

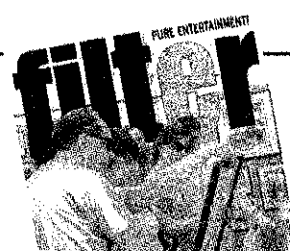
How mothers and daughters relate



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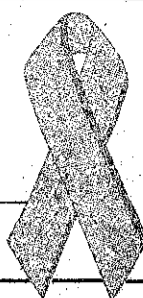
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'I put my faith in God, and my family and friends help me.'



PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Sarah Thurmond (right) sits in the kitchen with her family, including (from left) brother Josh, father David and mother Carol.

Simple touch is painful experience when you have epidermolysis bullosa

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Sarah Thurmond's skin is so fragile that her parents can't even give her a big hug.

"If somebody hugs me really tight, I'll blister," Sarah, 16, said.

Unlike most children, she could never play dodge ball, jump off a diving board, climb a tree or be pushed high on a swing set.

Her pain would be excruciating; her scars, possibly permanent.

At times, Sarah has received blood transfusions almost as often as other children have soccer practice. She has undergone 17 skin grafts.

Sarah has suffered since birth with epidermolysis bullosa, or EB -- several inherited disorders that leave the skin and mucous membranes so vulnerable that the slightest touch can cause severe irritation, painful blistering and scarring.

A lifelong disease, EB leaves its victims facing a life expectancy of 30 years, although many patients live longer. They are at high risk for infections and skin cancer. Blisters in the mouth, esophagus, throat and stomach can lead to malnutrition.

"It's supposed to get milder as I get older," Sarah said, sitting at the dining room table of her family's Westland home.

"But I'll have it for life."

As many as 100,000 Americans, mostly children, suffer from EB.

"I put my faith in God, and my family and friends help me," said Sarah, who hasn't let the disease stop her from attending 11th-grade classes at Westland John Glenn High School.

Sarah's 18-year-old brother Joshua, a Glenn senior, also has EB, but his is slightly milder. He hopes to study accounting and law this fall at Spring Arbor University, in hopes of eventually becoming an attorney.

Their parents, Carol and

PLEASE SEE DISEASE, A6



Sarah Thurmond takes special precautions to protect her skin due to a disease that makes it easy for her to blister.

Surprise!

State apologizes for failing to list 2nd judicial candidate

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

The state Bureau of Elections apologized Wednesday for a snafu that left Mayor Sandra Cicirelli mistakenly believing she faced no opposition in her bid to become a Westland district judge.

In a surprising development, Cicirelli and other political observers learned this week that Westland attorney Jennifer Thor also is in the race.

On Friday -- three days after the filing deadline -- a state Web site still listed Cicirelli as the only judicial candidate to replace retiring Judge Gail McKnight.

Moreover, a call by the Observer to the state had resulted in the newspaper being referred to the Web site for a listing of candidates.

On Monday, however -- six days after the filing deadline -- Thor's name was listed on the state Web site.

"I'm surprised in that she wasn't listed (before)," Cicirelli said.

Meanwhile, Thor, who beat the filing deadline but then went out of town, returned home to read published reports indicating that Cicirelli was unopposed. Thor, too, questioned why her name wasn't mentioned.

Thor wondered whether she had fallen short of the 400 voter signatures she needed on petitions to get her name on the ballot. But, that wasn't the case.

On Wednesday, Bureau of Elections spokeswoman Kelly Chesney attributed the confusion to "a clerical error" made by an employee who was entering information into a computer.

"Unfortunately, it was a clerical error that made it appear that there was one candidate for that position," Chesney said. "It was an isolated incident, and we apologize for any confusion."

Cicirelli took her petitions

to Lansing and filed them on April 28, and she said she was told that she was the first candidate to file.

But the state Web site now lists Thor as filing her petitions on April 27 -- one day before Cicirelli. Thor said she, too, hand-delivered her signatures to Lansing.

Chesney conceded that Cicirelli "was told in error that she was the first candidate to file."

Confusion aside, Cicirelli and Thor will now compete for a six-year term in Westland 18th District Court.

"I'll mount an aggressive campaign," Cicirelli, 54, vowed Tuesday, after learning of Thor's candidacy.

Thor, 36, has practiced law since 1995 and is currently with Meisner & Associates in Bingham Farms. She said she has worked as a pre-hearing attorney for the Michigan Court of Appeals, as a research attorney for Dearborn 19th District Court, and as a staff attorney for the UAW-GM legal services plan.

She also serves on the city's Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, which reviews plans by developers to build on certain land, such as the contaminated Cooper School site.

She was appointed to the Brownfield post by Cicirelli.

Thor said Tuesday she has been considering campaigning for a judicial post for two years, saying rumors had circulated that McKnight might not seek re-election.

"It's been one of my goals for a long time," she said. "I have a strong knowledge and grasp of the law."

Cicirelli also has long wanted to be a judge. She even ran against 18th District Judge C. Charles Bokus in 1994 but lost the race.

She served 12 years on the Westland City Council and just began her second four-year term as mayor in January.

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

Wedding chapel at school divides historians

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Westland historians are divided over plans to use the restored, one-room Perrinsville Schoolhouse for wedding ceremonies.

"It's not a chapel. It's not a church. It's a schoolhouse," local historian Ruth Dale said.

But some historians and city officials support the plan, saying it will help raise money to restore other Westland historic buildings.

Perrinsville Schoolhouse was

restored several years ago and offered for field trips to student groups from Wayne-Westland, Livonia and Garden City schools.

The school hasn't drawn as many visitors as historians and city officials had hoped, even with its old-fashioned bell, pot-belly stove and late-1800s teaching materials.

The building stands on its original site off Warren Road west of Merriman, in the Livonia school district portion of Westland.

City officials have started marketing it for wedding ceremonies -- a

decision supported by a majority of Westland Historical Commission members.

"This is totally wrong," Dale said during a recent Westland City Council meeting. In part, she fears the school could be damaged.

But Westland Housing/Community Development Director James Gilbert said the school will be used only for wedding ceremonies -- not receptions or parties.

PLEASE SEE WEDDINGS, A9



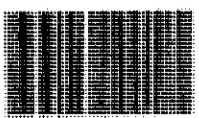
All-Stars shine

Look inside today's edition for a special section featuring the 2006 Observer All-Star Team. Read about their high school accomplishments and their career goals. Members of the 2006 team include (back, from left) Silvia McCandlish, Tyler Temby, Emily Wang, Ameya Walimbe, Yiyang Lu, Kaitlyn Reed, Jessica Erlingis, Kathleen Kneiser, Nivedhita Subramanian and Adam Davis; (front, from left) Erica Brown, Jeff Holycross and Tina Wang. Not pictured are Paul Moncznik, Anna Malecke and Trevor Sponseller.

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Coming Sunday

Losing a job can be a traumatic experience. Help is available for those who feel depressed after being laid off. See Sunday's Health section.

Shop's sweets baskets have Mother's Day all wrapped up



PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Rosemarie Fabian, owner of de Ros Delicacies, is busy assembling fresh bread and pastry gift baskets to fill orders for Mother's Day.

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

The day begins early at de Ros Delicacies in Redford Township.

Fine European-inspired pastries are baked and delivered to the shop no later than 6 a.m. That's when owner Rosemarie Fabian and her employees take over – and transform the baked goods into decorative gift baskets, customized for each recipient.

This time of year, most of those baskets of sweet treats are prepared in time for Mother's Day.

"By seven-thirty, we start packing," said Fabian. Some deliveries begin as early as 10 a.m.

Customers can choose from Mom-friendly gifts like ceramic teapots and tea cups or spring-inspired items such as birdhouses or flower pots. Each basket may be filled with European-inspired breads and pastries like delicate kolacky, sweet cinnamon raisin bread, pound cake, walnut rolls, danish, croissants and more. Baskets can also come filled with gourmet chocolates, nuts and cheeses.

Fabian has her system down to a science. She's been running the local business for 25 years. It began when her cousin, Delphine McMaster, began sending gift baskets to friends. Together, they saw the business potential in this venture and began working out of McMaster's Redford home.

"Nobody was doing it at the time," said Fabian. "I thought it was a great idea."

Within a few years, they found space in the community and moved the business to Five Mile Road. After two years, the company required even more room – particularly to fill enormous numbers of holiday orders. So, de Ros Delicacies moved across the street and 17 years later, it remains there.

Located at 25420 Five Mile Road just east of Beech Daly, de Ros Delicacies handles telephone and Internet orders, as well as walk-in customers.

"We do a tremendous

amount of baskets for funeral homes," said Fabian. "People send our baskets instead of flowers."

COVERING MANY OCCASIONS

But the baskets are not confined to a single purpose or occasion. Fabian customizes each basket for its recipient. She chooses handmade linens and handmade bows to suit the occasion. From graduation to a new baby, a holiday to a housewarming, there is a basket to suit any event.

"It's easy for customers to order," said Fabian. "The bakers keep it consistently good."

Visitors to the Livonia Chamber of Commerce Business Expo can try de Ros baked goods from 1-4 p.m. Thursday, May 11, at Burton Manor.

"We really try very hard to give customers the freshest product and excellent service," said Fabian.

That mission means she must extend hours during the Christmas rush. That's the busiest time, Fabian said. She calls in extra help to put together 350 baskets a day over about two weeks in December.

Redford resident Paula Beauchamp has worked at de Ros for eight years. She said she likes working with customers, and has made some close friends over the years. Co-worker Debbie Clifton of Westland agreed. She said the employees all get along very well. "It's a great team effort," said Fabian.

Margaret Brooks said she enjoys the people she works with, and said the business has a "nice atmosphere." For co-worker Ruth Durham, the job has afforded her flexibility for her family. She doesn't even mind the holiday rush, she said, because she "thrives in chaos."

Baskets range in price from a small sampler at \$23.95 to a large basket of breads and pastries for \$74.95 to a super deluxe basket for \$135, and prices and sizes in between.

Employees can deliver bas-



Redford-based business de Ros Delicacies sells and ships handmade gift baskets – like this Mother's Day version filled with fresh pastries – for any occasion.



Owner Rosemarie Fabian, of de Ros Delicacies, shows off a European pastry gift basket, which is ready for delivery. She and her employees will be busy filling orders for Mother's Day.

kets throughout the Metro Detroit area, or ship them anywhere in the United States. Store hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday. While they prefer 24

hours notice, the shop can often accommodate orders made in the same day. Contact the shop at (313) 531-0321 or visit the Web site at www.derosdelicacies.com. scasola@hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2054

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Group turns in 11,000 signatures

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

Citizens for Livonia's Future wrapped up its recall petition effort this week, gathering more than 11,000 signatures for all but one of five Livonia school board members, according to recall coordinators.

"We're over 11,000 signatures per person, except for Kevin Whitehead," said Jody Hamilton, a Livonia parent who has been coordinating the effort.

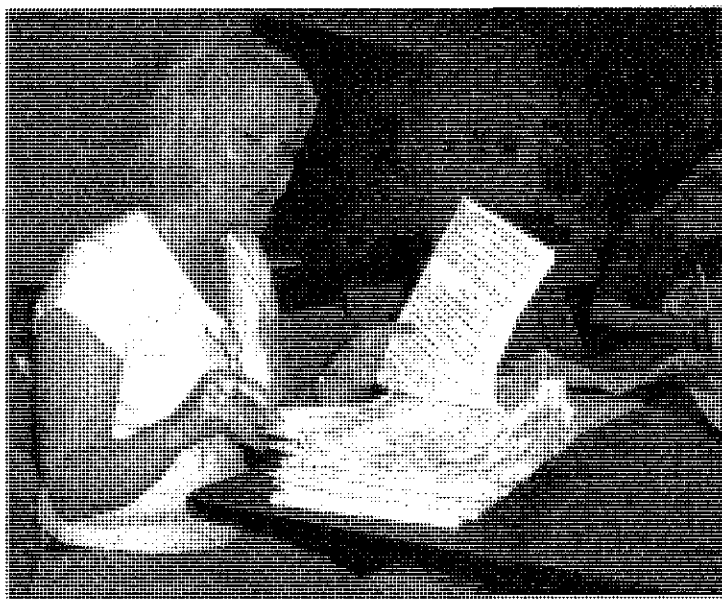
For Whitehead, the group gathered 10,995 signatures in support of a recall. On the high side, volunteers gathered 12,200 signatures in support of recalling board President Dan Lessard. The signatures were submitted Friday to the Wayne County Clerk's office in Detroit.

The entire recall effort came in response to the Livonia Public Schools Board of Education's December approval of the Legacy Initiative. The plan — which goes into effect in the fall — will close seven school buildings and reorganize grade levels to save from \$1.5 million to \$2 million to deal with rising costs and declining student numbers, and to save programs and class sizes.

"For most of us, it's not the fact that they have to close schools (that's an issue)," Hamilton said. "It's the plan that they put in place and the way they did it."

Five of the six trustees who approved that plan are targeted. They include: Rob Freeman, Lessard, Cynthia Markarian, Lynda Scheel and Whitehead.

Trustee Joanne Morgan, who was defeated in a re-election bid May 2, supplied the sixth vote in support of the plan. She



KELSEY FURELL

Laura Flavin, a member of Citizens for Livonia's Future, checks signatures on petitions to recall five members of the Livonia Public Schools Board of Education. The petitions were submitted Friday to the Wayne County Clerk's Office.

is not part of the recall and will finish out her current four-year term June 30. Trustee Tom Bailey cast the single vote in opposition to the Legacy Initiative.

Hamilton said the recall effort has been "about putting in place a board that's more trustworthy and a board that we believe will listen to us — and at least respect the concerns of its constituents."

From the start, the citizens group aimed to gather about 11,000 signatures per trustee. The group had 90 days in which to meet that goal.

