



Braille children's books founder honored

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It's gum time



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SUNDAY
July 16, 2006

WESTLAND Observer

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Check-cashing stores hit by 3 robberies

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

A serial robber may be involved in three robberies of Westland check-cashing businesses within a one-week period ending Thursday, police confirmed.

The lone bandit also is suspected of similar incidents in communities such as Livonia, Farmington and Dearborn, authorities said.

One Westland business, Instant Cash Advance on Wayne Road north of Hunter, was robbed twice during the rash of holdups.

The latest incident happened about

2:26 p.m. Thursday when a lone bandit knocked on a locked door of Instant Cash Advance and was let inside by a female worker, police Sgt. Michael Willard said.

"He stepped inside and told her that he'd like a cash advance, and he told her not to move," Willard said. "He set down a brown (paper) bag on the counter, and she could see a black barrel of a gun sticking out of the bag."

The robber ordered the worker to put money in a separate bag he handed to her, and he escaped out the front door with an undisclosed sum of cash, Willard said.

"He took off on foot and went north

and disappeared," the detective said.

A police dog was brought in and led authorities behind a strip mall where Instant Cash Advance is located, but no one was captured. The suspect was described as a black male, about 5-foot-4 with facial stubble and a slight mustache, Willard said. He was wearing a white ball cap with a black bandanna under it, a gray shirt with faded red print, black jeans and white shoes.

The same business was robbed about 5:11 p.m. Friday, July 7, by a suspect who wore a loose-fitting mask with holes in it, police Sgt. Chris Benson said. The store wasn't locked this time. The bandit demanded money and

implied that he had a gun in his pocket, Benson said. He ordered a couple of employees to the floor at gunpoint and escaped out the back door with an undisclosed sum of money, Benson said.

The suspect's description has varied somewhat, but police believe that a serial robber may be at work. In this incident, he was described as a black male, about 5-foot-10, 200 pounds and possibly 40 years old. He also had facial stubble that could be seen around the edges of the mask, Benson said.

In between the robberies at Instant Cash Advance, a similar business, simply called Cash Advance, was robbed

about 2:11 p.m. Tuesday, July 11, on Merriman Road north of Palmer, police Sgt. Michael Harhold said.

In that holdup, the robber actually pointed a gun at an employee, demanded money and then escaped on foot without firing any shots.

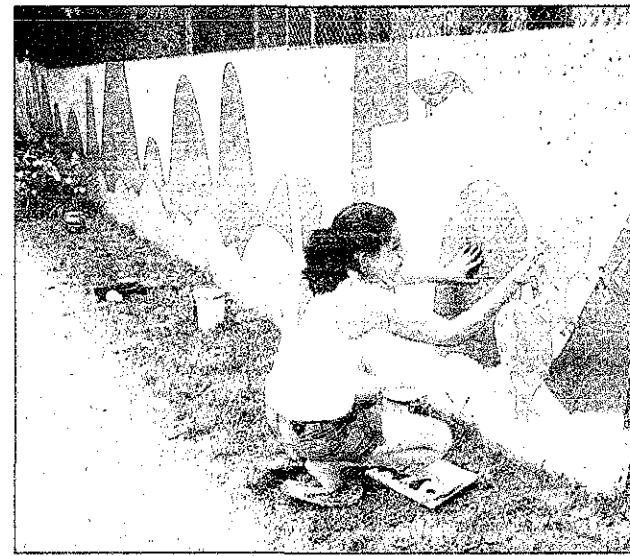
He was described as a black male, about 6 feet tall with a stocky build.

"His face was concealed with a mask," Harhold said.

Authorities urged anyone with information to contact the Westland Police Department at (734) 722-9600, or make an anonymous tip for a possible \$1,000 reward by calling Crime Stoppers at (800) SPEAK-UP.



Beautifying the Bailey Center



PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Michaela Galindo, 20, of Westland has volunteered to paint the wall outside the pool area at the Westland Bailey Recreation Center. She said she is trying to get exposure of her artwork with a tiki theme.

Who will be the next Westland Idol?

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Step back, Taylor Hicks. Take a second-row seat with Carrie Underwood, Fantasia Barrino, Ruben Studdard and Kelly Clarkson.

Forget *American Idol* for now, even if it did help launch Westland native Josh Gracin's country music career.

The pressing question this month is: Who will be the next *Westland Idol*?

To find out, don't tune in to the Fox network. Go to this year's Christmas in July fundraising event sponsored by a local charitable organization, the Westland Community Foundation.

"The people who perform in this contest are just incredible," foundation President Glenn Shaw Jr. said.

The next Westland Idol will be named during the Christmas

in July event scheduled for 6 p.m. Thursday, July 27, at the Hellenic Cultural Center on Joy Road east of Newburgh.

Organizers ask for a minimum donation of \$50 — money that will be used for student scholarships, Salvation Army summer camp programs and other community projects. In all, the foundation has donated more than \$400,000 during the last 10 years.

The scholarships are given to cash-strapped students who don't necessarily have the best grade-point averages but who excel in a particular area of study.

To register for Christmas in July, call (734) 595-7727 or just show up at the door. Finger foods will be available.

Organizers also ask those attending to bring nonperishable food items to place under a

PLEASE SEE IDOL, A5

Group pushes for tough immigration laws

BY DAN WEST
STAFF WRITER

Metro Detroiters seeking stricter regulations to control illegal immigration gathered Thursday at Livonia's Civic Center Park to welcome five motorcycleists on a cross-country ride to promote the cause.

Dissatisfaction with some Congressional calls for reform that would give illegal immigrants amnesty has inspired this group of activist bikers to travel 14,000 miles and visit each state capital spread the word. The effort, funded by individual donations and larger contributions from anonymous Michigan donors, is being called The 21st Century Paul Revere Ride of 2006.

"A situation that has been a concern has become a crisis," said Howard Woolridge, a Washington lobbyist and retired Lansing police officer who is coordinating the program. "We've seen many people who are happy to see someone fighting against the policy

of open borders."

The Paul Revere Ride, which includes five permanent riders clad with red, white and blue, made its only two Michigan stops Thursday in Lansing and Livonia. The Livonia stop was organized by a new grass-roots group called Michigan Citizens for Immigration Reform.

