

New moms thrive despite lack of sleep

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Jury acquits man in killing

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

A former Inkster man has been found not guilty of killing drug dealer Billy Ford and dumping his body in Westland in 1994.

Boysie Walker, 46, was acquitted recently by a Wayne County Circuit Court jury that deliberated only 45 minutes, Westland police Sgt. James Dexter said.

Walker was arrested in October after an informant, Darnell O'Neal, told authorities that he saw Walker abduct Ford at gunpoint and drive off from an Inkster house.

A short time later on Dec. 14, 1994, Ford's body was found along a snow-covered roadside on county-owned property near

On Dec. 14, 1994, Billy Ford's body was found along a snow-covered roadside.

Merriman Road and Michigan Avenue. He died of a shotgun blast to his chest.

Defense attorney Susan Rock argued in December

during a hearing in Westland District Court that Walker "did not commit this crime."

A Wayne County jury sided with Rock on April 13 and returned a not-guilty verdict during Walker's trial on first-degree murder and felony firearm charges.

"It was not a surprise," Dexter said of the verdict. "It was an old case, and Darnell O'Neal would not testify as to what he (earlier) told us that he saw. He was reluctant to testify."

"We did the best we could," Dexter said. "What more can anybody ask of us?"

Walker, a former Inkster resident who had moved to Battle Creek before his arrest, had maintained his innocence all along. He did not testify at his trial.

O'Neal didn't testify that he saw Walker shoot Ford. Rather, O'Neal only said he saw Walker force Ford to drive off at gunpoint.

No testimony had surfaced as to what happened between the time of the alleged abduction and the time that Ford's body was found.

However, O'Neal did testify in December that Walker told him "not to tell anybody or something would happen to me."

Rock couldn't be reached on Thursday.

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



TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Givin' a root

Lincoln Elementary School fourth-grader Amanda Burkacki watches a demonstration on how to correctly plant a tree as part of Rooting for the Rouge. The project, a partnership of the Wayne-Westland Community Schools, the cities of Westland, Inkster and Wayne and Canton Township, involves nine elementary schools in the district. It kicked off at Lincoln where students participated in the planting of six trees to replace those killed by the emerald ash borer. The students got help from Westland Department of Public Works with the planting the trees on the school grounds.

Recall: Trustees hire attorney

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

Following a big week for a grassroots opposition group, members of the Livonia Public Schools Board of Education aren't backing down. In fact, the board members targeted for recall are bracing for the legal process by hiring an attorney.

This week, board members Dan Lessard, Kevin Whitehead, Robert Freeman, Lynda Scheel and Cynthia Markarian hired attorney David Gillam, a partner with the Farmington Hills law firm Secrest Wardle.

"The fact that they're spending their own money

shows how strongly they feel that the decision they made is in the best interest of the students, the district and the community," said Gillam.

Last week, the Citizens for Livonia's Future turned in some 11,000 signatures to recall the five trustees for their support of the Legacy Initiative, a plan to close schools and shift grade levels at elementary buildings in order to save money and maintain class sizes. Earlier in the week, the CFLF backed school board candidate, Steve King. He won the election over incumbent Joanne Morgan by almost 900 votes.

Even as the Wayne County and Livonia City clerks work

to verify the signatures on recall petitions, the district continues to move forward with its Legacy Initiative.

From a legal standpoint, Gillam's role will be to make sure "all the proper steps have been followed" by those circulating the petitions, and signing them. He said he will be looking to see that the proper forms were used, and the petitions were circulated in the proper manner. He will also verify the figures being used by the county and city clerks, which deem how many signatures are required.

Officials have said 8,921 valid signatures are needed to

PLEASE SEE RECALL, A7

County's life ordinances will have little effect on city

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Three new Wayne County ordinances regulating youth curfews, loud noise and graffiti-based vandalism will have little impact on Westland, a judge said Thursday.

The "quality-of-life" ordinances, adopted this month by the Wayne County Commission, pertain to issues already addressed by Westland officials, 18th District Judge C. Charles Bokos said.

"It's redundant for us," he said. "We've had these ordinances covered for years."

Local communities can opt out of the county ordinances or use their own, if they already have them.

One county ordinance sets a curfew for youths 17 years and younger from 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. weekdays and from midnight to 6 a.m. weekends.

The county adopted the new rule because juvenile crimes increase for youths ages 10 to 17, according to county officials.

According to Bokos, Westland has a similar ordinance stating that no one under 17 can loiter on the street between midnight and 6 a.m. unless accompanied by a parent or guardian, at a workplace or on an emergency errand.

Moreover, the time is more restrictive for youths under 14, who face a curfew of 10 p.m. to 6 a.m., Bokos said.

"We've had a curfew for minors for years," he said.

Westland hasn't had many

problems with curfew violations, Bokos said. "It's just never been a real big problem."

The county also passed an ordinance to restrict loud music and other sounds that can be heard outside after 10 p.m. weekdays and after midnight on weekends.

Westland's ordinance is even more restrictive, putting the distance at 50 feet for radios, televisions, stereo speakers and other items that cause noise, Bokos said.

The third county ordinance is aimed at curbing graffiti by providing new, stricter penalties. Bokos said Westland has long battled such vandalism with its rules against malicious destruction of property.

Violators of any of the misdemeanor ordinances can face penalties ranging up to \$500 in fines and up to 90 days in jail, Bokos said.

In some cases, youths caught spray-painting graffiti have been referred to local programs that force them to clean up their own mess.

Wayne County Commissioner Ilona Varga, D-Detroit, introduced the ordinances because people had repeatedly complained to her about rowdy youths, excessive noise and vandalism of property.

"I think most of our kids are responsible young people," she said, "but sometimes they get misguided. These ordinances are not designed to punish them. We simply need more order to protect them and the rest of our communities."



TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

On the campaign

Former U.S. Sen. Max Cleland speaks to guests at the Harris Kehrer VFW Post 3323 in Westland as he campaigns for Democratic congressional candidate Tony Trupiano. See story and photos on Page A8.

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Coming Thursday in Filter

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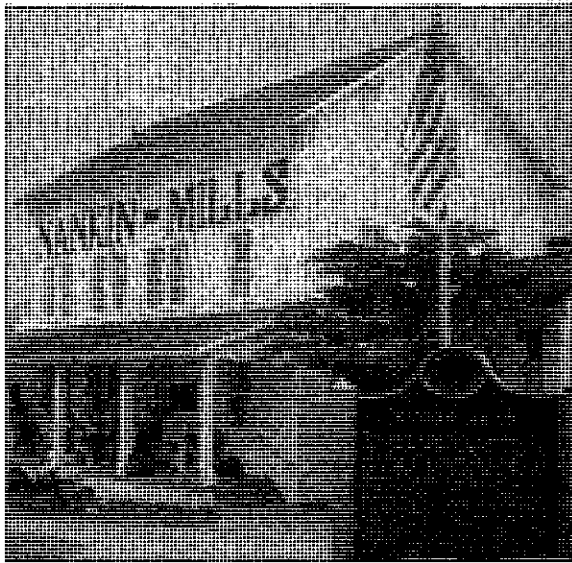
On your mark(er): Friends host program on historical sites

On Your Mark(er) ...
 Jim Brennan's hobby is photography, a very specific kind of photography.
 Brennan has spent the past 18 years photographing the site of every historical marker in the State of Michigan.
 Brennan has traveled nearly 20,000 miles and to every county in the state at least twice. But people interested in markers will need only go to Nankin Mills in Westland at Friday, May 19, to hear a presentation by the creator of the award-winning site MichMarkers.com.
 In addition to "visiting" a few of the historic sites, participants will also hear about the state's historical marker program and how sites are nominated and approved.
 The 7 p.m. event is hosted by The Friends of Nankin Mills.

