



Documentary reflects on immigrants' stories of struggles, success

HOMETOWNLIFE - C1

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SUNDAY
December 10, 2006

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Mark LeSuer took this picture in 1970 of what would become Central City Park. In the background is Westland City Hall.

Old pictures capture dump site that became Central City Park

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Mark LeSuer of Westland recalls vividly what a former dump site looked like before it became Central City Park. He took pictures of it.

With Westland City Hall in view, LeSuer's camera captured abandoned drums, old furnaces, discarded cans and bottles, wood - even a battered boat - on the land.

LeSuer, 52, took the pictures in late 1970 when he was an 11th-grader at John Glenn High School. He won \$25 for his shots of environmental pollution in a photography contest sponsored by the student council.

"Everybody in my generation knew what was there," he said.

Wayne County road workers used

the site as a dump from the 1930s through the 1970s, officials have said, but they weren't alone.

"Everybody dumped there," LeSuer said.

LeSuer thought about his pictures after a controversy erupted in early November about park contamination. City, county and state officials kept quiet for years after soil tests revealed elevated levels of lead in the western ball diamonds.

Officials are now dealing with how to clean up the park - long considered one of Westland's gems.

LeSuer didn't bring his pictures to the *Observer* to make any political statement or to embarrass anyone.

Rather, he just thought people who



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Mark LeSuer, a 1972 graduate of John Glenn High School, talks about pictures he took as part of a high school environmental project.

PLEASE SEE DUMP, A6



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Keegan Weise, 6, of Wayne sits on the lap of his father, Darren Weise, as Wayne County nurse Amelia Small takes a sample of blood that will be tested for lead. Weise said his son played soccer in Central City Park, where elevated levels of lead have been found.

Scores line up for free lead testing

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Six-year-old Keegan Weise of Wayne was first in line when Wayne County health workers came to Westland to test people for exposure to lead.

Keegan played soccer for the last two seasons in Central City Park, where soil tests found elevated levels of lead.

"I want to make sure he's OK," Keegan's father, Darren Weise, said. "I've heard that one of the side effects of lead can be learning deficiencies. A child's brain is like a sponge at his age, and every time these kids play soccer, they're out there rolling around on the ground."

Health workers took Weise's telephone number and said they would call him if his son tested positive for exposure to lead.

Keegan and nearly 100 other people showed up Wednesday for

free lead testing at the Bailey Recreation Center. At times, tempers flared as people waited nearly two hours to have their blood drawn.

"I thought it was ridiculous," said Westland resident Georgia Becker, who was tested along with her daughter, son-in-law and two grandchildren, ages 12 and 13. "It wasn't organized at all."

Wayne County officials had encouraged people to call ahead for appointments, but Becker said she was told when she called Wednesday morning that she couldn't reserve a time slot.

The county will offer another round of free testing 9 a.m. to noon Wednesday, Dec. 13, at the Bailey Center. Alan Helmkamp, assistant Wayne County executive, has said people who want to make appointments may call (734) 727-7056.

PLEASE SEE TESTING, A6

Wetlands prompt developer to revise Maida Woods site plan

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Developers have scaled back their plans to build new homes on the city's southwest side after learning that the land contains state-regulated wetlands.

Still, critics contend that the proposed Maida Woods subdivision shouldn't be built on Palmer Road between John Hix and Hannan roads.

Residents rallying to protect the heavily wooded area believe the development could destroy a refuge for wildlife, threaten nearby wetlands and adversely affect the Rouge River.

"It's a watershed issue," said Jacqueline Rubasky, a California resident who has returned home to help her parents and others fight the

development.

"It's like coming in and ripping out the heart of this community," Rubasky told the *Observer*. "We have this little Garden of Eden in our own back yards."

A new study by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality shows that the 14-acre site contains about 2.5 acres of regulated wetlands, said Andrew Hartz, district supervisor for the DEQ's land and water management division.

D.W. Krane, one of the developers for Royal Oak-based Kentmoor LLC, said the findings have led to a revised site plan for 35 single-lot homes rather than 41, as was originally proposed for the condominium development.

"We have revised the site plan to adhere to the MDEQ requirements," Krane said. "We have

added some more green space and buffers. We are going to build around the wetlands area, and we have removed the building (plans) from those sites."

But the Rubaskys and others, who have formed the Westland Homeowners Committee for Environmental Conservation & Smart Growth, said the project will disrupt one of the city's last natural areas. They believe the city has a legal right - and a moral obligation - to protect the land.

"We're not anti-development. We're smart growth," Jacqueline Rubasky said. "This is a highly sensitive environment. This is a wetlands area. We have to be sensitive to that."

"We should do everything we can to value and protect our pristine areas," she added.

Her father, Jim Rubasky, questioned the need for the Maida Woods development when Westland already has so many homes for sale and in foreclosure.

Krane, meanwhile, said developers will soon submit their revised site plan to city officials.

Westland City Council President William Wild has said he will schedule a study session to discuss the issue before any decisions are made.