Only 8,921 validated signatures, per trustee, are required to initiate a recall.

"We have a 25-percent cushion," Hamilton said. "That's more than we anticipated." She said the group would have submitted the signatures with a 10-percent margin of error.

Hamilton and a few other members of CFLF worked through the night Thursday to count, sort and check the petitions for errors, before turning them in to the county clerk's office.

"We're amazed," Hamilton said Friday morning before heading downtown. "I just can't believe it."

Next, the clerk's office staff will have seven days to verify the number of signatures, before sending the paperwork on to the Livonia City Clerk's office, where those petitions will again be validated to ensure there are no duplicate

signatures and that all forms were signed by registered district voters.

With enough valid signatures, Hamilton said, the community can expect a recall election to take place as early as Aug. 8.

In the meantime, members of CFLF are also pursuing a lawsuit against board trustees and the school district, in an effort to halt the Legacy Initiative for one year to allow more time to study the impact such changes would make on the community.

Newly-elected board Trustee Steve King, who will take office July 1, has spoken out in support of this idea.

"It's a big change," Hamilton said, "with Steve King getting elected and the community accomplishing this huge task. At least we're trying to do what we feel is best for our kids."

Lawyers representing board trustees and administrators, and the Citizens for Livonia's Future, will meet Friday, May 12, for a settlement conference in the pending lawsuit.

According to Southfield attorney Mayer Morganroth, who represents the CFLF, a settlement conference often precedes a trial. Should the case go to trial, he said, he would try again for a preliminary injunction to prevent the district from moving forward with activities related to the Legacy plan.

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Strings program to be a part of 5-6 schools

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

Livonia trustees were treated Monday night to the sounds of a Beatles classic — *Eleanor Rigby* — rather than a three-minute speech by a group of aspiring musicians.

String musicians from elementary, middle and high school levels in the district attended the meeting with instruments in tow. To demonstrate their dedication, and the importance of early exposure to string instruments, they chose to play, rather than speak.

While re-organizing music specials classes for grades five and six, district administrators had not incorporated a strings component for the coming school year. A community group called Save Our Strings spoke out to promote the program — and submitted a petition to back its efforts, which included more than 450 signatures.

Supt. Randy Liepa assured the group Monday that he is listening.

"Ever since the introduction of our program at the five-six schools in April, we have been exploring ways to (get) the strings component into the elementary schools," he said.

After meeting with music teachers last week, Liepa said administrators have decided to offer strings as a component of the new fifth-grade instrumental music class, and provide instruments to those who

choose to take it. The class would expand on its current offering of once a week for 10 weeks.

"Next year it will be 20 weeks, two times a week, or 40 sessions," Liepa said.

Liepa said in addition to a fifth-grade course, "we are looking at a sixth-grade opportunity as we move forward."

Young musicians and their parents said the change was a start, a move in the right direction.

Kathy Bilger, president of the Livonia Youth Philharmonic of Michigan, was one such voice.

"What does it mean to the families in Livonia?" she wrote in an e-mail message Tuesday. "It means we had success last night. It was a victory in a sense. We achieved a chance to keep orchestra in Livonia, but the rest depends on us. The board will not fund orchestra for only a few people, there has to be real interest out there for it to survive."

Allison Anderson, a senior and cello performer at Churchill High School, was pleased to hear the news.

"For me, music is very important," she said. "It's my entire life."

Anderson was "outraged" to hear the program could've been cut at the elementary level.

"It's important to start at a young age," she said. "I started with the Livonia Youth Philharmonic in second grade. I started performing at 6 years

old. To me, music is very important."

She said it's also necessary to have a strong strings program at the elementary level, in order to support the middle and high school orchestra programs.

While he's not planning on pursuing a career in music, Churchill senior Randy Yao said he's truly enjoyed his musical training in Livonia.

"It's taught me a lot about time management," he said. "I've met a lot of people."

Derek Weller, music director of the Livonia Youth Philharmonic, is also a product of Livonia Public Schools. His first exposure to the bass came as a fifth-grader at Rosedale Elementary.

In a letter to the school board read by Allison Anderson, Weller expressed the following support for the string program: "Education in the arts not only greatly enhances the quality of one's life, but also leads to the development of crucial skills. Discipline, teamwork, creativity, self-expression and cultural awareness are only a few valuable skills which can be enhanced from having a string program in your school district."

Upper elementary families can expect to receive mail this week which will provide a full description of both the instrumental music and vocal music courses available at next year's upper elementary schools, so students may make a choice.

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Team talks about both Cooper sites

Livonia Public Schools District Transition Team members recently held a meeting to discuss and dispel any environmental concerns surrounding the history of Cooper Elementary School property.

The building is located across from the former Cooper site which was built on a landfill. That site, located in the Westland portion of the district, is currently being redeveloped.

The DTT focus group meeting featured experts, including Paul Owens from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Robert Gorman from NTH Consultants and developers Frank Jonna and David Nona.

It was meant as a way for the community to gather information about the environmental history of the current and former Cooper sites.

The meeting will be tele-

vised on LPS TV — which is Channel 15 for Bright House and Wide Open West subscribers and Channel 19 for Comcast customers — on the following dates and times:

- 8-10 p.m. Thursday, May 11.
 - 9:30-11:30 a.m. Saturday, May 13.
 - 8-10 p.m. Tuesday, May 16.
 - 7-9 p.m. Sunday, May 21.
- This unedited meeting also will air in August on LPS TV.

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RU artist explores galaxy far, far away

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

When it comes to original artwork, Redford Union senior Matt Ahlgren relied on nothing less than the force.

With a young Jedi's dedication, he created a three-foot tall, walking, talking R2-D2 robot sculpture — as part of his advanced art course this year.

Ahlgren has been immersed in art classes since second grade.

When challenged this year by longtime art teacher Robert Bishop, he took on the ultimate project — one that would combine his appreciation for George Lucas' *Star Wars* film series with his flair for construction and detail. Ahlgren built the friendly little droid almost completely out of Popsicle sticks.

The 3-D project took more than a month to complete. He worked four hours a day, and spent most of his spring break completing the creative replica.

In all his years of teaching, Bishop said, "I've never seen anything like this. He put his heart and soul into it."

Ahlgren is also a finalist for the 2006 Redford Union Artist of the Year Award.

What began as a way for him to diversify his art portfolio by incorporating an array of mixed media pieces turned into much more.

"This medium is definitely his forte," Bishop said.

Ahlgren started with the basic, intricate structure of the droid, but kept adding more detail.

He used a lazy Susan to make the droid's head rotate, added sound effects and even attached a remote control car and casters underneath the structure — so it can move.

He placed fiber optic and glowing lights to make R2-D2



Star Wars fan and Redford Union student Matt Ahlgren impressed his art teacher by creating R2-D2 and several film-related starships, almost completely out of Popsicle sticks.

as close to the original as possible. And he painted the droid in the appropriate blue-and-white color scheme.

"I didn't intend for it to be this realistic," Ahlgren said.

Bishop said his student went "above and beyond" the requirements of the project.

"He's a very Zen person," Bishop said. "He has a lot of patience."

Using popsicle sticks proved time-consuming. Ahlgren soaked them in water to mold the sticks to suit the curved shape of the robot. He perfected the method while creating smaller replicas of *Star Wars* starships, including the TIE fighter and X-wing starfighter.

"I've always had a knack for construction and building," said Ahlgren, adding that the most difficult part was creating R2's framework, curved head and keeping its "legs" from wiggling.

Bishop said: "It came easier to him as he went on."

Ahlgren estimated that he used about 2,500 popsicle sticks to construct R2-D2, and 1,000 more in an array of *Star Wars*-themed sculptures. Some of those sculptures incorporated wire and tiny detailing.

"I've always enjoyed *Star Wars*," Ahlgren said.

He constructed R2-D2 to almost the exact size as the original.

The sculpture is about 2 inches shorter than the actual R2-D2's 36-inch height.

On the robot's test run through the hallway, Bishop said, students and teachers were popping their heads out

of the classrooms and into the hallway for a peek.

Kim Price, Ahlgren's girlfriend and an artist in her own right, said her first impression of his R2-D2 sculpture was that it "was kind of surreal. I thought 'How did he do that?' I'm really proud of him."

The *Star Wars*-inspired display continues to draw considerable attention around the school. And that's just what art should do, Bishop said, "make you more visually aware, so you're able to see things you don't normally see."

Ahlgren isn't sure where next project is headed. He plans to move onto more personal subjects, and perhaps wire sculptures.

"I'm done with Popsicle sticks," Ahlgren said.

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PHOTOS BY TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Redford Union senior Matt Ahlgren translated his longtime appreciation for *Star Wars* by creating this 34-inch R2-D2 replica, out of Popsicle sticks.



Matt Ahlgren's art display has been the talk of Redford Union High School. It showcases some of his *Star Wars*-themed Popsicle stick art work.

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Class of 2007

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"Attending Madonna University has been very rewarding. The education provided is excellent with a curriculum that has been challenging, while fair. Combined with the fact, it's a Catholic University, it was a perfect fit for me."
Steven Burt
Class of 2006

Named to the honor roll at the end of the first semester honor roll at Wayne Memorial High School were:

Amanda Abulawi, Terry Ackman, Keith Adams, Wendy Adkins, Ammer Ahmad, Zohaib Ahmad, Abigail Alejandro, Muhammad Ali, Ryan Allen, Jessica Amburgey, Jacob Anderson, Lamar Anderson, Justin Archie, Allison Areeda, David Arnold, Kimberly Artuso, Autumn Askew, Brittanie Askin, Cynthia Asianian, Ashley Atterberry, Gideon Ault, Amanda Bailey, Anthony Bailey, April Bailey, Shirelle Bailey, Kelsey Baker, Cara Ball, James Banks, Allen Barr, Jessica Barrett, Delancey Barron, Rachael Barton, Jeremiah Bauman, Samantha Bawcum, Jennese Bean, Melanie Beard, Crystal Beaver, Monica Beeson, David Benson, Hailey Benton, Madelyn Bevil, Ryan Bies, Ryan Bird, Brooke Bishop, Brandie Bishop-Stacker, Fawna Black-Cicotte, Shereen Blair, Colleen Blake, Jessica Blanchard, Ryan Blanchard, Brittany Blanton, Christopher Blevins, Kelsey Blevins, Stefayne Bliven, Timothy Bliven, Alexis Blue, Jakob Boertje, Cameo Bond, Joseph Bonett, Anthalyce Bonner, Shayna Bono, Lisa Booterbaugh, Gabrielle Borden, Danielle Borg, Jenna Bossio, Danielle Boston, Nicole Bouren, Joshua Boyce, Joshua Bradley, Bruce Brewer, Michelle Brewer, Cory Brooks, Joshua Brooks, Andrea Brown, Jason Brown, Rickelle Brown, Katie Brumfield, James Bryant, Jonathan Bryant, Christopher Burtraw, Corisa Butler, Dakota Butler, Chanel Cabbil, Brooke Cabe, Casey Cahill, Chelsea Cahill, Brittany Calhoun, Samantha Calladine, Antwain Calloway, Cassandra Campbell, Corey Campbell, Elizabeth Campbell, Danielle Capraro, James Capraro, Jorge Carmelo, Arlene Carter, Benjamin Chalupka, Jared Chatterton, Kimberly Chau, Sebastian Chauve, Melissa Chesnut, Nicholas Chilson, Lindsay Chmiel, Jonathan Choate, Teal Christoffersen, John Cipolletti, Lorina Clardy, Robin Clarke, Travis Cleveland, Doyle Colaianne, Ashley Cole, Michael Cole, Justin Collop, Nova Connolly, Chelsea Cooney, Amy Cottenham, Krystie Crandall, Sarah Craven, Matthew Cretens, Daniel Crumme, Daisy Cruz, Ruth Cuevas, Linette Cuevas-Zuniga, Alexandria Cupp, Stefanie Curcuro, Laura D'Arcy, Heather Daniels, Latosha Davenport, Amber Davis, Brittney Davis, John Davis, Maria Davis, Michael Davis, Oriana Davis, Jennifer Dawson,

Marcus Dawson, Amber Day, Amber Decker, Kristina Decker, Brittany Demaray, Sarah Demske, Christopher Dewaelsche, Briana Dewyer, Kyra Dewyer, Erina Dinkollari, Erica Dishon, Max Ditmore, Kelly Doerr, Sean Doerr, Jordan Dottor, Elizabeth Douglas, David Draper, Kelsey Drennen, Rajat Dua, Emily Duclo, Eric Durham, Kevin Dye, Samantha Dye, Jessica Eaves, Brandee Eckford, Kevin Erdmann, Kyle Erdmann, Javeair Ester, Kenneth Ester, Kherrre Fairbanks, William Follow, Marian Farmer, Heather Favazza, Jessica Fellows, Jeremy Ferack, Amanda Fill, Jeremy Flatt, Joshua Fletcher, Bailly Floyd, Elizabeth Ford, Matthew Foss, Dustin Franklin, Nicole Franklin, Danny Frantjeskos, Daniel Frey, Lindsay Funk, Kia Fuqua, Daniel Fyfe, Jacob Fyfe, Ryan Gabriel, Heidi Galea, Michael Gallagher, Allison Gardiner, Brent Gaskell, Heather Gendron, Daniel Gill, Justin Girouard, Zachary Girouard, Angel Glaspie, Michelle Goff, Nastassia Goines, Julie Good, Adam Gorring, Claudia Grant, Michelle Grassmyer, Stefayne Bliven, Timothy Bliven, Mason Green, Michael Green, Gary Greene, Heather Greenfields, Jennifer Greenfields, Jessica Greggi, Meredith Griggs, Brittney Grubbs, Justin Gunther, Thomas Gunther, Jennifer Guthrie, Kristine Haggard, Tracey Halaberda, Bethany Hamlet, Kathryn Hansen, Cory Harden, Elizabeth Hardy, Roberta Hardy, James Harris, Jamie Harris, Kyle Harris, Austin Hassen, Lavertis Hawkins, Ashton Hay, Yousef Hegazi, Brian Heinrich, Alyssa Hendricks, Alysa Henning, Heather Henning, Elyse Henry, Donald Herber, Andrew Hermatz, Crystal Herndon, Maxwell Hershey, Michael Hicks, Christopher Hilger, John Hill III, Sylvia Hipke, Samantha Hochstadt, James Holbrook, Jordan Holland, Jennifer Holloway, Kristie Homer, Callie Hubbard, Sherry Hubbard, Janessa Hudson, Kara Huff, Jason Hughes, Kelli Hughes, Thomas Humphries, Ashley Hunt, Raymond Hunter, Stephanie Jablonicky, Gregory Jablonski, Gabrielle Jackson, Jordan Janowitz, Nickole Jarvis, Anthony Jett, Byron Johnson, Megan Jones, Cassandra Jordan, Nicole Kaminski, David Kautz, Jessica Kay, Chase Kelly, Nolan Kennedy, Chapin Kibitiewski, Jory King, David Kiracofe, Kristen Kiracofe, Monica Kmet, Elgin Kodra, Nicholas Kostora, Taylor Krohn, Kyle Kruckow, Jessica Kuder, Jonathon Kuhlman, Tabithia Kujat,

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BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Robin Holbrook (left) is involved with Wayne-Westland Friends of EB, an organization that helps families like Sarah Thurmond's deal with a rare skin disease. With Holbrook is Sarah's mother, Carol.

