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Book helps kids live a do-it-right life

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SUNDAY
September 3, 2006

WESTLAND Observer

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Jury convicts man in Westland salon shooting

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

A gunman who opened fire in a Westland nail salon where his wife worked has been convicted of trying to kill her boss for refusing to fire her. Andy Nguyen, 32, could face penalties ranging up to life in prison after a Wayne County jury convicted him Wednesday on charges of assault with intent to murder and felony firearms. "This guy was obviously by his actions quite dangerous, and the verdict was appropriate and just," said

What do you think about this story? E-mail your responses to smason@hometownlife.com.

Westland police Sgt. Michael Harhold, who handled the case at trial. Nguyen, a Dearborn Heights resident, was upset that his estranged wife wouldn't quit her job at Golden Nails, a salon near Merriman and Cherry Hill, authorities said. Nguyen, who earlier had threat-

ened to kill his wife, took a .40-caliber handgun to the salon on the afternoon of Feb. 28 and confronted owner Dung Hoang, said now-retired police Sgt. James Dexter.

Nguyen was accused of pointing the handgun at Hoang's face and pulling the trigger, but the weapon didn't initially fire. "It just went click," police Lt. James Ridener said at the time. Nguyen then worked with the gun and prepared to fire again as the two men began struggling near the back

of the salon, where Hoang had been eating lunch, Dexter said. Hoang was hit on the head with the gun, and Nguyen then fired several shots. Most of the bullets hit the ceiling and wall, but one grazed Hoang's head, Dexter said. As the struggle continued, Hoang managed to bring Nguyen under control, and he took the gun from him as the wife and others fled the salon, police said. Nguyen fled through the salon's rear door and around to the front parking lot of the strip mall where the

incident happened, Dexter said. By then, police arrived and captured him. Testimony started Tuesday and ended Wednesday in Wayne County Circuit Judge Bruce Morrow's courtroom, and a jury returned a verdict the same afternoon it started deliberating, Harhold said. Nguyen is expected to face sentencing later this month.

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



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Wetting a line

Emily Johnson, 8, of Canton, was recently fishing at Friendship Lake in Westland with her grandmother, Jeanne Kashian of Garden City. Emily, who says her favorite colors are sky blue and pink, said a few fish nibbled on the line, but she wasn't catching any.

Ceremony will mark 9/11 anniversary

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Five years after the 9/11 terrorist attacks stunned a nation, Westland will remember their impact.

St. Matthew Lutheran School and Church will sponsor a memorial service at 11 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 10, near a flagpole behind Westland City Hall, on Ford Road east of Newburgh.

St. Matthew third-grade teacher Jane Gusé announced the ceremony and said the public is invited.

Pastor Kurt Lambart will address the crowd, and two St. Matthew school choirs will perform patriotic songs such as *God Bless America* and *Let There Be Peace on Earth*, Gusé said.

Lutheran High School Westland's choir will perform *Show Me Thy Ways*, she said.

The ceremony will include a tribute to local police officers and firefighters, Gusé said.

"We want to honor our everyday heroes - the police and firefighters who put themselves out there every day for us," she said.

On Friday, Westland Mayor Sandra Cicirelli said she will address the crowd. She said it's important to remember 9/11, particularly due to ongoing terrorist threats.

"It's not only important to commemorate that event five years later," she said, "but it reminds us that we still have to be very vigilant."

Family auto shop weathers tough times

BY DIANE GALE ANDREASSI
CORRESPONDENT

New technology has put a dent in the collision shop industry, but it hasn't closed a long-standing business in Westland.

Darrell Howe, owner of Howe Collision, says honesty has been the hallmark of the 25 years he's been in business, and that keeps customers coming back.

"We focus on honesty and good quality work," Howe said. "We don't take advantage of people. Some people might think (we) do, but those are the people who don't understand what it costs."

Business has been affected, however, by vehicle safety fea-

tures that result in fewer accidents.

"The biggest problem in this business is that you have your third brake light, anti-lock brakes and sensors to keep you from backing into things," Howe said.

Another change is that the steel used to produce vehicles is harder and it makes repairing cars more difficult. However, it's actually safer for passengers, Howe said.

"It used to be you heat it up and bend it," he said. "Now the heat distorts the steel so bad that you can't heat it. They made the cars to protect the passenger. They made it so it will fold up on the outside and it doesn't get to the passenger. It's a softer impact. With the

old frame there was more of a harder impact when you got hit, because the steel wouldn't give."

When the steel can't be bent, used parts or new replacements are installed.

"It depends on what the customer wants and what's more feasible price-wise and to fix the car properly," Howe said.

New technology also has helped make work easier for Howe and other collision shops in the last two and a half decades. Today, for instance, Howe Collision has down draft spray booths with a gas-fired oven.

"We used to air dry them and now we bake them," Howe said. "Before, we couldn't touch it the next day, and now

an hour later we can work on them. It cuts a day, sometimes two days, off the repair time."

Howe Collision is known for telling customers to save their money and get another car if the repair costs are too high.

"If a car's not worth repairing he'll tell the customer you don't want to put that much money in the car," said Howe's sister, Beth Simmons, Howe Collision manager.

But some customers just don't want to give up their vehicles.

"I've had a lot of people come in here and put in twice as much as what it's worth, because they don't want to get rid of their car," Howe said.

Howe Collision repairs domestic and foreign cars and



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Howe's Collision in Westland is celebrating 25 years in business. Darrell Howe (left), sister Beth Simmons and Howe's son, Tommy, stand in the paint booth area of the shop.

backs its work with a lifetime guarantee. Howe also offers door-to-door pickups and free

loaners determined on a case-

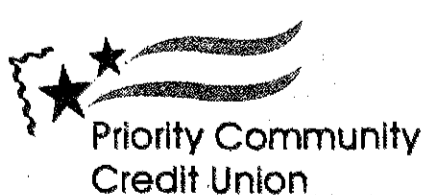
PLEASE SEE AUTO SHOP, A6

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Volume 42
Number 29



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Coming Thursday



Picasso, Rembrandt, and Rock & Roll are part of DIA's September reopening celebration. In Filter.

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INFORMATION CENTRAL

Local history at fingertips

Where do you go for local information? The *Westland Observer* offers current news and activities for the Westland area. City Hall and the city Web site provide an amazing amount of information ranging from city services and permits and forms to community profiles and city maps. The Westland Historical Museum houses a wealth of information about the history of Nankin Township and the city of Westland in its books, files and its knowledgeable members.

There are times when you need to go to the source for your information. However, in most cases, the William P. Faust Public Library of Westland can offer you "one-stop shopping." We are open more hours than other city services, and we offer free Internet access. Our staff will do its best to find you what you need in a timely manner.

The library not only has copies of current local newspapers, we also provide access to the *Observer* on microfilm or CD, dating back to 1989. We maintain a clipping file of the *Observer* newspapers that run from 1999 to the present.

The library houses a number of useful items about the city's business, too. The current year's city council agendas and minutes are kept in a binder at the reference desk, and we have copies of previous years, back to 1997. Videotapes of recent City Council meetings are available for checkout. Hard copies of the Westland city ordinances and the Wayne County ordinances are available at the reference desk. We house a variety of city documents, such as municipal budgets in our local history reference collection.

The library owns local city histories,

including: *History of the City of Westland*, *History of Eloise*, *Eloise: Poor House, Farm, Asylum, and Hospital 1839-1984*, *Wayne County Infirmary, Psychiatric, and General Hospital Complex at Eloise, Michigan 1832-1982*, *Bark Covered House (Dearborn)*, *Footpaths to Freeways (Livonia)*, *Garden City Chronicle and Northville, Michigan*.