Hartz said DEQ approval will be necessary only if developers try to encroach on the regulated wetlands area.

"In my mind," he said, "the developer is going through the proper channels and doing this the right way."

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Coming Thursday in Filter



It's the best chance of the year for movies as potential Oscar contenders are released. Let our guide help you choose what to see.



Children with a rare disease that leaves their skin extremely sensitive share a happy moment with Santa.

Event helps children feel 'they are not alone'

Their skin is so sensitive that even the slightest touch can cause pain, blistering and scarring.

They share a life-threatening disease, epidermolysis bullosa, or EB - several inherited disorders that leave the skin and mucous membranes extremely fragile. But, early this month at Westland Free Methodist Church, children with EB from 12 families also shared an afternoon of fun, games, crafts and a visit from Santa Claus.

The second annual Santa Social was hosted by the Wayne-Westland Friends of EB and supported by the Macomb County-based Kisses 4 Katie foundation.

"Each child was given gifts specially picked out for them," said Robin Holbrook, longtime volunteer for the Wayne-Westland Friends of

EB. "The event gives children with EB the chance to interact with other children who live with this genetic disorder and to feel for a day that they are not alone."

While the children enjoyed themselves, parents and grandparents also got the chance to network with each other and find support for the difficult task of caring for the many medical, social and emotional needs of EB children.

Two of the families were from Westland, including Dave and Carol Thurmond, who brought their children, Joshua and Sarah, and Matthew and Danielle Cripps, who have two daughters with EB.

To learn more about EB or to find out how to help, visit the Wayne-Westland Friends of EB Web site at www.wwfbeb.org.



Ethan Fox (right) of Grand Ledge and big brother Devin receive gifts from Santa.

District may consider high school day change

BY REBECCA JONES
STAFF WRITER

The high school day may look different for Livonia Public Schools in 2008.

Students could take seven classes a day, or five courses in trimesters. Either move would give students more opportunity for electives.

Teachers, administrators and board members agree that students need more choices in their schedule as Michigan adopts the most rigorous set of graduation requirements in the country.

The bottom line is, "How do we best meet the needs of all our students?" asked Sheila Alles, the district's director of academic services.

The Livonia Education Association recently formed a committee to investigate options, said Carolyn Norris-Deyell, president of the union.

"(Teachers) know we have to look at the day," Norris-Deyell said. "You have to have the arts. All of the jobs that are coming into existence depend on creativity."

Currently, LPS students can take 12 electives over four years. Beginning with next year's requirement of more core academic classes, that choice will be cut to eight.

Under trimesters, students could take five courses at a time over 13 weeks, for a total of 15 classes during the school year, or three more than the current six-hour semesters allow.

About 50 Michigan school districts have adopted trimester scheduling, including Clarenceville, and most recently, Farmington Public Schools.

Districts use different models to structure the day. Farmington decided to replace block scheduling (90-minute classes every other day) with trimesters. Classes will meet five times a day for 70 minutes over 12-week

semesters. A seven-period day would shorten classes from 60 to 50 minutes, letting students fit in an extra class per semester.

LPS won't make any changes until the 2008-09 school year, Supt. Randy Liepa said.

LPS has also formed a steering committee to discuss options.

One downside of trimesters is that students wouldn't have as many weeks to tackle the subject matter, Liepa said. Teachers are also concerned about maintaining students' focus during longer class sessions, Norris-Deyell said.

In Farmington, the move to trimesters is expected to save \$2.3 million in staffing costs, but LPS administrators said it was too early to estimate restructuring costs for the district.

In addition, any change to the high school day would be a contractual issue between the district and LEA.

School board member Steve King, who brought up trimesters during a discussion of high school graduation requirements Nov. 27, pointed to a statistic in the Spring Lake school district.

An administrator there reported that Michigan Educational Assessment Program scores have improved since that district moved to trimesters seven years ago. Whether the district moves to trimesters or not, Trustee Robert Freeman said he was concerned about taking choices away from high schoolers.

"I'd like to see innovative ways to continue to allow students to have opportunities," he said. Students use that time to explore career fields, he said.

The issue will be studied carefully over the next year, Norris-Deyell said. "We want to make sure we have the right choice for students."

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CORRECTION

The Redford Civic Symphony joins the Friends of the Opera of Michigan and the St. Priscilla Catholic Church Chorus in concert 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 17, at the church, 19120 Purlingbrook, Livonia. A Nov. 26 article incorrectly stated that the orchestra would perform on Dec. 16. There is no charge. Donations are welcome. For information, call (313) 582-0997.

The concert is one of a series and features Karin White, soprano; Quinto Milito, baritone; Steve Tompkins, tenor, and the Redford Civic Symphony under the director of Douglas MacQueen. Jeanne Muraski conducts the St. Priscilla Catholic Church Chorus.

WESTLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT

The following vehicles have been deemed abandoned and will be sold at public auction December 19, 2006 at 11:15 A.M. The auction will be held at Westland Car Care Towing, 6375 Hix Road, Westland, MI 48185. The vehicles will be sold as is, starting bid is for towing and storage.

