While "it's nice to be recognized," Denning admits she prefers to let others have the attention. She has more than enough accolades - Woman of the Year, Westland ATHENA Award, Wal-Mart Business Person of the Year, to name a few.

"I don't want this to be the Mary Denning Club," she said. "WOW has a lot of great women and they all need to shine. I want WOW to take credit for what we do."

Denning has been at the helm of the organization since she and Mary Gregosky founded it in 2000, helping build it in to a 40-member group that has raised some \$50,000 to benefit women and children in Westland and neighboring communities. Their inspiration was the Garden City Business and Professional Women's Club. They attended a meeting, saw what they were doing and decided they could do that.

WOW affiliated with the Westland Chamber of Commerce to start and eventually decided to become its own nonprofit. With the money it has raised, among other things, it has helped provide a playscape at the Rose F. Kennedy Respite Center and provided Barbara Douglas scholarships, including four this year, for women returning to school.

"Everything that comes in goes back into the community," said Denning. "Our only cost is half of a phone bill."

The group's involvement reads like a who's



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Mary Denning shows off the handcrafted Country Living Collection quilt she received as a runner-up in the magazine's Comfort Contest.

who of the city. It has helped the Westland Goodfellows, Westland Historical Society, the Wayne-Westland Community Schools' Red Wagon Literacy Project and the Westland Relay for Life. It also provided 300 pairs of socks for the victims of Hurricane Katrina who relocated to the Detroit area.

But the crowning achievement may well be WOW's annual Chocolate Fantasy Ball which serves as the backdrop for the presentation of the Westland ATHENA Award, and it is Denning who puts the chocolate in the name.

In its second year, the ball raised \$17,000 for WOW programs. It also has caught the attention of ATHENA International which will have Cooke speak at its international convention at the end of this month about the Westland program.

"They see our program as a hallmark example of how to run a successful ATHENA program," said Cooke. "People are starting to recognize what we do and generate more funds to give away."

While Denning didn't get the cash, as a runner-up, she did receive a handcrafted Country Living Collection quilt and several copies of the magazine. But that's OK. She plans to use it in a raffle to raise money for WOW.

"Mary is a positive, upbeat person," said Cooke. "She does all this and runs a successful business. She's like my idol. If I keep up with Mary, I'll be successful."

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SEX CASE

FROM PAGE A1

— to his smoke shop to investigate allegations he was possibly giving or selling cigarettes to minors and asking for sexual favors.

The teenager testified Thursday that Nunoo sold cigarettes to her, asked her to go to lunch with him and gave two e-mail addresses to her. She said she told him that she was 15, although she is 17.

The girl turned the information over to Westland police, who called in the sheriff department's Internet Crime Unit. Liczbinski posed as the 15-year-old girl and initiated an Internet chat with Nunoo.

On March 14 — the day before his arrest — Nunoo chatted with Liczbinski for more than four hours about food, movies, birthday gifts and the need for the girl to go to school and get along with her parents, Liczbinski said in court.

But Nunoo invited what he believed was a 15-year-old girl to his house for dinner and asked whether she had ever had sex in water, Liczbinski testified. Nunoo stated that he would use protection to keep the girl from getting pregnant, the corporal said.

Nunoo and Liczbinski had a shorter online discussion March 15 — the day of the arrest — and authorities placed Nunoo under surveillance before he showed up at Town & Country Lanes, Liczbinski said.

Charges against Nunoo are punishable by 20 years in prison and a \$100,000 fine upon conviction, according to Westland Police Chief Daniel Pfannes. Nunoo, who eventually could face deportation, has had a not-guilty plea placed in his court file.



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Wayne County Sheriff Cpl. William Liczbinski testifies against Jonathan Nunoo, accused of being an Internet sex predator.

In court Thursday, Bokos refused to reduce Nunoo's \$500,000 cash bond, even though defense attorney Johnson termed Nunoo's Internet behavior "an isolated incident" and said the defendant isn't at risk of fleeing.