DISEASE

FROM PAGE A1

David Thurmond, had no known family history of the disease, although it is genetic. Joshua was born with third-degree burns on his foot and ankle. Sarah had blistering by the time she was a month old.

David Thurmond, 43, drives a route filling vending machines. His insurance covers much — but not all — of the family's enormous medical expenses.

Carol Thurmond, 42, is a registered nurse who can't work outside the home because her children require so much care. Still, she is thankful for the career path she chose.

"EB is an emotional and financial strain," said family friend Robin Holbrook, a Canton resident who helps steer the nonprofit Wayne-Westland Friends of EB.

The group sponsors fundraisers to help families and to provide some funding for medical research. The Thurmond family also has had strong support from Westland Free Methodist Church, their place of worship.

Just two years ago, Sarah couldn't attend school and had

to study in homebound classes. She now has a 3.8 grade-point average.

Most days, while other children are out playing, Sarah goes to bed around 6 p.m.

because she has to rise as early as 3:45 a.m. to get ready for school. She has to put Vaseline and gauze pads on her neck, back, arms, legs and feet — and sometimes her hands. She uses an electric cart to maneuver around school.

"The cart helps to protect me," Sarah said.

Although some students stare at her, most of them aren't unkind to her.

Some days, she has to leave school early due to pain. She has a team of 15 doctors treating her, and a private nurse visits her at home. She depends on pain medication all the time.

"Otherwise, she would just be crying in pain," her mother said.

Sarah has 16 different prescription medications. Twice a week, she receives 11 hours of vitamin C intravenously at home.

She has other IV procedures to keep fluids in her body, to protect her against germs and to keep her from becoming malnourished.

"Her biggest risk is infection,

because her skin is so raw," Carol Thurmond said.

Currently, Sarah's disease forces her to have life-sustaining blood transfusions every three weeks.

The cost of protective dressing for the Thurmond children, alone, is thousands of dollars each month, making the family's insurance coverage vital.

In what little spare time she has, Sarah's hobbies include making scrapbooks, reading Christian books and romance novels, and practicing her desktop publishing skills.

As Sarah talked about her hobbies while sitting at the dining room table, Carol Thurmond looked proudly at her daughter and smiled.

Smiles seem to come easy for the Thurmond family, despite the difficulties they face every day.

Said the mother: "Sarah even made her brother's high school graduation invitations."

To help the Thurmonds and families like them, send checks made payable to the nonprofit Wayne-Westland Friends of EB, P.O. Box 851092, Westland, MI, 48185. For more information, call (734) 844-1899, check out the Web site www.wwfef.org, or send an e-mail to Friends@wwfef.org.

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AROUND WESTLAND

Spring Bazaar

Come one, come all. Bring your friends and family to shop for crafts and home party goods 5:30-8:30 p.m. Friday, May 12, at Wildwood Elementary School, 500 N. Wildwood, Westland.

The vendors will include Mary Kay, Tupperware, Arbonne, Parti Lite, Avon Pampered Chef. There also will be a bake sale and door prizes. All money raised will go toward guided reading books.

Admission is \$2 for adults and \$1 for children age 12 and under.

Sneak preview

Wayne-Westland's Class of 2019 will get a sneak peek at what is waiting for them in kindergarten.

From 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Friday, May 12, incoming kindergarten students at Lincoln Elementary School, 33800 Grand Traverse, Westland, are invited to spend some time in their future classroom with current students and teachers.

While the students are busy in the classroom the parents will meet with the principal and receive a welcome.

For more information, call the school at (734) 419-2700.

Garage Sales

Almost 80 different vendors are participating in the Westland Community Garage Sale 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, May 13, in the Parking lot between the Westland City and Westland Police Station, on Ford Road south of Wayne Road.

There will a variety of items for sale at the event, sponsored by the Westland Parks and Recreation Department, Kicks for Kids, Westland Therapeutic Recreation Club and Westland Youth Assistance.

The Romanowski VFW Post 6896 of Westland, will have a garage sale, featuring office furniture, donated by Arvinmeritor of Troy and "priced to sell out," 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, May 13, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, May 14, at the post, at 28945 Joy. For more information, call (734) 525-9454.

Fun Run/Walk

North Brothers Ford and the City of Westland will hold its eighth annual 5K Fun Run/Walk 9 a.m. Saturday, May 13, at the Bailey Recreation Center, 36651 Ford.

Cost is \$18 thereafter. Registration will open at 8 a.m. the day of the run/walk.

There will be prizes and recognition of the top three male and female participants in all age groups, race refreshments, water and fruit available at checkpoints along the course and after the race and a handicap accessible flat course and awards for the top three in the handicap group.

Proceeds benefit the Karmanos Cancer Institute. For more information, call Jackie Marcaccini at North Brothers Ford, (734) 524-1243 or e-mail her at jackie@north-bros.com.

Coffee Hour

State Rep. Glenn Anderson, D-Westland, will hold his local coffee hour 9-10:30 a.m. Monday, May 15, at the Westland Big Boy Restaurant, 6360 N. Wayne Road.

Residents are invited to meet with Anderson to discuss issues and concerns.

Anderson holds his local coffee hours the third Monday of each month.

Scholarship benefit

The Wayne Business and Professional Women will have a fashion show and dinner with a raffle and vendors p.m. Thursday, May 18, at the Wayne Community Center, Howe Road at Annapolis in Wayne.

The benefit supports the club's General Scholarship Fund which provides scholarships for a high school girl and woman who are entering college. Tickets cost \$25 for adults and \$20 for senior citizens and those 16 years and under.

Lunch with the CEO

Westland residents are invited to a complimentary lunch with Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday, May 22, at the senior citizen Friendship

Center, 1119 N. Newburgh, south of Ford.

City officials announced the luncheon this week, saying Ficano will be available for questions and answers.

Those planning to attend are asked to call the Friendship Center by Monday, May 15, at (734) 722-7628. Tickets are available by calling Noel Derr at (734) 718-7328.

Baby shower

Oakwood Annapolis Hospital's Childbirth and Maternal Services Department will have a Community Baby Shower 7-9 p.m. Thursday, May 18, in the second floor conference room of the hospital, 33155 Annapolis at Venoy, in Wayne.

All pregnant and perspective couples are invited to attend the evening of fun, information and prizes. Child birth educators, pediatric nurses, car seat specialists and physicians will be on hand to answer questions. Formula representatives also will have information available.

Donations of prizes for the shower also are being sought.

Registration is preferred and women and couples interested in attending can call the Maternal Services Department at (734) 467-4570 or (734) 457-5588 or by e-mail at gerakd@oakwood.org.

Fellowship luncheon

The Wayne Rotary Club will welcome the mayors of Wayne and of Windsor, Ontario, Canada, Al Hadius and Eddie Francis, respectively, to a Rotary District 6400 International Fellowship Luncheon at noon Tuesday, May 16, at the Wayne Community Center, 4635 Howe.

The guest speaker for the luncheon will be Jennifer Jones whose talk will be "Imagine the possibilities." Rotary International can have in Resolving World Conflict and Resolution."

Hadius and Francis will exchange keys to their respective cities at the luncheon.

For more information, call Art Quintal, project chair at (734) 722-8925 or by e-mail at Aquin16087@aol.com.

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Walsh, Schoolcraft partner on M.B.A. program

Walsh College and Schoolcraft College have partnered to create a joint program that gives students the chance to complete a master of business administration degree in five years, versus the typical six years.

Schoolcraft has also reached new articulation agreements with Northwood University and Madonna University.

Honors Fast Track begins at Schoolcraft College, where students complete an associate in applied science degree in general business or marketing and applied management.

They then take approximately another year's worth of coursework at Schoolcraft College before completing remaining bachelor's and master's degree requirements through Walsh College.

They can complete those requirements at the Walsh College Troy or Novi campuses or at Schoolcraft College.

"Our Honors Fast Track partnership with Schoolcraft provides a quality, affordable path to an advanced college degree," Walsh College President Keith A. Pretty said. "It increases access to business knowledge for future business leaders, giving them the opportunity to remain in this exciting growth market and power the continued success of the region."

Students expected to benefit from Honors Fast Track are "clearly focused on the goal of earning an MBA quickly, while obtaining a significant cost savings by taking additional courses at the community col-

lege tuition rate," Schoolcraft College President Conway A. Jeffress said.

Students can enter the Honors Fast Track program directly after high school graduation or as transfer students any time after an initial semester at Schoolcraft College. Each must meet specific admissions requirements.

Students entering the Honors Fast Track program from high school should have a minimum 3.3 grade point average and an ACT score of 22 or higher.

Schoolcraft College students who earn their associate in applied science degree with a minimum of a 3.3 GPA are eligible to transfer to Walsh to complete their bachelor's and master's degrees.

The Northwood University agreement allows Schoolcraft students in business administration to transfer up to 91 credits earned at Schoolcraft toward a bachelor of business administration degree at Northwood. Students must earn a minimum of 44 credits at Northwood.

Schoolcraft students who have earned an associate degree in child care and development can transfer up to 74 credits toward a bachelor of science degree in child development at Madonna University. They must complete a minimum of 46 credits at Madonna.

The Schoolcraft and Walsh College agreement allows Schoolcraft students with a grade-point average of 3.3 or higher to transfer a maximum

of 87 credits toward the Walsh College honors fast track for a bachelor of business administration degree in management and a master's degree in business administration at Walsh. Students must earn a minimum of 63 credits at Walsh.

Articulation agreements allow community college students seeking a bachelor's degree to complete more courses on a two-year campus than is normally allowed, thus

saving money with the lower tuition rates. Without such agreements, students generally can transfer only half of the credits in a bachelor's program.

Signing the agreement are, seated left to right, Walsh President Keith Pretty and Schoolcraft President Conway Jeffress; Walsh Chief Academic Officer Rod Hewlett and Schoolcraft Chief Academic Officer Camille Colatosti.



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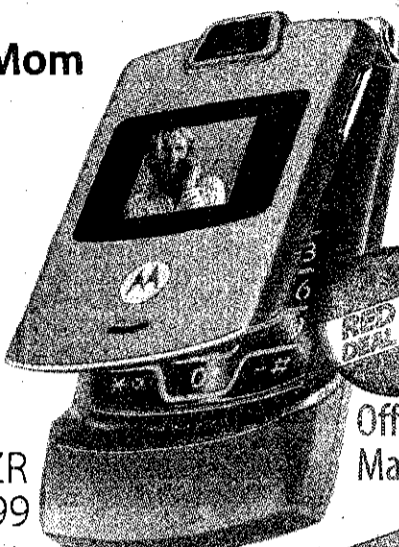
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Police arrest suspect in doctor's office

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Westland police captured a suspect Monday while he was stealing prescription drugs from a doctor's office on Venoy Road north of Palmer, a detective said.

Officers caught the suspect, described as a 27-year-old homeless man, after an alarm alerted authorities that a break-in was occurring, police Sgt. John Hoak said.

One officer arrived and waited near the back door until

another officer showed up, and then they went inside and caught the suspect just before 8 p.m., Hoak said.

The suspect wasn't armed, and he surrendered without putting up a fight. Police found that he had several vials of prescription drugs and some hand-held medical devices, Hoak said.

The medical tools, alone, amounted to \$1,000 or more, he said.

The suspect was inside a lab area of the doctor's office and was reaching into a cupboard

when he was caught, according to police reports.

Police also found a cut drinking straw on the man — one they believe he may have used to ingest cocaine, Hoak said.

The suspect hadn't been formally arraigned Tuesday afternoon, but as a minimum he will likely face a charge of breaking and entering a business, Hoak said.