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	BODY	V.I.N. #
1993	Ford	Aerostar	S/W	1FMDA41XPZA17875
1987	Mercury	Sable	4 DR	1MEBM58U7HG656280

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Personal property described below in the matter of

- A011 - Jenora Olaniran- mattress, 15 boxes, dryer
- A016 - Tracey Wilburn- mattress, microwave, TV
- B012 - Quineth Hill- mattress set, dresser, speaker
- B023 - Geneva Joubert- TV, dresser, sofa
- B084 - Eric McLenon - mattress, box spring, vacuum cleaner
- B104 - Karen Kerrens-Madison - misc. items
- B158 - Brandie Peoples - bags, totes
- B176 - Richard Harrington- mattress set, microwave, kitchen table
- B233 - Gloria Prim- TV, clothing, bags
- B245 - Sonya Dickens- sofa, loveseat, totes
- B335 - Danyelle Boykin- bags, 10 boxes
- B339 - Deloris Smith- bags, boxes, totes
- B361 - Daniel Page - boxes, misc. items
- B381 - Romare Redden- refrigerator, table, chairs
- C013 - James Scruggs - desk, dresser, toys
- C014 - Lynne Ray- washer, dresser, trunk
- E025 - Michael Knapp- Ac Unit, stereo, 2 trunks
- E050 - Deborah Keast- power tools, end table, TV
- F025 - Venida Chapman- bookcase, desk, microwave
- F032 - Antoine William- boxes, stereo, TV
- F047 - Brian Thiel- desk, golf club set
- F049 - Juanita Connelly- refrigerator, stove

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CITY OF WESTLAND NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION

On DECEMBER 19, 2006 the Westland Police Department will conduct a public auction of impounded, abandoned vehicles. The auction will begin promptly at 11:00 a.m. at Westland Car Care, 6375 Hix Road, Westland, MI, County of Wayne, where the following vehicles will be offered for sale to the highest bidder.

YEAR	MAKE	BODY STYLE	COLOR	V.I.N. #
1992	Buick	Regal/4 DR	Black	2G4WB54T6N1401100
1995	Plymouth	Neon/4 DR	Black	1P3ES67C6SD155819
1995	Ford	Escort/2 DR	Green	1FASP1J7SW249158
1997	Toyota	Corolla/4 DR	White	1NXBA02E0VZ542757
1991	Mercury	Topaz/4 DR	Black	2MEPM36X5MB622220
1999	Buick	LeSabre/4 DR	Silver	1G4HR52K9XH407245
1991	Mercury	Cougar/2 DR	Blue	1MEPM6044MH653364
1995	Ford	Ranger/PU	Green	1FTCR14UXSPA87745
2001	Dodge	Caravan/SW	Blue	2B8GP44G51R117519
1993	Mazda	SW	Red	JM3LV5212P0506318
1991	GMC	Sonoma/PU	Black	1GTCS14AXM0534547
1992	Ford	Aerostar/SW	Dk Green	1FMDA11U3NZB79039
1993	Ford	T-Bird/2 DR	Black	1FAPP8241PH171760
1994	Ford	Ranger/PU	Black	1FTCR10A1RTA47969
1994	Kawasaki	Motorcycle	Green	JKAZX4E15RB505300
2006	Dodge	Charger/4 DR	Green	2B3KA43G06H160990
1992	Olds	Royale/4 DR	Blue/Wood	1G3HN53L5NH363328
1990	Ford	Ranger/PU	Black	1FTCR10X6LUA48766
1989	Plymouth	Voyager/Van	Blue	1P4FH5432KX702184

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

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Salvation Army drive going strong

BY JULIE BROWN
STAFF WRITER

Wayne-Westland Salvation Army leaders are pleased with local folks' generosity in the Red Kettle campaign this year.

This year's goal is \$125,000, and corps commander Matt O'Neil noted \$48,529 had been raised as of Dec. 7.

"We're doing a little better than last year. We're about \$5,000 ahead of last year" at this time.

The campaign, which features bell ringers at the familiar red kettles, runs through Saturday, Dec. 23.

"We've gotten a lot more in our mail already this year," O'Neil said of donations. People aren't focused on world crises like hurricanes right now, he noted, which helps with fund-raising among the many nonprofits.

"Everybody's trying to fight for some money this year. I'm glad we're doing as good as we are."

You can still contribute. Checks payable to the Salvation Army can be sent to 2300 Venoy, Westland 48186.

The phone number is (734) 722-3660.

The local Salvation Army Angel Tree is still in need of help. "We still need people to adopt families," O'Neil said.

Trees with kids' names are at Westland Shopping Center and at the Denny's restaurants by the mall and in Romulus.

For that program, you take a tag for ideas on what to buy for a child, and can adopt brothers and sisters. Call Margaret Gaster at the above number if you want to adopt a family.

A lot of businesses take an entire family. "Individual people do it as well," he said.