Edith Simmons, a Southfield resident involved in the group, said MCFIR wants to promote a secure border policy to local lawmakers and residents. "We are a country of immigrants, but we want people to come here and be part of our melting pot," Simmons said. "Unfortunately, most of the illegal immigrants coming into this country don't give a diddly-do about this country."

MCFIR, primarily a group of metro Detroit Republican supporters, used the opportunity to criticize Michigan's U.S. Senators Carl Levin and Debbie Stabenow, both Democrats, for their open stance to policies friendly to



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Milton Simmons, a Southfield resident, stands along Five Mile Road looking for support for his anti-immigration views.

illegal immigrants. Simmons said such policies bring more drugs, terrorists and disease into the country and escalate health care and education costs for American taxpayers.

Woolridge added an open borders policy is irresponsible and dangerous in the post-9/11 era and hurts American workers and wages. Also he said more unskilled illegal immigrants are willing to work for less pay and compete with U.S. citizens for jobs.

"We will be successful when

we build a national security fence (along the U.S.-Mexico border) and we start to punish employers who hire illegal immigrants," Woolridge said.

After the group's Thursday afternoon stop in Livonia, the riders headed to Indiana. The Paul Revere Ride started in Colorado on May 29. After riding an average of 300 miles a day, the ride is scheduled to end with a rally in Washington, D.C., on Aug. 12.

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CFLF asks court to stop school legacy plan again

BY DAN WEST
STAFF WRITER

A group opposed to Livonia Public Schools' reorganization plans has again asked a judge to put a halt on the Legacy Initiative's implementation.

Citizens for Livonia's Future were unsuccessful in seeking a preliminary injunction in March, but CFLF attorney Mayer Morganroth filed for the measure again Wednesday in Wayne County Circuit Court. A hearing on this new request has not yet been scheduled.

The district also serves the north part of Westland.

The group is seeking a 45-day freeze on efforts to carry out reorganization plans and to force officials to operate the 18,300-student school district as it did this

past school year, until group leaders and school officials meet with a facilitator. A judge's request for that facilitation is scheduled for Aug. 24.

The facilitator will guide talks between the sides in an attempt to broker a compromise but the facilitator has no power to order any action.

"If (the district is) permitted to continue to implement their irreversible, costly and wasteful plans for the Legacy Initiative, the facilitation ... will be rendered meaningless because (district officials) will contend that it is impossible to reverse or alter their plans," Morganroth argued in court documents.

School district attorney Gary King said CFLF cannot ask for

PLEASE SEE LEGACY, A5

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Coming Thursday in Filter Jazzfest

Jesse Patter opens Friday night's lineup at Birmingham's Jazzfest.

INFORMATION CENTRAL

Summer is prime party time, and it's common knowledge that an all-out bash cannot possibly achieve full potential unless there is just the right music for the occasion. With rising music prices and legal questions with respect to "free" downloads, there are few places to turn to in order to find a great selection of music without exhausting the entire party budget. The Westland library is a gold mine for music of all genres, whether you have last-minute party needs or you're simply in the mood for some alone time to rock out to some tunes on an individual basis.

Bring the ever-popular luau theme to life with selections from our international music collection, such as Hawaiian drum dance chants, a mix of traditional Hawaiian music or, for more of a contemporary sound, Cyril Pahinui's *Night Moon*. Planning a golden oldies get together? Forget about suffering through songs you don't want to hear from the radio, and choose from a list of artists that you really enjoy, like various hit CDs by The Beatles, Stevie Wonder, The Rolling Stones, The Beach Boys and many more.

Believe it or not, we also have music that's appropriate for the slew of graduation parties that seem to take up most of the summer. Bring Detroit's own White Stripes into your back yard, or maybe some Dave Matthews Band and Jack

Johnson. If you want to really get things hopping, then check out Eminem, Fall Out Boy, 50 Cent and The All-American Rejects, among other big names in our CD collection.

For some poolside relaxation after the stress of summer fun, delve into our classical music section and soothe frazzled nerves with Beethoven, Bach, Mozart and others. If violins and horns aren't exactly your style, the library also offers music by artists such as Miles Davis, Ray Charles, Diana Krall and Billie Holiday in the jazz and rhythm and blues section.

The possibilities are endless, so feel free stop by and browse through our collection to supplement your summer entertainment. If you have any questions, call the Reference Desk at (734) 326-6123.

Highlighted Activities
Adult Book Club July 18, 7 p.m. This month's book is *Blink* by Malcolm Gladwell. Please read the book before the meeting. All are welcome.
Teen Movie Night July 19, 7 p.m. *Men in Black*, rated PG-13, in the library's community rooms. The movie will run approximately 113 minutes. No registration required. Feel free to bring pillows and blankets and friends ... we'll supply the snacks.
Internet 101 at 10:30 a.m. July 21. For the very beginner: what the Internet is and how to get there. No registration or fee required.

Mastodon bones generate buzz



PHOTOS BY JOHN STORMZAND | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Bill McEntee of the Road Commission for Oakland County holds one of the larger bones of a prehistoric mastodon found at a construction site in Rochester Hills. The bones, at least 10,000 years old and dating to the Ice Age, were found buried under just five or six feet of peat near Adams Road and M-59. They have been turned over to the Cranbrook Institute of Science for cleaning and study.

Prehistoric discovery unearthed at road construction site in Rochester Hills

BY ANNETTE KINGSBURY
STAFF WRITER

A road construction site off Adams Road in Rochester Hills was the scene of unusual excitement Monday.

As word spread that the bones of a prehistoric mastodon had been unearthed Friday by workers preparing the site for the rerouting of Adams between Auburn and Hamlin, people began turning up to have a look. It got to the point where the Oakland County Sheriff's Department declared the bones off-limits mid-afternoon, fearing for the relics' safety.

Leah Allen of Rochester Hills took a half-day off work to bring her 8-year-old son Kyle to the site. "History in the making," she called it.

"He got to hold a vertebrae," she said, referring to Kyle. "It's so neat; right in our own back yard. ... We came back here before they developed this so many times. ... It's the coolest."

An employee of Dan's Excavating told police a shovel digging in a peat bog came up with a large bone late Friday. After doing some research on their own,

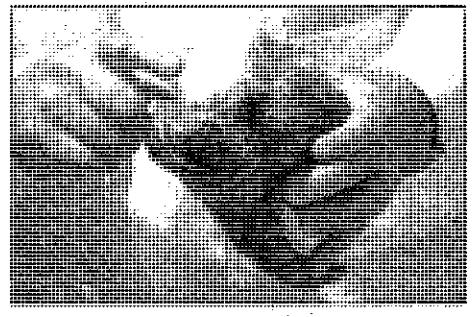
workers reported the find Saturday and called in the Cranbrook Institute of Science.