Refreshments and a tour of the mill, which also has a state historical marker, will follow the program.
 Nankin Mills is located at 33175 Ann Arbor Trail just east of Farmington Road. Although the event is free, reservations are recommended. Call (734) 261-1990 or visit www.nankinmills.org to register.
 Brennan, a Marysville resident, has always had an interest in history.
 During the early 1990s, when his kids were growing up, he and his family used to stop and read the markers during their travels and he would write down the information. That led to photographing the sites.
 According to Brennan, the kids were pretty good sports during vacations around the state, but

mainly because of a family rule: "Whenever I photographed three markers, the kids got to stop at Dairy Queen."
 "As a result, I not only became familiar with historic markers, but with ice cream stands," he said.
 When the Internet came along, placing his photos and information on a Web site. His site, www.michmarkers.com, has received a number of awards, including the Great Lakes, Great Sites Award as one of the region's best non-profit/community service sites.
 Although his kids are grown, Brennan continues to visit new sites.
 Does he ever foresee getting down to zero? Not likely.
 "They put up markers faster than I can photograph them," he said.

Nankin Mills has served Wayne County since 1842. The building is now the headquarters for Wayne County Parks and houses an interpretive center that tells the natural and cultural history of the mill and the surrounding Rouge River watershed.
 The Friends of Nankin Mills is a volunteer organization incorporated in 1987 to help Wayne County preserve the historic mill and ensure Nankin Mills remains an important community resource and a fun place to visit.
 The group helps raise funds to purchase exhibits, sponsors activities, assists the interpretive center staff, serve as docents and more.
 For more information on the Nankin Mills Interpretive Center, contact Parks Naturalist Carol Clements at (734) 261-1850.



The historical marker at Nankin Mills is one of some 1,400 historical markers that can be found around the state.

INFORMATION CENTRAL

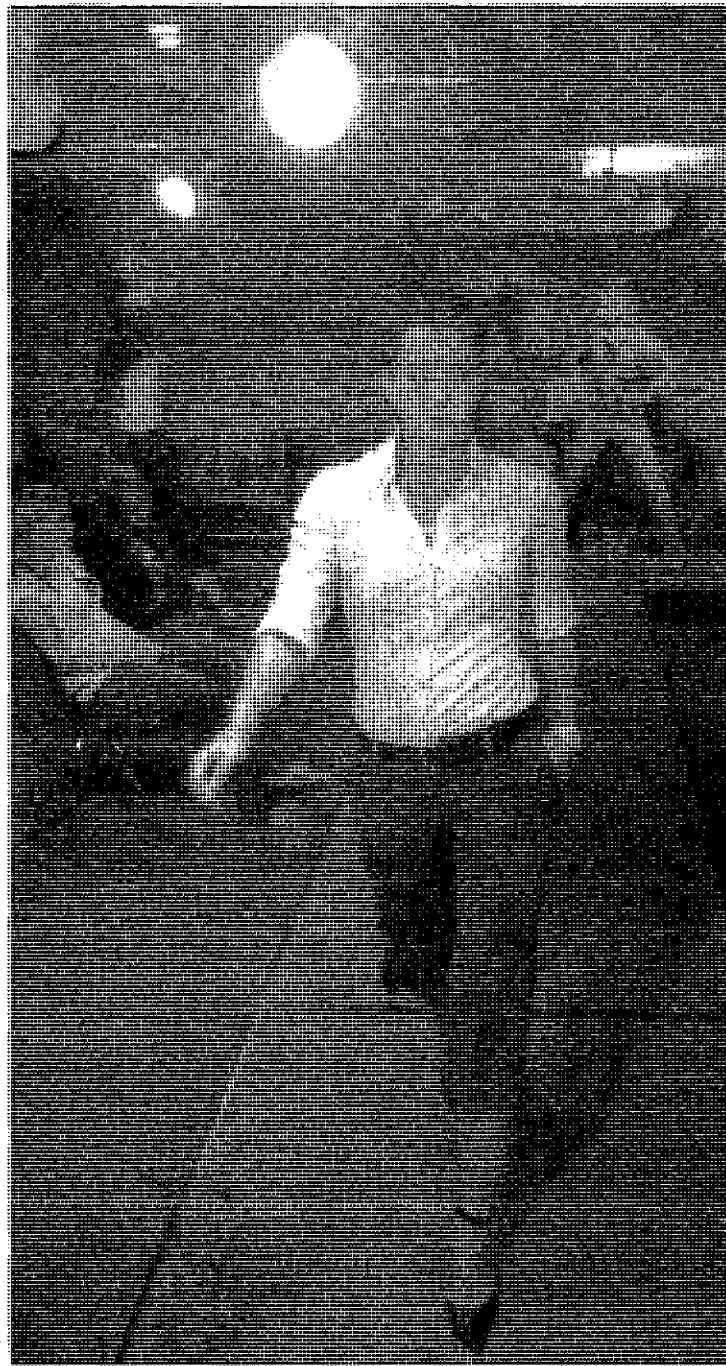
Listen up, moms: May 14 may be just for you, but the rest of May is Family Wellness Month.
 You probably know how important you are to your family's health. But wellness is more than just medical health - it involves your family's lifestyle and habits. You can go a long way to ensuring your family's overall wellness, and the library can help.
 Wellness is more than just medical health - it involves your family's lifestyle and habits. You can get a lot of concise information quickly in a family health reference, like *The American Medical Association Family Medical Guide* or the *Mayo Clinic Family Health Book* (both available in our Reference section). Both books outline the broad spectrum of family health.
 The table of contents from the AMA guide reads like a checklist of wellness advice: "Healthy eating; Exercise; Healthy weight; Reducing Stress; Staying safe; Preventing violence; Complementary and alternative medicine; Aging well."
 Both also include detailed medical and symptom guides for your family.
 If your family is relatively new, the books in Dewey Decimal System Classification area 649 (child rearing) can help you get a handle on the health and development of your children.
 William and Martha Sears' *The Baby Book*, Mayes and Cohen's *The Yale Child Study Center Guide to Understanding Your Child*, and Reder, Catalo and Hamilton's *The Whole Parenting Guide* all make good overviews of baby and child health and wellness.
 In the 613s (Personal Health and

Safety), Ralph Lopez's *The Teen Health Book* focuses on your older children, and Sothorn, von Almen, and Schumacher's *Trim Kids* encourages healthy eating and exercise to combat childhood obesity.
 Christiane Northrup's *Mother-Daughter Wisdom* and Emily Senay's *From Boys to Men* seek to help mothers deal with the health and wellness of their daughters and sons respectively.
 And if you're caring for an older family member, don't overlook books like *The Merck Manual of Health and Aging*.
 The library takes care to have plenty of accurate and encouraging health and wellness information on hand. Call us at (734) 326-6123 or stop by the Reference Desk. We'll get you set for Family Wellness Month and beyond.
Internet 201: 7 p.m. May 15.
 Learn about search engines - which ones do what, how to evaluate them, and how to pick good Web sites.
Adult Book Discussion Group: 7 p.m. May 16, 7 p.m.
 Join us as we discuss *Alias Grace* by Margaret Atwood. Please read the book before the meeting. All are welcome.
Essential Oils 101: 7 p.m. May 23.
 Learn about the vital power of plant and flower essences to heal the body. Ilka Handshaw, aromatherapy consultant, will help you discover the therapeutic benefits of aromatherapy.
Information Central is compiled by Bridget Sturdy, reference librarian, at the William P. Faust Public Library, 6123 Central City Parkway, Westland. For more information, call (734) 326-6123.