"It's snowing now so it'll put everybody in the Christmas spirit, we hope," O'Neil added.

The local Salvation Army will have a New Year's Eve party, with dinner 6-8 p.m., and music 8 p.m. at the Salvation Army. Dinner is \$10 for an adult suggested donation, \$5 for children.

"After 8 o'clock there's no cover charge."

Christian rock is to be featured, with bands Not of This World and also Midst of the Lions.

'It was a great night. Everybody had a good time, and we had a lot of positive feedback.'

Lori Brist
chamber president



Jennifer Pupa, a student in the culinary arts program at the William Ford Career Technical Center, arranges a tray of tasty treats.



PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Irene Sequin and Joy Ebel try a specialty from Fire Mountain's Theodore Smith during Taste Fest.

Hundreds savor culinary delights of annual Taste Fest

Hundreds of people became food connoisseurs for a night Tuesday in Westland, dining on scrumptious dishes ranging from prime rib to burritos to pulled pork during Holiday Taste Fest.

In all, 550 people and 21 restaurants joined this year's event, sponsored by

the Westland Chamber of Commerce at the Hellenic Cultural Center on Joy Road east of Newburgh.

"It was a great night," chamber President Lori Brist said. "Everybody had a good time, and we had a lot of positive feedback."

A committee of chamber board members chose cater-

ing company Hickory BBQ & Grill, which served pulled pork and cheesy potatoes, for the Culinary Excellence Award - meaning its food was ranked the best.

The committee chose Lakeshore Grill at Macy's for the Culinary Creativity Award, meaning the Westland Shopping Center-

based store had the best table decorations.

Restaurants like Casa Fiesta brought so much food that Taste Fest participants had to be careful not to fill up at one culinary station.

"A lot of people said it was the best Taste Fest ever," Brist said.

DEATHS

C
William "Bill" Cochrane
Cochrane, 50, formerly of Farmington Hills, died Dec. 3.

G
Edward J. Gulick
Gulick, 85, died Dec. 6.

H
Marguerite M. "Peggy" Harris
Harris, 89, of Farmington, died Dec. 7.
Kathryn M. "Tass" Hartrick
Hartrick, 80, of Royal Oak, died Dec. 8.

M
Patricia K. McGlone

McGlone, 85, of Plymouth, died Dec. 3.

S
Margaret L. Smith
Smith, of Bloomfield Hills, died Dec. 5.

Theodore J. (Ted) Sura
Sura, 90, formerly of Birmingham, died.

V
Thomas M. Vich
Vich, 54, died Dec. 4.

Complete paid obituaries can be found inside today's newspaper in Passages on page C4.

Children's Christmas Toy Drive

Drop-off Centers:

- Farmington Hills: 10000 Farmington Hills Blvd. (10000) 12/10-12/17
- Eastland Mall: 10000 Eastland Mall (10000) 12/10-12/17
- Children's Center: 10000 Children's Center (10000) 12/10-12/17

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And, thank you to everyone who took the time to stop by with non-perishable food items. The Showroom staff and the Canton Goodfellows appreciate your contribution to assist needy families in Canton.



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Sun., Dec. 10	Closed
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Tues.-Sat., Dec. 12-16	9:30-8:00 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 17	Noon-5:00 p.m.
Mon.-Sat., Dec. 18-23	9:30-8:00 p.m.
Christmas Eve	11:00-3:00 p.m.
Closed Dec. 25 & 26	



www.showroomofelegance.com

AROUND WESTLAND

Council to meet

The Westland City Council has scheduled two study sessions - one for 6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 11, to discuss the city audit and another for 6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 18, to discuss an office at Hunters West apartments that provides services for mentally and physically disabled residents.

Gracin to perform

Country singer, Westland native and former *American Idol* finalist Josh Gracin, a former U.S. Marine, will make a special appearance at Marty Feldman Chevrolet in Novi on Thursday, Dec. 14. Gracin will perform three acoustic songs, sign autographs and take pictures with fans 4-6 p.m. The performance and autographs are free and the event is open to the public.

"We are looking forward to the opportunity to host Josh at the dealership and give the community a chance to meet and hear this talented rising star," said Marla Feldman, president of Marty Feldman Chevrolet. "We are also excited that Josh chose to support the Detroit automotive industry by driving a new Chevy Tahoe XLT truck."

Gracin served in the U.S. Marines from 2000-04 and was honorably discharged. After his success on *American Idol* with his rendition of Rascal Flatts' *I'm Moving On*, Gracin earned two Billboard Top 10 Singles *I Want To Live* and *Nothin' To Lose*. Gracin lives in Nashville with his wife and three children.

Marty Feldman Chevrolet is located at 42355 Grand River Road between Haggerty and Novi Road in Novi.

Tunes for Toys for Tots

Donors are invited to bring Toys for Tots items - new, unwrapped toys - to the upcoming "Abstraction Thursday" event on Thursday, Dec. 14, at the Token Lounge in Westland.