"We probably were the first ones to dig through it," said Bill McEntee, director of Permits and Construction for the Road Commission.

By Monday, an impressive collection of bones, including parts of tusk, several vertebrae, ribs and a huge tooth had been unearthed. Cranbrook spokesman Stephen Pagnani said the remains had been positively identified as a large adult mastodon.

"It's a very mature animal, we know that," he said. Cranbrook's collection has a mastodon that was found in 1965 when I-75 was being built. In fact, the finds aren't that unusual; some 250 sites around the state have yielded the bones of *mammut americanum*. Since 2002, it has been the state fossil.

The mastodon is believed to have roamed much of North America in the Pleistocene Epoch, also known as the Ice Age. Vegetarians, they munched shrubs and trees. Spruce cones were the only other debris found buried with the bones.



Open wide: One huge tooth was among the fossilized remains of the mastodon unearthed at a construction site in Rochester Hills this month.

Scientists don't know why the mastodon became extinct. Pagnani said this one may be 10,000 to 14,000 years old.

"What makes this so important is this kind of evidence helps solve mysteries," he said. One question scientists hope to answer is whether this mastodon wandered into the bog and got stuck or was hunted and butchered.

Cranbrook scientists, including a staff paleontologist, will clean and examine the bones with the goal of eventually putting them on display. Ownership discussions will come later.

"It makes you think: 12,000 years ago, here," Pagnani said.

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CITY OF WESTLAND
NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION

On JULY 25, 2006 the Westland Police Department will conduct a public auction of impounded, abandoned vehicles. The first auction will begin promptly at 11:00 a.m. 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#
1988	Olds	Delta 88/4 Dr.	Brown	1G3AV69Y1E9759356
1996	Mercury	Gr. Marquis/4 Dr.	White	2MELM74W5TX658054
1994	Ford	Van	Red	1FTJS34H4RHA26406
1995	Chrysler	Concorde/4 Dr.	Blue	2C3HD56T6SH543586
1993	Cadillac	DeVille/4 Dr.	Black	1G6CD53B6P4243717
2005	Dodge	Stratus/4 Dr.	Red	1B3EL46X05N624434
1994	Pontiac	Gr. Prix/2 Dr.	White	1G2WJ12X4RF271259
1991	Olds	Cutlass/4 Dr.	Red	1G3AJ4NXM6315539
2002	Pontiac	Sunfire/2 Dr.	Silver	1G2JB12482711729
1993	Cadillac	DeVille/4 Dr.	Burgndy	1G6CD53B7P4205333
2001	Chevy	Cavalier/4 Dr.	Black	1G1JC52417353996
1987	Pontiac	Gr. Prix/2 Dr.	Red	2G2GK11Z2H2202140

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 AUGUST 15, 2006 unless it is claimed by the owner prior to that time.

YEAR	MAKE	BODY STYLE	COLOR	VIN#
1986	Ford	Bronco/2 Dr.	Brown	1FMBU14T1GUB88789

Publish: July 16, 2006

WESTLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT

The following vehicles have been deemed abandoned and will be sold at public auction July 25, 2006 at 11:15 a.m.

The auction will be held at Westland Car Care Towing, 6375 Hix Rd., Westland, MI 48185. The vehicles will be sold as is, starting bid is for towing and storage.

Year	Make	Model	Body	VIN#
1990	Dodge	Ram	Van	2B7HB21Z2LK764991
1988	Ford	E-150	Van	1FD3314H5JAB10845
1999	Pontiac	Sunfire	4 Dr.	1G2JB5249X7566052
1985	Ford	Crown Vic.	4 Dr.	2FABP43F0FX210139
1995	Ford	Escort	2 Dr.	1FASP11J5SW220239

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GARDEN CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

RESOLVED: That the Board of Education of the School District of the City of Garden City hold its regular meetings on the second and fourth Monday of each month in the Administrative Service Center Board Room, 1333 Radcliff, beginning at 7:00 p.m.; further, when feasible, the Board endeavors to designate the second regular board meeting of each month as a meeting to be held at a school building also starting at 7:00 p.m. It should be noted that all student expulsion, disciplinary or appeal hearings will be conducted at the Administrative Service Center.

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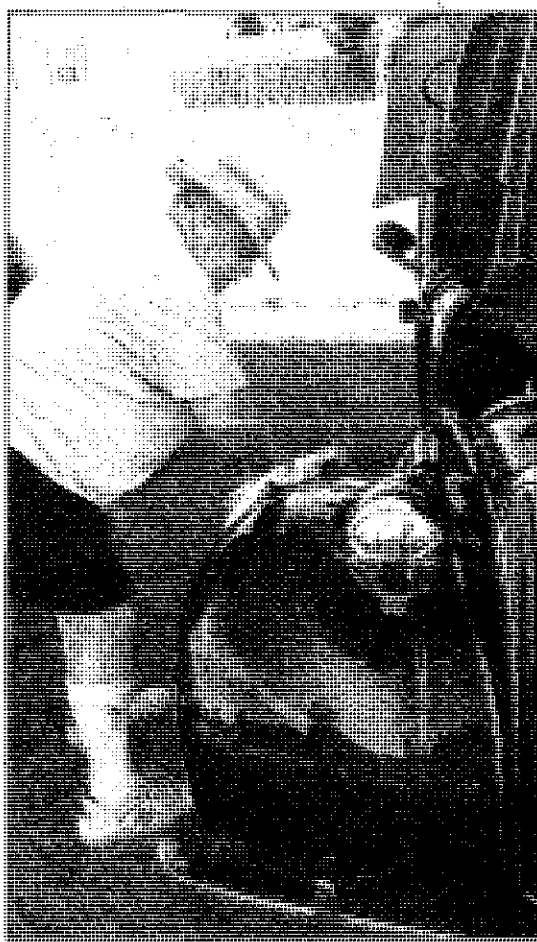
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Doug Sparks polishes the 1937 Chevrolet street rod he brought with him from Arizona while he's in Michigan visiting his children.