Looking for a high school yearbook? We own recent yearbooks from John Glenn, Wayne Memorial, Churchill, Franklin and Westland Lutheran.

Whatever your need, call (734) 326-6123 or visit the library at 6123 Central City Parkway, and we will be happy to help you.

Highlighted Activities
Teen Advisory Board (TAB) Meeting

At 7 p.m. Sept. 6, join other teens and have your say in helping to select books, programs and prizes for teen activities. All sixth- through 12th-graders are welcome. Pick up a registration form in the young adult area of the library.

A Drug-free Approach to ADHD 7 p.m. Sept. 11. Join Dr. Brian K. Brackney to learn about safe, natural solutions to help improve behavior and performance. This program is specifically designed for parents, teachers, day care supervisors, or anyone who interacts with children.

Information Central is compiled by Mariyn Kwik, at the William P. Faust Public Library, 6123 Central City Parkway, Westland. For more information, call (734) 326-6123.



PHOTOS BY TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

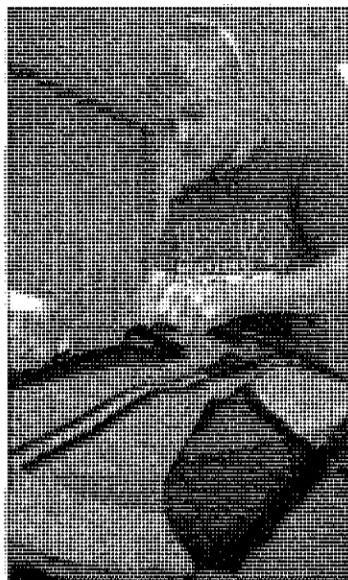
Donors fill backpacks for new school year

Back to school can be an expensive time. However, the donations of the Livonia Goodfellows, Livonia Youth Commission and the Westland Masons will help 175 elementary students return to the classroom with new backpacks filled with donated paper, markers, crayons, notebooks, pencils, etc. Community Choice Credit Union provided backpacks.

"We're basically providing staples," said Jeff Nork, Livonia Youth Commission member.

Recipients are lower-income Livonia students selected through the help of the Goodfellows. The youngsters picked up their backpacks Tuesday at Livonia's Civic Park Senior Center.

Participants made their way through the maze of backpacks at the Civic Park Senior Center, as the children found just the right one out of the supplies donated by the Livonia Youth Commission, Livonia Goodfellows and Westland Masons.



Thirteen-year-old Steven Tuyo of Livonia picks out his backpack from those provided by donors.



Lauonda Ward of Livonia and her son, Andrew, 9, check out the school supplies inside one of the donated backpacks.

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CITY OF WESTLAND PUBLIC NOTICE

The following appeals will be heard at a public hearing to be held in the Council Chambers of Westland City Hall, 36601 Ford Road, Westland, MI on Wednesday, September 20, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. at which time comments may be directed to the Board during audience participation. If you wish to reply by mail, send your comments to the above address. All property owners whose names appear in our tax rolls located within 300' of this property are being notified pursuant to this statute.

Petition #2560, 2609 Cascade Court
Request for a front yard setback variance from Ordinance 248 in order to construct a 6' x 12.9' covered porch addition in the front of the existing home.

Petition #2563, 34312 Parkgrove
Request for a side yard fence height variance from Article X of the Westland City Code of Ordinances in order to install a 6' high privacy fence in the side yard of the existing home.

Petition #2564, 539 N. Wayne Road
Request for a use variance from Ordinance 248 in order to re-establish a non-conforming residential use of a commercial property located at the site.

Petition #2565, 125 S. Merriman Road
Request for two variances from Ordinance 248 in order to demolish the existing service station building located on the site and construct a new service station building with convenience store.

Petition #2566, 35810 Florane
Request for two variances from Ordinance 248 in order to construct a 6' x 17'8" covered porch addition to the front of the existing home.

Petition #2567, 30518 Louise
Request for two variances from Article X of the Westland City Code of Ordinances as a result of the installation of a four (4) foot high chain link fence in the front yard of the existing home.

Petition #2568, 35605 Warren Road
Request for a sign area variance from Ordinance 248 in order to install 42.5 feet of wall-mounted signage at the existing commercial site.

Publish: September 3, 2006

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Summer Reading Program attracts crowd

Employees of the Westland public library are pleased with the results of the 6 Summer Reading Program.

The program attracted 1,114 children, with 564 of them completing the program, according to children's associate Bernadette Dewyer.

Community sponsors, including the Friends of the Public Library of Westland, helped make the program fun for the children by providing gift certificates, prizes and incentives for participants.

The local businesses include Frito Lay, Skating Station II, Mary Denning's Cake Shoppe, 7-Eleven, Culvers Restaurant, Target Stores, D & D Bicycle, Glo-Golf and WLND Cable TV.

Youngsters completing the program included:

Nicholas Adamson, Christopher Afak, Daniel Aguirre, Adwait Ahire, Nâdim Ahmad, Aisha Ahmed, Semeeah Alam, Fatima Alam, Taia Syed Ali, Bailey Allen, Matthew Allen, Madison Anderson, Joshua Andres, Nicholas Andres, Deriale Andrews, Brandon Antoon, Dylan Antoon, Jane Awoh, Ave Maria Awosik, Adrienne Ayers, Luisa Bajao, Cora Bailou, JaAnna Barile, Connor Barlow, Maxwell Barnes, Webster Barnes, Walker Barnes, Ashlyn Barnes, Cameron Barsy, Jonathan Bartley, Tori Batko, Nathan Battah, Aniavin Battle, Evan Baysinger, Ryan Baysinger, Joshua Beasley, Benjamin Beauchamp, Samantha Beech, Branson Bellamy, Chad Bellamy.

Others included Devin Bennett, Benjamin Biber, Andy Biber, Aubrey Boston, Jeremiah Bowie, Jermaine Bowie, Jacquelyn Bowling, Zachary Bowling, Alexander Bowling, Olivia Brackenridge, Gavin Breuer, Brittany Brewster, Justin Brown, Zac Buda, Erica Buda, Timo Budiono, Ari Budiono, Ethan Buehler, Megan Buford, Jason Buford, Liz Burke, Corey Burkhardt, Alexandra Bushway, Melanie Bushway, Jacob Busick, Jeffrey Busick, Sanfelis Butler, Jeffery Butler, Annie Butterbaugh, Matt Butterbaugh, Victoria Campbell, Andrew Campbell, Christian Carlin, Bailey Carlin, Maliq Carr, Maria Cassar, Larry Cassar, Michael Chapman, Stephanie Chapman, Zoe Chapman, Sydney Chapman, Andy Chen, April Ciaravino, Rachel Cizauskas.

Others included Summer Clark, Olivia Clark, Trevor Clark, Christopher Codd, Whitney Coletta, Ryan Conley, Matthew Conley, Madison Conley, Scott Cook, Grace Cook, Rachel Corp, Oscar Cortes, Lizbeth Cortes, Yunus Cotton, Zacharia Cotton, Alex Cotton, Chanta Cuff, Chaurice Cuff, Cheyenne Cuff, Chantanea Cuff, Channel Cuff, Lex Currie, Alana Cyrus, Nicholas



Angelo Greene, 9, (left) and his sister, Ariana Marino, 4, of Westland react to Ming the Magnificent.