The gathering of donations is being coordinated by Ryan Bollerud of Livonia who is inviting his friends and anyone else interested to visit for the performance by Drum and Bass (electronic music) and the sounds of DJs Psycho, Darkcube, Ojibiwa and L-Type. The event is free, with drink specials offered. The lounge is on Joy Road just east of Middlebelt and doors open at 9 p.m. for 18 and over.

Bowl with Santa

The Plymouth-Westland

Grange 389 will host Bowling with Santa 1-3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 10, at I-bwn-N-Country Lanes at Wayne Road and Avondale in Westland.

The cost is \$7 per child and includes one game of bowling, shoes, hot dog and pop, present and a visit from Santa Claus. A portion of the proceeds will benefit Wildwood Elementary School and the Westland Goodfellows.

Tickets are available by sending a check, payable to Grange 389, to Bowl with Santa, 38015 Sherwood St., Westland, MI 48185, or by calling Jeffrey Goodfellow at (734) 722-8324.

Christmas play

Gethsemane Missionary Baptist Church in Westland has invited the public to a free Christmas play and dinner at 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 16, at the church, located at 29066 Eton.

For more information, call (734) 721-2557. Transportation may be provided upon request.

Pancake breakfast

There's a good chance Santa Claus will be on hand for a pancake breakfast, hosted by the Westland Jaycees, 8-10 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 10, at the Applebee's on Warren Road in Westland.

Tickets are \$6 for all-you-can-eat pancakes, meat and juice. Proceeds will go to benefit various community projects, such as the Jaycees' annual Easter Egg Scramble and Spring Youth Dance.

To purchase tickets or for more information, call Jenn or Mike at (734) 437-6354.

Dining To Donate

Enjoy a meal that's filling and fulfilling Thursday, Dec. 14, at Applebee's Restaurant, Warren at Central City Parkway, in Westland.

Fliers are available to present that day to get 20 percent of the bill donated to the Westland Rotary. Participants also are asked to bring an unwrapped toy for the Salvation Army.

Christmas party

An unwrapped toy is the price of a ticket to the Westland Community Foundation's annual holiday event Tuesday, Dec. 12, in the media center of John Glenn High School.

The get-together will be 6-8 p.m. and feature classical holiday music performed by the John Glenn Singers and refreshments and hors d'oeuvres prepared by the culinary arts program at the William D. Ford

Career Technical Center.

The toys will be given to the Salvation Army's Wayne-Westland Corps.

John Glenn High School is on Marquette, west of Wayne Road. For more information, or to reserve a spot, call (734) 595-7727.

Holiday music

The sounds of the season will echo through Westland Shopping Center with musical performances by local groups.

The five-piece Phil Gram All Stars will perform classic holiday music 6-8 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 12 and 19, in the East Court, while 3 D's & W, a barbershop quartet, will perform throughout the mall 6-8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 13 and 20, and Friday, Dec. 15 and 22.

Also performing will be Plymouth Baptist Church Choir 8-8:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 7, in the J.C. Penney Court, and Our Lady of Good Counsel Choir Group 11 a.m. to noon Friday, Dec. 15, also in the J.C. Penney Court.

Youngsters can stop by and see Santa 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Dec. 11-14. Additional hours will be 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Dec. 10 and 17, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Dec. 15, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Dec. 16, 17 and 23 and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Christmas Eve, Dec. 24.

With the holiday shopping season in full swing, the mall will be open a variety of hours during the month. It will be open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Dec. 17, 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Dec. 11-15, 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. Dec. 16, 18-23, and 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Dec. 24.

The mall will be closed Christmas Day, but will reopen 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Dec. 26. It will return to normal hours Dec. 27-30, then open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Dec. 31 and Jan. 1.

Book sale

The Friends of the Library will hold a book sale today (Sunday) at the William P. Faust Public Library on Central City Parkway north of Ford. For more information, call (734) 326-6123.

Euchre games

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 and includes refreshments, snacks and cash prizes. A 50/50 raffle also is available. The scheduled dates are Dec. 15, Jan. 7, 5, 12, 26 and Feb. 2, 9, 16. For more information, call (734) 427-5150.

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LPS looks at books, schedules as graduation rules change

BY REBECCA JONES
STAFF WRITER

Algebra will get harder next year. History will change. And lots of Livonia high school students will need new textbooks.

As a result of the new state graduation requirements, high school will be different next year. Students will take fewer electives and more academic courses.

The school board will consider setting aside \$250,000 from its fund equity for new books and teaching materials next year.

"We are going to see much more rigorous content in some of our classes," said Sheila Alles, the district's director of academic services, in a presentation to the school board on Monday.

The new Algebra 1 class will look more like the current Algebra 2, she said. Some Algebra 1 concepts will be taught in eighth-grade math. Under the new state law, students must pass four years of math, including Algebra 2.

The district will have to order new textbooks and novels.

"I'm not sure there is a textbook on the market that provides the content that we need to meet the (new Algebra 1) course content requirements," Alles said.