During the Autos for Autism car show, Westland residents Gary Olwean and Jean Sparks relax in Olwean's 1961 Chevrolet bubble top Bellaire.

PHOTOS BY MARCUS SINGLETON | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Buffs show off wheels to benefit center

BY LEANNE ROGERS
STAFF WRITER

Car lovers took over Garden City High School on Monday to benefit the Burger Center for Autism, which also serves Westland.

"Each year it's a little bigger and better," said Darlene Jablonowski, a member of the Autos for Autism organizing committee.

This year, 262 vehicles were entered in the show — up from 225 last year. The event raised between \$13,000 and 14,000 through entry fees, sponsorships and sales of shirts and concessions.

First- and second-place trophies are awarded in 12

classes such as restored, original, custom, street rod and street kit. There are eight celebrity awards presented by local dignitaries including state Sen. Laura Toy (R-Livonia) and state Rep. Jim Plakas (D-Garden City).

Taking the Best of Show award was the 1968 Chevrolet Camaro owned by Jim Kolodziej. Like the other non-celebrity awards, Best of Show is voted by the entrants to the competition.

The Autos for Autism event committee has 20 members with closer to 40 people volunteering at the show itself.

"People would show up that we weren't expecting and just want to help," said Debbie Cross, who co-chaired

the event. "We were very happy with the turnout. We are fortunate to have so many people who are willing to help."

It takes the committee about eight months to plan the event which also featured live music and a disc jockey.

The committee took over the event six years ago and the size has steadily grown. Funds raised last year refurbished the gym at the Burger Center. This year the funds are expected to go to prepare a daily living kitchen at the school's adult annex at the Cambridge Center.

"The committee has parents, teachers and people who don't have kids at Burger but want to help,"

Jablonowski said. "It brings tears to my eyes."

Along with fund-raising, Jablonowski said the car show helps with public awareness about autism which is occurring in much higher numbers in recent years.

Another fund-raiser to benefit the Burger Center is the 26th annual Lyman Foundation Golf Outing on Saturday, Aug. 12 at Hickory Creek Golf Course in Superior Township. Shotgun starts will be 7:15 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. Donations, volunteers and players are needed.

To register, call (734) 454-1850. For information, call Sharon Lundie at (734) 728-4919.

Girls, 2 and 5, found wandering on Joy Road

Westland police issued a ticket to a 33-year-old Livonia woman, citing her for child neglect Tuesday after a motorist spotted the woman's two young children walking across Joy Road near Merriman.

Livonia police continue to investigate the family's household situation. Westland police were initially called after a motorist saw the two young girls, ages 2 and 5, walking across the main road between 10-11 a.m. It appeared their mother was sleeping when the young girls walked away from their home on Denne Street.

"It took us about 45 minutes to figure out who the kids belonged to," said Livonia police Lt. Greg Winn. "This appears to be a chronic problem."

Westland police issued the ticket and turned the case over to Livonia authorities.

Neighbors told police the young girls have walked away from the house, without any adult supervision, on several occasions. In many cases, neighbors said they have returned the girls to the home.

Police left the children with the mother after talking with her brother.

Teen rescues brother, 6, from bonfire accident

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

For Livonia's Peck family, an Independence Day camping trip in Northern Michigan took a dangerous turn, leaving their 6-year-old son hospitalized with third-degree burns on his left hand and right leg.

According to Sue Peck, her youngest son, Jacob, was attempting to get out of a chair while seated near a bonfire when the chair collapsed and he began to fall toward the flames. Jacob's 16-year-old brother, Shea, didn't hesitate. He jumped in, grabbed his brother, and ran to a nearby river to put out the flames.

"He had just taken a CPR First Aid class at his high school through JROTC," Sue Peck said. "He just reacted. He didn't wait for a response."

The accident occurred Sunday, July 2 at a primitive camp site near Lumberman's Monument, in the Au Sable River Valley in Oscoda County. At the time, Sue and her husband, Joe Peck, had gone to get ice as the fire was dying down. They returned to the site about

9:20 p.m. just after the incident.

"It was phenomenal," Peck said. "Everyone in our family is calling (Shea) a hero for responding the way he needed to."

They took Jacob to the hospital, St. Joseph Health System in Tawas City. Hours later the little boy was air-lifted and taken to University of Michigan Medical Center to have his burns treated. The Pecks drove to Ann Arbor, arriving around 3:30 a.m.

"He's been here ever since," said Peck from the hospital.

Shea said Shea, a Franklin High School junior, was "shaken up" by the incident but knows he made a difference and saved his brother's life.

"It's very scary," Peck said. "All we can do is thank God it wasn't worse. He's alive. We will get through it. We're all very proud of Shea for what he did."

Joe Peck agreed: "I'm very appreciative of what my son has learned through JROTC."

As for Jacob, his mother said, "he worships his older brother."

While he isn't a fan of doctors, needles, or having to keep his leg straight and stabilized each night, she said he is recovering.

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TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

On course

Adam Clay, 12, of Westland tees off at Glenhurst Golf Course in Redford as part of the junior golf program offered by the Redford Parks and Recreation Department.

Few spots left for restaurant rally

Last call. Only 50 spots out of 500 still are available for a July 25 "restaurant rally" sponsored by the Westland Chamber of Commerce, chamber President Lori Brist said. For just \$20, participants can sample food from 10 local restaurants: Applebee's, Beaver

Creek, Casa Fiesta, Farwell & Friends, Johnny Carino's, LongHorn Steakhouse, Malarkey's Irish Pub, Marvaso's Italian Grille, Panera Bread and Uno Chicago Grill. The restaurant rally is scheduled for 6-10 p.m. Tuesday, July 25. Participants will be

given special T-shirts entitling them to sample food at the 10 eateries. Those who don't want to drive may hop aboard shuttles that will make their way among the restaurants. To sign up or for more information, call the chamber at (734) 326-7222.