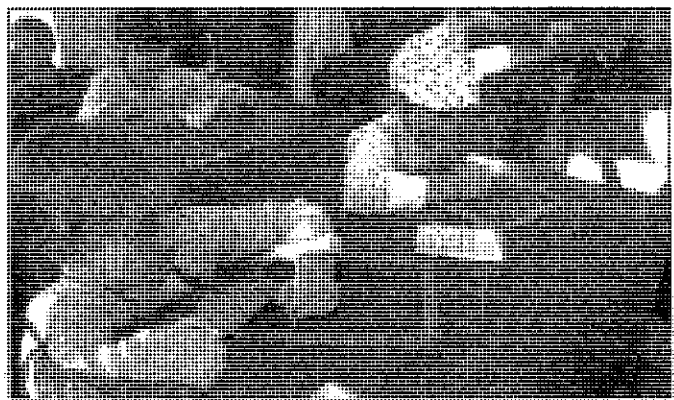
The intruder also is likely to face charges of being a habitual offender.

"He has an extensive (crimi-

nal) record in three states," Hoak said.

The suspect isn't a Westland resident, the detective said. His last known address was in the Commerce Township area, but Hoak said the man is believed to be homeless.

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



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Westland's one-room Perrinsville Schoolhouse, used here by students from Walker-Winter Elementary School in Canton, is now ready for wedding receptions. In this field trip, fourth-graders Samantha Heikkinen (left) and Kurstin Watkins (right) practiced their handwriting on old-fashioned chalk slates.

WEDDINGS

FROM PAGE A1

Money raised from wedding ceremonies could help to restore two 1800s-era homes — the Octagon House and the Rowe House — that need repairs on the Westland Historic Village Park site, on Wayne Road south of Marquette, city officials have said.

"We sure don't have any money in the city's general fund (to pay for repairs)," he said.

Ultimately, city officials hope that wedding ceremonies will be held at the Octagon House, once it is restored.

Dale took issue with references to the one-room schoolhouse as Historic Perrinsville School Wedding Chapel.

Mayor Sandra Cicirelli and other city officials have said the Perrinsville Schoolhouse isn't being officially renamed, but

Dale is nonetheless concerned.

Wedding packages range from \$180 for a bride, groom and 10 guests to \$350 for a more elaborate ceremony, including 45 guests, red carpet, and a horse-drawn carriage.

All packages include a consultant to help plan the wedding, floral arrangements and bows, a nondenominational minister, and a ceremony rehearsal.

Moreover, those who want to spend another \$100 may buy a brick engraved with the wedding date and names of the bride and groom. The bricks — sold for years but now also marketed for weddings — will become part of a walkway that leads into the school.

For more information, call Westland Historical Commission member Tonya Cramier-Onca at (734) 261-9208 or e-mail her at tonca@gmail.com.

DEATHS

D
Mary (Mae) E. Dierkes
Dierkes, 84, formerly of Birmingham, died May 4.

M
Richard C. McMahon
McMahon, 84, of Royal Oak, died May 7.

Cindy Borgman Mika
Mika, 52, formerly of Farmington, died May 6.

Betty Ann Ryan (nee Walker)
Ryan, 82, formerly of Birmingham, died May 3.

S
Marcile Shedd
Shedd, 87, of Plymouth, died May 5.

Complete paid obituaries can be found inside today's newspaper in Passages on page A20.

Herniated Disc Technology Discovered by NASA Scientists

Ann Arbor — A new free report has recently been released that reveals how breakthrough medical technology is offering new hope for sciatica sufferers. Discover how research has proven non-surgical decompression 86% successful in treating debilitating back pain. Find out how NASA's accidental discovery led to the most promising treatment today. For your free report entitled, "How Space Age Technology Is Solving Back Pain Without Drugs Or Surgery!" Call 1-800-469-3618 for the toll-free recorded message. Supplies are limited - call now. If phone lines are busy, visit: www.midischerniation.com

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OUR VIEWS

Academic All-Stars deserve applause

Intelligent, hardworking, active, optimistic and thankful. These are just a few of the traits that describe this year's *Observer* Academic All-Star Team.

For 21 years, the *Observer Newspapers* has honored outstanding young scholars as members of the Academic All-Star Team. As a local newspaper, we devote a good amount of news space to local schools and education, so it makes sense to honor those who excel.

This year's All-Star Team does excel, indeed! Members are Presidential Scholars, captain of the track team, won awards for playing piano, flute and violin. They act, sing and volunteer at local hospitals and as tutors — in their spare time. They strive for careers as researchers, physicians, lawyers, film directors and chemists so they can save the world. They applaud, honor and thank the teachers who have made an impact on their lives.

They are the the 2006 *Observer* All-Star Team and runners-up.

We have high expectations for all of these students. Today, in a special section inside this newspaper, we salute the more than 40 students who have achieved outstanding academic success throughout their high school careers. They are indeed some of the best and brightest high school students from public and private schools throughout the *Observer* coverage area.

All of these students are smart, motivated and eager to expand their world. They are also generous with their time and talent and eager to make the world a better place. They know and value the importance of a good education and they want others to enjoy this benefit. They are grateful to teachers who have inspired them and parents who have provided for and nurtured them along their path to academic and personal success.

Congratulations to the 2006 Academic All-Star Team of **Xiwen Wang**, Plymouth High School; **Paul Moncznik**, North Farmington High School; **Jeff Holycross**, Stevenson High School; **Yiyang Lu**, Salem High School; **Adam Davis**, Plymouth High School; **Kaitlyn Reed**, Canton High School; **Trevor Sponseller**, Salem High School; **Nivedhitha Subramanian**, Canton High School; **Erica Brown**, Stevenson High School; **Anna Malecke**, Mercy High School; **Silvia McCandlish**, North Farmington High School; **Kathleen Kneiser**, Mercy High School; **Zhujie Wang**, Churchill High School, **Ameya Walimbe**, Farmington High School, **Tyler Temby**, Thurston High School; and **Jessica Erlingis**, Ladywood High School.

The *Observer Newspapers* salutes these outstanding young men and women as they close the door on a successful high school career and move on to what promises to be an outstanding future.

Moms: Don't lose sight of the bigger picture

Someone once said that when it comes to parenting, the days are long and the years are short.

With all the things parents have to do, it's easy for them to get caught up in the details of child rearing and lose sight of their greater purpose.

That's especially true of mothers, who still seem to assume the majority of child care responsibilities, whether they work outside the home or not.

Taking care of children's daily needs — packing diaper bags, wiping running noses and messy bottoms, preparing meals, washing clothes, filling out field trip permission forms, running to the pediatrician's office, registering kids for soccer or baseball — leaves little time for mothers to reflect on their larger role.

Before long, the days have turned into months, the months into years.

Ask any mother attending her child's high school or college graduation this spring and she'll tell you how quickly kids grow up.

Mothers, of course, are more than unpaid nursemaids or nannies taking care of their children's physical needs. They're the first and most influential teachers in their youngsters' lives.

While they tend to the little things, they're teaching the big things — whether they realize it or not.

Through their example, they pass along their beliefs about what matters most in life, how to treat other people, how to view oneself.

It's comforting to know that most children, even the most rebellious, usually adopt their parents' values later in life. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree, as the old saying goes.

This Mother's Day, we hope mothers take time to reflect on their greater purpose: shaping the hearts and minds of the next generation.



Geoff Brooks 5-11-06 ©2006 OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC

LETTERS

Hamas at watershed

Since quotes in the media do not always convey complete meaning of the speaker, I want to further clarify the characterization of comments I made in the April 13 edition of the *Observer & Eccentric* regarding Israel and the new Palestinian government now controlled by the avowed terrorist organization Hamas.

It is often true that politicians in democracies claim mandates far beyond the intentions of the people. We have even seen it here in our own country. Democracy is not just the act of winning a free election. The Palestinian election was not about a political battle between those who support negotiated peace with Israel and those who would seek Israel's destruction. The election was about law and order, security, good governance and the despair Palestinian people feel about the lack of tangible benefits from their leaders' efforts to build a country. That despair led them to a desperate and unfortunate decision to put Hamas in power.

When I stated in the *O&E* that "We can't ignore what happened in the election," I did not mean that Israel must accept the impossible situation of negotiating in good faith with a terrorist organization. The point I was making was that when George W. Bush and Thaddeus McCotter argue that the United States should be in the business of spreading democracy, they better have a plan to deal with supposedly clean elections that have results we do not like. Simply demanding democracy and then doing an about-face when the results come in proves the shortsightedness and narrow perspective of the people currently running our foreign policy in Washington.

Hamas is a terrorist organization and I believe that Israel should not have to deal with an organization dedicated to its violent destruction. History in the Middle East and in Northern Ireland has taught us that when both sides are talking, less innocent blood is spilled. Hamas is now at a watershed moment. They can shed their terrorist past, learn to govern democratically, and seek the peace their people want or they can claim a groundless mandate and lead their people to more bloodshed. If Hamas chooses the latter, its own government will self-destruct because they will have broken the social compact with the Palestinian people and will be judged as the terrorist organization they are.

Tony Trupiano
candidate for Congress
Michigan's 11th Congressional District

Boycott to cut gas prices

Concerning the high gas prices at the pump: This is not original, but it would work, if drivers would do it — boycott all Exxon-Mobil gas stations. After a short while, their prices would come down and competitors would also come in line with Exxon-Mobil. People would have to tell their friends and so on to make it work.

Robert Legel
Livonia

Stealing America

There is a huge amount of propaganda and myths circulating about illegal aliens, particularly illegal Mexican, Salvadorian,

Guatemalan and Honduran aliens.

No. 1: Illegal aliens generally do NOT want U.S. citizenship. Americans are very vain thinking that everybody in the world wants to be a U.S. citizen.

Mexicans, and other nationalities, want to remain citizens of their home countries while obtaining the benefits offered by the United States, such as employment, medical care, in-state tuition, government subsidized housing and free education for their offspring.

Their main attraction is employment and their loyalty usually remains at home. They want benefits earned and subsidized by middle-class Americans. What illegal aliens want are benefits of American residence without paying the price.

No. 2: There are no jobs that Americans won't do. Illegal aliens are doing jobs that Americans can't take and still support their families. Illegal aliens take low-wage jobs, live dozens in a single residence home, share expenses and send money to their home country. There are no jobs that Americans won't do for a decent wage.

No. 3: Every person who illegally entered this nation left a home. They are NOT homeless and they are NOT Americans. Some left jobs in their home countries. They come to send money to their real home as evidenced by the more than \$20 billion sent out of the country each year by illegal aliens.

These illegal aliens knowingly and willfully entered this nation in violation of the law and therefore assumed the risk of detection and deportation. Those who brought their alien children assumed the responsibility and risk on behalf of their children.

No. 4: Illegal aliens are NOT critical to the economy. Illegal aliens constitute less than 5 percent of the workforce. However, they reduce wages and benefits for lawful U.S. residents.

No. 5: This is NOT an immigrant nation. There are 280 million native-born Americans. While it is true that this nation was settled and founded by immigrants (legal immigrants), it is also true that there is not a nation on this planet that was not settled by immigrants at one time or another.

No. 6: The United States is welcoming to legal immigrants. Illegal aliens are not immigrants by definition. The U.S. accepts more lawful immigrants every year than the rest of the world combined.

No. 7: There is no such thing as the "Hispanic vote." Hispanics are white, brown, black and every shade in between. Hispanics are Republicans, Democrats, Anarchists, Communists, Marxists and Independents. The so-called "Hispanic vote" is a myth. Pandering to illegal aliens to get the Hispanic vote is a dead end.

No. 8: Mexico is NOT a friend of the United States. Since 1848, Mexicans have resented the United States.

During World War I, Mexico allowed German spies to operate freely in Mexico to spy on the U.S. During World War II, Mexico allowed the Axis powers to spy on the U.S. from Mexico. During the Cold War, Mexico allowed spies hostile to the U.S. to operate freely.

The attack on the Twin Towers in 2001 was cheered and applauded all across Mexico. Today, Mexican school children are taught that the U.S. stole California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. If you

don't believe it, check out some Mexican textbooks written for their schoolchildren.

No. 9: Although some illegal aliens enter this country for a better life, there are six billion people on this planet. At least one billion of those live on less than \$1 a day. If wanting a better life is a valid excuse to break the law and sneak into America, then let's allow those one billion to come to America, and we'll turn the U.S. into a Third World nation overnight.

Besides, there are 280 million native-born Americans who want a better life. I'll bet Bill Gates and Donald Trump want a better life. When will the U.S. lifeboat be full? Since when is wanting a better life a good reason to trash another nation?

No. 10: There is a labor shortage in this country. This is a lie. There are hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of American housewives, senior citizens, students, unemployed and underemployed who would gladly take jobs at a decent wage.

No. 11: It is racist to want secure borders. What is racist about wanting secure borders and a secure America? What is racist about not wanting people to sneak into America and steal benefits we have set aside for legal aliens, senior citizens, children and other legal residents? What is it about race that entitles people to violate our laws, steal identities and take the American Dream without paying the price?

For decades, politicians have refused to secure our borders and look after the welfare of middle-class Americans. These politicians have been of both parties. A huge debt to American society has resulted. This debt will be satisfied and the interest will be high.

There has already been riots in the streets by illegal aliens and their supporters. There will be more. Politicians have a choice to offend the illegal aliens who have stolen into this country and demanded the rights afforded to U.S. citizens or to offend those of us who are stakeholders in this country.

The interest will be steep either way. There will be civil unrest. There will be a reckoning. Do they have the courage to do what is right for America? There will be a reckoning. It will come in November of this year, again in 2008 and yet again in 2010. We will not allow America to be stolen by third world agitators and thieves.

David J. Stoddard
U.S. Border Patrol (ret.)
Hereford, Ariz.

SHARE YOUR OPINIONS

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

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

QUOTABLE

"Just after putting into place a historic change which increases curriculum requirements which passed the legislature almost unanimously, the Republicans are now attempting to take the resources away to implement it."

State Rep. Glenn Anderson, D-Westland, about a proposal to use \$20 per pupil of K-12 state school aid to fund colleges

A visit to Science Center can kindle kids' interest forever

We've been worrying lately about kids, science and technology — and what that means for the future of Michigan.

