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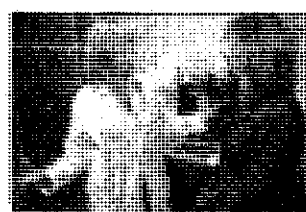
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### Fabulous sock hop benefits hospice

HOMETOWN LIFE - C1



### Women's Center fixes broken hearts

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### Homecoming fever takes over Wayne High

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SUNDAY  
October 8, 2006

# WESTLAND Observer

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PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Westland firefighters Dave Sukel, Chris Buzzelli and Ed Leskun hold tight onto a rope to lower a fellow firefighter down from a simulated burning home during a training exercise in Inkster.

## Firefighters get skills to help each other

BY DARRELL CLEM  
STAFF WRITER

Firefighters can face a perilous job, whether rescuing people from a burning house or charging into an empty building to battle property-damaging flames.

They're usually the last ones to get out, and they depend on each other for protection.

Now, they're better prepared. Just last week, Westland firefighters continued learning from an ongoing rapid intervention team program aimed at improving their skills at rescuing each other.

In a neighborhood near Michigan Avenue and Inkster Road, the scene involved a simulated fire in an abandoned house

in Inkster where firefighters learned short-cuts to saving each other.

"What we learned is how to deal with rescuing a firefighter in abnormal circumstances," said Scott Neal, Westland assistant chief of training and education.

One exercise simulated a firefighter falling from one floor to another.

"We learned how to use our equipment in different ways, such as using a hose to bring a firefighter out of a hole, say from a basement floor to the first floor," Neal said. "We would use the hose as a tool rather than getting a ladder."

It saves time. It could save lives.

PLEASE SEE **FIREFIGHTERS, A6**



Westland firefighter Ken Hamilton is ready to enter the simulated burning home during the Rapid Intervention Team training.

## Neighbor's call foils break-in

BY DARRELL CLEM  
STAFF WRITER

An alert neighbor and a swift response from Westland police led to the capture Thursday of a home invasion suspect, police Lt. James Ridener said.

The incident happened about 10:15 a.m. in the 33000 block of Yuma, north of Warren between Farmington and Wildwood. Police believe the suspect had earlier broken into homes in Garden City and Dearborn Heights.

An alert neighbor noticed a man knocking on several doors on both sides of the street before he started breaking into one house, Ridener said. No one was at home.

"The neighbor heard a big boom and saw him trying to kick in a door on the side of the garage," Ridener said, but the man couldn't get inside.

"The neighbor called 911 and then watched the suspect kick in the front door and actually go into the house," Ridener said.

Westland police officers rushed to the neighborhood as the man was allegedly ransack-

ing the house.

"He was still in the house, but he dove out of a window and took off running," Ridener said. "Our officers corralled him at Mohawk (Street) and Warren."

Inside the house, police found a laundry basket in which the man allegedly had piled things, Ridener said. Police also found jewelry that the man had taken with him when he fled the house, the lieutenant said.

On Friday afternoon, Aaron Lamar McGee, 24, of Westland was arraigned in Westland 18th District Court on charges of second-degree home invasion, larceny in a building, stealing a credit card, and receiving and concealing stolen property less than \$200, according to a court clerk.

McGee was jailed in lieu of a \$50,000 cash or surety bond and ordered back in court Thursday for a preliminary hearing that will determine whether he should face trial in Wayne County Circuit Court.

[dclem@hometownlife.com](mailto:dclem@hometownlife.com) | (734) 953-2110

## Attorney pleased with judge's ruling

BY DARRELL CLEM  
STAFF WRITER

A Detroit attorney has applauded a Wayne County Circuit Court judge for ruling that authorities entrapped a former Westland smoke shop owner in an Internet predator case.

In a telephone call to the *Observer*, defense attorney Bertram L. Johnson called Judge Patricia Fresard's decision "beautiful" and said, "I think it took courage for her to do that."

Johnson said Thursday that Fresard's decision should send a message that "this kind of conduct needs to stop" and that investigators have to work within the law. Johnson represented Jonathan Nunoo, 39, who spent nearly five months in jail awaiting trial for criminal charges that Fresard dismissed in September.