Daniels, Hannah Daniels, Christian Daniels, Nicole Danish, Madilyn Darling, Diamond Davis, Qynton Davis, Darieli DeBiasi, Peter DeGuia, Joseph Dempsey, Kayla Dempster, Tess DesJardins, Ethan DesJardins, James Dismuke, Justin Ditmore, Rachel Ditmore, Rachel Divinagracia, Jessica Djokovic, Tyler Djokovic, Michael Douglas, Chris Douglas, Jillian Downey.

Others included Andrew Doyle, Hailey Doyle, Abby Drabicki, Nathan Drabicki, Erin Drabicki, Zack English, Alexis Epley, Ryan Erickson, Julia Evasic, Amelia Evasic, Brendan Ferracchio, Emily Ferracchio, Camryn Fields, Mackenzie Fields, Madeline Filiatraut, John Filiatraut, Alexandra Filiatraut, Ariana Fisher, Briana Fisher, Rebecca Foley, Chloe Franklin, Travis Fry, Christina Gallo, Gage Gansen, Dalton Gasior, Allison Gasior, James Gibbs, Brianna Gill, Catrina Gillies, Tia Gillies, Taylor Gillies, Kaitlyn Glassmeyer, Lauren Glassmeyer, Colin Gluth, Madhav Goli, Gema Gomez, Kyle Gothe, April Grace, Emma Grace, Jackie Grace, Ellary Graf, Eric Graf, Autumn Green, Angelo Greene, Meghan Gruebnaue, Kristen Gruebnaue.

Others included Derek Gruebnaue, A.J. Guzik, Logan Guzik, Emily Hackerd, Joshua Hagerman, Brooke Hale, Aldin Halitovic, Sara Halitovic, Peter Hamill, Jason Hamilton, Nicole Hamilton, Alyssa Hanley, Jacquelyn Hansen, Shelby Hansen, Ashley Hansen, Bailey Hansen, Kaitlyn Harris, Courtney Harris, Zachary Harrison, Emily Harrison, Jennifer Hegenauer,

Stephen Hegenauer, Ryan Hendershot, Jarret Hendershot, Brady Henderson, Malana Henning, Jacob Henning, Caitlin Hill, Benjamin Hodge, Caleb Hoffman, Kenton Hoffman, V. Holloway, Shirelle Holmes, Montel Hood, Tyler Hoskins, Danielle Hoskins, Nicholas Hoyer, Lindsey Hoyer, Travis Humbach, Rachel Hyams, Stephanie Hyams, Zuhâ Ijaz, Sabih Ijaz, Mackenzie Inman.

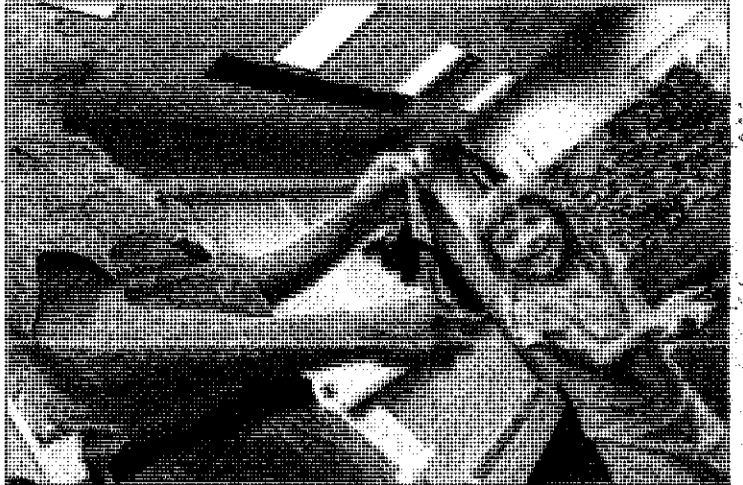
Others included Madison Inman, Nathaniel Irvine, Christiaan Irvine, Katie Jaber, Zack Jaber, Joey Jaber, Hunter Jacobs, Hannah Jacobs, Rebecca James, Jayden Jamison, Veer Jhaveri, Jeet Jhaveri, Anish Jog, Kayla Johnson, Elizabeth Johnson, Brittney Johnson, Brendan Johnson, Karissa Johnson, Taylor Jones, Jalene Jones, Jessie Jordan, Rucha Joshi, Eric Juarez, Amber Kalajian, Parag Kalothia, Rachel Kett, Marisa Kett, Kaitlyn Kett, David Kett, Ashlyn Kiedrowski, Kaily Kiedrowski, Amber Killingbeck, Brooke Killingbeck, Abby Klann, Viktorya Knaub, Michael Knaub, Marsha Knueppel, Kayleigh Kolb, Trevor Koleda, Skyler Koleda, Lauren Koleda, Cameron Kruger, Aric Kurash, Julian Lacey, Josh Lago, Madison Lago.

Mackenzie Lago, Saicharon Lakshmanan, Govinda Lakshmanan, Anna Lauber, Hunter Leforge, Madison Leforge, Travis Leforge, Ian Lewis, Julia Lewis, Kaeli Lewis, Sean Linden, Corey Littlefield, Kyle Littlefield, Lauren Lombardo, Adrain Loveday, Eric Lucht, Jason Ludwig, Cassie Mabelitini, Taylor Mabelitini, Karim

Mahamid, Smantha Mallory, Jacob Manning.

Others included Gregory Manns, Ariana Marino, Justin Markey, Danielle Marlett, Petar Martinowski, Mohamad Masada, Ameen Masada, Ahmand Masada, Cherise McAdoo, Connor McAnalley, Cody McAnalley, Megan McCurry, Autumn Melavey, Luke Melville, Olivia Melville, Rebecca Mickel, Nathan Mickel, Taylor Mifsud, Jacob Miltello, Dominick Miltello, Tanisha Mitra, Jacob Monday, Jazmin Montes, Zachary Montgomery, Ian Montgomery, Anisha Moorthy, Trice Morgan, Kaitlin Morgan, Meggan Morin, Sabrina Morrison, Angela Morrison, Ray Morrison, Madison Moss, Peter Mueller, Hope Mummert, Noah Munson, Taiyce Murray, Lauren Mykrantz, Amanda Mykrantz, Trent Nunn, Emma O' Beirne, Max O' Beirne, Antonio Ordaz, Alejandro Ordaz, Abigail Organ, Jocelyn Organ, Jordyn Ostrowski, Joshua Ostrowski, Jenna Ostrowski, Jady Ostrowski, Karlie Pardee, Collin Parker, Jarod Parker, Chelsea Pascas, James Pascas, Mila Patel, Dimple Patel, Neil Patel, Pooja Patel, Angela Peck, Jasmin Perry, Tudor Pester, Zachary Pienton, Alexis Pienton, Rebecca Pomeroy, Daniel Quaine.

Others included Katie Ramp, Shantam Ravan, Hailey Reid, Reed Reinhold, Emma Reinhold, Katelyn Rodriguez, Seth Rosales, Daniel Rosales, Jacob Rothman, Neil Rounsifer, Jordan Routen, Cory Routen, Abigail Said, Cecilia Said, Noah Said, Ryan Salter, Joshua Salter,



Ann Stein, 6, of Westland had a little excitement helping Ming the Magnificent (Ming Louie) with a magic trick at the final program celebration.