Here's why. To survive, we have to replace a brown-based, one-size-fits-all manufacturing economy with a brain-based, value-added economic model. If our kids don't get interested in science, technology and math, we won't have anybody around to drive this transition to a better economy for us all.

And even though the new, much tougher state K-12 school curriculum was adopted last month, it won't fully take effect before the kids who will be graduating from high school in 2011.

Plus, many of today's kids are just not interested in their courses in science and math ... and making them required courses may not change very much. As the old saying goes ... you can lead a horse to water, but learning quadratic equations is something else.

So for all those reasons, I joined my old friend, Bob Anthony, in visiting the New Detroit Science Center in downtown Detroit, on Warren Avenue not far from the Detroit Institute of Arts.

Now retired from PricewaterhouseCoopers and vice chairman of the Science Center, Bob is one of those people whose passionate volunteering makes Michigan a far better place.

It was a beautiful spring day, so we drove with the top down and parked in a lot just behind the DIA. The Science Center's bright crimson bricks glowed in the sun as we walked in to a modern building jam-packed with noisy, interested, energetic kids.

Some were sitting wide-eyed at a demonstration of how the Venturi principle kept balls levitating in space on a column of rising air. Others were poking at interactive exhibits. Some were eating lunch in a school group, while others were dashing about in the happily intent way kids have.

But they were all clearly learning — and having fun. The newly expanded Science Center offers 111,000 square feet of scientific exploration, including exhibit halls, auditoriums and an IMAX dome theatre. It's the largest and most popular place for informal science and technology education in Michigan.

The mission is straightforward: To inspire children and their families to discover, explore and appreciate science, technology and engineering in a dynamic and fun learning environment.

If you last visited the Center before 2001, it isn't the same place. It has completed a \$30 million renovation and expansion, and since then has attracted more than 1.3 million visitors.

Last year, nearly half all visitors were children who came with school or other groups. The total annual budget is a bit more than \$5 million, with about half coming from admission fees and half

from contributions, mostly from the auto companies and various southeastern Michigan foundations.

Kevin Prihod, the Center's energetic CEO, started with General Motors as an industrial engineer back in 1979. He is clear about the mission ... and the stakes: "As a society, we are facing a crisis in math, science and engineering. Our kids increasingly are tuning this stuff out. If we can excite and inspire kids, especially young ones, to these fields we will have made an enormous difference in our future."

As Bob and I walked around, we ran into a family from Ohio visiting Detroit on the kids' spring break. They were enjoying Detroit and having a great time at the Science Center. One daughter, eyes shining, offered that she'd love to be an astronaut or an engineer.

I wondered how that family would maintain their daughter's interest and nurture it long after their visit. The Science Center has a nifty tip sheet for parents on exactly that point:

■ Build their math skills. Buy them a calculator to carry. Have them calculate the tip at a restaurant or guess how many gallons of gas a car will need (and cost!) the next time you stop at the pump.

■ Foster their inquisitiveness. Ask them to replace the batteries in a flashlight or smoke detector. Help them take apart a toy, a pen, a telephone or small appliance.

■ Challenge them to come up with a better design for products they see every day — a light bulb, a coffee maker, a skateboard, stop lights. Take them on a factory tour to see how something is built.

When I was young, my interest in science was initially charged by my uncle, a physician who took me to his office and helped me stain my blood sample to diagnose my appendicitis. In high school, our physicist next-door neighbor gave me a summer job in his lab.

My professional interests later went in another direction, but many others who went on to a career in science or engineering had similar childhood experiences. Science and technology should only not be abstract; they need to be part of the texture of everyday life.

The things the Science Center is doing make precisely this point. The Center is one of those enormously valuable institutions that make life in Michigan worth living — and yet are not nearly as well-known as it should be. If you're a parent or an uncle or merely a friend and want to make a difference in a kid's life one afternoon, I can't imagine anything more worthwhile — and fun — than a trip to the Science Center. It just might be a life-changing experience.

And by the way ... you'll enjoy it, too.

Phil Power is a longtime observer of politics, economic and education issues in Michigan. He can be reached at ppower@hcn.net.

Finding your way back to heal rifts between mother, daughter

If someone were to ask me what I would do if I "had it to do all over again," my answer would be this: I would love my friends and family so well that no matter what, they would love me back in the same way. No reservations, no sibling rivalry and no holds barred.

Maybe then I wouldn't be wondering now what gets in the way of relationships between people whose connection to one another is so profound that nothing could harm it.

I started thinking about this because of the extraordinary and painful rifts that seem to be tearing through the bonds of people I

know. Has it always been there, this awful, almost inevitable hurting of each other's souls? Are we just now owning it, or has something fundamental gone out of our relational lives, making space for the hot acid of hate that appears to creep so readily into the cracks of our hearts?

Much has been made of the complex mother-daughter relationship in recent times. I became convinced that when a friend told me with great sadness recently about the falling-out she'd had with her mother shortly before the mother's death. This was followed by a tearful conversation with one of my favorite cousins whose relationship with her beloved mother had become so fragile that she feared they would never repair the damage done.

Shortly afterward, a co-worker, and then another friend, told similar stories. "She's not there for me when I need her," they told me. "She did this or didn't do that." "She just doesn't understand me. I love her dearly, but we can't seem to talk." "She doesn't know where I'm coming from." "There's too much competition between us."

All of it was familiar to me. I, too, had suffered the emotional split from a much-loved mother and had grieved the change in our relationship for years after her death at an early age.

It is an experience of loss that only those who have gone through it can know.

In each case, I gave them the same advice: "No matter what your issues are," I said, "find your way back to what binds you. No matter what it takes — hours of talking together, weeping, screaming, whatever — have it out until you get back in touch with the love, the loyalty, the special relationship you once had. Reclaim your mother before it's too late. If you don't, you may live to regret it."

I could say this with quiet authority. I lost

my mother before I could reclaim her, and it was too late. Each of them understood me, I think.

This scenario, while perhaps more dramatic between parents or siblings, isn't confined just to family.

Friendship and other meaningful relationships are destroyed every day over mundane as well as profound issues.

A lifelong friend of mine, on my short list of people I could count on, told me recently that an offhand remark of mine had offended her so much that she could not accept my invitation to a graduation party. I was stunned.

Even if I had been unintentionally tactless, was that a reason to virtually end all contact? If I stopped talking to everyone I love who had ever offended me, life would be a pretty lonely affair. When did relationships become this cheap, this dispensable? When did we begin to give up on "working things out?"

When did we start junk-piling the important connections in our lives and stop stockpiling the reservoirs of forgiveness and tolerance that made family and friendship work in spite of themselves?

I've talked to my friends about this a lot lately, as I started to plan my wedding without my mother to help and guide me through. And every time, a familiar ache roots itself in my chest, and I wonder what would have happened had my mother lived. Would we have done our screaming, weeping and talking until we were able to hug our way back to sisterhood and the bond of a mother-daughter connection?

Unfortunately, I will never have an answer to this question. However, I am fortunate to get along very well with my future mother-in-law. Since my engagement to her son a few weeks ago, we have bonded and become closer.

She has accompanied me when shopping for a bridal gown and meeting the photographer and caterer. I'm very grateful that my future mother-in-law completes the void of a mother-daughter relationship.

Will daughters ever understand why hearts break when they keep their mothers at arm's length? Will my friends reclaim their own mothers before it's too late? With all my heart, I hope so.

They can do it all over again. And that is an opportunity just too good to pass up in this time of fragile friendships, remote relatives and hungry hearts yearning for simple connection.

Katherine Korol is a Westland resident and recent graduate of Madonna University in Livonia.



Phil Power



Katherine Korol

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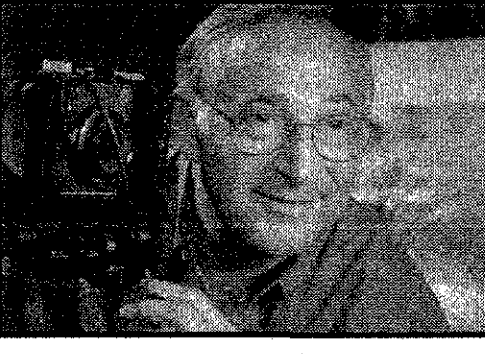
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Schoolcraft commencement start of new chapter in lives

Former Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer was the commencement speaker Saturday at Schoolcraft College's 41st commencement ceremony at Compuware Sports Arena in Plymouth Township.

More than 1,400 students were eligible to receive diplomas with approximately 500 graduates in attendance. Dennis Archer, chairman of the law firm of Dickinson Wright and former two-time mayor of Detroit, delivered the commencement address.

On Friday, 130 Policy Academy, Police Reserve Officer Training and Fire Technology graduates convened for their graduation. Judge Timothy Kenny, from the Wayne County Third Judicial Circuit Court, Criminal Division, was the keynote speech.

Archer was the mayor of Detroit from 1994 to 2001 and gained national attention for working to repair the city's relations with its suburbs and the local business community. His administration was a catalyst behind the construction of Ford Field and Comerica Park in downtown Detroit. He is currently chairman of the law firm of Dickinson Wright.

Archer, a former president of the American Bar Association, is the first person of color to hold both that post and the presidency of the State Bar of Michigan. He is also a former Michigan Supreme Court justice.

Kenny has served on the circuit court bench for nine years, before which he was an assistant Wayne County prosecutor for 20 years. During his tenure with the prosecutor's office, he served as chief trial attorney, director of the Career Criminal Prosecution Unit, and

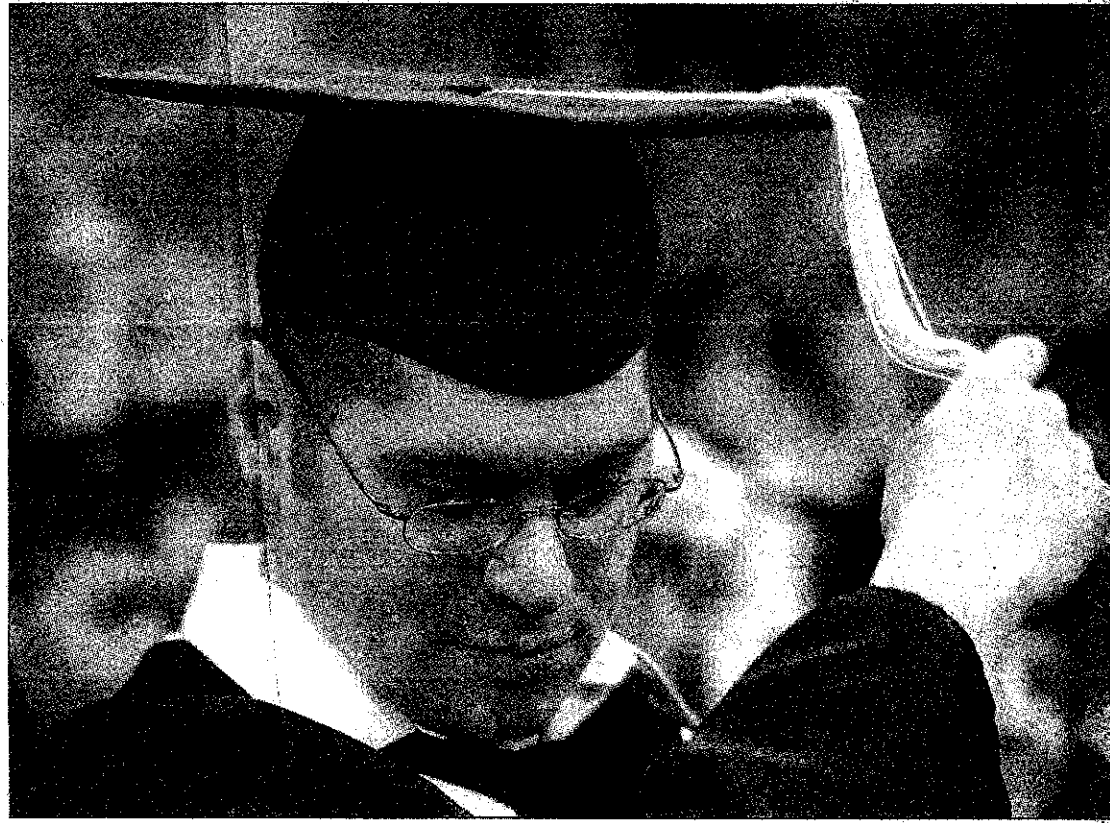


Dennis Balow receives his diploma from Schoolcraft President Dr. Conway Jeffress.

special assistant United States attorney. He also spent several years in private law practice.

Of this year's graduates, between 40 and 50 percent will transfer to a four-year university. According to Schoolcraft career counselors, the health care industry remains the hottest job field.

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PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

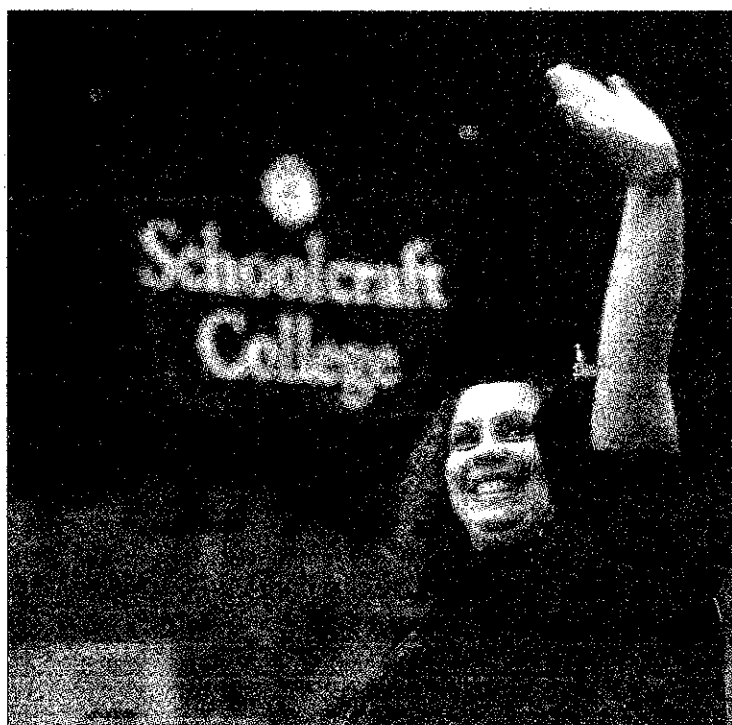
Kenneth Newman of Garden City flips the tassel on his mortarboard to the left side, signifying that he is now a graduate.