Alles also advocated for more professional development for teachers. "We're going to have to deliver instruction in a different manner," she said.

The school board will vote at an upcoming meeting to change

the LPS graduation requirements. As before, LPS will require 23 credits, but students will have fewer opportunities for electives beginning next year. Instead of room for 12 electives over the four years, they can take eight and must pass seven.

The new requirements apply beginning with the Class of 2010.

Livonia Career Technical Center principal Janet Haas was concerned about losing students in the career technical education programs once students have room for fewer electives. The district has 850 students in the career programs, which meet for two or three hours per day.

Haas worked with the state to develop a pilot program, cutting the Algebra 2 requirement to a half-credit for Career Technical Center students.

Trustee Robert Freeman wondered if a similar modification would allow students in the Creative and Performing Arts program to meet English requirements.

So far, those changes aren't allowed in the areas of science and language arts, Alles said.

Board member Kevin Whitehead asked about adding a seventh hour to the high school day, and Trustee Robert Freeman inquired about a switch to trimesters, a move some districts are trying in an effort to cut costs and give students more options during their high school careers.

Any change to the high school schedule would be a contractual

issue between the district and teachers' union, said Supt. Randy Liepa.

"They're very interested in exploring options," he said. "There are a lot of people with a lot of different ideas that we can explore."

The district will offer slower-paced math and science classes, using different textbooks, for students who are struggling and is looking into offering more tutoring, Alles said.

But, she added, "There's a possibility that it may take some additional summer school courses for some students to graduate."

To meet the state requirement, geography lessons will be incorporated in world and U.S. history, Alles said.

Trustee Daniel Lessard expressed concern that history lessons will be shortened.

"History is vast. ... History starts when there was nobody here. I don't believe that we're going to be able to teach that," Lessard said. "Kids are going to come out shortchanged."

The district will also add a credit of visual, performing and applied arts to its graduation requirements next year. Students will meet an online learning requirement during work for other classes.

The state will require two credits of world languages for the graduating Class of 2016. LPS is not adding a foreign language to its list of graduation requirements now, but will continue to offer language courses.

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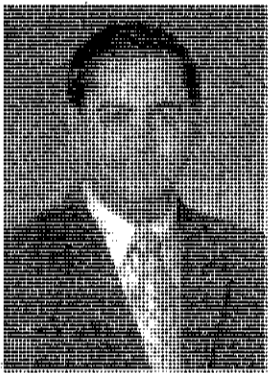
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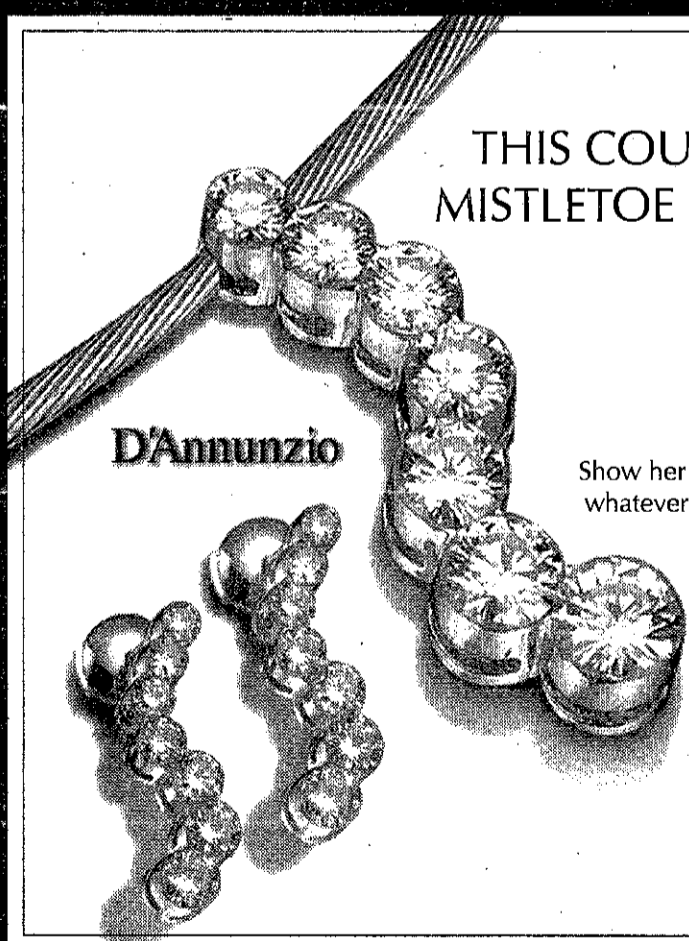
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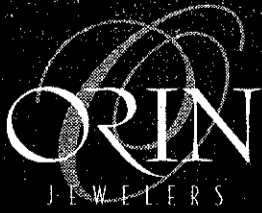
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Megan Buford, 7, and her brother Jason, 5, of Westland stand in line with their grandmother Kathy Dobbstein for the lead testing at the Bailey Recreation Center.