DEATHS

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p>A
Eileen Abbott
Abbott, 74, formerly of Farmington Hills, died May 8.</p> <p>B
Mary T. Bloom
Bloom, 80, of Bloomfield Hills, died July 9.</p> <p>D
Joseph Nicola DeLauro
DeLauro, 90, of Novi, died July 11.</p> <p>G
William G. Galinet
Galinet, 85, died June 26.</p> | <p>H
Alfred W. Gauzletti
Gauzletti, 74, of Beverly Hills, died June 27.</p> <p>J
Madeline Hope
Hope, 81, of Redford, died July 8.</p> <p>M
John P. Johnson
Johnson, formerly of Birmingham, died July 3.</p> <p>M
Helen I. Mileagee
Mileagee, 88, of Farmington, died July 12.</p> | <p>P
Dr. Sidney Miller, M.D.
Miller, 92, of Bloomfield Hills, died July 11.</p> <p>R
Los T. Pedlow
Pedlow, 75, of Westland, died July 10.</p> <p>R
Paula C. Pratt
Pratt, 91, of Troy, died July 9.</p> <p>R
Frederico "Fred" Ramirez
Ramirez, 87, of Livonia, died July 11.</p> |
|--|--|---|
- Complete paid obituaries can be found inside today's newspaper in Passages on page C4.

AROUND WESTLAND

Bible school

St. Michael Lutheran Church and School, 3003 Hannan in Wayne, will have a Bible school with the theme *Treasure Cove* 6-8:30 p.m. July 17-21. The event is for children in preschool through fifth grade, and it is free. For more information call (734) 728-1950.

No coffee

State Rep. Glenn Anderson, D-Westland, has announced that his monthly coffee hour with constituents will not be held in July or August.

Coffee hours, always held on the third Monday of the month at various locations, will resume on Monday, Sept. 18.

Anderson sponsors the coffee hours to give citizens an opportunity to meet directly with him about issues or concerns. They also are invited to call his office toll free at (888) 833-8494.

'Historic' flea market

The Friends of the Westland Historical Museum will sponsor its third-annual flea market 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, July 22, on the grounds of the historic Perrinsville Schoolhouse, built in 1856.

The schoolhouse is located on Warren Road at Cowan, just a quarter-mile west of Merriman Road.

The flea market will be held rain or shine, historian Ruth Dale said.

Donations are needed, with suggestions including dishes, small furniture, kitchen items, jewelry, toys, tools, antiques and collectibles - but no clothing.

Donations will be accepted 1-4 p.m. Saturdays July 1, 8 and 15 at the Westland Historical Museum, 857 N. Wayne Road between Marquette and Cherry Hill.

Spaces for this year's flea market will cost \$15 each. Proceeds from Friends of the Museum items will help restore the foundation of the 1850s museum.

For more information, call Ruth Dale at (734) 425-1955 or Virginia Braun at (734) 427-4648.

Yard sale

The YWCA Western Wayne County will host a Yard Sale 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, July 21, and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, July 22.

Office supplies, office furniture, children's toys and other items will be on sale. The Yard

Sale will be held at the YWCA Administrative Offices, 26279 Michigan Ave., and proceeds from the sale will benefit the families served by the YWCA.

The YWCA also is looking for volunteers from the community to help organize items to be sold, and help work the day of the sale. For more information, call the YWCA Western Wayne County at (313) 561-4110 Ext. 18.

Outreach clinic

The Legal Aid and Defender Association Inc. will conduct a free outreach clinic on civil legal services for income-eligible residents at 9:30 a.m. Wednesday, July 19, at the Westland Senior Friendship Center, 1119 N. Newburgh, Westland.

Attendees are asked to register before 10:30 a.m. A Legal Aid attorney will assist only those persons who have done so by that time.

For further information, call Gina Polley, director of community relations and governmental affairs, at (313) 964-4111, Ext. 6440 or (877) 964-5310, or by e-mail at gpolley@ladetroit.org.

Flea Market

Vendors are needed for a flea market 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 9, at Good Shepherd Reformed Church at Wayne Road and Hunter in Westland. Space is available at \$20 per space. Applications are available by calling Ray or Jackie Gagnon at (734) 722-7225.

Craft Show

Table rental is available at the cost of \$20 for the annual St. Theodore Confraternity of Christian Women craft show 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 21, in the Parish Social Hall at 8200 Wayne Road, Westland. Call Mary at (734) 425-4421 (voice mail #10) to reserve a table.

Enrollment offered

St. Damian Catholic School is accepting enrollment for fall. It offers preschool for children ages 3 and 4, kindergarten either three full days or five full days, and classes for students in grades one through eight. The school is located at 29891 Joy Road in Westland. Summer hours are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. For information call (734) 421-6130.

Antiques appraisals

The Westland senior Friendship Center will host its

fifth annual Newburgh Road Show, an antiques appraisal, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday, July 28.

Admission will be \$1. Col. Thomas Moody of Blue Willow Antiques will be doing the appraisals.

He specializes in glass, pottery, furniture, radios, kitchenware, war memorabilia, quilts, dolls and toys.

There will be a charge of \$3 per item appraised, with a limit of three appraisals. Refreshments will be available for a small donation.

The Friendship Center is at 1119 N. Newburgh, south of Ford, Westland. For more information, call (734) 722-7628.

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.

Eclectic Crafters

Ever thought of trying a craft but were afraid of investing too much before you knew if you were going to like it? Ever wanted a quiet place to do your scrapbooking?

Ever wonder if there are others as crazy about art and crafts as you are?

The answer to those questions could be the Eclectic Crafters which meet 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. the second and third Monday of every month and 5:30-8:30 p.m. the first Monday from at the Bailey Center in the Westland Civic Center Complex on Ford Road west of Carlson.

The program is offered in association with the Westland Parks and Recreation Department. For \$3, participants can try out different crafts, art materials and tools or bring their own project to work on. There will be inexpensive make-and-takes available. For more information, call (734) 620-3938.

Senior volleyball

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

If interested, call Mel Tockstein at (734) 722-0159.