Daniel Saltzman, Andrew Saltzman, Levi Samberski, Abigale Samborski, Christine Sankey, Joel Sankey, Carlos Santiago, Austin Schultz, Jennifer Schultz, Wesley Schumacher, Joshua Schwaegerle, Hannah Schwartz, Lindsay Schwartz, Garrett Schwemie, Daniel Selewski, Andre Senerpida, Aimee Serich, Travis Serich, Aakash Shah, Ashani Shah, Sarah Shand, Connor Shea, Kennedy Shea, Cassandra Shetron, Annika Sholander, Elizabeth Silva, Rosebelle Silvera, Oscar Silvera, Trevor Simpson, Adam Sinclair, Jason Singh, Alec Slater, Blake Slater, Zachary Smith, Matthew Smith, Aarti Sridhar, Ann Stein, Robert Stoops, Kaylee Strawser, Julia Sutton, Jeffrey Talarek, Josh Talarek, Maria Targosz, James Targosz, Joe Tarosz, Lisa Tauro, Julia Tauro, Stori Tavian, Mia Tavian, Joey Tavian, Madison Tenant, Ishan Thaker, Angelica Thompson.

Others included Hayla Thurmand, Jayden Thurmand, Paul Toth, Jacob Trombley, Hannah Trombley, Brandon Troop, Joshua Troop, Justin Trout, Kelsey Turner, Djokovic Tyler, Trevor Unsicker, Robert Unsicker, Dominick Valente, Annika VanLoton, Erika VanLoton, Thomas VanRiper, Joseph VanRiper, Jacob VanRiper, Emily VanRiper, Daniel VanRiper, Mary Vasely, Shrihika Venkat, Colleen Verla, Katelyn Verla, Josiah Vileo, Rebekah Vileo, Rosalia Vileo, Sudhir Vonkat, Siddharth Vonkataraman, Myracle Watkins, Shania Watkins, Ty Weatherwax, Seirra Weaver, Jill Wefsenmoe, Devoren Wesley, Cameron Wesley, Dorian Wesley, Devan Westfall, Evan Westphal, Alex Westphal, Colin Wethington, Vanessa Whiting, Ashley Wickman, Alison Wickman, Valery Wiley, Olivia Wiley, Natlie Wiley, Patrick Wilton, Stephenie Worthy, Matthew Wydick, Rachel Wydick, Christiana Wydick, Michelle Xie, Oliver Xu, Henry Xu, Edward Xu, Matthew Ye, Jade Ye, Nethra Yuvaraj, Merissa Zaiczynski.

Deanna Zeidan, Yasmin Zeidan, Angelica Zhou and Jonathan Zhou.

The finishers in the Teen Summer Reading Program included:

Christopher Adamczyk, Felicia Adamczyk, Andra Afak, Mehreen Ahmed, Amber Allen, Dawn Allen, Tiffany Allen, Darren Anderegg, Grace Anderson, Janet Awosika, Julianne Ayers, Yvette Ayers, Daniela Bajao, Antoine Battie, Mintoria Battie, Allan Beckman, Cody Beckman, Ewene Bernard, Nkem Bernard, Aaron Brown, Beth Brown, Taylor Brown, Preston Buehler, Angie Butler, Melissa Chesnut, Kevin Chung, Robert Codd, Laura Corp, Margarita Cortes, Lauren Daniels, Monice Dismuke, Madeleine Dlugokenski, Jennier Drum, Ashley Effer, Kyle Farrell, Nick Farrell, Brooke Femat, Karl Fletcher, Joe Foley, Kylie Gasior, Kaitlyn Gluth, Sarah Gosdzinski, Breann Graca, Sherry Green, Hailey Hoyer, Jennie Humbach, Rajah Ismail, Scott James, Jessica Jasinski, Danielle Kalajian, Katie Kalajian, Nikhil Kalothia, Jessica Kaur, Destinee Keno, Lauren King, Ryan Kobylarz, Kaltra Kruja, Becca Lawrukovich, Rachael Lawrukovich, Madelyn Leembruggen, Josh Lincoln, Alex Lohn, Megan Lohn, Areanna Luckett, Trisha Ludwig, Katrina Mahamid, Matthew Markey, Alicia Marcon, Hiba Masada, Kyla McKay, Nick Mifsud, Akshay Moorthy, Caitlyn Murphy, Victoria Parker, Mary Parrish, Rebekah Parrish, Sheel Patel, Kristen Peck, Anthony Picinini, Brittany Pultier, Nicole Quaine, Crystal Rosales, Rachel Ruohonen, Brandon Saltzman, Matthew Sankey, Jessica Schultz, A.J. Shand, Jamie Sholander, Linnea Sholander, Juliana Stewart, Nick Stone, Ronald Strawser, RuiShen Teh, Zishen Teh, Kiara Thornton, Hayley Totten, Jessica Trout, Aaron Turner, Raquel Vileo, Hope Winkles, Lauren Winkles, Chelsea Wojewski, Bobby Wood, Ty Le Wubbenhorst, and Jiji Wubbenhorst.

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Internet safety

St. Matthew Lutheran Church and School in Westland will sponsor an Internet safety class at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 20. The class will be for older students and for parents who may want information on how to keep their children safe online. It will provide information on what information youngsters should avoid putting online. The class is free and open to the public. The school/church are at 5885 N. Venoy.

Groovy time

The Sgt. Romanowski VFW Post 6896, at 28945 Joy Road in Westland, will sponsor a "70s Hippies Dance" at 8 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 23. Doors will open at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door. Second Wind will perform. There will be a prize for best hippie attire. Those attending also are urged to bring their 70s photos.

There will be food, raffles and a cash bar. For more information, call (734) 525-9454.

Crafters sought

The Sgt. Romanowski VFW Post 6896 is seeking crafters for an annual fall craft show that will be 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 4. The post is located at 28945 Joy Road. Tables and chairs are available. Reservations are needed by Oct. 4. Call Dianna Welchman

at (313) 278-3784.

St. Damian events

The St. Damian festival featuring Christian rock bands Remedy Drive and Photo 7 will be at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 8, at the church, on Joy Road east of Merriman. Gates will open at 6:30 p.m. The concert is expected to run until 11 p.m. or so.

Also, from noon to 11 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 9, and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 10, there will be inflatable rides, a casino tent, food, drinks, raffles and more. A Texas Hold-Em tournament, with tickets \$35 in advance and \$45 at the door, will run 6-11 p.m. Saturday. A spaghetti dinner is scheduled 1-4 p.m. Sunday.

In other St. Damian news, school started Monday, and hours are 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The school can be reached at (734) 427-1680.

Yard-craft sale

Watch for the big, big tents on Sept. 16 at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 37775 Palmer, Westland.

The church will be holding a

yard, craft, etc. sale 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., featuring household items, miscellaneous items and specialties items like Avon, candles, tools, houseplants and crafts of all kinds. There also will be a \$1 a bag used clothing sale inside the church, a food court to get refreshments, and a special drawing for two elephants!

All money raised will be donated to area organizations to be used to help people in our community. In the past, the church has made donations to the Salvation Army, Wayne County Family Shelter, Habitat for Humanity, World Hunger (Crop Walk), St. Mary's Outreach Center and John Bolde Food Depot and Trinity Lutheran Church, its mission partner, as well as provide Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets to Adam Jr. High families.

Senior dinner-dances

The Wayne Ford Civic League will be holding a senior dinner and dance at noon Sunday, Sept. 10 and 24 at the hall at 1645 N. Wayne Road, Westland. There will be a full

buffet dinner, beer, wine, coffee, and pop and dancing to the live entertainers.