Johnson argued that charges against Nunoo should be dropped because Liczbinski — not the defendant — initiated the Internet contact. Johnson rejected accusations that Nunoo is a predator and said his e-mails didn't amount to criminal behavior.

"I don't think a jury could ever find that there were any elements (of criminal sexual conduct)," Johnson said.

Bokos disagreed and said he believes that Nunoo meant to meet and have sex with an underage girl. Authorities have copies of the Internet chat that they have said implicates him in criminal behavior.

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School recycles cell phones, inkjets

For the past three years, students of Madison Elementary School have been participating in the FundingFactory Recycling Program, collecting empty laser and inkjet cartridges and used cell phones and send the waste products to FundingFactory.

The school participates in the recycling program throughout the school year, but this year, it has decided to step up its recycling efforts to celebrate Earth Day 2006.

The students are asking the community to recycle their empty laser and inkjet cartridges and used cell phones by dropping them off at the school, at between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. at 1075 S. Carlson, south of Avondale, Westland, between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. Friday, April 28.

Companies interested in demonstrating a commitment to education and the environ-

ment also can participate free of charge in the FundingFactory Business Support Program.

FundingFactory will send each supporting business free, postage-paid shipping boxes for the return of collected cartridges and cell phones.

To learn more about supporting the school, call FundingFactory toll-free at (888) 883-8237 and mention Madison Elementary.

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Alternate to MEAP test offers chance for Merit Award money

BY DIANE GALE ANDREASSI
CORRESPONDENT

A parent of a Livonia high school senior says she was surprised to learn that her daughter could qualify for \$2,500 Michigan Merit Award money by taking a test that hasn't been used by Livonia Public Schools students for the past three years.

After a little digging, Donna Grabowski discovered her daughter, Rebecca, could qualify for the college money if she did well enough on the WorkKeys test.

Grabowski says she was surprised the district didn't

After a little digging, Donna Grabowski discovered her daughter, Rebecca, could qualify for college money if she did well enough on the WorkKeys test.

advertise the WorkKeys as an option.

Most Livonia students receive the state money provided by the Merit Award by taking the MEAP (Michigan Educational Assessment

Program) test and meeting minimum requirements. Students have at least six opportunities to take the MEAP test during their junior and senior years, according to Rob West, district coordinator of assessment and evaluation.

However, there are other options to win the Merit Award. Students who score well enough on the ACT, SAT or WorkKeys are also eligible for the state money.

In fact, since 2003 no Livonia students earned the Michigan Merit Award by taking the WorkKeys test, West reports.

"Since 2003 there are a lot

of kids who missed this money," Grabowski says.

However, last year, 660 students earned the award by taking the MEAP test and 39 won it with their ACT test scores.

Last year, 88 percent of Livonia seniors indicated they intended to go to college. Of that group, 57.1 percent received the Merit Award, West adds.

WorkKeys is a vocationally oriented test that focuses on workplace skills rather than academic skills; problem solving; communication skills; and teamwork, according to the State of Michigan Web

site, <http://www.michigan.gov/mis> tudentaid.

Letters sent from West's office notifying high school seniors on whether or not they qualified for the Merit Award includes a note at the bottom of the page explaining that students who didn't qualify using their MEAP scores have "other means of Merit Award Qualifications, such as ACT scores." It doesn't mention the WorkKeys, but it does imply that parents could investigate further.

The WorkKeys tests cost \$50 and are the responsibility of the student.

"We don't advertise the WorkKeys," West says. "I think responsibility could be on parents. It's a state program. It's not a Livonia program."

Grabowski, a paraprofessional at the Western Wayne Skill Center, which is in the Livonia School District, says she was aware of the WorkKeys test, because it is sometimes administered to paraprofessionals.

"You can't tell me that there wouldn't be hundreds of kids who would take this test if they knew about it," Grabowski says. "Part of the problem is that a lot of counselors don't know about the WorkKeys. If I would have known this back in September, (Rebecca) could have taken

this test once a month. She could have taken a prep class."