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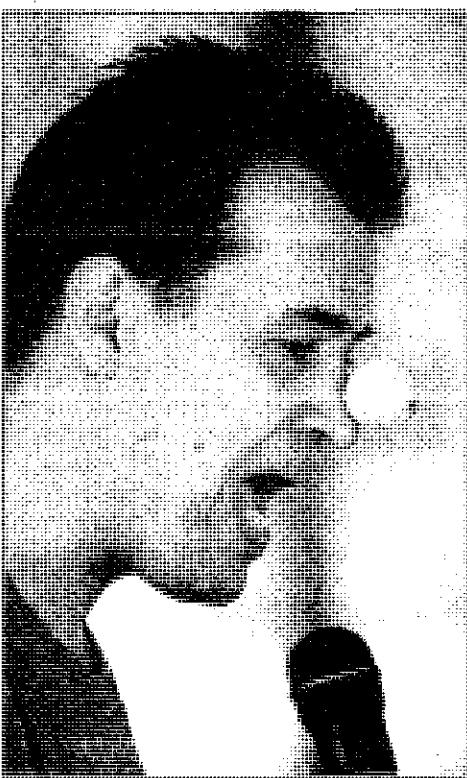
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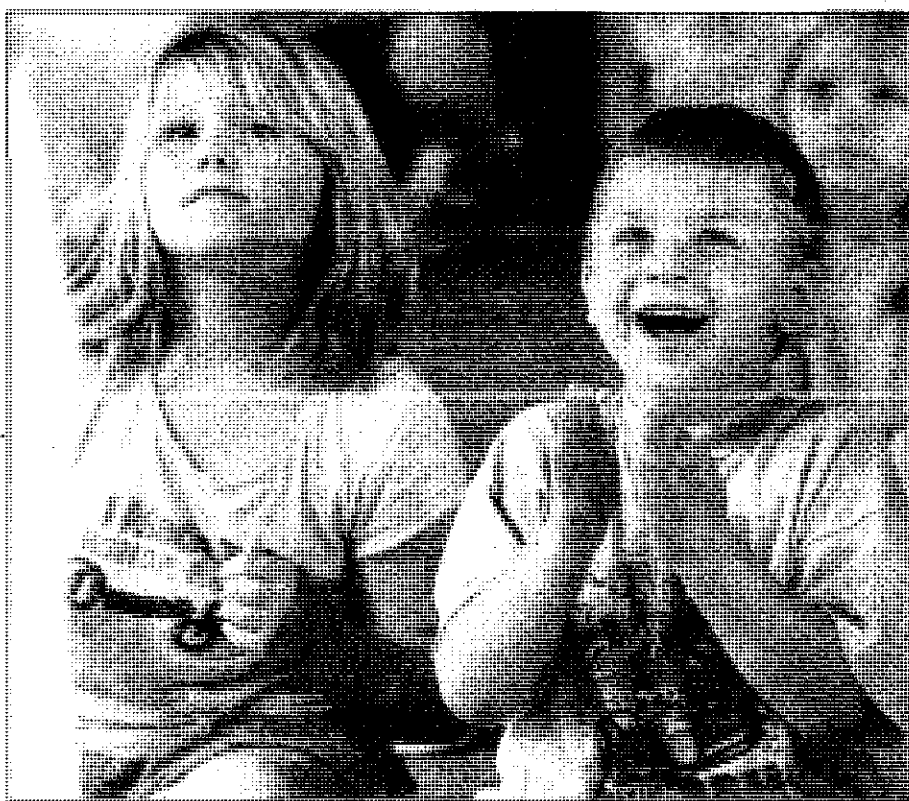
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020460123



It's magic

Gordon the Magician performs magic for the children.



Westland youngsters Evelyn Acerrano, 9, and her brother Genaro, 7, keep their eyes on Gordon the Magician as he performs tricks for the children at the Afternoon Delight Summer Series at Garden City Park.

'Compassionate' pastor shared faith, love of life

BY STEPHANIE ANGELNY CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

As pastor of St. Timothy Presbyterian Church in Livonia, the Rev. Janet A. Noble-Richardson touched the lives of many.

The 44-year-old Plymouth resident served the church for 18 years. On Tuesday, July 11, Noble-Richardson died in a three-car crash on the Ohio Turnpike. She had been traveling to a family cabin, friends said, but never made it to her destination. The fatal crash occurred shortly before 10:30 p.m. near Brecksville, Ohio.

Ohio Highway Patrol Lt. Chris Butts said it was raining when Noble-Richardson apparently lost control of her Ford Explorer and hit the left median wall while traveling the Ohio Turnpike.

"After she struck the median, her car came to rest in the left lane with the lights out, and was hit by an oncoming Toyota Camry," Butts said. "It hit her rear quarter panel, spun the car and ejected her. She was pronounced dead on arrival to the hospital."

The news brought an entire community together Wednesday night in Livonia. A memorial service filled St. Timothy's, said Ron Hendry, a Livonia resident and friend.

"People of all faiths were there," he said. "Catholics and Methodists. They loved this lady."

David Kourdt, a longtime member of St. Timothy, served on the committee with seven other members when the church was searching for a new pastor 18 years ago.

"There was a radiance about her all the time," he said. "She is a true Christian, a true believer."

Kourdt said Noble-Richardson knew she had been called to be a pastor. Her impact surpassed St. Timothy's walls. She was active in the Presbytery as a whole, Kourdt said. In a group of more than 90 Detroit-area Presbyterian churches, he said she also made an impact on her fellow clergy. "A number of

them came and spoke about what a wonderful person she was (during Wednesday's service)," he said. "She was so loved by everyone, so compassionate."

Hendry said: "She was the reason we joined the church. She was a wonderful woman. Her charisma from the pulpit effected everyone."

It certainly affected Evelyn Ritenour and her husband, Don. The Northville residents considered their pastor to be like a daughter to them.

Ritenour said she came to know Noble-Richardson 16 years ago, shortly after she became pastor at the Livonia church. What struck Ritenour the most was Noble-Richardson's love of children — and the way that admiration was returned.

In her time at St. Timothy, the vacation bible school program continued to grow and thrive, according to Kourdt.

Ritenour noted that the church members themselves share a closeness "because of the love Janet gave us all."

"Ministers have told us they don't know of another church as close," Ritenour said. "We suffer, cry, rejoice and laugh together."

Her life was not without hardship, Ritenour said. Noble-Richardson had been battling cancer and underwent chemotherapy several times.

"We were all praying it would disappear," she said. "Our prayers were answered. Not the way we wanted them to be."

Survivors include her husband, Matthew Richardson; father, the Rev. Robert Noble; brother, Thomas (Margaret) Noble; sister, Margaret (the Rev. Mark) Ruppert; and six nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her mother, Ethelyn.

Visitation will be 1-9 p.m. Sunday at Harry J. Will Funeral Home on Six Mile in Livonia. Visitation at St. Timothy, at 16700 Newburgh, will be at 10 a.m. Monday, followed by services at 11 a.m. Memorial donations may be sent to the church.