Police sent a 17-year-old girl into Nunoo's shop to investigate allegations he may have been selling or giving cigarettes to minors in exchange for possible sexual favors.

The girl told Nunoo that she was 15, and she obtained e-mail addresses that she turned over to authorities. Wayne County Sheriff Cpl. William Liczinski has testified that he posed as

the girl online and chatted with Nunoo about such topics as sex, movies and school. Nunoo was arrested March 15 when police said he went to Town & Country Lanes bowling alley on Wayne Road to meet the girl. He was charged with two counts of using the Internet to commit a crime and one count of child sexually abusive material.

On Thursday, Johnson said that Nunoo and Liczinski corresponded by e-mail and that Nunoo didn't go into a chat room to prey on children.

"The typical pedophile situation was not there," Johnson said.

Nunoo closed his All-Star Smoke Shop in the aftermath of the charges. He has kept another job as a certified nurse assistant at a nursing center, where his boss believed him innocent, Johnson said.

The attorney called Nunoo "a great client" and said, "I always believed he was innocent."

Johnson said he didn't know whether Nunoo will file a lawsuit now that he has been cleared of criminal charges.

Nunoo could have faced penalties ranging up to 20 years in prison if he had been convicted. Assistant Wayne County Prosecutor Keith Clark has said the prosecutor's office still may appeal Fresard's decision.

## Durante favors right to work, K-16 ballot proposal

BY DARRELL CLEM  
STAFF WRITER



Durante

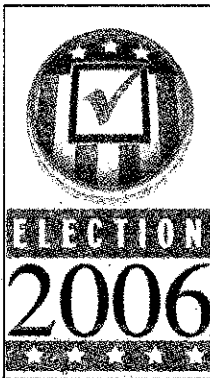
Republican state House candidate Sam Durante appears confident he will capture the 18th District seat in his first bid for public office.

Durante, 64, isn't intimidated by Democratic opponent Richard LeBlanc, a nine-year Westland City Council member and former Wayne-Westland school board trustee.

"I will win this seat," Durante said matter-of-factly during an interview with the *Observer*.

Durante described himself as far removed from the

PLEASE SEE **DURANTE, A4**



Sam Durante and Richard LeBlanc are running for the 18th District seat in the state House.

## LeBlanc: Pluses are proven leadership, responsiveness

BY DARRELL CLEM  
STAFF WRITER

Democratic state House candidate Richard LeBlanc believes that his proven leadership and his responsiveness to constituents will convince voters to elect him to the 18th District seat.

LeBlanc, 48, hopes to replace his political ally — departing state Rep. Glenn Anderson (D-Westland) — by defeating Republican hopeful Sam Durante.

"I've said forever and a day that among the things that make me the better candidate is my proven



LeBlanc

PLEASE SEE **LEBLANC, A4**


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### Coming Thursday in Filter



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Michigan has  
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Register to vote

Westland residents who want to vote in the Nov. 7 election and who aren't yet registered - have until the Oct. 10 deadline to sign up. Residents can register at the clerk's office at Westland City Hall, on Ford Road between Newburgh and Wayne, or go to a Secretary of State office. Those wishing to register must turn 18 by Election Day and be a resident of the city in which they're voting and take a picture identification to the place where they register. Resident who want an application for an absentee ballot should call the clerk's office at (734) 467-3188 or (734) 467-3187. Voters who think they might not be able to make it to the polls are encouraged to ask for an absentee ballot.

Town hall meeting

Mayor Sandra Cicirelli will hold her quarterly Town Hall meeting at 6 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 19, at the Holiday Park Clubhouse at 34850 Fountain Blvd. The Department of Public Service will be highlighted at the meeting and a certificate will be presented to Kenneth H. Reeves, president of the Southeast Homeowners Association. The presentation will be made in honor of Annapolis Park Week. A special recognition also will be given to Josephine Brunet, the Senior Citizen of the Quarter, and the mayor will receive a presentation from Department of Michigan Junior Ms. Poppy Chelsea Kovacs.