Student fashion show takes charitable turn



Fashion Merchandising students Ashley Krueger and Lisa Ho watch as Jessica Wiecezorek and Shea Truxell strut down the runway, in preparation for a student-created benefit fashion show.



Shey Truxell practices walking the runway.

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
 STAFF WRITER

This year's Fashion Merchandising students didn't just plan a runway show - they decided to take on the world in style.
 About 70 students attending the Livonia Career Technical Center classes approached their year-end fashion show as one big event.
 "Every year we have a fashion show at each of the high schools," said Shea Truxell, a Churchill senior and a coordinator.
 This year, the students from all three LPS high schools joined efforts for a single premiere event under the idea that they would "Go big or go home."
Catwalk For a Cause, sponsored by Parisian, will begin at 6 p.m. Tuesday, May 16, at the Italian American Club, 39200 Five Mile in Livonia.
 "This is the biggest event ever put on by our Fashion Merchandising class," said Shannon Kluba, a junior who is handling promotions for the show.
 Jessica Wiecezorek, a Stevenson senior and a coordinator, said the fashions will focus on styles and cultures from across the globe. The clothes and accessories will come from closer to home - Laurel Park Place's Parisian store at Six Mile and Newburgh in Livonia. As the primary sponsor, Parisian is outfitting men, women and even a few children who are modeling in the show.
 The younger set, kids from ages 4 to 10, will fit right in as the charitable cause for this event involves children.
 Proceeds from the fashion show will be donated to Feed The Children, an international, nonprofit organization that delivers food, medicine, clothing and other necessities to those in need and those impacted by famine, war, poverty or natural disaster.
 Founded 27 years ago, Feed the Children provides food and essentials to children in the U.S. and 117 other countries around the world.
 Truxell said students discussed which charity they would choose. Helping children was a mission everyone

This year, the students from all three LPS high schools joined efforts for a single premiere event under the idea that they would 'Go big or go home.'

could support, added Pat Wright, fashion merchandising teacher.
 "With Feed the Children, an extremely high percentage (of donations) will go directly to the children in need," Wright said.
 Nicki Bobowski, a Churchill senior, said this year's event has been easier to plan than previous shows, thanks to the collaboration of all the students involved, and their connections.
 Students started preparing for the fashion show in December. Wiecezorek said she wrote the proposal and then the group began looking for donations and sponsors.
 Some tasks proved more challenging than others. Wiecezorek and Truxell said they spent some 10 hours in Barnes & Noble sifting through a wide variety of world music to set the tone for the show. They also worked directly with Parisian managers to put the show together.
 "I'm astonished by the support," said Truxell. "Everyone put so much work into this."
 Wright said she hopes the entertaining event will draw a crowd of 200 to 300 people. By Thursday morning, students had already sold 150 tickets.
 Beyond the focus on fashions, the show will feature entertainment by Irish dancers, belly dancers, and more. Ticket holders will have a chance for gift certificates and giveaways.
 Wright said all of the students have had an opportunity to contribute talents, in addition to modeling. "I'm proud of everyone," she said.
 Tickets for *Catwalk for a Cause* cost \$20, and include an all-you-can-eat dinner buffet. Tickets are on sale through Monday, May 15. For more information, call (734) 744-2816.
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Circulation Business Hours/Subscription Rates
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POSTAL PERIODICAL REQUIREMENTS
 The Westland Observer - Publication NO. USPS 663-530 Published every Thursday and Sunday. Periodical postage is paid at Livonia, Michigan 48150.

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MEDC chief touts 'good news' for state economy

BY HUGH GALLAGHER
STAFF WRITER

Jim Epolito, president and CEO of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, kicked off the Livonia Business Expo Thursday by sharing "a lot of good things you never hear about."

"Business activity has increased dramatically and no one talks about it," Epolito said. "USA Today reported that Michigan is pulling out of its slump."

Epolito, the retired president of the Accident Fund and former Blue Cross/Blue Shield executive, was appointed by Gov. Jennifer Granholm last year to replace Don Jakeway to head the MEDC.

He brought an upbeat message to a full house at the Livonia Chamber of Commerce Business Expo Kick-Off Luncheon at Burton Manor.

"Livonia is very blessed with the economic growth it has," Epolito said.

He cited Alpha Stamping, Quicken Loans and Schoolcraft College's culinary arts program as examples of Livonia's healthy economy.

He said the rest of the state is moving in the right direction by working to secure Michigan's base in the automobile industry by bringing in more research and development while diversifying in new directions.

"We have a two-part strategy," Epolito said in an interview after his speech. "The primary part of the governor's plan is to retain and grow the base, get business to consolidate within Michigan, and that's all businesses, dominated by the manufacturing sector."

"What we're seeing is that we're still manufacturing at levels that we were previously, if not more, but we're doing it with a lot more automation, a lot less people and a lot higher skilled workers."

He said the state wants to retain that base. At the same time, the MEDC is working to attract new businesses.

"The 21st Century Fund is to diversify and be a catalyst to diversify the economy in



Epolito

Michigan is four areas: alternative energy, advanced manufacturing and automotive, life sciences and homeland security and

defense," he said.

But he warned the future is not in the large industrial complexes of the past.

"To suggest that at some point we'll bring in a plant with 5,000 employees that pays \$30 an hour is not realistic," he said. "About 60 percent of what we do in outreach to small businesses."

Recently, Republican gubernatorial candidate Richard DeVos has been critical of the MEDC and talked about eliminating it if he is elected. Epolito said Michigan is in stiff competition with other states which have used the Michigan model for attracting businesses.

"I think the MEDC was created in '99 by then-Governor John Engler and John Engler at first blush was not invested in economic development or the economic development corporation, but he learned the hard way that if you stand on the sidelines and don't engage you will lose business," he said.

On Friday, Epolito was scheduled to leave on a trip with Granholm to Asia. Granholm and Epolito will be discussing investment in Michigan in Japan and Korea, then Epolito will travel on to China.

"A trip to Japan last year bore fruit for Michigan," he said. "There are almost 600 Asian companies in Michigan. Many came from that trip. It's a matter of building on relationships that we have here. No taxpayer dollars were used to finance the trip, it is all corporate dollars."

Epolito left his audience with an admonition.