Staff writer Tony Bruscatto contributed to this report.

Lions award scholarships

The Wayne Lions Club has provided \$2,000 in scholarship money to local students, president Will DePetro has announced.

Winners from the 2006 graduating class are James Capraro of Wayne Memorial High School (\$750), Bruce DeBruhl of John Glenn High School (\$750) and Mara Magyarosi of the William D. Ford Career Technical Center (\$500).

An award dinner was held recently at China Star restaurant in Westland. Selection was based on financial need, academic achievement and community involvement.

Board to host 'coffee, conversation'

BY DAVE VARGA
STAFF WRITER

As new president of the Livonia Board of Education, Lynda Scheel believes, "Communication is something we really want to improve on."

Toward that effort, board members will start a series of "coffee and conversation" meetings to provide give-and-take discussion with about 25-30 selected residents, by reservation only.

A maximum of three board members will attend, with trustees rotating their participation.

Meetings will be held at 6:30-8 p.m. Mondays at the board office, July 17, 24 and 31, and Aug. 7 and 21. The sessions won't be open to the gen-

eral public and community participants for the first few meetings will be invited by members of the District Transition Team.

Later, Scheel said, a method will be set up for people to sign up.

For now, those interested can contact the DTT at its Web site (www.livonia.k12.mi.us/transition/transition.html).

No agenda will be set at the outset of the meetings, and Scheel wants the conversations to become an added method of communication.

"We hope people will bring up issues as they come up and don't let things fester," she said.

The district has faced turmoil in the wake of the board's approval in December of the controversial Legacy Initiative

reorganization and cost-savings plan. That plan, which sparked a recall of five board members in the Aug. 8 election, has made many board meetings contentious, making it difficult for effective audience communication. "People don't get the feedback," Scheel said, and that leaves many frustrated.

Initial limits on participants will help ensure that the meetings are productive, according to Supt. Randy Liepa.

"Allowing either side to pack it would not be appropriate," he said.

The board is announcing its plans for the meetings, along with plans for an "Asset Utilization Committee" to look at district properties, in a special mailer being sent to district residents. The flier also introduces each board member.

"We really need to start bringing this community back together," Scheel said.

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SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
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2006-2007

Regular meetings of the Board of Education of the Livonia Public Schools School District shall be held at 7:00 p.m., in the Board of Education offices, 15125 Farmington Road, Livonia, Michigan, 734-744-2500, on the first and third Mondays of each month with the following exceptions:

- A regular meeting will not be held on July 3 or 17, 2006
- A regular meeting will not be held on August 7 or 21, 2006
- A regular meeting will not be held on September 4, 2006
- A regular meeting will not be held on January 1, 2007
- A regular meeting will not be held on February 5 or 19, 2007
- A regular meeting will not be held on April 16, 2007

Therefore, regular Board meetings will be held on the following dates:

July 10	August 14, 28	September 18	October 2, 16
November 6, 20	December 4, 18	January 15, 29	February 12
March 5, 19	April 2, 23	May 7, 21	June 4, 18

In general, the second and fourth Mondays of each month shall be reserved for Board committee meetings or special and/or study meetings as needed.

Special meetings of the Board of Education may be called by the President of the Board, or any two members thereof, by serving on the other members a written notice of the day, time, location and purpose of such meetings. Service of the notices shall be made in accordance with Board Policy BCAC and with the provisions of P.A. 267 and the General School Laws of the State of Michigan, and may be made by a member of the Board or any employee of the Board.

The Secretary of the Board shall cause public notice to be given of all meetings of the Board of Education in accordance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act.

Proposed minutes of Board meetings will be available for public inspection during regular business hours at the Board of Education offices, 15125 Farmington Road, Livonia, Michigan, not more than eight business days after the date of each meeting, and approved minutes of each meeting will be available for public inspection during regular business hours at the same location not more than five business days after the meeting at which the minutes are approved.

The President and/or Secretary of the Board shall be authorized to sign all contracts and legal documents on behalf of the Board of Education following approval by resolution of the Board unless the Board specifically designates other members of the Board or administration in its resolution to approve the contract or legal document.

Publish: July 16, 2006

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That is not a statement. It is the title of a book. It was one of the first books I ever read and I will never forget it, though I haven't seen it in nearly a half a century.

For whatever reason, that book made an impression on me and began a lifelong love affair with reading, and later, writing.



Greg Kowalski

Libraries around the nation, including those right here in the Birmingham-Bloomfield area, are promoting their summer reading programs. We tend to look at summer reading the same way we look at summer movies — pretty lightweight stuff: Harold Robbins and Batman.

There's nothing wrong with that. I still remember reading a wonderful science fiction book called "Garbage World," which was set on a planet where everyone else tossed their trash. Not exactly great literature, but it was enjoyable and I didn't feel I wasted my time reading it.

But I still have a fondness for the classics, and I encourage everyone who has an interest in great reading, writing or storytelling to check out the great books. Long ago I embarked on a journey of reading every classic novel that has ever been written. It's a subjective list to an extent, although many are generally recognized as classics — "Moby Dick," "War and Peace," "David Copperfield," and "Huckleberry Finn," for example.

Those are wonderful books, but only represent the standards. There is a whole set of other classics that are generally overlooked that are definitely worth checking out.

One of my all-time favorites is "Sister Carrie" by Theodore Dreiser. Published in 1900 it was quite scandalous in its day, but it is one of the most remarkable pieces of writing I have ever encountered. It offers an incredibly vivid portrait of late 19th century America, perhaps unmatched anywhere. In a similar vein, "McTeague," Frank Norris' naturalistic novel from the same period, is gritty

and powerful.

Both books are beautifully written and demonstrate how simple words can be crafted into compelling stories that can touch your soul.

Although many of the greatest novelists were active in the 19th century, when reading was a principal form of entertainment, many modern novelists have created great works. I found Leon Uris' "Mila 18" utterly enthralling. It is the rare kind of book that led me to start reading first-thing Saturday morning to pick up where I had left off Friday night. Based on fact, it tells the tragic story of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising against the Nazis in World War II.

This is powerful writing. Marjorie Rawling's "The Yearling," from 1938, is another superb piece of writing with one of the most memorable endings I've encountered in a book.