Seniors must be at least 60 years old to attend. Tickets are \$8 for league members and \$10 for non-members. Memberships are on sale year-round and cost \$5 for seniors. Tickets are available at the door. For more information, call (734) 728-5010.

Mom 2 Mom sale

St. Damian School is hosting a Fall Mom 2 Mom Sale 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 23, 2006. New this year will be a Dad 2 Dad Sale which will take place at the same time at the school, 30055 Joy, between Middlebelt and Merriman. Table rental is \$20 table rental for the Mom 2 Mom Sale and \$15 outdoor space rental for the Dad 2 Dad Sale. For more information, call Dawn at (734) 983-0221.

Euchre returns

Friday Night Euchre/Pinochle Card Parties will be back at St. Bernadine Parish in Westland beginning Sept. 8.

Doors will open at 7 p.m. and play starts at 7:30 p.m. No partner is needed.

Admission is \$5 admission includes refreshments, snacks and cash prizes. A 50/50 raffle also is available.


The scheduled dates are Sept. 8, 15, 29, Oct. 6, 13, 27, Nov. 3, 17, Dec. 1, 15, Jan. 7, 5, 12, 26 and Feb. 2, 9, 16.

St. Bernadine Parish is on the southwest corner of Ann Arbor Trail and Merriman in Westland. For more information, call (734) 427-5150.

Wedding Cakes 101

Mary Denning's Cake Shoppe will offer Wedding Cakes 101, a two-hour everything you ever wanted to know about wedding cakes, but didn't know who to ask event, 5-7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 12 and Oct. 10. The program for cake decorators, caterers or the bride and groom will look at the correct size cake for guests, icings, how a mousse filling compares to cream filling, what fondant is and pricing wedding cake.

The cake shoppe is at 8036 N. Wayne Road. To register, call (734) 261-3680.



**STATE OF MICHIGAN
COUNTY OF WAYNE
CITY OF GARDEN CITY**

ORDINANCE NO: 07-001

BEEKEEPING ORDINANCE

AN ORDINANCE REGULATING THE KEEPING OF BEES, PROVIDING FOR BEEKEEPING PRACTICES; PROVIDING FOR THE PROHIBITION OF BEEKEEPING ON CERTAIN PROPERTIES AND IN CERTAIN LOCATIONS; PROVIDING FOR A REQUIRED WATER SOURCE; PROVIDING FOR DESTRUCTION OF UNUSUALLY AGGRESSIVE HIVES OR COLONIES; PROVIDING FOR NUISANCE AND LEGAL RECOURSE; PROVIDING THAT THE KEEPING OF BEES IS A MUNICIPAL CIVIL INFRACTION; PROVIDING FOR PENALTIES; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION AND EFFECTIVE DATE.

THE CITY OF GARDEN CITY HEREBY ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. PURPOSE.

The Purpose of this Ordinance is to establish beekeeping practices intended to avoid problems that may otherwise be associated with the keeping of bees in populated areas and to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens.

SECTION 2. PROHIBITION OF BEEKEEPING ON CERTAIN PROPERTIES.

A. It shall be unlawful for any person to keep, harbor, possess, raise, or maintain one or more hives or colonies of bees on any lot or parcel of land that is less than one-quarter (1/4) acre in size.

B. Hives and colonies shall not be located less than sixty feet (60') from any lot line nor less than one hundred fifty feet (150') from any hospital, public eatery, office, or school.

SECTION 3. WATER SOURCE REQUIRED.

Any person maintaining, keeping, raising, harboring or possessing one (1) or more hives or colonies of bees shall ensure that a convenient source of water which is adequate for the size of the hive or colony is available to the bees at all times to ensure that the bees do not congregate at swimming pools, pet watering bowls, bird baths, or other water sources on neighboring properties thereby causing human, bird or domestic pet contact.

SECTION 4. DESTRUCTION OF AGGRESSIVE HIVES OR COLONIES.

In any instance in which a colony exhibits unusually aggressive characteristics of stinging without provocation or exhibits an unusual disposition to swarm, it shall be the duty of the beekeeper to promptly destroy the hive(s) or colony(s) or remove them from the property.

SECTION 5. NUISANCE AND LEGAL RECOURSE.

Except as provided above or as otherwise allowed, the keeping of bees is hereby declared a nuisance for which the City may use any legal recourse available in addition to prosecuting violations hereof.

SECTION 6. VIOLATION AND PENALTY.

A. Unless otherwise provided, any person, corporation, partnership or any other legal entity who violates the provisions of this Ordinance shall be guilty of a municipal civil infraction and shall, upon a finding of responsibility, be punished by paying a fine of \$250.00. For each subsequent violation of this Ordinance, the responsible person or entity shall pay a fine of not less than \$500.00.

B. The City may also seek additional legal and/or equitable relief in the district court or by filing suit in the circuit court. The City may recover its reasonable attorneys fees, court costs and other expenses related to enforcement activities or litigation against the person or entity found to have violated this Ordinance.

SECTION 7. SEVERABILITY.

If any clause, sentence, section, paragraph or part of this Ordinance, or the application thereof to any person, firm, corporation, legal entity or circumstances, shall be for any reason adjudged by a court of competent jurisdiction to be unconstitutional or invalid, said judgment shall not affect, impair or invalidate the remainder of this Ordinance. It is hereby declared to the legislative intent of this body that the Ordinance is severable, and that the Ordinance would have been adopted had such invalid or unconstitutional provision not have been included in this Ordinance.

SECTION 8. REPEAL.

All Ordinance or parts of Ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed only to the extent necessary to give this Ordinance full force and effect.

SECTION 9. SAVINGS CLAUSE.

All rights and duties which have matured, penalties which have been incurred, proceedings which have begun and prosecution for violations of law occurring before the effective date of this Ordinance are not affected or abated by this Ordinance.

SECTION 10. PUBLICATION.

The Clerk for the City of Garden City shall cause this Ordinance to be published in the manner required by law.

SECTION 11. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Ordinance, as amended, shall take full force and effect upon publication as required by law.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing Ordinance was duly adopted by the City Council of the City of Garden City at its regular meeting called and held on the 28th day of August, 2006, and was ordered to be given publication in the manner required by law.

Allyson M. Bettis, Clerk-Treasurer

Introduced: August 7, 2006
 Adopted: August 28, 2006
 Published: September 3, 2006
 Effective: August 28, 2006
 Resolution#: 06-08-199
 Publish: September 3, 2006

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'Specials' teachers excited for new year's new offerings

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

With the new school year beginning Wednesday, Livonia Public Schools are introducing new courses for all fifth- and sixth-graders.

The three new upper elementary schools — Cooper, Johnson and Riley — as well as Webster Elementary School will offer students an array of new specials classes. In addition to more time in art, music and physical education, students will be able to take Information Technology, World Language and Art and Computer Graphics.

For three years, Julie Strickland worked as a media specialist at now-closed Taylor Elementary. This year, she's taken on a new role as an Information Technology teacher at Riley, Webster and Johnson.

"I see it like a sort of natural transition," Strickland said. "We're incorporating both technology skills as well as projects with research."

Strickland said she's looking forward to working in the different buildings, with different staff members.

"I'm excited to see how it turns out," she said.

Information Technology is a new, year-long course for fifth-graders across the district. Strickland has been working alongside Annette Garbutt, who will teach the same class at Cooper and Johnson schools.

"We had an opportunity this summer to meet and plan," said Strickland. "We went over how we wanted the year to look."