Former Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer encourages graduates to be ethical.



Laura Michalski of Canton spots family in the crowd.

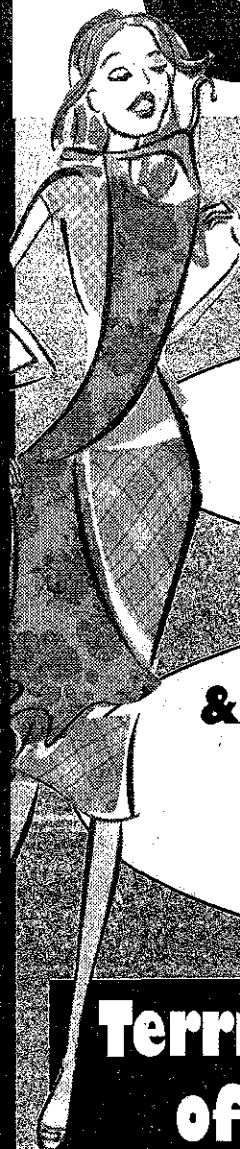


Josephine Covington waves to friends and family during the recessional.

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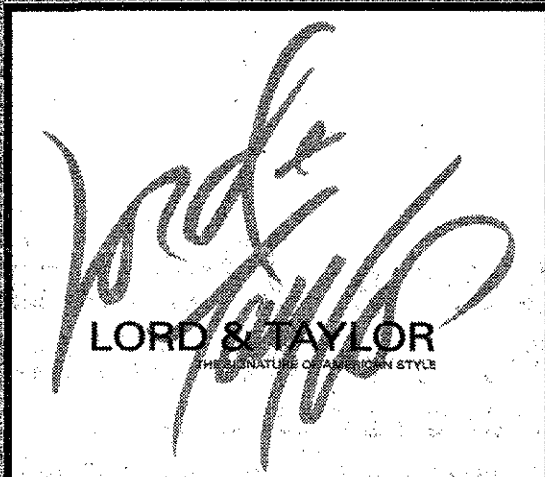
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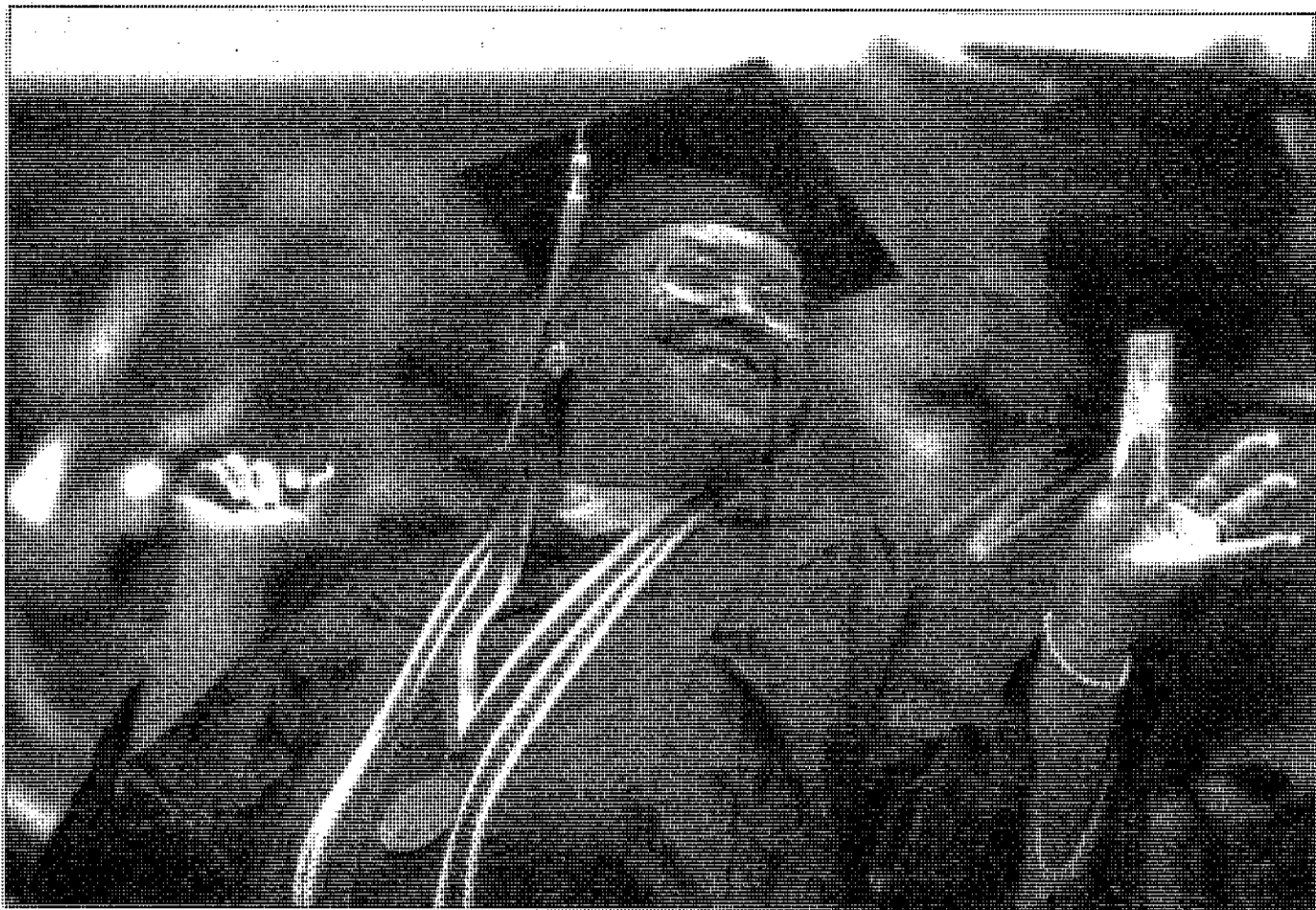
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Tammy Watkins waves to family after receiving her Bachelor of Social Work degree. She is from Westland.

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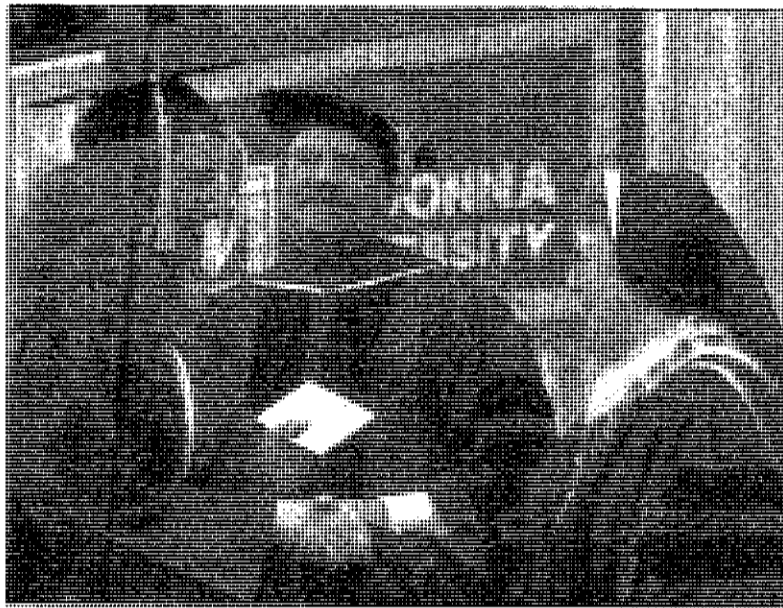
Madonna University graduates 832 students

Madonna University held its 59th commencement Saturday, May 6, at Calihan Hall at the University of Detroit-Mercy.

Approximately 832 graduates joined the Madonna University alumni ranks, with 610 students receiving a bachelor's degree, associate's degree or certificate, and the remainder earning a master's degree.

Honorary doctorate degrees were bestowed upon '67 alumna Sister Mary Renetta Rumpz; The Kresge Foundation President and CEO John E. Marshall, III; and Ford Motor Company President and COO James J. Padilla. Distinguished alumna awards will be given to the following members of the first class of lay women, 1951 graduates: Gertrude D. Bonk, Lorraine R. Ciak and Mary Joan Kaminski-Nardi, M.Ed.

Presiding over the commencement ceremonies was Madonna University Vice President for Academic Administration Ernest I. Nolan. The invocation was given by Bishop John M. Quinn, auxiliary bishop, Archdiocese of Detroit and Madonna University trustee. The mace bearer will be Osvaldo Rivera, director of the office of multicultural affairs.



Melanie Smith receives a Bachelor of Science degree from Madonna President Sister Rose Marie Kujawa and Board of Trustees Chair Richard Walawender.

Transportation leader honored with 'Apple'

Livonia Public Schools named Steve Woodworth as the latest recipient of the district's Golden Apple Award.

The award is meant to recognize an outstanding contribution of time, talent and effort which supports the district. As supervisor of the Transportation Department, Woodworth was nominated by a fellow employee.

Dan Cramb called him "one of the nicest people I've ever known" in that nomination letter. "I've known Steve all of my life," he continued. "He is always motivated. Steve has been co-captain for LPS's Relay for Life team, right alongside Joyce Vandervennet, and is very much deserving of this award."

Woodworth thanked his family and friends, many of whom attended Monday night's board

meeting to share their support.

"I'm deeply honored and touched," he told the crowd.

Woodworth said he "could not be more pleased with the people I work with - who do the lion's share of the job day in and day out."

Retired LPS administrator Dave Watson noted that Woodworth oversees 100 bus drivers, seven mechanics and a support staff. He coordinates late schedules, absences and emergencies, and has taken on growing responsibilities over the years.

"Steve is a valuable member of Livonia Public Schools and performs his job on a daily basis reliably, professionally and is very deserving of this award," said Watson.

By Stephanie A. Casola

ACHIEVERS

Olivia A. Gerhard of Westland earned a certified medical assistant credential after recently passing AAMA CMA Certification/Recertification Examination for medical assistants.

Gerhard is a graduate of the medical assisting program at Schoolcraft College in Livonia and is employed at the Family Practice Center of Livonia.

Vera Sattler is featured as part of May's Windows of the Month for the Michigan Stained Glass Census. The Census is a program of the Michigan State University Museum.

Sattler designed three sets of stained glass window panels, located at St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Westland, Akiva Hebrew Day School in Southfield, and Mardigan Library at the University of Michigan-Dearborn.

Sattler was born in West Berlin, Germany, and moved to the United States in 1951 where she attended Wayne State University and received a bachelor of science degree in art. She

worked as a window restorer for Detroit Stained Glass Works before opening her own studio designing church windows fabricated by the Steven Frank (West) Studio in Livonia.

Lisa Freese, a paraprofessional at Patchin Elementary School, has been recognized for her work at the Wayne County Regional Educational Service Agency's Celebration of Excellence in Education program May 3.

Also recognized at the ceremony was social worker **Wendy Lyon** for her work as an ancillary professional at Madison and Lincoln Elementary Schools.

Coleen Dziurlikowski of Westland received the Achievement Award in psychology from Olivet College as part of its annual Honors Convocation April 5.

The award recognizes the senior who has made a significant contribution to Olivet College students, classes, faculty and the discipline of psychology.