And there are so many more: Ignazio Silone's "Bread and Wine," Ken Kesey's "Sometimes a Great Notion," Peter Matthiessen's "Far Tortuga," Carson McCuller's "The Heart is a Lonely Hunter," and for the truly adventurous, Stendahl's "The Red and the Black," are just a few.

Recently Henry Roth's "Call it Sleep" resurfaced again after being periodically ignored for the last 70 years. It is an amazingly rich story of early 20th century immigrant life in New York. Read it, and you feel like you are there. All of these books open up whole new vistas to us. They take us from the Caribbean to the ghettos of New York and Warsaw, or to the mountains of the Northwest. And they show us the range of human — and inhuman — experiences.

Every time I get the uppity feeling that I am a good writer, I pick up one of these books and am put back into place. This isn't just writing. It is artistry.

Make your summer reading program one to remember. Check out some really great books.

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

Looming Medicaid changes create a cause for concern

Every so often, Congress changes the rules of Medicaid eligibility for nursing home coverage. In recent years, the law has been relatively stable, with no changes in federal law since 1993.

In our collective experience of 35 years of practicing elder law we have never seen such drastic and detrimental changes in the law when it comes to providing benefits to our elderly, disabled and the poor.



Don Rosenberg



Danielle Mayoras

In February, President Bush signed the 2005 Deficit Reduction Act (DRA), which includes changes that tighten Medicaid asset transfer rules and affect Medicaid eligibility for nursing home care. These changes have not yet been enacted in Michigan.

Here is a brief summary of some of the expected changes in the law. When and how these looming laws are interpreted and applied in Michigan remains to be seen. Some of the most significant changes are:

■ A lengthened lookback period. States previously used a three-year period to examine the financial records of Medicaid applicants and determine if asset transfers (gifts) were for less than fair market value. Under the DRA, the lookback period will be changed to five years.

■ Altered start of penalties. For assets transfers that are less than fair market value, the penalty period will now begin at the date the individual would otherwise have been eligible for Medicaid, but for the asset transfers, rather than the date of the asset transfer itself.

Charitable and political contributions as well as innocent gifts to family are types of transfers that could result in an Medicaid ineligibility penalty. For example, a fairly healthy grandma gives her granddaughter \$20,000 to assist with her college education.

Three years later grandma has a stroke and requires nursing home care and over the next 18 months spends her life savings on her own care. Forty-eight months after her gift to granddaughter, grandma is now out of assets and applies for Medicaid.

She will be penalized for about four months before she will receive Medicaid benefits, even though she has no more money to pay for her care. How her care will be paid for during the

four-month period of ineligibility is anyone's guess.

■ New test of home equity. Medicaid previously disregarded the value of a primary residence in counting assets. Under the DRA, individuals with more than \$500,000 in home equity will be ineligible for Medicaid nursing home benefits. The states do have the option of raising the threshold to \$750,000.

■ Treatment of annuities. Changes made concerning annuities are very complex and as of this date it is unclear on how they will be interpreted. The gist of these changes is to provide a requirement that the state be named as a remainder beneficiary to the extent medical services have been paid by Medicaid. Previously, federal government treated certain annuities as exempt assets and did not require that the government be named as the beneficiary.

■ New proof of citizenship requirements. Finally, the new Medicaid laws require individuals to provide satisfactory documentary evidence of citizenship or nationality when initially applying for Medicaid or upon a recipient's first Medicaid redetermination. This portion of the law is very troubling in that there are many persons who were born overseas or in the South who do not have a birth certificate.

Currently, these laws are not in effect in Michigan. It is expected that they will not become effective until sometime in the late fall or early 2007. The message from our government is obvious: One needs to plan and plan early or you will have to "go it" on your own. The best time to plan is before Michigan implements these changes. You should realize that even though there are new laws looming, there are still many ways that you can legally and effectively save the assets. This will continue to be true even when the new laws are finally effective.

A person's goal should always be to provide the greatest quality of care to themselves and their loved ones at the least cost to them and their family. This goal can be accomplished even if one is already in a nursing home. Remember, it is never too late to plan. In light of these new laws, it is now more important than ever to work with an experienced elder law attorney.

Don L. Rosenberg and Danielle B. Mayoras are the founders of The Center for Elder Law. More information can be found at The Center's web site, www.thecenterforelderlaw.com or by calling (248) 641-PLAN. If you would like to be kept advised of new developments and other elder law information, you can subscribe to the center's free Internet newsletter.

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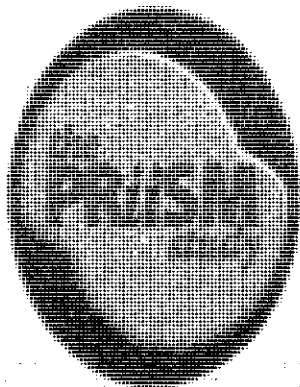
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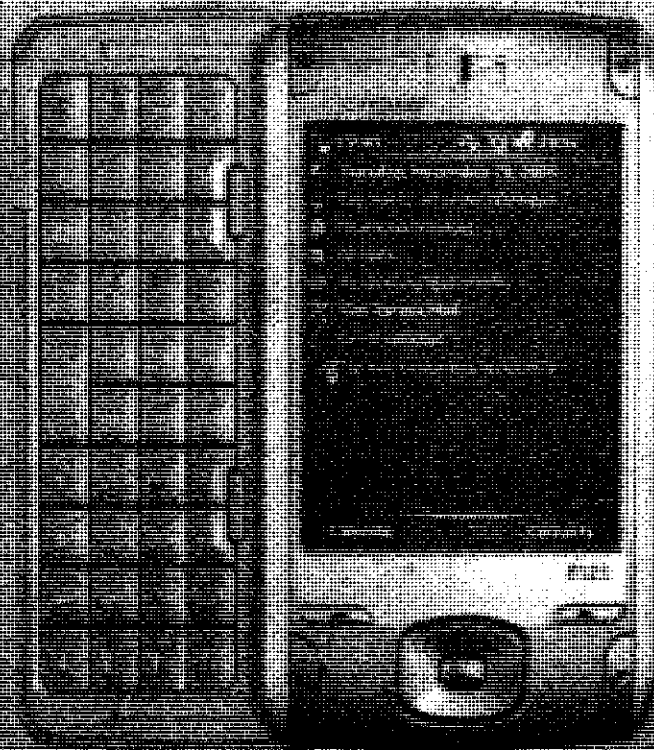
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