"We are the worst adversaries of our state," he said. "Be an advocate of the state where you live."

hgallagher@hometownlife.com
(734) 953-2149

Family furniture store bucks area trend

BY DAN WEST
STAFF WRITER

Market conditions and the arrival of IKEA have moved several small and family-run furniture stores in and around Livonia to close their doors for good.

Those factors didn't scare veteran furniture salesman Bud Mason and his three sons, Greg, David and Mike, from buying the former Tenpenny Furniture store in Livonia from his former employer for his family's first business ownership venture.

"It's what we know and we already have a comfort level with this building and the clientele," said Mason, an 81-year-old Westland resident.

The family acquired the 9,000-square-foot building next to Bill Brown Ford on Plymouth Road and opened Mason's Furniture in February. The inventory features wooden dining room sets, cabinets, bedroom sets and upholstered couches and chairs. The store offers qualified customers 12-month, no-interest financing.

Greg Mason, who also worked at the former Tenpenny store, said there is a niche for customers who desire a smaller furniture store that has a cozy setting and is better-prepared to handle special order pieces.

"We realize these are difficult economic times, and if times were good, Mr. (John) Tenpenny wouldn't have sold us this store," Greg Mason said. "But with other stores going out of business, we



PHOTOS BY TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Greg Mason (left) and father Bud sit in the showroom of newly opened Mason Family Furniture in Livonia.

believe those closings have given us a great opportunity."

Smaller furniture operations, such as Newton Furniture, House of Denmark, Classic Interiors and Jimmie's Rustics have closed their Livonia stores in recent months. Commercial real estate analysts said small- and mid-sized furniture retailers cannot compete with the inventory volumes and financing deals offered at Art Van and other chain retailers.

Experts added independent furniture store owners in metro Detroit fear an additional loss of business when the 360,000-square-foot IKEA store opens in Canton in June.



The new sign outside of Mason Family Furniture in Livonia.

Greg Mason said he is encouraged by business so far, particularly with sales of upholstered products, and hopes his family's store will get a boost when the Wonderland Village project and surrounding redevelopment

ment is complete. "We've received a great response so far," he said. "We realize that everyone is not comfortable walking into a huge store."

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Tip leads officers to missing suspect

A man who was behind the wheel of stolen van, ran from Westland Police and eluded arrest for nearly 90 minutes Tuesday. An officer stopped the man on Wildwood at Warren after he ran at red light at the intersection. The officer checked the license plate and found the Ford van had been stolen April 20 in Dearborn Heights.

"There was some pushing and shoving, then the suspect ran," said Sgt. Jeff Tryzbynski.

The officer pursued the suspect but lost sight of him. Officers looked for the suspect but he wasn't located, even when a police dog was utilized.

"The officers were about to give up when employees at a car wash said there was a man in the woods," said Tryzbynski. "They knew we were looking for someone. We found him hiding in the woods."

The suspect was located in a wooded area east of Warren and south of Cowan not far from where Wildwood dead ends.

"He's a career criminal and knew he was going to jail," Tryzbynski said of the suspect, a 36-year-old identified as being homeless.

The man is being held in lieu of \$100,000 cash bond after being arraigned in 18th District Court on charges of receiving and concealing stolen property, driving with a suspended license, resisting arrest and being a fourth-degree habitual offender.

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.

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.

Pegged 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 four-some 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 championship 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.

Teen caught spending phony money in school

A 15-year-old Westland boy was arrested Thursday, suspected of spending counterfeit money in the Churchill High School cafeteria and store in recent weeks.

The freshman at the school was turned over to his parents pending further investigation, said Livonia police Lt. Greg Winn.

The boy is accused of printing smaller denomination bills on his home computer and using them to make purchases at the school.

It is not known how much phony money was collected by the school. Other students, Winn said, overheard the boy talking about the phony money which eventually lead to police notification.

The matter remains under investigation.

Religious rip-off

Police are looking for suspects in connection with the theft of a snowmobile and weed trimmer at the First Baptist Church on Inkster between Six Mile and Seven Mile. Sometime between Sunday and Tuesday, the thieves cut open a padlock on a church shed and stole the equipment. A padlock to another shed was also cut, but the shed held children's toys and nothing was taken.

Refund rejected

A 44-year-old Detroit man

CRIME WATCH

was arrested Tuesday for stealing a DVD player and attempting to exchange it for a refund.

The problem started at 2:45 p.m. at the Meijer store on Middlebelt when two men walked into the store, one of the men grabbed the \$300 DVD player and brought it to a register seeking a refund.

He said he did not have a receipt because it was a gift.

As store security officers approached the men, one of them handed the DVD to the other and ran out of the store. Police said the second man tried telling a few stories before he abandoned the DVD player and ran off.

Police are still looking for the other man.

Unlucky seven

A 23-year-old Farmington Hills woman was arrested Tuesday for trying to steal seven articles of clothing from the Von Maur store at Laurel Park Place Mall.

Security personnel told police the woman brought the items into a changing room, left the room empty and walked out of the store without paying the \$222 cost for the merchandise.

She was detained by security officers shortly after 4 p.m. and turned over to police.

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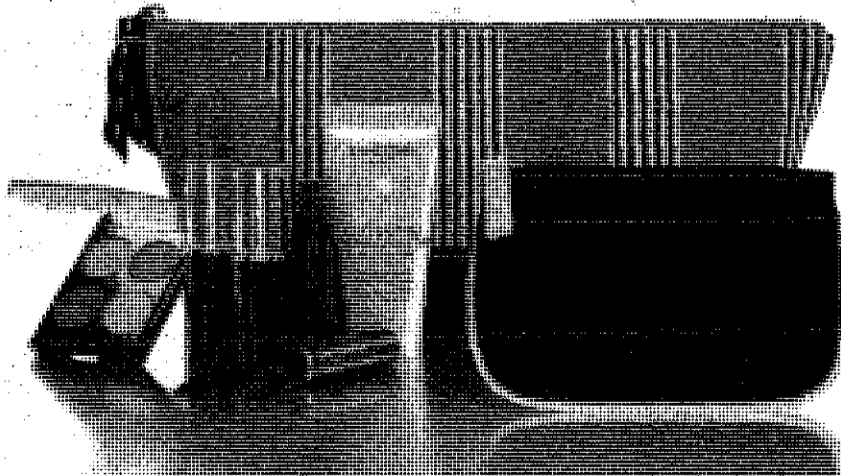
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On the premises where said property has been stored and in which are located at Public Storage, 20080 Allen Rd., Trenton, MI 48034 (248) 263-3880, on 5-24-06 at 9:30 am. Personal property described below in the matter of:

- 1025-Nicole Hellens-boxes, bags, misc. items
- 1101-Lashunda Miller-dresser, 3 bikes, boxes
- 947-Ken Paul-misc. items
- 831-Timothy Harpster-chair, couch, dresser
- 918-Jason Appleby-dresser, boxes, end tables
- 924-Amanda Genton-boxes, bags
- 712-Jamie Walls-computer, dresser, big screen TV
- 623-Eric Johnson-dining table, end table, 2 TV's
- 519-Marilyn Ewings-boxes, misc. items
- 513-Roy Poore-misc. items
- 213-Michael Kearns-couch, dresser
- 153-Cynthia Clemo-boxes, 3 dressers
- 148-Milton Engle-misc. items