The class includes a key-boarding component to improve students' computer skills, but also covers Internet safety and research skills. Class projects will range from students' own interests to a collaboration with core courses like science and social studies.

"We'll be using appropriate and rich Web sites to gather information," Strickland said.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

Matthew Miga taught Spanish and English courses at the high school level prior to his turn as a sixth-grade foreign language teacher. He'll be teaching Spanish for a semester and French for a semester as a new World Language instructor.

"I'm really excited about getting students interested in a new language," Miga said. He

plans on incorporating a lot of cultural learning into the class. In addition to vocabulary, students will play games and listen to music related to the cultures covered in his class.

Miga said he's particularly excited about working with this age group, compared to high school students. "I've heard they're excited about learning," he said.

Miga will teach at Riley, Webster and Cooper. His counterpart, Katrina Wrezinski, will teach the class at Cooper and Johnson.

Miga is looking forward to building the language program. He said research supports starting students early in language programs, not only helps them to understand concepts and pronunciation, but also prepares them for the global economy.

Creating the course has been a collaborative effort among teachers and administrators, Miga said.

Art and Computer Graphics will also be a new addition to the upper-elementary grades this year. Art teachers Sally Gyokeres and Marcy Baker will head those sixth-grade classes.

MORE TIME, OPTIONS IN ART

Gyokeres, who will teach the

class at Riley, said she's pleased the district is able to broaden its art program, while staying true to national standards. In addition to the new course, the entire K-6 art curriculum has been revamped and classes expanded by five minutes. Students will have more time to spend on in-class art work.

"All sixth-graders will have experience in the computer lab," Gyokeres said. "That's not something that was available last year."

The course will incorporate lessons based on core curriculum, while having access to technology like digital cameras and scanners.

"To me a computer is just another tool to teach art," Gyokeres said. "We're still teaching the principals. They have to be creative with it, just as they would with clay."

The biggest difference between computers and working with paints or clay?

"Cleanup's a cinch," she said. Gyokeres said the computer aspect adds a level of confidence to art class that some students might not have experienced if they didn't excel at drawing, for example.

"They're excited about it," she said.

'All sixth-graders will have experience in the computer lab. "That's not something that was available last year.'

Sally Gyokeres
art teacher

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Doig named top internist by professional peers

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

Dr. Christopher Doig wasn't planning to go to Scottsdale, Ariz., in October for the American College of Osteopathic Internists' annual convention. It was his partner, Dr. Joseph D'Avanzo, who was supposed to attend.

That changed, though, when the event coordinator called and "dropped a bomb" on Doig. He needs to be at the convention to accept the association's 2006 Internist of the Year Award.

"I feel real honored to be singled out among so many fine physicians and recognized for my hard work," said Doig, 48. "It's just very special."

The association has been presenting the award since 1996 honoring ACOI members for outstanding achievement in internal medicine.

It was D'Avanzo who nominated Doig for the honor three or four years ago. Doig speculates that the association's



Doig

board of directors must archive nominations and re-evaluate them every year.

Practicing for 18 years, Doig is in private practice with D'Avanzo

in Livonia and on staff at Garden City Hospital. A past chief of staff, Doig has been the residency director within the hospital's medical education department for 12 years and chair of the internal medicine department.

"It's a very big honor and certainly very prestigious. Dr. Doig is very deserving," said Gary Ley, hospital president and CEO. "He's a really personable guy. He's a good Christian and works way too hard."

Doig's two-year stint as chief of staff shows the high respect he receives from the medical staff, Ley said. Doig has also been very active in the hospital's Michigan State University

consortium, which Ley said helps a doctor become better known professionally.

A Farmington Hills resident, Doig is a graduate of the University of Michigan and the Michigan State University College of Medicine. He did his internship at Detroit Osteopathic Hospital-Bi-County and a three-year residency at Botsford Hospital in Farmington Hills.

But Garden City Hospital was his goal when he completed his training. Growing up in Dearborn Heights, Doig graduated from Riverside High School. He recalls that Garden City Hospital was where he was taken "when my wrist got broken playing football against Garden City West."

"I knew I always was going to practice here," he said. "I did my training elsewhere because Garden City didn't have a strong program in internal medicine training, but I always knew I would come back here to practice."

Of course, it can't hurt to

have his father-in-law, Dr. George Lawley, on staff at the hospital for 40 years.

Doig estimates he works a minimum of 12 hours a day, starting at 7 a.m. and finishing around 8-10 p.m. Although, when the hospital gets bombarded with patients, quitting time can be closer to midnight.

"I consider a 12-hour day a luxury," he said.

The amount of time Doig puts in may explain why he includes his "great family" — his wife and seven children — in accepting the honor. While they "don't like it," they are understanding about his time away from them.

"It's nice to get recognized for my hard work and it's a nice recognition for my family," he said. "This never would have happened without them at home. I couldn't be any of this, if my family had not let me."

Staff writer LeAnne Rogers contributed to this story.
smason@hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2112

Arthritis Today
JOSEPH J. WEISS, M.D. RHEUMATOLOGY
18829 Farmington Road
Livonia, Michigan 48152
Phone: (248) 478-7860

WRIST PAIN

Most wrist pain occurs at the base of the thumb. The wrist consists of nine bones, but arthritis concentrates in the bones at the base of the thumb: the place where the trapezium and the first metacarpal articulate. In medical jargon this site is designated as the first MCP joint.

If you develop arthritis of the first MCP joint you are not likely to feel pain there. If a physician in his examination of your hand, palpates the first MCP joint with a firm force, and you have arthritis at that location, you will feel sharp pain.

In virtually all cases, the type of arthritis at the first MCP is osteoarthritis. The cause is wearing down of the cartilage at that site. Prior injury leads to this osteoarthritis, though it happens even if you have never experienced undue or prolonged hard activity of your hands.

Similar thumb pain occurs when you strain the extensor tendons of the thumb. This condition is De Quervain's tenosynovitis. However, your doctor by appropriate maneuvers of the hand can distinguish between osteoarthritis of the wrist and De Quervain's tenosynovitis.

Treatment of arthritis of the wrist depends on its extent. The simplest therapy is a night splint. Medication consists of anti-inflammatory drugs which give pain relief rather than cure. Injection of the wrist may give months of activity with minimal discomfort. If these measures fail, hand specialists can undertake a variety of operations to replace the impaired bone, resolve the pain and allow you reasonable daily use of your wrist and thumb.

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Westland welcomes new police officers

The Westland Police Department has added two new members to its ranks — Nathaniel MacRae and Kristy Dabliz.

The two officers were sworn in for duty Monday during a Westland City Hall ceremony attended by Police Chief Daniel Pfannes, Mayor Sandra Cicirelli, City Clerk Eileen DeHart, several police department members and the families of the new officers.

MacRae, 29, is a Plymouth resident and graduate of Michigan State University, where he received his bachelor's degree in education. He was a fifth-grade schoolteacher before he began pursuing a career in law enforcement.

He also was a Detroit police officer for 15 months prior to being laid off due to budget cuts. He served briefly as a police officer for the Detroit public school district.

Dabliz, 28, is a Redford resi-



Police Chief Daniel Pfannes (center) is in good company with the two latest Westland police officers to be sworn in for duty. They are Kristy Dabliz (left) and Nathaniel MacRae.

dent who earned an associate's degree from Oakland Community College and who took classes at Wayne State University with thoughts of

pursuing a degree a pre-medicine, Pfannes said.

Her life took a change when she joined the Detroit Police Department a little more than

two years ago. Her last assignment was with the Tactical Mobile Unit.