Qualifications for the WorkKeys will change next year. In spring 2007, the merit award will be based on the ACT and two WorkKeys tests, applied mathematics and reading for information, according to Will Valet, ACT communications associate. WorkKeys is administered by ACT.

The MEAP won't be part of the criteria next year, Valet says.

The Michigan Merit Award was established by the Michigan Legislature in 1999 (Public Act 94) for the high school graduating Class of 2000 and after. About 50,000 high school graduates earn the award each year, according to the state Web site.

Locally, the WorkKeys test has been given at Schoolcraft College, Oakland Community College, Washtenaw Community College and Henry Ford Community College. For more information call these locations for WorkKeys test dates. For sample questions on the WorkKeys go to www.act.org/workkeys.

"Hopefully other kids will qualify for the money," Grabowski says. "It might make the difference between someone going to college or not."

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Correct diagnosis of psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis while always important is more so today. The reason is because the medical community-dermatologists and rheumatologists-have better therapy than previously existed.

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When physicians use an anti-TNF in psoriasis or psoriatic arthritis, the involved skin and/or the inflamed joints respond even to the point of resolution of pain and deformity.

Physicians must use anti-TNF drugs cautiously. The medication has side effects of which the most important is to bring out latent tuberculosis or make you more susceptible to catching a fungal infection, histoplasmosis. Oddly, taking an anti-TNF drug does not increase your risk of pneumonia from bacteria or the influenza viruses.

The other problem with this class of drug is the cost. The average expense is \$1300/month or nearly \$16,000/year. Even with insurance coverage the out of pocket dollars are too great for some patients.

Doctors are careful in deciding on an anti-TNF drug, and use it only when indications for its initiation are compelling.

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GIRLS JUST WANT TO HAVE FUN!
Congratulations to PATTI WRNAK of Rochester Hills who won tickets to the April 8th performance and PAT WALKER of Canton who won tickets to the April 13th performance!

MEAP

FROM PAGE A1

in mathematics and reading and did better than their counterparts statewide. Fifth- and sixth-graders also bested state averages in writing and English language arts, a combination of the reading and writing scores.

On the social studies test, sixth-graders scored the same as the state average, while Wayne-Westland eighth-graders did better than other eighth-grade students around the state in social studies and science.

"We're pleased with the improvement," said Baracy. "A

majority of our students are at or above state scores. It shows our teachers, administrators, parents and students are taking the MEAP tests seriously and are working together to keep improving on them."

One area of concern for the district is the writing scores which are down from previous years.

School officials will analyze the data and determine what needs to be done to increase proficiency.

"The scores across the state were down," said Baracy. "We were down, but not as much as the state, so that's a good thing."

School officials are using good news like improving test

scores and new programs like the all-day kindergarten program that's being piloted in four elementary to the district to Realtors.

And it appears some what the district has done is paying off. According to Baracy, the number of incoming kindergartners held from last year and were up slightly at the Kindergarten Roundup program last week.

"It appears there's been a positive reaction to it," he said. "It was obvious to us that the Realtors were hearing from prospective homebuyers that they wanted that (all-day kindergarten) program."

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MEAP RESULTS

HOW THEY DID

Third Grade

- Mathematics - 90 percent proficiency.
- Reading - 88 percent proficiency.
- Writing - 50 percent proficiency.
- English language arts - 77 percent proficiency.

The state proficiency scores were 87 percent in mathematics, 87 percent in reading, 51 percent in writing and 78 percent in English language arts.

Fourth Grade

- Mathematics - 82 percent proficiency.
- Reading - 82 percent proficiency.
- Writing - 50 percent proficiency.
- English language arts - 72 percent proficiency.

The state proficiency scores were 82 percent in mathematics, 83 percent in reading, 55 percent in writing and 76 percent in English language arts.