Finding records

The Irish Genealogical Society of Michigan will present a program, "Finding Your Irish in the Canada/U.S. Border Crossing Records," at 1:30 p.m. Saturday Oct. 28, at the Gaelic League/Irish American Club, 2068 Michigan Ave., west of Tiger Stadium, in Detroit. The speaker will be Jan Zaleski, the author of Guide to Records of Border Crossings between the United States and Canada 1895-1954. Zaleski is an accredited genealogist, a civilian employee of the Detroit Police Department and a volunteer at the Family History Center in Westland. The meeting is open to the public and there is no charge. For more information, call Michael Brautigan at (734) 454-3495.

'Walk for Kids'

The Village of Westland, 32001 Cherry Hill, is sponsoring a "Walk for the Kids" Friday, Oct. 13, to benefit the Penrickton Center for the Blind. Participants will walk around the building, raising money for the center through pledges from sponsors or donations. Registration will be 9-10 a.m., with the walk running from 10 a.m. to noon. Pledges and donations will be collected at the time of registration. Walkers will receive T-shirts and there will be a lunch of hot dogs, chips and pop following the event. Prizes also will be awarded. For more information or to sign up, call Wellness Coordinator Tony Maino at (734) 762-8810.

Low-cost exams

In commemoration of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Garden City Hospital will provide low-cost mammograms Tuesday-Wednesday, Oct. 17-18, at the hospital 6245 Inkster Road, Garden City. The exams are targeted toward women who have no medical insurance or physician. The cost of the examination will be \$30, the interpretation fee will be waived. The hospital will offer physician services in case a follow-up examination is necessary. Women interested in the low-cost service should bring a prior mammogram film, if possible. To schedule and appointment, call the hospital scheduling at (734) 458-3471.

Book mark contest

Children ages 5-12 are invited to design an original bookmark depicting how the library is important to them and the Westland community to celebrate the William P. Faust Public Library of Westland 10th anniversary. Entries will be judged on creativity and theme interpretation. One winning entry will be professionally reproduced and the artist will receive a \$30 gift certificate to Target. Runners-up will be selected, and prizes awarded, in three age groups - 5-6 years, 7-8 years, 9-10 years and 11-12 years. All bookmark designs become the property of William P. Faust Public Library of Westland. Contestants may pick up an

entry form at any patron service desk. The form may also be downloaded from the library's Web site at www.westland.lib.mi.us. The deadline for all entries is 5 p.m. Friday, Oct. 27.

Shopping Expo

Get your Christmas shopping done early at P.D. Graham Elementary School's third annual Shopping Expo 5:30-7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 24. There will be more than 10 vendors under one roof. Admission is \$2 per person and free child care is provided. The school is at 1255 S. John Hix, south of Cherry Hill, Westland. For more information, call Erin Arbour at (734) 968-1850.

Crafters wanted

Table rental is available at the cost of \$20 for the annual St. Theodore Confraternity of Christian Women Craft Show on Saturday, Oct. 21, 2006 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Parish Social Hall at 8200 N. Wayne Road, Westland. Call Mary at (734) 425-4421 (voice mail No. 10) to reserve a table. Crafters are being sought for a craft show 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 11, at Community Free Will Baptist Church, 33031 Cherry Hill, west of Venoy, Westland. Registration is \$20 and must be paid Oct. 28 to hold a spot. The money will be applied to the \$20 table rental charge. Any remaining balance for additional tables must be paid at time of set up. For more information, call Marge at (734) 729-2578 or Jean at (734) 421-0733.

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 at 28945 Joy Road. Tables and

chairs are available. Reservations are needed by Oct. 4. Call Dianna Welchman at (313) 278-3784.

Craft show

St. Theodore's Confraternity of Christian Women will hold its annual Craft Show 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 21, in the Parish Social, 8200 N. Wayne Road, Westland. In addition to free parking and free admission, there will be free hourly door prizes and a raffle for a choice of numerous baskets. Refreshments and baked goods will also be available.