Dabliz comes from a law-enforcement family. Her father, Joseph, is a retired Detroit officer, and he pinned her badge on her when she took the oath. Her brother, Joseph, and her boyfriend, Vincent Bastine, are Detroit officers.

Pfannes said the MacRae and Dabliz families were impressed with how the officers were welcomed as new additions "into the (Westland) police family."

"These officers represent a 25-year investment in the police department," the chief said. "The employees of this department are its most valuable resource, and we want them to view themselves as shareholders in our company. I wish both Nathan and Kristy the best of luck as they begin a new journey in their lives."



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Tim Kohsman of Howe's Collision sands a door on a Lexus. The shop is celebrating 25 years in business.

AUTO SHOP

FROM PAGE A1

to-case basis.

"Everyone wants it done in one day and we try to get it done in two," Simmons said.

The family run business, with 17 bays, is truly a family affair.

Darrell Howe opened the shop on Wayne Road at Avondale with his brother Mark in 1981; Simmons, their sister, does all the pin-striping on the vehicles. Howe's son, Thomas, also works in the shop.

Mark Howe went on to open Howe Auto Body in Plymouth 11 years ago. Their other sister, Lori Richardson, works at that location along with Mark's son, Josh.

"We were always interested in fixing cars and worked at other collision places before we opened our own," Darrell Howe said.

During the 25 years since he opened Howe Collision, Darrell Howe said there have been ups and downs in the business. And this would definitely be a southward turn, Howe said.

"It's a very difficult time right now with the economy, and the insurance companies are just choking us," he said. "People have no money to go anywhere.

But, he recognizes that loyal customers who keep coming back are, unfortunately, doing so because they've had multiple accidents.

With less cars on the road there are less accidents. Insurance claims are down 40 percent over the last three years."

He is an advocate for customer rights when dealing with insurance companies.

"They need to know that it is against the law for an insurance company to tell them where they have to get their car fixed," Darrell Howe said. "And that's what's happening to our industry right now."

But, he recognizes that loyal customers who keep coming back are, unfortunately, doing so because they've had multiple accidents.

"We have customers coming in every other month," he said, explaining that one woman had three cars being repaired simultaneously.

Still, he's proud of the business, saying, "We've dedicated 25 years to satisfying the customer."

Police officer recalled as dedicated, gentlemanly

BY JULIE BROWN
STAFF WRITER

Arthur "Skip" Gage, who died Aug. 24 in a traffic crash, is being mourned by family and friends who remember the retired Detroit police officer for his spirit, dedication and storytelling.

"There's so much to say about Skip," said Justin Johnson, Mr. Gage's partner in sales at Motor City Harley-Davidson in Farmington Hills. "He was probably one of the best people I've known in my

life."

Johnson recalled Mr. Gage, a Livonia resident, as being fun to be with and a gifted joke and storyteller. "He was a very dedicated officer," he said. Mr. Gage taught motorcycle skills to recruits in Detroit and led the city's police honor guard for a number of years.

"He always had a story to share with his friends," said Johnson, who lives in Redford. "He was just a complete gentleman."

Mr. Gage, 63, is survived by two children, Jennifer Teal and

Tim Gage, each of whom has two children. "He'd talk a lot about his grandchildren," Johnson said. "He was just one of those guys who was so full of life."

Son Tim added: "He loved everybody." Tim Gage recalled how his father was proud of his police work — he spent 28 years with the Detroit department — and his founding of the WartHogs motorcycle group. That group includes mostly police officers and firefighters.

"He was just an all-around good guy," said 20-year friend

Diane Higgins of Westland and the Southern Michigan Riders. She and Johnson noted how well-attended Mr. Gage's funeral was Monday, Aug. 28. The funeral, at Riverside Chapel in Waterford, included a number of police representatives, an honor guard and a 21-gun salute.

Memorial contributions are suggested to the Detroit Police Benefit and Protective Association, 3031 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit, MI 48226. For information on contributions, call (313) 870-2300.

College students can win tuition in IKEA contest

IKEA is currently running a contest that will pay a year's tuition for a Michigan college student. The winner will also receive a \$500 IKEA gift card to outfit their college room.

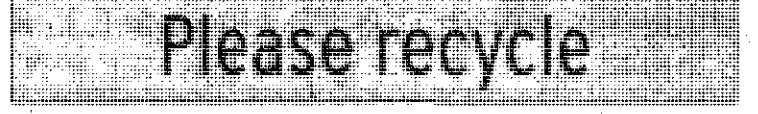
While college students are shopping in the IKEA store to outfit their campus living space, they can enter to win

the contest. No purchase necessary. There will also be four runner-up winners drawn. They will each win a \$500 IKEA gift card.

There are two ways to enter. Students can go to the IKEA store in Canton and complete an entry form or send a postcard, or 3x5 card, to IKEA

Canton Tuition Contest, IKEA Canton, 41640 Ford Road, Canton, MI 48187, ATTN: Public Relations with student's name, address, daytime telephone number, e-mail address and name of school. Postcards must be received at IKEA Canton by Sept. 30, 2006. Entrants must be age 18 or

older, a registered student in the state of Michigan, and a U.S. resident to enter. One entrant will win their college tuition paid for one year (not to exceed \$20,000) directly to their accredited college or university located in the state of Michigan. Go to <http://www.IKEA-usa.com>.



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As summer ends, it's time to get serious about politics

Summer always ends too soon. We know that we still have six or seven more weeks of pleasant weather for outdoor activities. We don't have to haul out the parkas yet, though there will be some sweater days coming sooner than we like.

But, psychologically, ever since we were kids, Labor Day was the thud that ended summer. That last-gasp holiday (its meaning and origins never clearly explained) was the signal that pickup baseball games, bicycle cruising, swimming at the local pool and trips to Uncle Bill's cottage were at an end and (shutter) school was on us again.

As adults, most of us don't get that clear division between the carefree days of summer and the return to work in autumn. We work most of the summer as well. But, still, we've been conditioned to understand that autumn is a serious time, a time to buckle down and get busy, a time to stop whiling away our days and make something happen. That nip in the air is our spur, our reminder that we are entering into a less languid season.

Professional baseball hangs on into October as the last vestige of summer, but it competes with the return of college and professional football.

This year, Labor Day also marks the official beginning of the fall election season. Michigan has a full plate of decisions to make Nov. 7. We will elect a governor, U.S. senator, U.S. representatives, attorney general, secretary of state and state representatives and senators. We'll decide on five and maybe six state ballot issues and maybe some local issues. We'll elect members to boards we have to be reminded even exist and we'll elect judges usually without any clear idea about how they'll perform on the bench (and canny candidates won't give you a clue, either).

In other words, in the spirit of the season, we have our work cut out for us. We will be bombarded by radio and television commercials for candidates in the key gubernatorial and U.S. Senate races. You'll also see print ads for these and the other races.

The radio and TV spots tend to be more theatrical, pungent — deceptive. They've become such a cliché. A voice intones in horror that this candidate or that candidate has "sold out" Michigan. The complexity of political decisions get conveniently crushed into a sound bite. The other side is always offended that their opponents would run ads like — well, like their ads!

Meanwhile, political consultants and ad agencies rake in the money. It doesn't seem to make sense, but these spots actually influence voters. In fact, for some voters it's the only information they get about the candidates.

Print ads seem to be more informative and less vitriolic (and, of course, we believe more effective).