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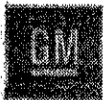
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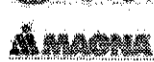
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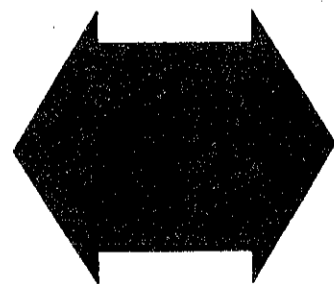
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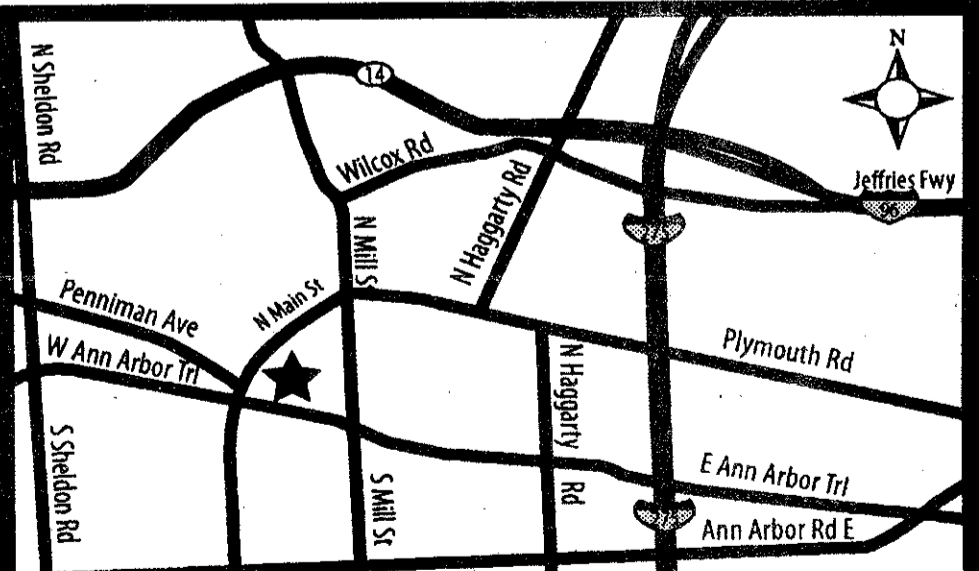
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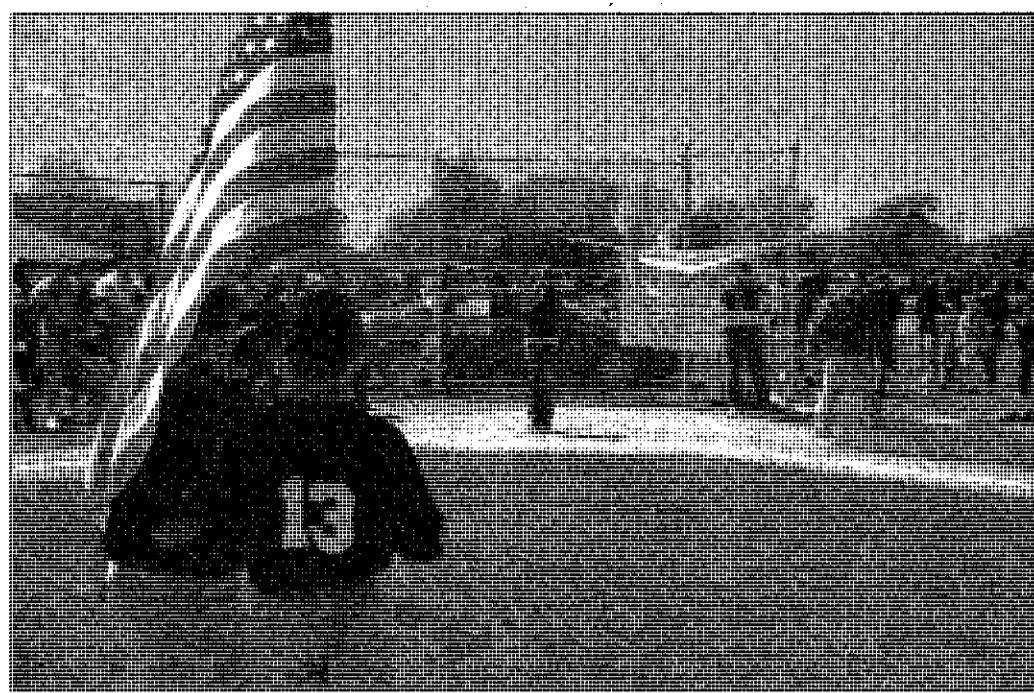
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Play ball!

The call to play ball echoed across baseball diamonds around Westland as the Westland Youth Athletic Association kicked off its spring baseball season. At Marshall Middle School, where the WYAA and Wayne-Westland Community Schools partnered to recondition the baseball fields, players Triston Gellert and Ryan Schafer served as the colorguard for the singing of the national anthem by Sarah Lenore.

Chemical awareness emphasized

Wayne County's Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management will participate in Chemical Awareness Week now through May 13. The Michigan State Police (MSP) Emergency Management division, the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) and the Michigan Chemistry Council are promoting this public-safety event statewide.

This year's awareness effort focuses on public preparedness and action steps in the case of a chemical (contamination) emergency, with an emphasis on 'shelter in place.' Safety pamphlets and related Chemical Awareness Week information are being made available at Wayne County's Web site, <http://www.waynecountyemd.com>.

Wayne County is "highly focused on bringing our citizens the correct information, so we can prevent an incident," said James Buford, the county's

Homeland Security director. "Public awareness is a vital part of Homeland Security and Emergency Management."

Improper handling, processing, storage and transport of chemicals/toxins can create public hazards. And accidents involving hazardous materials, both at home and commercially,

have been common in some communities, like Romulus and Riverview. Chemical Awareness Week focuses on the dangers of intentional and unintentional chemical releases, home-safety measures and what actions citizens may take to help prevent injury in the event of a commercial accident.

GOLF OUTINGS

D.A.R.E.

Westland police have announced the 16th annual golf outing for the department's D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program on Tuesday, June 13.

Registration will start at 7 a.m. with the event following at 8 a.m. at Woodlands of Van Buren, 39670 Ecorse Road, east of I-275, in Wayne.

Cost is \$125 per person and includes a golf cart, lunch and dinner.

Businesses and others also may be a par sponsor for \$100, which includes getting a sign placed on the course and a quarter-page ad in the program; a birdie sponsor, which includes providing a cash or door prize and being recognized in the program; or an eagle sponsor for \$700, which includes four green fees, two signs placed on the course, a full-page ad in the program and a special framed certificate.

There will be a hole-in-one contest sponsored by North

Bros. Ford.

For more information, call D.A.R.E. instructor Ken Kline at (734) 722-3273.

Rotary

Westland Rotary Club will have its 2006 golf outing Thursday, May 25, at the Golden Fox Golf Course, 8768 N. Territorial Road.

Peg as a for the "Classy Outing for a Classic Cause," golf packages at \$160 per golfer, \$600 for a foursome and \$685 for the Eagle, a foursome and birdie hole sponsorship, and includes a 11 a.m. shotgun start, scrambles format, prizes and filet mignon dinner and banquet.

Sponsorships - birdie hole for \$100, classic premium for \$300 and community champion for \$1,000 - are available.

For more information, call (734) 326-6123, Ext. 222, or (248) 474-1503.

Proceeds to Salvation Army Summer Camp and Westland Rotary Charities.

CITY OF WESTLAND SYNOPSIS OF MINUTES MTG. 9-5/1/06

Presiding: Council President Wild
Present: Godbout, Graunstadt, Kehrer, LeBlanc, Pickering,
Absent: Stottlemeyer
113-Approved minutes of regular meeting held on 4/17/06.
-Granted request from Mobile One to hold Grand Opening Celebration/Free Cookout on 5/6/06.
-Granted request from Friendship Center to hold "National Senior Health and Fitness Day Walk" on 5/19/06.
-Approved bid from Pritula & Sons Excavating and Bidigare Contractors for emergency sewer repair, est. amt. \$80,000.00.
-Approved bid from Vermont Systems, for P & R Software, not to exceed \$35,000.00.
-Approved bid from Colwell Equip. Co., for Light Tower, amt. \$6,985.00.
-Approved bid from Bidigare Contractors for RPO Round VI Footing Drain Disconnection Prgrm, amt. \$198,053.50.
-Adopted Budget Amendment 2006-10, Cable Fund, amt. \$313,948.00.
-Introduced Budget Amendment 2006-11 Water & Sewer Fund, \$65,000.00.
-Waived procedure and adoption Budget Amendment 2006-11; Water & Sewer Fund, \$65,000.00.
-Adopted Prep. Land Div. Res., Parcel #056-058-99-0006-702, s. side Cherry Hill, e. of Newburgh, PD2145.
-Adopted Prep. Resolution to make application to MDOT for permits to work state trunking rights-of-way on behalf of the City.
119-Granted request from Wayne Ford Civic League to hold their annual carnival 5/22-5/31/06.
120-Approved Proposed Land Div., Parcel #056-084-01-0140-301, n. side of Powers, n. of Van Born, w. of Inkster, PD2150
122-Approved Checklist Activity: \$419,831.40 and Prepaid: \$13,419,748.99
Meeting adjourned at: 8:23 p.m.
Minutes available at the Clerk's office.

William R. Wild
Council President

Eileen DeHart
City Clerk

Publish: May 11, 2006

062848812

CITY OF WESTLAND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

WHEREAS, In accordance with the provisions of the Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act, Act 381 of 1996, Section 125.2663 (9), (10), (11a), (11b) and (11c), a plan has been filed with this Body to support Cooper NJ, LLC's (Cooper NJ) proposal to construct a new development on the site of the Former Cooper School in Westland; and

WHEREAS, The eligible property is located at 28611 Ann Arbor Trail, Westland, MI. The site location and surrounding area are shown on the Site Location Map below; and

WHEREAS, All maps, plats, and a description of the Brownfield plan are available for public inspection in the Office of the City Clerk located at 36601 Ford Road, Westland, MI 48185 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.



NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that a public hearing be held on Monday, June 5, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. EST, in the Westland City Hall Council Chambers, 36601 Ford Road, Westland, Michigan to hear any objections or comments thereto.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that true copies of this notice be served, posted and published in accordance with the provisions of the Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act, Act 381 of 1996.

EILEEN DeHART
Westland City Clerk

Publish: May 11 & 18, 2006



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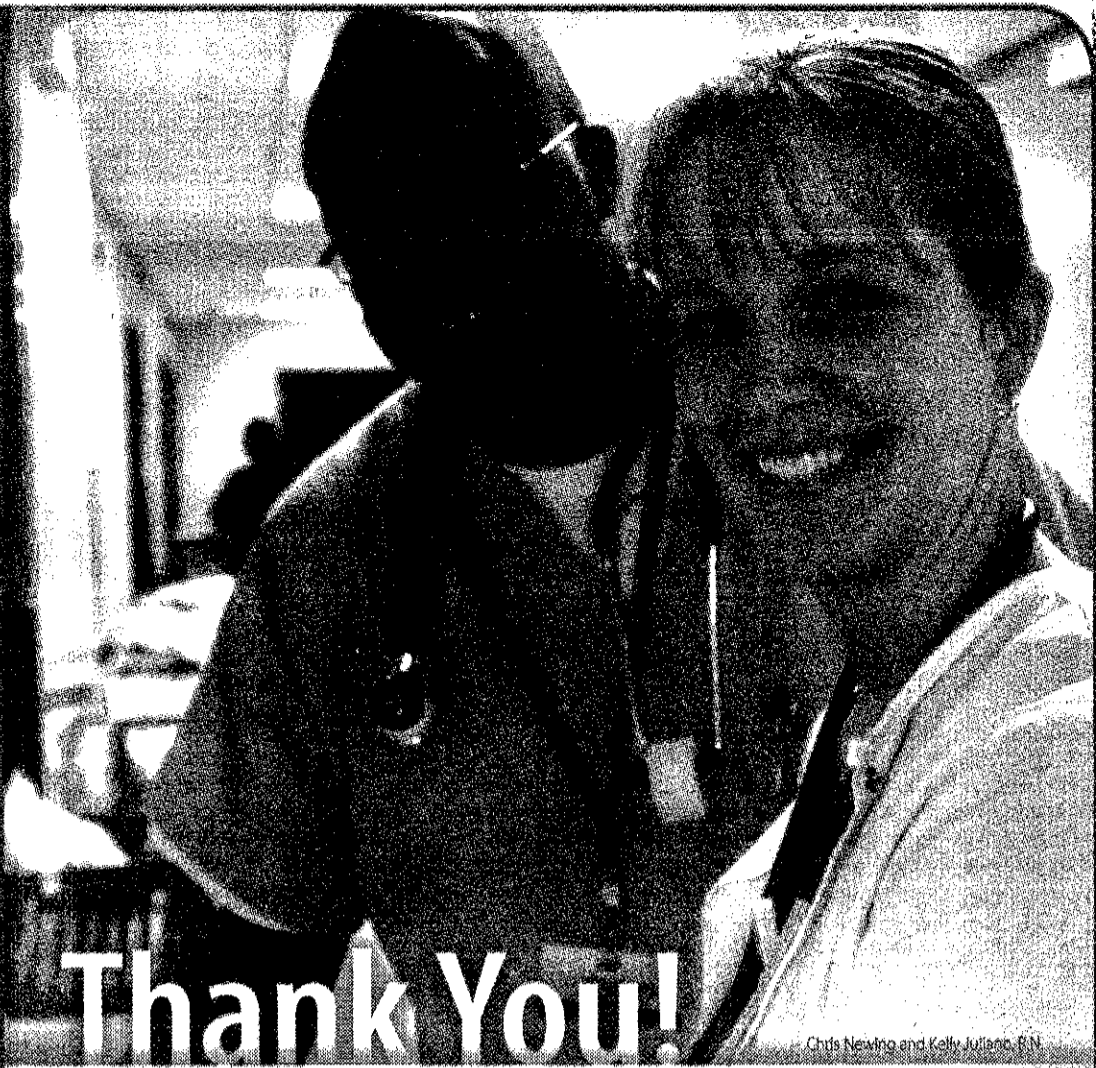
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Adults \$20.95
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For more information and reservations please call 734.729.4477.



WOODLANDS of Van Buren
39670 Ecorse Rd, Wayne, MI
www.thewoodlandsgc.com

Youth theater brings Hastings Street back to life

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER

Joshua Williams is glad he wasn't a teenager in 1945. The Redford student's role in *Hastings Street* opened his eyes to the turmoil and racism back then. The Mosaic Youth Theatre uses jazz, swing and blues from that era to tell the story of African Americans living in Detroit's Black Bottom neighborhood and Paradise Valley entertainment district where legendary musicians such as Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Ella Fitzgerald performed. Hastings Street was the main commercial thoroughfare in the area before it was demolished in the 1950s.

The historical drama opens Friday, May 12, and continues to Sunday, May 21, in the Detroit Film Theatre at the Detroit Institute of Arts. It is based on oral histories and follows students in the Y-Gees youth guidance club at Miller High School as they create a play about their lives after a visit from Langston Hughes, an African American writer during the Harlem Renaissance in 1920s New York.

Williams plays Clarence, a member of the Y-Gees. Just like his character, Williams loves to dance. He studied ballet, modern, jazz, and tap from fourth to seventh grade at Cherry Hill School of Performing Arts in Inkster before turning to acting at Thurston High School. Most recently he danced in the Redford high school production of *Seussical*. He joined the Mosaic intermediate training program in August. The youth theater draws members from Southfield to Detroit.