Quilt Show

Christian Union Church at 1046 Wayne Road will hold its second annual juried Quilt

Show 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 21. There will be quilts on display, quilting demonstrations, vendors, a bake sale, and hourly door prizes. A \$3 donation is requested for admission. For more information, call Mary Surbrook at (734) 721-6871.

Vegas Night

St. Bernardine Parish at 31463 Ann Arbor Trail at Merriman, Westland, is having a Las Vegas Party 8 p.m. to midnight Friday, Oct. 20. No smoking rooms will be available and hot dogs, potato salad, snacks and pop are included in \$7 admission. Beer also will be available at \$1 a glass.

Games include Black Jack, Roulette and Beat the Dealer, and there also will be hourly 50/50 drawings and a raffle. Friday Night Euchre/Pinochle Card Parties start at 7:30 p.m. at St. Bernardine Parish in Westland. Doors open at 7 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 Oct. 13, 27, Nov. 3, 17, Dec. 1, 15, Jan. 7, 5 12, 26 and Feb. 2, 9, 16. St. Bernardine Parish is on the southwest corner of Ann Arbor Trail and Merriman in Westland. Call (734) 427-5150.

Canton's Newest Dermatologist! Welcome Ali A. Berry, M.D. to the Hamzavi Dermatology Family. Hamzavi Dermatology has added a new location in Canton, on Haggerty just south of Ford Road (inside the Haggerty Professional Plaza). Accepting New Patients! Our physicians, Iltefat Hamzavi, M.D. and Ali A. Berry, M.D. accept most major insurances, including BCBS, Blue Care Network, Aetna, Care Choices, Preferred Choices, Cigna, HAP and more! We specialize in all skin, hair and nail conditions including: Acne/Acne Scar Treatment, Allergic Rashes, Botox, Broken Blood Vessel Laser Therapy, Dandruff/Seborrheic Dermatitis, Eczema, Fillers, Pediatric Dermatology, Peels, Pigmented Lesions/Moles, Psoriasis, Rosacea, Ring Worm, Skin Cancer, Warts and many more! To schedule an appointment please call Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. 734-495-1506 (evening & weekend appointments available) Hamzavi Dermatology 49650 Cherry Hill Road, Suite 230, Canton & 2050 Haggerty Road, Suite 120, Canton

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# Tune into fire safety: 'Stand by your pan'

How often has the doorbell rung or a child interrupted you while you were cooking, causing you to forget about the chicken you left sizzling on the stove - until smoke filled the house?

If this scenario or a similar one doesn't sound familiar to you, you may want to think about it a little more because it's likely that you, a friend, or family member has run the risk of having a dangerous fire. As a member of Livonia Fire & Rescue, I often talk to people about the ways they can stay safe in their homes. Too often, we have that talk after they've suffered a damaging fire.

It's my hope that people reading this article won't have to learn the hard way. If I could give just one fire warning, I'd say, "stand by your pan!"

Why? Because cooking is the leading cause of home fires, according to the non-profit National Fire

Protection Association (NFPA). The latest statistics from NFPA say that one out of every three home fires started in the kitchen and more than 100,000 fires a year were related to cooking.

We're joining forces with NFPA and thousands of other fire departments across North America to commemorate Fire Prevention Week, October 8-14, "Prevent Cooking Fires - Watch What You Heat." The theme reminds us that leaving cooking unattended and other unsafe kitchen practices are a recipe for disaster.

Often when we're called to a cooking-related fire, the residents tell us they only left the kitchen for a few minutes. Sadly, that's all it takes for a dangerous fire to start.

The bottom line is that there's really no safe period of time for the cook to step away from a hot stove. A few key points to remember:

- Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, broiling, or boiling food. If you must leave the room even for a short period of time, turn off the stove.

- When you are simmering, baking, or roasting food, check it regularly, stay in the home, and use a timer to remind you.

- Keep cooking areas clean and clear of combustibles (e.g. potholders, towels, rags, drapes and food packaging).

- Keep children away from cooking areas by enforcing a "kid-free zone" of three feet around the stove.

- If you have a fire in your microwave, turn it off immediately and keep the door closed. Never open the door until the fire is completely out. If in doubt, get out of the home and call the fire department.