Fifth Grade

- Mathematics - 77 percent proficiency.
- Reading - 81 percent proficiency.
- Writing - 70 percent proficiency.
- English language arts - 79 percent proficiency.
- Science - 72 percent proficiency.

The state proficiency scores were 73 percent in mathematics, 80 percent in reading, 63 percent in writing, 75 percent in English language arts and 77 percent.

Sixth Grade

- Mathematics - 67 percent proficiency.
- Reading - 83 percent proficiency.
- Writing - 70 percent proficiency.
- English language arts - 77 percent proficiency.
- Social studies - 78 percent proficiency.

The state proficiency scores were 65 percent in mathematics, 80 percent in reading, 63 percent in writing, 77 percent in English language arts and 78

percent in social studies.

Seventh Grade

- Mathematics - 57 percent proficiency.
- Reading - 71 percent proficiency.
- Writing - 64 percent proficiency.
- English language arts - 68 percent proficiency.

The state proficiency scores were 60 percent in mathematics, 76 percent in reading, 67 percent in writing and 73 percent in English language arts.

Eighth Grade

- Mathematics - 56 percent proficiency.
- Reading - 70 percent proficiency.
- Writing - 58 percent proficiency.
- English language arts - 64 percent proficiency.
- Science - 79 percent proficiency.

The state proficiency scores were 63 percent in mathematics, 73 percent in reading, 65 percent in writing, 69 percent in English language arts and 77 percent in science.

Chamber, foundation host 'Run for Roses'

They horses will be off an running, when the Westland Chamber of Commerce and Westland Community Foundation host "Run for the Roses" Friday, April 21.

The event will serve as a fund-raiser for the Community Foundation and as the chamber's 10th annual Spring Gala and awards program.

The event will be held at the Hellenic Cultural Center on Joy in Westland. The fun will start at 6 p.m. with cocktails and the opening of the silent auction, followed by a strolling dinner, derby entrance, prizes and open bar.

At 6:30 p.m., recipients of the 2006 First

Citizen Award, sponsored by the Westland Observer and the Westland Chamber of Commerce, and the 2006 Business Person of the Year Award will be honored. The chamber also will honor longtime businesses who are celebrating five years and up as members of the organization.

Party goers will place bets and view aces. The betting and prize "money" will be tickets that at the end of the evening can be used to try and win prizes like a trip to the Kentucky Derby.

Tickets are \$60 per person and are available by calling the chamber at (734) 326-7222.

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Clyde Smith & Sons celebrates 172nd year

Clyde Smith & Sons will celebrate 172 years in business April 22 by inviting the public to visit its greenhouses and garden center - and to participate in free seminars throughout the day.

The business is located on Newburgh Road south of Joy.

Seven generations of the family have now been involved. The business, which has grown into a sprawling business from a mere farm in 1834, will offer the following seminars during its spring open house:

- Jim Honerhoff will lead a

- 10 a.m. seminar on "Perennial and Water Gardening."
- Mark Polio from Conard Pyle Nursery will host an 11 a.m. seminar titled "What's New For 2006."
- Culinary arts instructor and master gardener June Brown will offer tips during a 1 p.m. session called "Cooking and Gardening with Herbs."
- Ted Williams from Jackson & Perkins Roses will field questions about roses during a 2 p.m. seminar "Roses, Roses, Roses."
- Dave Smith will give helpful hints on how to prepare soil and what plants to pick during his 3 p.m. session called "Ready, Set, Go Gardening."



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Clyde Smith & Sons is celebrating 172 years of being in business. Standing amid the hydrangeas are Sandy (from left) and David Smith Jr., Carol McCreedy, David Smith Sr., Edna Smith and Barb Strong.

■ Premier Soil representative Dick Pavlick will offer a "Free Soil Testing" seminar 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Those who want to participate are asked to bring a small baggie of soil from the yard or garden to get expert advice.