Publish: May 7 & 14, 2006

CE09436114

Notice of Public Sale of Personal Property

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

On the premises where said property has been stored and which are located at Public Storage, 3650 Enterprise Dr., Allen Park, MI 48101 (313) 441-3117 on 5-24-06 at 10:30 am. Personal property described below in the matter of:

- B168-Kim Butler-mattress, couch, totes
- B071-Lynn D. Walsh-misc. items
- B072-Michael Kowalski-power tools, washer, totes
- B152-Evelyn Finn-dresser, couch, boxes
- B181-Peri Crim-toys, box spring
- B204-Julia Karapetian-box spring, couch, toys
- B265-Steven Weaver-coffee table, toys, boxes
- B298-Andre Broughton-totes, bags
- B367-Michael Campbell-boxes, ac unit, wheel chair
- B374-Marshawn Robinson-couch, mattress, box spring
- B401-Barbara Kelley-clothing, toys, bicycle
- B406-William Ferguson-TV, totes, golf clubs
- C023-Kimberly Moore-Barnes-misc. items
- E047-Robert Mayo-dryer, washer, toys
- F047-Brian Thiel-clothing, desk, dresser

Publish: May 7 & 14, 2006

CE05436112

CITY OF WESTLAND NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION

On MAY 23, 2006 the Westland Police Department will conduct a public auction of impounded, abandoned vehicles. The auction will begin promptly at 11:00 am at Westland Car Care, 6375 Hix Rd., Westland, MI, County of Wayne, where the following vehicles will be offered for sale to the highest bidder.

YEAR	MAKE	BODY STYLE	COLOR	VIN
1990	Olds	Cutlass/4Dr	White	1G3NL54U1LM724459
1995	Toyota	Corolla/4 Dr	Blue	1NXAE04B7S229025
1997	Pontiac	Gr Prix/4 Dr	Red	1G2WP52K3VF223613
1994	Ford	Taurus/4 Dr	Maroon	1FALP52U6RG239865
1995	Ford	Contour/4 Dr	Gray	1FALP6536SK224563
1996	Ford	Taurus/4 Dr	Silver	1FALP52U3TG226508
1988	Mercury	Gr Marquis/4 Dr	Black	2MEBM75F5JX711150
1995	Chevy	Sport Bus/SW	Gray	1GAGG39K2SF126949
1990	Chevy	Lumina/4 Dr	Silver	2G1WL54T4L9183134
1984	Chevy	C20/PU Truck	Black	1GCCE24H4EF332584
1993	Chevy	Lumina/4 Dr	Black	2G1WN54T8P1133092
2005	Kia	Sedona/SW	Blue	KNDUP132156681239
1987	Lincoln	Town Car/4 Dr	Blue	1LNBM82F1HY665866
1993	Ford	Taurus/4 Dr	White	1FACP5349PG168506

All vehicles are sold in "as is" condition. Bidding on all vehicles will start at the amount due for towing and storage. Vehicles may be deleted from this list at any time prior to the start of the auction.

30 DAY NOTICE OF AUCTION

Due to unknown ownership, 30 day notice is hereby given that the vehicle(s) listed below will be auctioned after JUNE 13, 2006 unless it is claimed by the owner prior to that time.

YEAR	MAKE	BODY STYLE	COLOR	VIN
1989	Chevy	Corsica/4 Dr	Maroon	1G1LT64W6KY220195

Publish: May 14, 2006

CE09436140

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. Tickets are available by calling Noel Derr at (734) 718-7328.

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.

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 prospective 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.

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 Hadious 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."

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

Bowling benefit

A special benefit for the wife and 5-month-old daughter of Brian Kapelanski, 33, of Westland, who recently passed away after battling cancer, will be held at 8 p.m. on Friday, May 19, at Woodland Lanes, 33775 Plymouth Road in Livonia.

Friends and family are organizing the event, which will include Glo Bowl and No Tap bowling, food, auctions and raffles at the bowling center located on Plymouth Road between Farmington Road and Stark. Tickets are \$25 and may be purchased by calling Becky

Hund at (734) 765-1564 or Kevin Kshat at (734) 525-6876.

Donations also will be accepted from those who wish to help out, but do not prefer to bowl. The fund-raiser will benefit Brian's wife, Chris, and daughter, Sidney. Brian was a 1991 graduate of Catholic Central High School.

Bowling benefit

The Westland Jaycees will be hosting a Bowl-a-Thon Sunday, May 21, to raise funds to purchase a Thermal Imager for the City of Westland Fire Department.

The fund-raiser will be held at Town and Country Lanes on Wayne Road at Avondale. Registration begins at 1 p.m. The cost is \$20 and includes three games, shoes, pizza and a pop, mystery games and door prizes. Or get in free with \$40 in donations.

For more information or to confirm a spot, call the Westland Jaycees hotline at (734) 26-0400 and leave a message or Bryan Lakotas at (734) 326-7380.

Dive right in

The Churchill High School Women's Swimming and Diving Team will host a Fish-Bowl fund-raiser at 1:30 p.m. Sunday, May 21, at Westland Bowl, 5940 Wayne Road, north of Ford Road.

The event begins at 2 p.m. with three games of cosmic bowling, shoes, pizza and soda and more offered at \$20 per bowler. The event includes a 50/50 raffle, gift basket raffles and a variety of contests - including best team T-shirt,

mystery game and high games.

Register with captain's name, phone numbers, address and names of team members with a check payable to Kathryn Timson and mailed to CHS Fish-Bowl, 37659 Ladywood, Livonia, MI, 48154. For more details, call Debbie McDonald at (734) 432-5028.

Blood drive

Hayes Elementary School in Westland will sponsor its last blood drive of the school year 1-7 p.m. Tuesday, May 23. Anyone who wants to donate blood may show up or call ahead to schedule an appointment at (734) 744-2725.

Hayes is located south of Ann Arbor Trail between Merriman and Middlebelt. To get there, turn south on Hillcrest off of Ann Arbor Trail and then right on Louise.

Summer camp

The Wayne Parks and Recreation Department is accepting registration for 2006 Summer Day Camp at the Wayne Community Center, 4635 Howe, Wayne. Registration will be accepted in person 4-6 p.m. May 23 and 25 and June 6, 8, 12 and 13. For an appointment, call (734) 721-7400, Ext. 1306.

Day Camp begins June 14 and runs through Aug. 25. It will be 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday for children ages 5-13. Daily, weekly and

full season rates are available.

Daily activities include swimming, ice skating (August only), arts and crafts, sports and board games, wallyball, outdoor play and more. There also will be field trips every week and special events.

Weekend Carnival

The Wayne Ford Civic League is hosting the Skerbeck Bros. Carnival on its grounds at 1645 N. Wayne Road in Westland, starting May 25. The carnival will be operation the entire Memorial Day weekend including Monday, May 30. There will be a beer tent with a variety of entertainment, including a battle of the bands event Friday night with first-, second and third-place cash prizes.

Spaghetti Dinner

The Dyer Senior Center at 36745 Marquette, Westland, invites you to the best Spaghetti Dinner in Westland. The dinner will be served 4-7 p.m. Friday, May 26. Enjoy spaghetti, salad, desert, entertainment and dancing for just \$6.

For more information, call Mary Browe at (734) 419-2020.