- Always keep an oven mitt and a lid nearby. If a small grease fire starts in a pan, smother the flames by carefully sliding the lid over the pan (make sure you are wearing the oven mitt). Turn off the burner and slide the pan off the burner. To keep the fire from restarting, do not remove the lid until it is completely cool. Never pour water on a grease fire. If the fire does not go out, get out of the home and call the fire department.

- If an oven fire starts, turn off the heat and keep the door closed to prevent flames from burning you or your clothing. If the fire does not go out, get out of the home and call the fire department.

A cooking fire can quickly turn deadly. I have seen too many homes destroyed and people killed or injured by fires that could have been easily avoided. Please heed these simple safety rules.

We firefighters would like to be in your kitchen, but only when you invite us for dinner!

For a demonstration of cooking fires, as well as an opportunity to meet many of your local firefighters, please plan a visit to Livonia fire station No. 3 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 14, for our annual Fire Prevention Week Open House.

If you can't make the Open House, stop by any of our five fire stations 9:30-11 a.m., 1:30-4:30 p.m. or 6-8 p.m. Oct. 9-13. For more information, call us at (734) 466-2444.

Tom Kiurski is the Training Coordinator for the Livonia Fire Department.

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**Guild auditions for Gilbert and Sullivan operetta**

The Comic Opera Guild will hold open auditions for its upcoming production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance* in two locations: 7-9 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 22, at Madonna College, Kresge Hall, 36600 Schoolcraft Rd., Livonia (Entrance D) and 7-9 p.m. Monday, Oct. 23, at University of Michigan School of Music, 1100 Baits Drive, Room 2058, Ann Arbor.

Lead and chorus singers are being sought for this production. The rehearsal period will allow most people to fit the show in their schedule. Interested people may come during the times listed above, or contact the Guild for a specific time.

You will be asked to sing a number that you bring with you, and lead candidates will be asked to read dialog.

The Comic Opera Guild will present *The Pirates of Penzance* at the Village Theater, 50400 Cherry Hill Road, Canton, 8 p.m. Thursday-Friday, Feb. 15-16 and 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 17.

The Comic Opera Guild, a semi-professional lyric theater company, has performed classics of light opera over 30 years.

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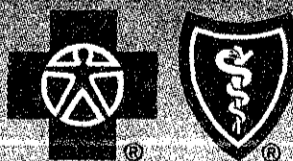
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## At a time when we need more, politics reaches for a new low

This past week in politics is enough to make a political junkie swear off for a while.

Jennifer Granholm and Dick DeVos met in their first "debate." Tim Skubick, host of Off the Record, set the tone for the night by asking whether DeVos was offended by Granholm's campaign ads. Skubick kept acting like a political heat-seeking missile, zeroing in on the most testy and least illuminating subjects. The only questions about governing came from Detroit News reporter Charlie Cain, and he got few opportunities to steer the conversation to more elevated levels.



Hugh Gallagher

Shame on Tim Skubick for wasting our time when the state faces real problems.

Granholm was considerably more polished than her opponent, who stared into the camera like a deer in headlights and kept repeating how "disappointed" he was. But Granholm also descended into political games with her accusations about a DeVos investment in a nursing home operation and an implication that he was somehow responsible for alleged resident abuse. His response was less than forthcoming, but bringing the issue up was cheap and distracting. Stick to real issues; this state is suffering.

Shame on Jennifer Granholm and her advisers because on substance and performance, she had it won until that point.

This week's debate will be Tuesday. WDIV-TV (Channel 4) will be pre-empting a great new television series, Friday Night Lights, to show the debate. Friday Night Lights will be aired at 1:38 a.m.

WDIV, do us a favor, do the right thing. Show Friday Night Lights at its regular time and show the debate at 1:38 a.m.

Nationally, it's Mark Foley all the time. There are calls for Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert to resign. Assuming that he's felling the truth, that the only communication by Foley that he knew about was the ambiguous e-mail and not the salacious instant messages, he probably should not resign.