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Publish: April 9 & 13, 2006

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State immigration proposals revive Know Nothing spirit

My ancestors all came from Ireland. I've never explored the family genealogy but both paternal and maternal sides of the family tree probably made their way here before 1900 and some probably as far back as the 1840s in the first rush of Irish Catholics escaping the potato famine.

I don't know if all my ancestors made their way into the country through then legal channels. I suppose some could have hidden in a tramp steamer and then made off in a small boat once they got close to New York City or maybe they were legally allowed into Canada and then crept over the border through Maine or Vermont from Quebec.

Don't know if any of them were Fenians, on the one hand, or British justice agitators, on the other. But they were agitators against British rule in Ireland.

Probably not. My paternal grandfather, for whom I was named, was pretty strait-laced. He worked more than 50 years on the Lackawanna Railroad as a switchman beginning in 1906. According to an article in the Lackawanna company magazine in 1954 he had a perfect safety record on a dangerous job. He was given the Orchid of the Month. Solid, hard-working and I suspect his parents were as well. He went to Mass every morning before work.

When my ancestors arrived they encountered numerous "No Irish Need Apply" signs for any but the most menial and dangerous occupations. They gravitated to the coal mines and railroads. "They" and "their" foreign religion were the particular targets of the Know Nothing Party, a remnant of the Whigs before the Civil War. "They" would be joined in time by Italians, Jews from Eastern Europe, Poles and other groups.

State Rep. Robert Gosselin, R-Troy, would be a Know Nothing if the party still existed. He is the sponsor of an 11-bill package that he calls "Michigan Citizens First" which seeks to create residency and citizenship requirements for financial assistance including scholarships, education grants and state-funded mortgage programs.

This is all part of a concerted effort nationally and in the state to deal with the problem of illegal immigrants. On Friday, the U.S. Senate shelved a compromise bill that would allow some illegal immigrants (those here more than five years and able to pay a fine and back taxes) to eventually work toward citizenship. The bill requires immigrants who have been here less than five years to touch back with their home country before being allowed back into the

United States and would send illegal immigrants with less than two years back to their countries of origin. It would also beef up border security to prevent more illegals from arriving and penalize businesses that hire illegals.

The Senate compromise had won the favor of President Bush and but faced stiff opposition from Senate conservatives and the House, which passed a tough bill in December making illegal immigration a felony and created stiff new fines for employers who employ illegal immigrants. It also would extend a physical wall along the 700-plus-mile border with Mexico in addition to other security measures.

Illegal immigration is a problem. An estimated 10 million to 12 million people are in this country illegally. Conservatives argue that any plan to allow these immigrants to become legal residents constitutes amnesty (which is apparently a very scary word). But, also, labor unions argue that illegal aliens in some parts of the country drive down wages and that immigrants are exploited by employers who underpay them and don't provide proper safety and health protection. Though most unions oppose the House approach.

There are security issues, crime issues and lost tax income.

It's a tangled web and needs to be addressed. But the package "Michigan Citizens First" is a misguided, xenophobic mess. Any bills that require citizenship to receive benefits would deny benefits to taxpaying legal immigrants. The bills also seem based more on notions than actual information.

In a story Thursday Gosselin said, "I don't know what it would mean in terms of economics if we clamped down on illegal immigrants. But I do know that it's costing us right now. We pay for it through out hospitals and our schools. Our systems are being overtaxed and drained dry." (By an estimated 150,000 illegal immigrants in a population of nine million?)

What these proposals do is penalize hardworking people who want to be even more productive by getting an education, buying a home, putting down roots and paying taxes. It's just a slap at people already on the lowest rung of our society. It's legislative bullying.

Gosselin also argues that Michigan lost representation in Congress to California because of all the illegal immigrants there. Wouldn't that be an argument for inviting more illegal immigrants to Michigan rather than driving them down to California and Texas? Talk about Know Nothing!

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

Once again, case of the Oakland County child killer taunts us

With the possible exception of Jimmy Hoffa's disappearance, I can't think of another crime that has gripped Oakland County so strongly for so long as the Oakland County child murder case.