Senior Dinner Dances

The Wayne Ford Civic League is offering a dinner for seniors on Sunday, May 28, and June 11. The dinner will be

noon to 3:30 p.m. at the league at 1645 N. Wayne Road in Westland. Price is \$8 for league members and \$10 for non-members. There is a full buffet dinner with beer, wine, pop, and dancing to live entertainment. The dinners are for people age 60 and older. Call (734) 728-5010 for more information.

Goodbye tea

Schweitzer Elementary Principal Diane Nichols and third-grade teachers Pat Colligan and Carole Osterling will be the guests of honor at a goodbye tea to be held 4-6 p.m. Wednesday, May 31. The tea will be held in the gymnasium of the school at 2601 Treadwell, Westland.

Former students and staffers and friends are invited to come a wish them farewell and good luck. Tea and cookies will be served.

Pancake breakfast

The Westland senior Friendship Center holds an all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast 8:30-11 a.m. the second Thursday of the month at the center on Newburgh south of Ford.

The cost \$4 per person for buttermilk or multi-grain pancakes, coffee, juice, low fat milk, sausage and bacon. Sugar free syrup will be available.

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 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.midscienciation.com

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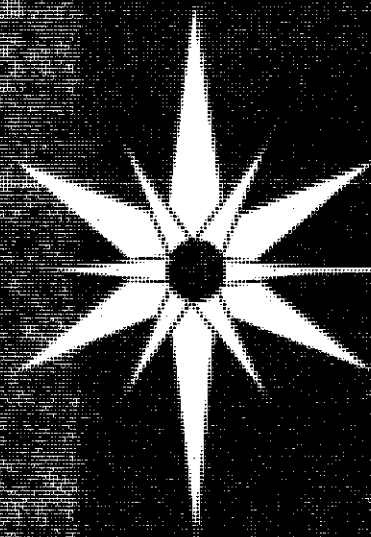
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FROM PAGE A1

force an election, which would be as early as Aug. 8. "We need to make sure every avenue has been explored," said Dan Lessard, board president.

'BEST FOR KIDS'

He said the trustees stand by their decision to support the Legacy Initiative, a plan that he said promotes educational excellence and fiscal stability in the district. It's designed to save \$1.5 to \$2 million a year for five years.

"We continue to feel we have done what we were voted in to do," said Lessard. "We feel we have done what's best for kids, and for the district."

Gillam said: "We are definitely on board on their behalf."

Members of the Citizens for

Livonia's Future have also filed a complaint against the board and administration, claiming they acted in an "arbitrary and capricious" manner by creating and implementing the Legacy plan.

Southfield Attorney Mayer Morganroth represents the citizen's group in this matter.

"They're not happy with the Board of Education and I don't blame them," said Morganroth. He said the success the group had in collecting more than the necessary amount of signatures per board member in support of a recall would "bolster the lawsuit."

Morganroth said the district could ultimately have a new board and a new superintendent seated, when all is said and done.

Attorney Gary P. King represents the board and Supt. Randy Liepa in the current lawsuit - which remains sepa-

rate from the recall.

"The board has consistently denied the existence of any improprieties in the process that was utilized to develop the Legacy Initiative, and continues to maintain that the Legacy Initiative is supported by sound educational and economic considerations," said King.

A settlement conference in the lawsuit originally set for May 12 has been canceled by Wayne County Circuit Court. The next step in the legal process will instead be a status conference on May 18, where the attorneys representing both sides will discuss where they are in the process of discovery for a lawsuit.

'BUSINESS AS USUAL'

In the meantime, the Legacy Initiative remains business as usual in the district. Lessard said "things are moving for-

ward" as planned.

"It should be in place by the first day of school in September," he said. "That has always been the goal."

Liepa agreed the district is moving forward with its plans, including the purchase of additional buses required under the Legacy Initiative.

The recall effort has not impacted the district's transition phase.

"I have not been given any

direction from the board to alter our planning based on signatures," Liepa said.

From principal and teacher placements to regular meetings with the superintendent, Lessard said the changes have been made in a "well-thought-out" manner throughout the district.

"I can't see anything from our end that would cause this thing not to be up and running in September," he said. "I don't

see the board saying we're going to dismantle this thing," Lessard said the Citizens For Livonia's Future group may be just as sure of their position.

"I don't see these people backing off of the path they've taken," he said. "That's unfortunate."

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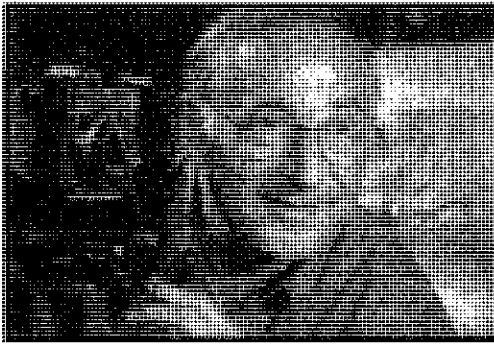
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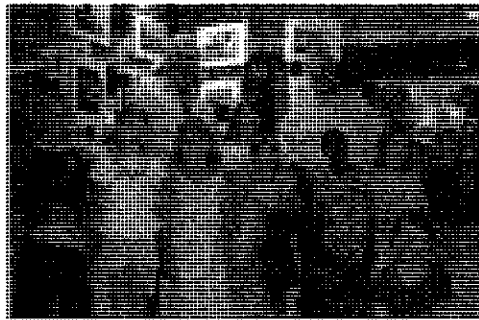
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Commission moves forward on mental health authority

BY HUGH GALLAGHER
STAFF WRITER

Wayne County Commissioner Philip Cavanagh, D-Redford, wants to settle the question of who runs the county's mental health programs before the state legislature acts to cut anywhere from \$30 million to \$50 million from mental health funding.

"It has always been the underlying question of who drives the agency, whether it's the 12-member board or the (county) CEO and his administration," Cavanagh said in an interview Tuesday. "Even under the previous county executive it was a point of contention."

He said the county has had 10 Mental Health Agency directors in eight years.

Cavanagh is the chair of the county commission's Task Force on Mental Health. The second of three hearings on proposals for creating an independent mental health authority will be held 3-5 p.m. Wednesday at the Livonia Civic Center.

The Community Mental Health Agency is operated by a 12-member board.

Six members are appointed by the county executive, six by the mayor of Detroit.

The agency is operated as a county department and funded by federal and state Medicaid money and county matching funds.

The agency contracts with five MCPNs (Metro Community Provider Network) to deliver mental health services to 40,000 county residents.

Two years ago, Sens. Beverly Hammerstrom, R-Temperance, and Shirley Johnson, R-Royal Oak, sponsored a bill to withdraw funding from the agency unless the county created an independent authority. Gov. Jennifer Granholm vetoed the legislation.

Cavanagh said the county could be liable for as much as \$228 million for failing to spend state and federal funding.

"These are through various things like accumulating a fund balance, socking away \$30 mil-

lion in risk reserve and the Feds are saying if you're not going to spend it, give it back," Cavanagh said.

Hammerstrom said Friday that under House legislation, the county could lose \$50 million in state funding and under Senate legislation it could be \$35 million.

"I don't think Sen. Johnson will back off from that," she said.