These newspapers and others do provide information on where the candidates stand and who they are, what the ballot issues are about and other information. Our Web site www.hometownlife.com runs a voters guide featuring answers to questionnaires sent to candidates. The candidates themselves also operate Web sites that will give you the dirt on their opponents, but will also give you some idea where the candidates come down on issues important to you.

And in these difficult times for Michigan, all these issues are important to you — from the stagnant economy to the quagmire in the Middle East.

The latest figures from the U.S. Census Bureau merely confirm what we have known for a long time. Real income is down. Michigan has had the steepest plummet of the 50 states, dropping 12 percent from 1999 to 2005.

Politicians (even those who pretend they aren't politicians) will promise you that things will be different if you elect them. That's what running for office is all about.

But it's up to us to separate the wheat from the chaff, the politicking from the governance.

By the time Nov. 7 rolls around, the weather will be turning chilly and we'll be cooled on the whole political process and yearning for those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer.

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

Other states take the lead in cable franchise reform

Almost everyone agrees that rewriting cable franchising laws to encourage competition will result in lower prices and better service. But legislation in Congress that would encourage competition nationwide is bogged down by political infighting and may not get passed this year. Some states are not settling for that, and are changing their own laws to modernize their video services industry. And they're already starting to reap the benefits.

Texas was the first, passing a new franchising law late last year. Since then, cable subscribers have seen rates drop as incumbent cable providers have to work to compete for business. In Keller, Texas, the cable company cut their price on one bundled service in half to compete with Verizon.

Between 1995 and 2004, rates have increased by 86 percent. Since Texas has passed legislation promoting cable competition, rates have decreased 20 percent.

Indiana has witnessed similar successes, after their state legislature streamlined video franchising laws. A study by Ball State University estimates that the rate reductions brought on by increased competition will save current Indiana cable subscribers as much as \$262 million a year. Working harder and smarter to succeed will also encourage companies to invest in important new technologies like fiber-optic broadband service. AT&T alone is going to invest \$250 million in wiring Indiana communities to increase broadband coverage. TeleNomic Research, LLC found that every \$1 million of telecommunications investment creates 18 jobs. That's a significant economic boost.

The list goes on. New Jersey just finalized their new law and Verizon is already employing 1,000 technicians in the state and will spend \$1.5 billion over the next three years to develop a fiber network to power its television and Internet products. In all, 14 states have either passed or are in the process of passing cable franchise reform.

Michigan is one of them. Bills have been introduced in both the House and Senate that would establish a reasonable, fair process for companies to follow if they want

a chance to offer video services in our state. Just a chance — not an edge, not preferential treatment — but merely the opportunity to compete in a free market.

Remember that cable TV is not just about entertainment anymore. Television, Internet and telecommunications services are all coming together, and it won't be long before businesses and workers are going to need access to them to survive. Everyone will benefit from the countless applications of modern technology in education, healthcare, commerce and a variety of other fields. New ones are developed every day.

Giving companies the chance to compete in a free market is the right thing to do. It's not only fair (cable franchises are one of the last true monopolies left in this country) but it makes plenty of economic sense. We all want lower rates, and competition is one of the best ways to get them. But we also want modern, up-to-date technologies, and making the video services market competitive will spur their deployment.

According to the Phoenix Center, for each year that lawmakers continue to delay removing the barriers of competition American consumers stand to lose \$8.2 billion. In fact, Michigan alone stands to lose \$77 million every year.

Today in Michigan, unemployment is hovering around 7 percent and Livonia residents have been demanding competition and lower cable rates for years. By providing companies the opportunity to compete, Michigan would see a substantial investment from companies looking to upgrade current technology and provide new technology to Michigan residents.

This investment would not only provide better service and lower prices to consumers, it will also provide jobs to many Michiganders in need of employment.

All of the experts agree that the road to Michigan's recovery is diversifying our economy and investing in new technologies. Passing legislation that would promote competition, lower prices, better service, and provide a substantial capital investment is not only a shot in the arm for Michigan's economy, but is also a building block in securing Michigan's future.

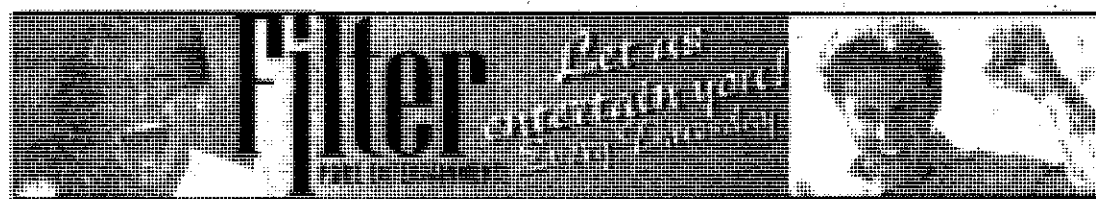
Brian Meakin is a Livonia city councilman.



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Brian Meakin



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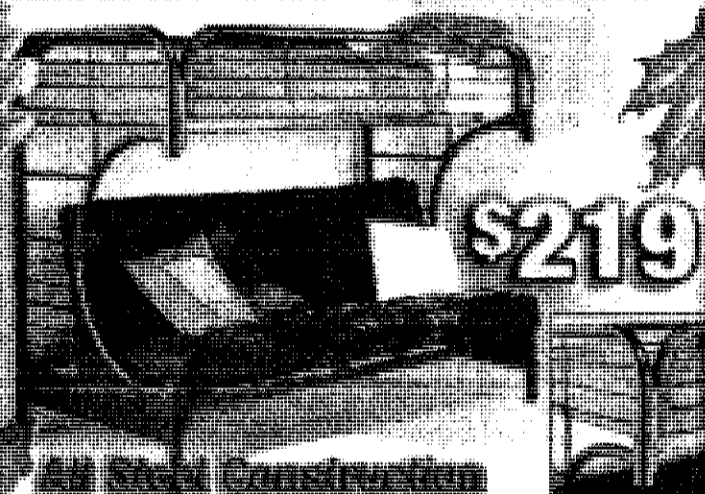
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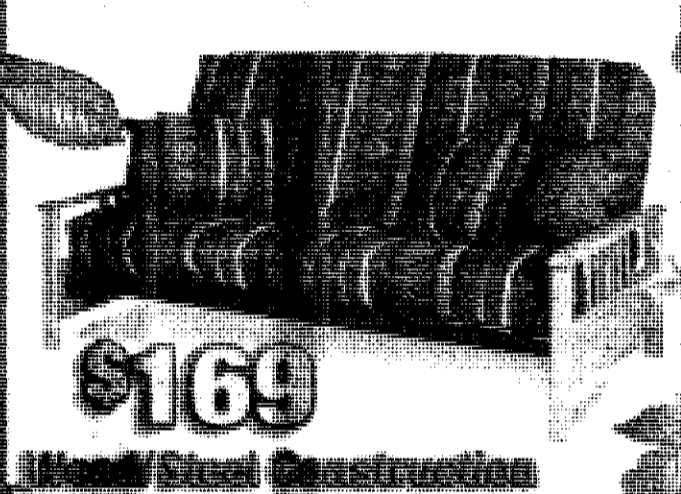
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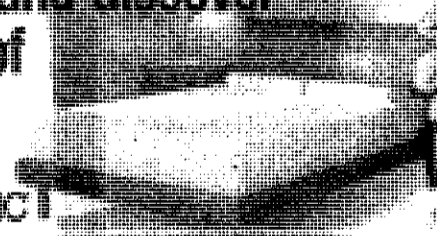
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