Nearly 30 years after four children were abducted, including one from in front of a store on Maple near Woodward in Birmingham, police continue to investigate the case, hoping to find a clue before it is too late to ever solve it.

The killer, if he is still alive, is getting older.

Most recently, police had planned to go down to a prison in Indiana to interview a potential suspect. It's not the first time police have held out hope that the crime will be solved - eventually.

And it's not surprising that so much effort has been devoted to this long investigation. This is truly a heart-breaking case.

Mark Stebbins, 12, Jill Robinson, 12, Kristine Mihelich, 10, and Timothy King, 11, were abducted and murdered between

December 1976 and March 1977. Timothy was abducted in Birmingham. Their bodies were found scattered from the side of I-75 in Troy to a ditch in Livonia. At least two of the kids had been sexually assaulted.

There were scant clues - a blue AMC Gremlin may have been involved - but it was never found. In fact, nothing ever came of any clue, tip, lead or hope that the case would ever be solved.

For several years I knew Jerry Tobias while he was on the Bloomfield Township Board of Trustees. Tobias, who was once the Franklin Village police chief, was part of the Oakland County child killer investigation team from the beginning. He never gave up the search.

From time to time he would give me updates on the case. In particular I remember one Saturday when he called me at home. There had been a break in the case, he said. He was confident that at last there might be a resolution at any time. That was about five years ago.

Nothing came of it, just as nothing came of all the other leads that glowed red hot only to fade over the years.

Jerry died in January 2004. I know that if he had only one regret in life it was that he

For several years I knew Jerry Tobias while he was on the Bloomfield Township Board of Trustees. Tobias, who was once the Franklin Village police chief, was part of the Oakland County child killer investigation team from the beginning. He never gave up the search.

couldn't crack this case. It meant a lot to him.

It's hard to get excited anymore when someone says there's a new lead in case. Just as they tear up the countryside from time to time in search of Jimmy Hoffa, the hunt for the Oakland County child killer goes on.

And on. Despite the years, this must be dreadful for the families of the children. But what could be worse than thinking that somewhere out there the killer is still free.

Or maybe not. It's been speculated the killer never struck again because he is in prison on some other charge. Or he may be dead. Or maybe he did kill again somewhere else and the cases were not linked.

Or maybe ... Or maybe ... That's the frustration. The most dedicated investigators and most sophisticated police work haven't been able to solve these murders.

That's not without precedent. Back in 1888 the most famous serial killer of all time murdered five women in one of the largest, most sophisticated cities in the world. Yet Jack the Ripper was never caught and has grown to legendary status in a perverse way.

The Oakland County child killer won't achieve the notoriety of Jack the Ripper. But that doesn't make this case any less painful.

The identity of Jack the Ripper likely will never be known, but there still is hope that this case will be broken. Unless the killer operated alone and never spoke about his acts to anyone, someone out there knows who he is.

And maybe ... Greg Kowalski is editor of the *Birmingham Eccentric*. He can be reached at (248) 901-2570 or by e-mail at gkowalski@hometownlife.com.



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New Lawrence Tech center is clean, green

SHOWCASE OFFERS FUN

From miniature golf and laser tag to student-created video games, Lawrence Technological University's annual Innovation Showcase offers fun for adults and children alike.

A celebration of LTU students' accomplishments over the past year, the showcase will be held noon to 5 p.m. Saturday, April 29 at the university, 21000 W. 10 Mile in Southfield.

Tours of the university's new, environmentally-friendly Taubman Students Services building will be included.

Participants will also be able to ride a mechanical bull, view Formula and Mini-Baja vehicles and attend the Whiz Bang Chemistry show.

There will also be presentations on the Rouge River Watershed and civil engineering students will break a concrete bridge beam.

They will also be able to engineer their own river, view the work of student architects and designers and see a concrete canoe that floats.

Snacks will include cotton candy and root beer floats.