FICANO'S PLAN

Ficano has long advocated changing the composition of the board to 13 members with the county executive appointing the extra member.

"Mr. Ficano supports a local solution," said Teresa Blossom, spokeswoman for the Mental Health Agency. "We are in a quandary with a six-six board. In Oakland County L. Brooks Patterson appoints all the members of the mental health board."

Blossom said the legislation passed two years ago was "punitive."

"We pay all the bills. We put up the money," she said.

She said Ficano has made "significant progress" in reforming the system and problems related to billing and service.

"A state survey was made of 129 consumers and 127 expressed satisfaction with the service they received," she said. "In her veto message, the governor said the issue of governance is a key issue. Ficano wants the system to be the best it can be."

Hammerstrom said a 13-member board can't be formed without changing the current legislation.

"The issue isn't the size of the board ... it's a power thing and it's not about the county executive, it's about mental health," Hammerstrom said.

She said she is disappointed that Granholm has been "silent" about the current legislation.

"She doesn't want to get into a fight with Ficano, but she worked to create a health authority. She was able to broker a deal," Hammerstrom said. "It's just an indication that

mental health is not as important as physical health."

DIRECTOR DISAGREES

Recently Richard Visingardi, the agency's interim director appointed last year to replace Patty Kukula, was put on administrative leave for his health. In press reports he has complained that he is being forced out of office because he disagrees with the county executive over how much money the agency could lose.

Visingardi's contract with the county expires in June and Blossom said he will be on leave until the end of his contract.

"Medicaid laws and funding have gotten very complicated," Cavanagh said. "Interim director Richard Visingardi said it no longer behooves the county to have this layer of government. You need an authority to manage this. The state is saying you're at 13 percent administration and they say next year you'll be at 7.5 percent. They say this is where you should have been at and this is what you're going to give you."

Cavanagh said he supports Visingardi's idea of reducing the number of MCPNs from five to two.

Cavanagh said his committee will not change the composition of the board, as that is a state law.

"I understand the county's line, we're putting in the match and the city isn't but a huge majority of the clients are from the city," he said. "My committee will talk about that and the committee could make a recommendation to the legislature. But the enabling legislation isn't going to do anything to the structure."

Cavanagh said he expects the public hearings to be wide open and expects to hear from affected unions, mental health advocacy groups and others.

"Three weeks from now the committee convenes again and decides on the enabling legislation. Two weeks ago the question was will we have an authority, now it's how will it be structured," he said.



PHOTOS BY TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Democratic congressional candidate Tony Trupiano introduces senator Max Cleland who made a stop to campaign for Trupiano at the Harris-Kehrer VFW Post.

Max Cleland campaigns for Trupiano, veterans

BY HUGH GALLAGHER
STAFF WRITER

Former Georgia Sen. Max Cleland spent an exhausting day Wednesday campaigning for 11th Congressional District Democratic candidate Tony Trupiano in his bid to unseat Republican incumbent Thaddeus McCotter.

Cleland, who lost both legs and his right arm in combat in Vietnam, has been making the rounds in support of Democratic candidates.

"The country is mad as hell and they're not going to take it anymore," he said. "They are mad at the lies, particularly of this administration, and they are ready to throw the bums out, and they don't trust this administration anymore from the president on down."

Cleland said the Democrats have a chance to win back 15 seats and take control of the House.

"You'll see a bunch of new people elected to Congress this year, particularly the House, who have never run before," he said. "This includes a lot of Band of Brothers, people who served in the military, many of whom took the oath at the academy, naval or military academy, not to lie or cheat or steal and they won't tolerate it."

Cleland was visibly tired when he arrived Wednesday afternoon for a "town hall meeting" at the Harris-Kehrer VFW Post in Westland. But his face lit up when he saw the cap on Roger Kehrer of Plymouth Township, one of the Band of Brothers who served in Vietnam.

The cap identified Kehrer as serving in the same battalion in Vietnam. Cleland was wheeled over and spent several minutes talking with his comrade and ended by giving him a hug.

"We knew some of the same people in the command, he gave me a note to help with an MIA (presumed missing in action)," Cleland said. "After 36 years, this man is still thinking about his comrades." Kehrer, who served 1967-



Roger Kehrer of Plymouth Township speaks with former U.S. Sen. Max Cleland. The two found out they served in the same unit in Vietnam.

68 as a lieutenant, was also wounded in the war. He said he gave Cleland a note to help him track down what happened to Lt. Marvin Stone, who was originally thought to have been killed in action, but is now listed as missing.

Cleland has dedicated his career to serving his Band of Brothers. He rose to the rank of captain before being wounded.

He served in the Georgia state Senate 1971-75; served as President Jimmy Carter's administrator of the Veteran's Administration; Georgia Secretary of State 1982-96; and U.S. senator 1997-2003. He also served on the 9/11 Commission on the terrorists attacks.

He lost re-election to Republican Saxby Chambliss, who was criticized for running ads questioning Cleland's patriotism and showing him in ads along with pictures of Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden.

On Wednesday, Cleland began his day of campaigning by attending the opening of a one-stop Wayne County veteran's office in downtown Detroit with Gov. Jennifer Granholm and County Executive Robert Ficano.

Cleland pushed two themes during a brief interview and in his talk at the hall, corruption in Washington and the handling of the war in Iraq.

"The 9/11 Commission focused on faulty intelligence.

Now we know that it wasn't faulty intelligence, it was made up to justify the invasion of Iraq, which was already predetermined when George Bush got elected," Cleland said. "Iraq was not a threat to the United States. This was all a war built on a lie."

He said the military personnel are burned out and the focus has been taken away from terrorism.

"Osama bin Laden has become, as Sen. Bob Graham said, Osama been forgotten. He's still out there making more tapes than the Republican National Committee. We have an absolute disaster on our hands here. It's time to clean house."

He was also critical of funding available to help returning veterans deal with post-traumatic stress.

"War is one thing. When you come home, it's another," he said. "The trauma of war is greater than we thought. You have no idea what is going to happen to you in Iraq."

Cleland had been a guest on Trupiano's radio talk show and praised the candidate as someone who "speaks truth to power."

Trupiano, in turn, introduced Cleland as "one of the greatest Americans that God has put on this earth."

Cleland finished out the day appearing at two Trupiano fund-raisers.

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IKEA cometh: Someone please tell me what all the hype is about

I was a bit amazed when IKEA spokesman Joseph Roth told me that the mammoth blue and yellow store at Ford and Haggerty roads, which is set to open June 7, contains the first escalator ever built in Canton Township.

I just couldn't believe it. With all the building that has gone on in Canton in recent years — all the industrial and commercial buildings along I-275 and Michigan Avenue, the retail giants along Ford Road and the township building itself — you would think there would've been an escalator built at some point.

Recently I was able to visit the massive 311,000-square-foot store that has risen from the ashes of the former Super Kmart. There has been so much hype about the store over the course of the last couple of years, I must admit that I was expecting some kind of Xanadu when I walked through the doors.

But the first thing you see is that escalator, and not much else. So as I rode up, I had great anticipation what I would find when I got to the top. What I found — drum roll, please — was a furniture store. No Xanadu. Just a furniture store.