But before the Foley scandal broke, Hastert showed his true colors with his inflammatory, partisan, noxious comments about Democrats who voted against the bill giving the president more authority in handling detainees and denying detainees habeas corpus rights. He said that Democrats who opposed the measure, "voted today in favor of more rights for terrorists. So the same terrorists who plan to harm

Granholm was considerably more polished than her opponent, who stared into the camera like a deer in headlights and kept repeating how "disappointed" he was. But Granholm also descended into political games with her accusations about a DeVos investment in a nursing home operation and an implication that he was somehow responsible for alleged resident abuse.

innocent Americans and their freedom worldwide would be coddled if we followed the Democrat plan."

Never mind that several detainees have been found to have no connection with terrorist groups and activities. Never mind that we are a nation founded on the idea that all humans have "inalienable rights" and that being brought before a court in a timely manner is one of those human rights. Never mind that there is a difference between being a terrorist and being "suspected" of terrorist activities.

Of course, the right-wing spin is all over the Foley matter. It's "clearly" a plot by Democrats to make Republicans look bad. Never mind that they do look bad.

Finally, closer to home. There is a scurrilous piece of literature being sent around by the Michigan Republican Party against state Rep. Glenn Anderson, who is running for the state Senate against state Sen. Laura Toy. The text on the front reads "The Ten Commandments, pretty hard to argue with any of them. Unless you're a radical liberal like Glenn Anderson." The next page asserts "liberal" Anderson is "controlled" by radical special interests.

It's clearly aimed at those just barely literate voters who don't understand what the words radical or liberal mean and don't have a firm grasp of the First Amendment. Glenn Anderson is anything but a "radical liberal." He's a decent man and a moderate Democrat who votes his conscience. Toy, who says she favors closer relations with those across the aisle, needs to disavow any connection with such garbage.

A sad, sad week for politics.

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.

## Fourteen reasons not to kill mourning doves

Go out and vote 'no' on Proposal 3 to protect Michigan's mourning doves.

Doves had been protected in Michigan for more than 100 years. Gov. Jennifer Granholm promised to protect them, too, but early in her term she broke that promise and allowed them to be hunted.

Many hunters and non-hunters are against the mourning dove hunt.

Here's 14 solid reasons:

■ Michigan's dove population is low.

There's no overpopulation argument.

■ Doves do not damage crops nor ornamental plants.

■ It's not an attempt to chip away the hunting "rights" in Michigan.

■ With dove hunting, there's virtually no financial gain for the state. It doesn't contribute to increased tourism or funds from hunter license fees.

Even the Michigan United Conservation Club, a group that wants dove hunting, admits it.

■ There's a high wound rate. Crippled birds are often left to die.

■ Doves are monogamous, loving creatures. Both parents raise their young. If one parent is shot, all of the young usually die.

■ In Michigan, we already hunt and kill: ducks, deer, bears, squirrels, crows, rabbits, raccoons, elk, turkeys, foxes, skunks, woodchucks, pheasants, coyotes, woodcocks, Canada geese, mergansers, coots, moorhens, quail, English sparrows, weasels, feral pigeons and porcupines. Enough already.

■ Doves today; wolves and cranes tomorrow? Some hunters are now organizing to kill wolves and cranes once they are off the endangered species list. Can any animal live in peace in Michigan — especially the state bird of peace?

■ Mistaken identity. Doves are often mistaken for protected birds like the American kestrel. Even President George W. Bush, with experienced hunting guides, mistakenly shot one while dove hunting.

■ Doves are at their lowest body weight during hunting season, 3.5 ounces, and the flesh contains lead. Lead bullets are used to kill doves. So not only are you getting just a little bit of flesh, it's riddled with lead. And it leaks into the land. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said 728 hunters deposited 1,086,275 pellets per hectare of lead shot in

Say it again, crippled birds left to suffer. The Wildlife Society says 21-47 percent of shot doves aren't retrieved. They're crippled and die slowly from the wounds. Then their lead-filled bodies are eaten by other animals.

four days of dove hunting.