TESTING

FROM PAGE A1
 Those who get tested will have to wait to learn whether they've been exposed to lead.
 "It'll be at least a week for the results," Helmkamp said.
 The testing arose after it was revealed in early November that city and county officials knew for years but kept quiet about elevated levels of lead, particularly on the Central City Park ball diamonds.
 A long line formed Wednesday for blood testing, but Helmkamp

said the county only had so many health care workers it could spare for the program. Many others were involved elsewhere in giving flu shots.
 In other developments, officials from the city, county and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality had a telephone conference Thursday to discuss new soil tests conducted in the park in early November.
 The latest tests again found elevated levels of lead in an L-shaped area going from the ball diamonds to the soccer fields, Helmkamp said. The new results paralleled earlier findings, he

said.
 "This will help us to define the area of remediation as we go forward to get DEQ's approval for remediation," Helmkamp said.
 Officials hope to get approval to bring in 12 inches or more of new soil along with what Helmkamp described as a "geotextile barrier" to prevent lead from reaching the surface.
 "That's what we're proposing," Helmkamp said.
 DEQ officials already have rejected two earlier remediation plans.

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DUMP

FROM PAGE A1

don't remember the dump site might find his photos interesting.
 When he took the shots, LeSuer was a student council class representative who was taking a course in photo darkroom techniques.

Now employed as a maintenance technician, LeSuer lost track of his pictures for more than 30 years after he graduated from high school in 1972 and started attending Northern

When he took the shots, LeSuer was a student council class representative who was taking a course in photo darkroom techniques.

Michigan University in Marquette.

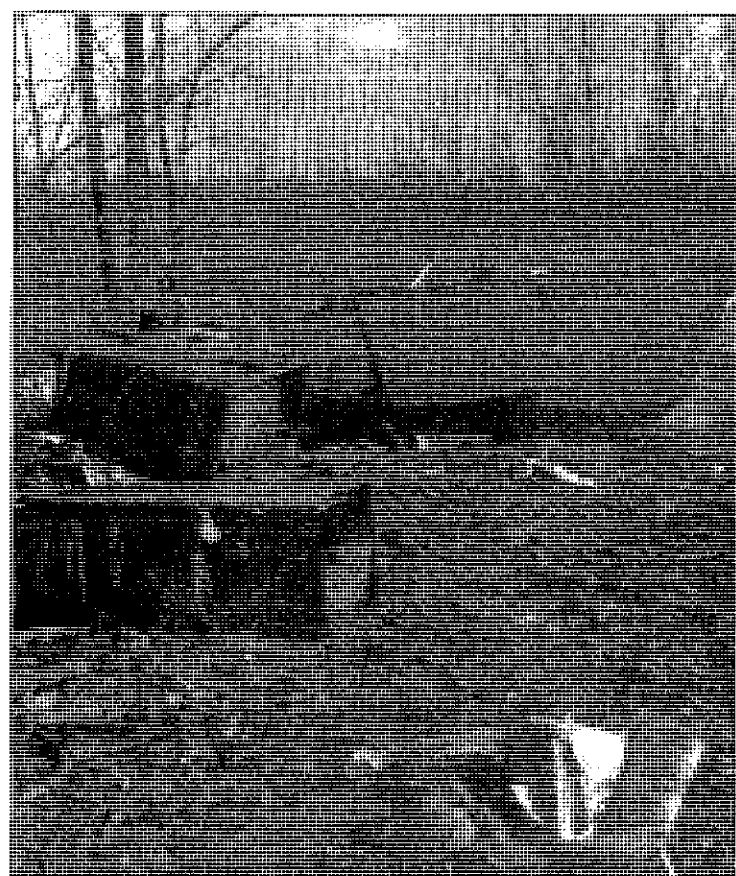
During a family gathering for Thanksgiving, his sister told him that after he went off to college, she kept some of his belongings, including the pictures.

LeSuer, who lives in the same Westland house where he lived back then, was surprised to see his old contest-winning pictures.

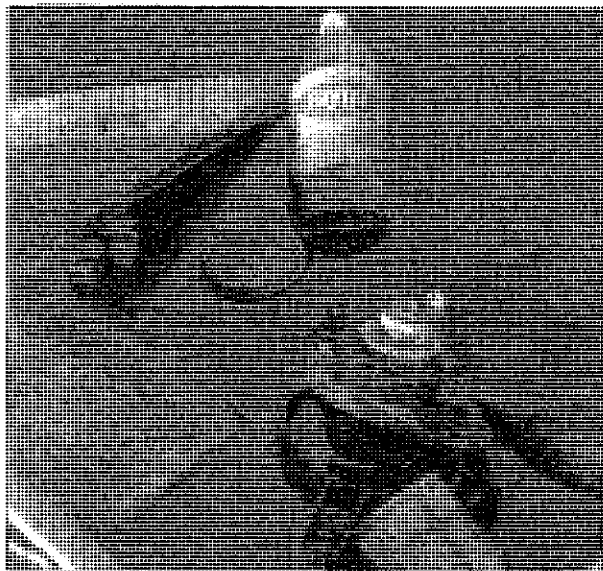
"My sister had them for 33 years," he said.
 His pictures captured an era before Wayne County made the land into a park and started leasing it to the city of Westland in 1978. The area wasn't nearly as developed then.