Additional information is available at www.ltu.edu/specialevents or by calling (800) CALL-LTU.

BY PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER

Its geothermal heating system extends 300 feet underground.

Its living, green roof insulates against summer's scorching sun and winter's biting cold.

Its sweeping glass wall dominates the campus quadrangle, providing grandeur to the center where students go to change a class, get financial aid or look for a job.

It's the \$13.9 million A. Alfred Taubman Student Services Center and it will be dedicated Friday at Lawrence Technological University in Southfield.

The center's environmentally-friendly features are more than talking points, said Joseph Veryser, associate dean of the LTU College of Architecture and Design.

They're examples of LTU practicing the cutting-edge technology students need in their professional careers, Veryser said earlier this week while previewing the newest structure on the 125-acre campus.

Environmentally-friendly design is important as companies look for ways to conserve energy, Veryser said.

And LTU students are expected to be familiar with

them, said Ann Knecht, an architecture student from Ann Arbor. "Companies want us to know something about them," she said.

Andrea Lazar, a student from Farmington Hills, said she is anxious to put some of those concepts into practice. "They're important when I look at a company (as a prospective employer)," she said.

The building is designed as a living laboratory, said Bruce Annett Jr., executive director of marketing and public affairs, in compliance with LEED™ (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)

certification.

Here are some of the building's features:

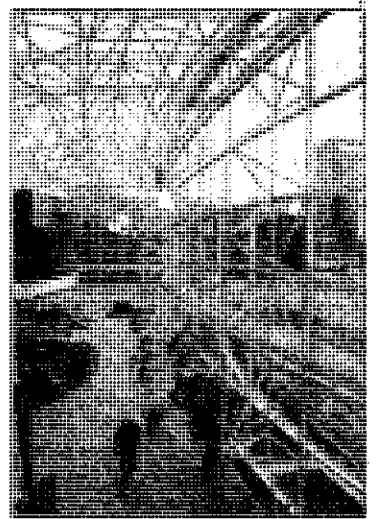
- It has no boiler, furnace or gas meter.
- Water is circulated in 88 geothermal wells - each as deep as the nearby Southfield Town Center across is tall - which help heat the building in winter and cool it during the summer.
- It has a living, green roof.
- Nine different species of sedum ground cover on most of the 10,000-square-foot roof provides more effective insulation. The living roof also absorbs about 60 percent of

rainwater, with the rest recycled as "gray" water used for flushing toilets and irrigating the adjacent campus quadrangle.

The roof is expected to last about 40 years, or more than twice the life span of those constructed with traditional materials, according to designers.

- Its photovoltaic panels convert sunlight into electricity.

Students designed and built a photovoltaic demonstration system on the roof of the engineering building that converts the sun's rays into enough electricity to power a large home.



LAWRENCE MCKEE | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

One of the most appealing aspects of the new Taubman Center on the campus of Lawrence Technological University is its view of the Southfield skyline.

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Barnaby named new Botsford board chairman

Steve Barnaby has been named chairman of the board of directors for Botsford General Hospital.

He replaces Edward N. Hodges III, J.D., of Farmington Hills, who served as Botsford's board chair for 22 years and was recently named chairman emeritus.

Barnaby has been affiliated with Botsford governance for almost 30 years; he was originally appointed to the board in February 1977. He also served as chairman of the board of directors of Botsford's sister organization, Community EMS, until December 2005.

Active in health policy and governance issues at both the state and national levels, Barnaby is currently participating in the Michigan Health and Hospital Association's Excellence in Governance Fellowship for 2005-2006.

The board of trustees of the American Hospital Association appointed Barnaby to a two-year term as an at-large member of its committee on governance. In that capacity, he is participating in the development of policies to represent, guide and assist the nation's hospitals. The committee also promotes grassroots advocacy efforts of behalf of hospitals.

A graduate of Wayne State University, Barnaby is a principal in Century Communications Ltd., a Plymouth-based management consulting firm. He was formerly publisher of the *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*.



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