"In 1945 a lot of teens were patriotic, but had to go through racism and most things teenagers don't have to go through today," said Williams, a junior. "My school is very diverse. I have a lot of white and black friends. I don't know how I could deal with it if I couldn't talk with my white friends like in the '40s."

Seon Britton agrees with Williams that he wouldn't want to live back then even though today's teens face problems such as violence, drugs

and peer pressure. The Southfield teen is happy to have been able to join the Mosaic Youth Theatre three years ago. He compares the Y-Gees to Mosaic, calling it an extracurricular activity that allows him to meet new friends and act. Britton, a senior at Southfield-Lathrup High School was in kindergarten the first time he stepped on a stage.

Britton plays Alfred, a jock on the basketball team. Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit originally performed *Hastings Street* five years ago during Detroit's tricentennial celebrations.

"In Mosaic you do something that you love to do," said Britton, who recently received his acceptance letter to New York University where he plans to study theater and communications. "You do school productions but those are not as professional. Mosaic is good if you want to do something serious."

"Hastings Street is a five-year process. We brought it back but interviewed people again to find a connection to the play. The play is the same; the approach is different. There are two things I'm ecstatic about. First this is an ensemble production, no leads, no minor roles. Second, this is the most intense show we've ever done."

Frank Slomzenski remembers Hastings Street well. When his parents lost their home during the Depression, the family ended up moving on the fringe of Black Bottom near Eastern Market. Slomzenski, a Livonia resident, worked with the young members of Mosaic to bring the era back to life.

"We lived on Willis near Grand Trunk Railway and I would actually cross Hastings which was an all-black street," said Slomzenski, 74. "The areas were kind of poor."

"It was a mixed neighborhood, Polish and blacks throughout. I played with the kids and we got along fine. Naturally there was prejudice but I didn't see it. There was a race riot in 1943. I remember it even though I was only age 11. Nothing happened in my neighborhood. Those were the

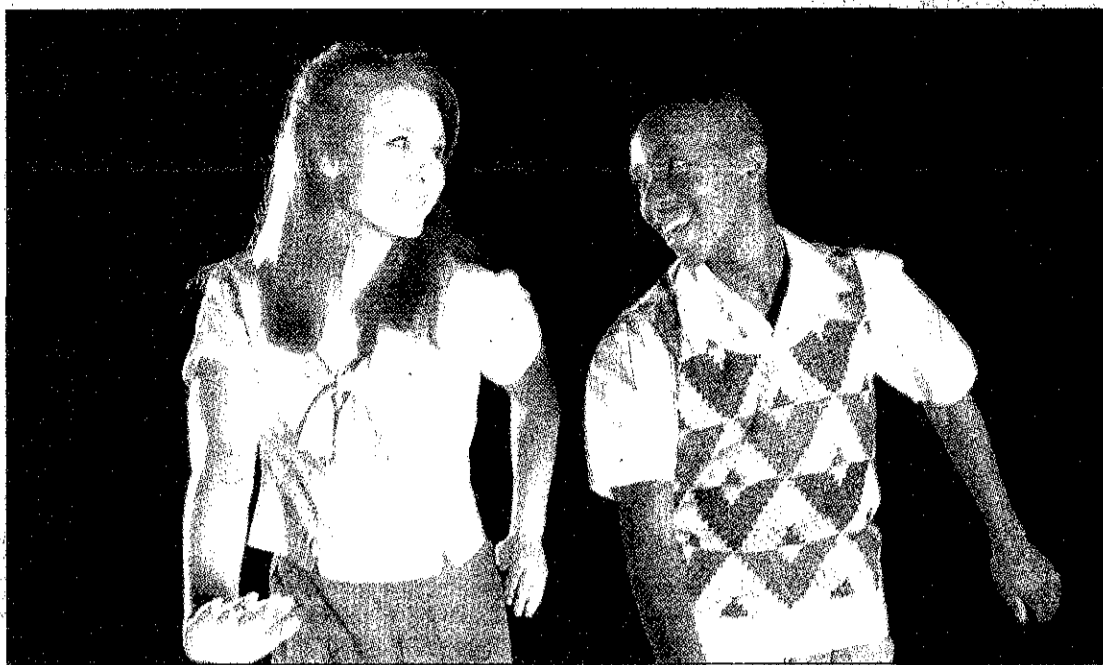
days when boxing was the sport and Joe Louis was well known by everyone. Black and white spoke about him equally."

Hastings Street runs Friday-Sunday, May 12-14 and 19-21, in the Detroit Film Theatre at the Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward. Curtain times are 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, and 4 p.m. Sunday.

Tickets are \$18, \$12, and available online at www.dia.org, or by calling (313) 833-4005. For information, call (313) 872-6910, Ext. 4005.

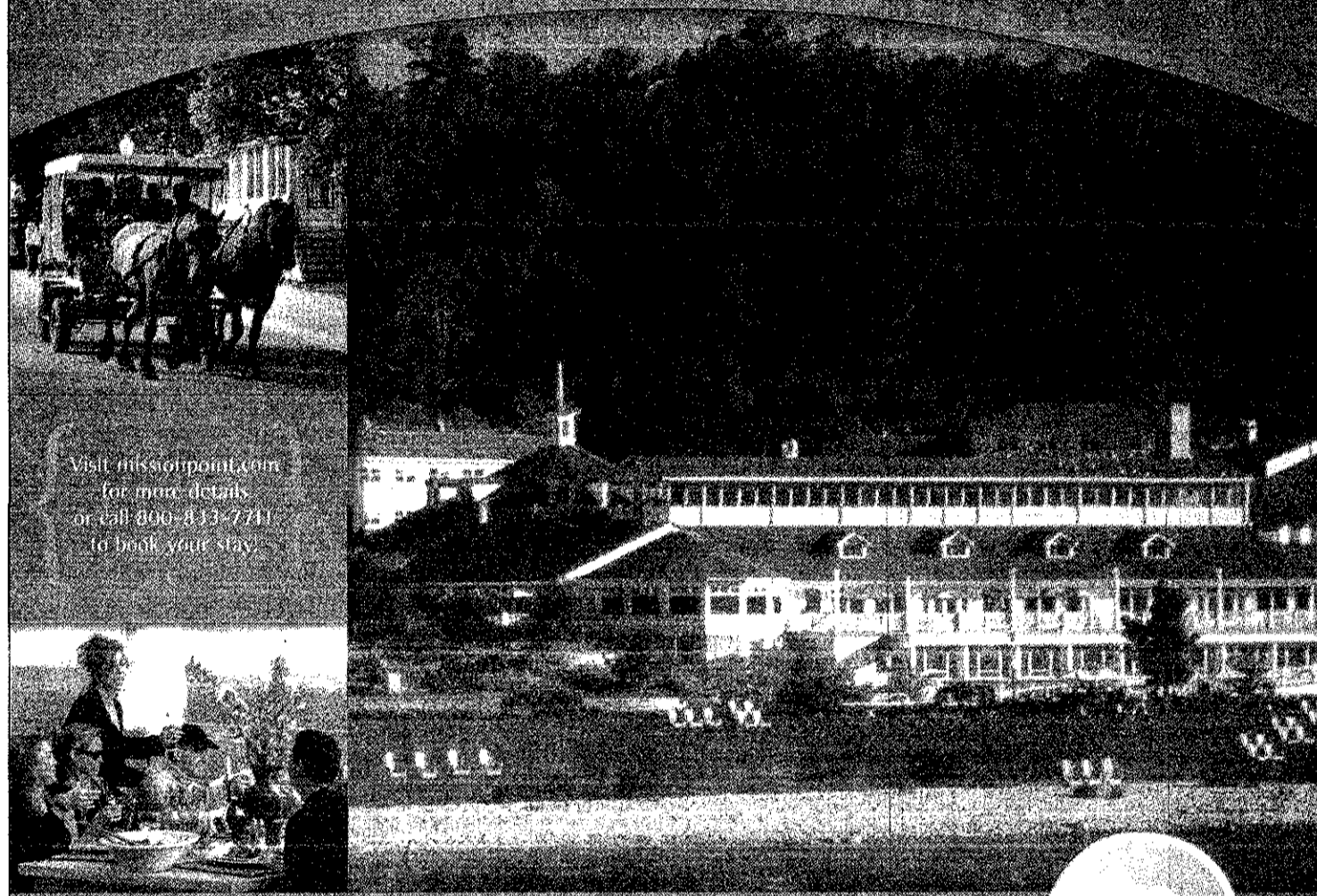
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Joshua Williams of Redford swing dances with Kelsey Hubbell, a student at Regina High School in Harper Woods.



PHOTOS BY ZACHARY SZYSZKO

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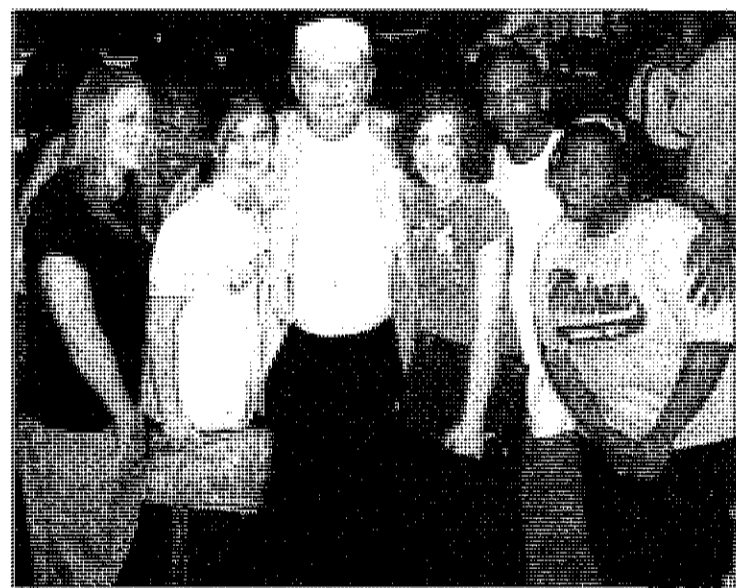
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PDF06042471



Frank Slomzenski (center), a Livonia resident, with members of Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit.

Symposium spotlights need for collaboration

The third annual Children's Mental Health Symposium will be held 1-3 p.m. Friday at Vista Maria, 20651 W. Warren Ave., Dearborn Heights.

The symposium, sponsored by County Commissioner Philip Cavanagh, D-Redford, will feature panel discussions on "The Need for Cross Collaboration to Better Serve Children with Mental Health Needs."

The program is free and reservations can be made by calling (313)967-3639 or by e-mail cmarcini@co.wayne.mi.us.

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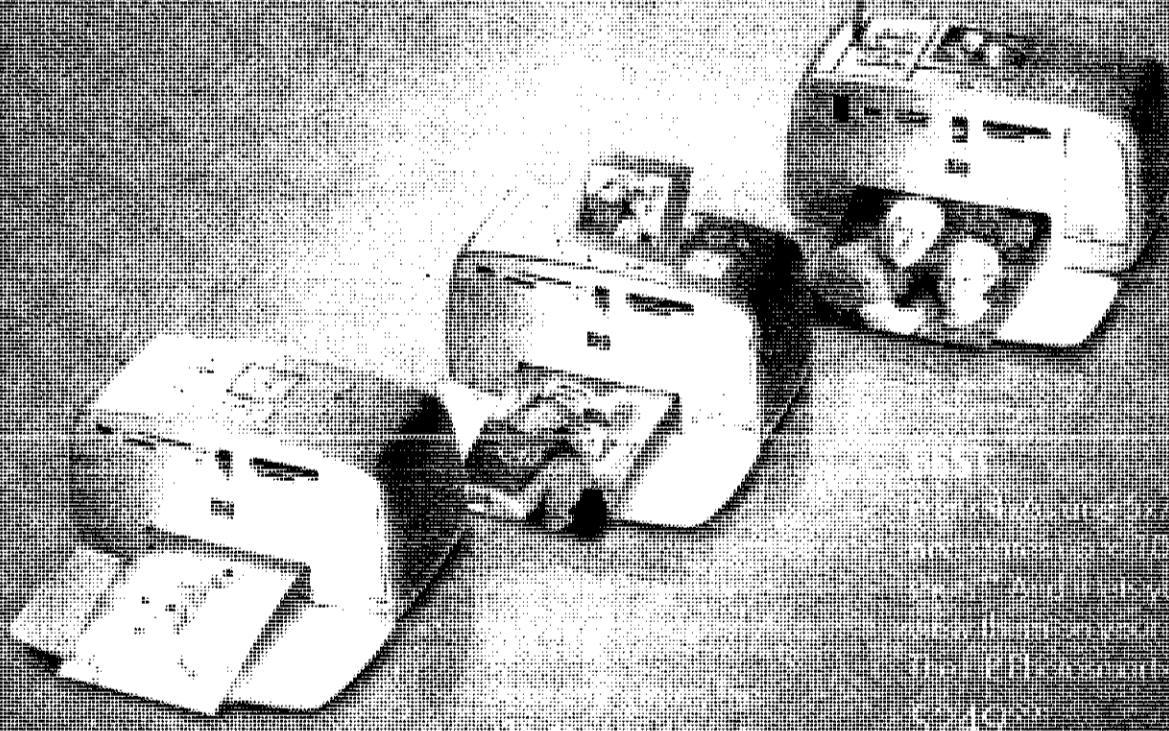
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 Sunday School 9:30 am Sept.-May
 www.beitkodesh.org

For Church Directory changes and information regarding advertising in this directory, please call **Donna Hart (734) 953-2153 the Friday before publication.**
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