■ Say it again, crippled birds left to suffer. The Wildlife Society says 21-47 percent of shot doves aren't retrieved. They're crippled and die slowly from the wounds. Then their lead-filled bodies are eaten by other animals.

■ West Nile virus. Mourning doves are listed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as a watch-list species for the disease. Why risk it?

■ The ballot proposal to ban dove hunting was initiated by a Michigan voters' group called Citizens to Protect Mourning Doves. It's a group of both hunters and non-hunters. Some who support the hunt want you to believe if you vote to protect doves, you will then let out-of-state groups control Michigan. Not true.

The truth is an out-of-state group, the National Rifle Association, on its Web site is calling for a "state of emergency" in its push to allow dove hunting here. The Humane Society of the United States only became involved when thousands of Michigan residents contacted it for help, as stated on its Web site.

■ Mourning doves are the state bird of peace. Some who support dove killing say that's untrue.

But it is. Here's the proof: House Resolution 244, from documents of the Journal of the House Number 30, March 25, 1998, proclaims:

*The mourning dove is an American bird known for its sad, cooing call. It is a peaceful songbird. They mate for life. The dove has traditionally symbolized peace with an olive branch in its beak.*

The resolution was approved in 1998.

How violent has Michigan become that we actually permit the killing of the state, and worldwide, symbol of peace?

Vote no on Proposal 3.

Lana Mini is a staff writer for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. She can be reached via email at lmini@hometownlife.com.

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This event benefits the Henry Ford Health System.

**SAKS FIFTH AVENUE**

# Seniors learn of Medicare Part D changes

BY STACY JENKINS  
STAFF WRITER

There are changes coming to the Medicare Part D prescription drug program for 2007.

Deductibles are rising, more plans are being offered and changes are anticipated in many of the dozens of coverage plans.

"I know this can be confusing to some of us, myself included," said Louanne Bakk, director of access and benefits assistance for the Area Agency on Aging, 1-B. "There are lots of variances from plan to plan."

There will be 54 drug coverage plans offered next year,

compared to the 41 plans offered now. Minimum deductibles will increase from \$250 to \$265 per year. Monthly premiums will range from \$17.90 to \$86.90, depending on the plan.

Bakk spoke to seniors at the Costick Center in Farmington Hills on Tuesday and offered help with the drug coverage changes coming Jan. 1 to all Medicare Part D participants. The program is in its first year.

Current enrollees who are happy with their drug coverage do not have to do anything to renew their plan for 2007. But those who want to explore other plans, or those who need

to sign up for the first time, will need to do so between Nov. 15 and Dec. 31.

Medicare Part D participants will soon receive a letter, entitled, "Model Annual Notice of Change #1."

"Everyone who has a Medicare Part D plan should receive this letter by the end of October," Bakk said.

It will explain how the individual's plan will change in 2007, including premium costs, co-pays, deductibles and which drugs will be covered.

If the plan is satisfactory, the participant does nothing. If a

change is desired, the participant needs to select a different plan, after researching the options, and enroll in a new plan. Bakk said it's very important that the person does not drop out of his or her current plan — it will automatically be discontinued when a new plan is selected. Medicare Part D participants are only allowed one change per year and a disenroll is considered to be a change and a re-enroll is a second change.

If it all seems too overwhelming, participants are encouraged to seek help.

"The Area Agency on Aging will do a one-on-one assistance program again to see if that current plan is the best for you," Bakk said.

The Agency plans to hold an assistance program at the Costick Center on a yet-to-be-determined date. Those needing help can schedule a one-hour appointment by calling the Area Agency on Aging 1-B's Medicare Medicaid Assistance Program at (800) 803-7174.

The Agency will send the person a small plastic bag to place all medications in and a list of other things to bring to

the assistance session.

"One-on-one assistance works the best because we're able to explain what their benefits are going to look like," Bakk said.

Those who qualify for Medicare Part D, but do not enroll in a Part D plan or a comparable one, are subject to a penalty of 1 percent of the premium for every month they're not in a plan.

"This is really the one chance you have for '07 to do this," Bakk said.

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- Financial Planning Seminar — with Rick Bloom

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