Before I go on, I have to admit that until I had to report on the coming of IKEA for the *Observer*, I didn't even know what IKEA was. That's probably because I'm not a shopper. My wife can attest to that. In fact, I always get the shivers when Christmas rolls around, and it's not from the cold weather. Long lines at the checkout counter scare me. I've never liked to be reminded that I'm part of the herd, and at no other time do I realize this more than when I'm out shopping. So I avoid it like the plague.

As a result, I really don't get all that excited about the opening of new stores.

But I expected IKEA to be different. So many people are excited about it. People I know have asked if I could somehow get them in before the official grand opening, which is sure to be an event in itself. At other IKEA locations, people have camped out for more than a week so they could be one of the first people in the store. Heck, at some IKEA locations in Europe and Saudi Arabia, people have been trampled and even died, because the herd couldn't wait to get in and get a look.

So I figured going into IKEA was going to be an awe-inspiring experience. For me, it



Kurt Kuban

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really wasn't. I found it to be just a succession of rooms — 56 in all — that feature furniture and accessories for every room in a home or office. And, according to Roth, the Canton IKEA is exactly the same as every other IKEA store in the chain, which includes 27 in the U.S. and 230 worldwide.

What makes the Canton store unique in the chain, is the fact that each item of merchandise in the store will display a price tag, which is Michigan law. As I looked around the store, it did seem a bit foolish for IKEA employees to have to put a price sticker on hundreds of wine glasses stacked on a pallet in the middle of one aisle. And there are literally hundreds of similar pallets containing just about anything you can think of for the kitchen or any other room in the home.

I will say this, though. IKEA is an amazing place in the sense that it is so big. On my visit, it seemed to take an hour just to walk around the place — and that was without doing any shopping. But it doesn't seem so big when you look around. Everything is quite cozy. The place just seems to go on forever. Room after room, aisle after aisle.

And, of course, because the place is so big, it is able to accommodate a lot of stuff. According to Roth, they have been receiving four or five trailers full of merchandise every day for weeks as they prepare for the big grand opening, which everyone is so excited about.

Everyone except me. I have to admit, I just don't get it. But consider the source.

Kurt Kuban is community editor of the *Canton Observer*. He welcomes comments at (734) 459-2700, or e-mail him at kkuban@oe.homecomm.net.

First Mother's Day without Mom recalls complicated relationship

It was a brisk January morning when I called into work and instead drove to the hospital to sit next to my mom's bedside. We didn't have much to talk about. The fear in her blind eyes shined bright, so I tried to keep things light by rambling about the kids and their activities, weather reports and telling anecdotes about my cat, Ozzy, and dog Guinness.

I spared any conversations on my mounting bills, the harassing e-mails that I was receiving, or the boss that was giving me problems for taking so much time off so that I could go to the hospital.

I merely held her hand in mine and talked like there wasn't a worry in the world. Every so often, a nurse would come in to explain details of the next day's open heart surgery or to check on her vitals.

We laughed and talked about everything and anything. She cried her heart out when I went home and I cried all the way to the car. Little did I know that would be our last bonding experience together.

I was an oops baby and grew up as if I were an only child. My brother and sister were more than 10 years older and so I was spoiled rotten because not only were my parents financially stable, but after raising two kids already they were laid back with their parenting style. This made my siblings very jealous.

My family, as dysfunctional as most, was never the Sunday night dinner type when I was young, and we never became that as we grew, but we always got together for the holidays and we all called our mom and dad.

Mom was not a hypochondriac in the least, but as long as I could remember she suffered from various physical ailments. When I was around 12 years of age my mom completely lost her sight and everyone's world changed.

My mother never adjusted to the blindness and fought hard when services tried to help her adapt. She instead slipped into a heavy depression which also affected us all. Her blindness prevented her from doing a variety of things and her self-pity would make me cry and turn it into my own self-pity.

I wanted her to one day read my book. I wanted her to see what her grandchildren looked like

and show off their pictures. I wanted her to show me how to apply makeup. I wanted her to cook me my favorite dish — her chicken noodle soup.

I wanted my mom; my whole mom and not just the shell of her.

Mom and I were close, but we had a strange love/hate relationship. Her stubbornness and moodiness drove me crazy. My stubbornness and moodiness drove her crazy. We would have to agree to disagree in order to get along, but even through the worst arguments, we always made up.

I kept a busy life being divorced with two young children and even though we lived but miles away from one another, I wasn't always able to go over to her house every week, but each day, no matter what, I called her on my way home from work.

Most of the time I kept my private worries private as my mom fed off of them and worried enough for both of us, but when I needed a hug — she was there to give me one.

On Jan. 30, 2006, in the early morning we received the call that mom had passed away. At the age of 68, she gave up her fight and now even though she cannot show me how to make her famous chicken noodle soup, I am sure that she looks at us from above and now knows what her grandchildren look like.

The planning of the funeral was a welcome distraction for me, but yet each afternoon thereafter I still continue to reach for the phone to call my mom ... and then remember.

This will be my first Mother's Day without a mom and I weep now as I write that. My brother and sister were jealous of me because I was given more than they were as children. I am jealous of them because they got to celebrate 10 more Mother's Days with our mom than I was granted.

Every commercial on the radio or the television reminds me that at the age of 35, I don't have a mom. I walk into the stores and they display banners to not forget Mom on Mother's Day. It is a painful reminder that the flowers that I buy for mom this year will sit on her gravestone instead of on her kitchen table, where the dandelions I picked her years back once sat.

Kristy Schiller is a resident of Westland.



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County renews funding for West Nile

County Executive Robert A. Ficano and Department of Public Health Director Anahid Kulwicki announced the renewal of Wayne County's Mosquito Abatement Assistance Program for out-county communities. The program provides assistance to municipalities that take measures to fight West Nile virus. The county took similar measures in past years.

The Department of Public Health has committed \$200,000 to help fight West Nile virus. Up to \$125,000 will be distributed among Wayne County's 42 communities, while remaining funds will go toward county-wide education, outreach, and prevention activities. Distribution of funds is based on population. City officials can receive assistance for larviciding, WNV educational fliers and campaigns, and the reduction of mosquito breed-

ing sites where standing water exists.

The county's Web site, www.waynecounty.com, has a range of information for residents on how they can protect themselves and their families from the virus. In order to reduce the risk of West Nile infection, health officials urge residents to:

- Eliminate all sources of standing water such as old tires, bird baths, toys that collect water, flower pots without drainage, wading pools and any other areas.

- Repair or replace window screens and seal areas of your home where mosquitoes are likely to get in.

- Use insect repellent containing DEET (follow manufacturer's instructions) for longer-lasting protection.

- Avoid being in mosquito areas when they are most active (early morning and

evening hours).

- Wear long sleeves and pants outdoors.

Less than 1 percent of people who get bitten and become infected will get severely ill. After the first local human cases were detected in 2002, education emphasizing prevention and mosquito abatement helped tremendously. A significant increase occurred last year, with 21 reported human cases, including three deaths in Wayne County.

The virus is spread to humans mainly through mosquito bites. It is not spread through person-to-person contact. Those most susceptible are people over age 50. Since birds are the primary carriers, residents who find dead birds can contact the Wayne County Department of Public Health at (734) 727-7445. Additional information is available online at www.cdc.gov.

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