"Back then, there wasn't as much fear about the environment," LeSuer said.
 "Environmental issues were just becoming pronounced."

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Mark LeSuer says his pictures of what is now Central City Park captured a battered boat, furnaces and other items that people dumped there.



What is now Central City Park was a dumping ground for many items.

INFORMATION CENTRAL

EVEN A LITTLE IS SOMETHING

Sunday, Dec. 10, marks the 56th annual United Nations Human Rights Day. In response to the horrors of World War II, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on Dec. 10, 1948, but did not start the holiday until 1950. The declaration is not legally binding, but it is meant to encourage governments to advance human, civil, economic and social rights.

Each year has its own observance and this year's is "Fighting Poverty: a Matter of Obligation, Not Charity." At the Westland public

library, you can find materials that will deepen your understanding of this important day.

According to the United Nations, poverty is the cause and product of human rights violations. You can find resources to help understand how this is so. *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time* by Jeffrey Sachs and *Wealth and Poverty: an Economic History of the 20th Century* are a couple good books to begin looking into deprivation at home and around the world and what can be done about it. The library even has relevant documentaries such as *Waging a Living and Wage Slaves: Not Getting by in America*.

Human rights violations can cover many different areas. *Encyclopedia of Human Rights Issues Since 1945* by Winston Langley and *Dictionary of Human Rights Law* by John Schuyler Gibson, and *Human Rights in a Nutshell* by Thomas Buergethal offer broad overviews of human rights. Other titles such as *Child Labor and Sweatshops*, *Human Rights of Women: National and International Perspectives*, *The Burning Tigris* by Peter Balakian are just a few examples of other human rights topics we cover.

So if you are ready to learn for yourself how poverty is related to human rights and perhaps change common perceptions about who is poor

and why, the library of Westland is a great place to start. Stop by at the reference desk, call us at (734) 326-6123, or remotely search our catalog 24 hours a day at www.westland.lib.mi.us. For more information on this year's Human Rights Day, you can go to: www.un.org/events/human-rights/2006.

HIGHLIGHTED ACTIVITIES

Canned Food Drive Dec. 10-16, sponsored by the Teen Advisory Board (TAB). Bring your canned or boxed food donations and drop them off in the boxes located in the library. All items will be donated to the Wayne-Westland Salvation

Army.

Forever Blessed Ministries with gospel saxophonist Steven Thomas 7 p.m. Dec. 11, featuring Deborah Thomas and special guest Frederick Storch.

Renaissance Chorus (a branch of the Barbershop Harmony Society) 7:30 p.m. Dec. 12.

Gifts for Giving Dec. 16 in three sessions: 10 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. Little short on cash but would like some presents for your family and friends? Stop by the library and make three cool gifts you can take home and give away! No charge. Registration is required. Call the library or stop by to save your seat. For grades six-12.

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<p>GRAPEFRUIT 2/\$1.00 40 Size</p>	<p>WHOLE or HALF SPIRAL HAMS \$3.99 lb. Ready to Serve Please Order Early</p>	<p>Lipari - Old Time HONEY MESQUITE TURKEY BREAST \$3.59 lb. Lipari - YELLOW AMERICAN CHEESE \$2.99 lb.</p>

A Christmas Wish

Johnson students send supplies to troops



PHOTOS BY TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Johnson Upper Elementary School fifth-graders Amanda Walker and Haylee Englehart decide what to include in a care package for soldiers in Iraq.

BY REBECCA JONES
STAFF WRITER

Sometime soon, soldiers in Iraq will open box after box of gifts from Johnson Upper Elementary school in Westland and smile.

They will be able to brush their teeth and moisten chapped lips.

They will be able to clean out their ears, and rest their heads on pillows at night.

Everyday items, like toothpaste and shoe inserts, are hard to come by in the desert war zone. So members of Johnson's Student Leadership club designed care packages.

"This is a huge war. We want all the soldiers to be safe," said fifth-grader Harjot Gill. "I guess we just want them to have a Merry Christmas."

Teacher Erika Rebbe worked with a soldier who returned from serving in Iraq who gave insight about what his buddies needed overseas.

That list included toothbrushes and toothpaste, cotton swabs, Gold Bond foot powder and little game books to help pass the time.

"These are things they have to share because they don't get enough of it," Rebbe said.

The whole school donated, and Student Leadership members spent their recess time collecting and organizing items from classrooms.

On Tuesday, students



Johnson Upper Elementary students take donated items from collection boxes to pack care packages with games, toiletries and snacks for soldiers fighting overseas.

stayed after school to get 30 boxes of donated goods ready to ship.

Fifth-grader Kayleigh Foreman held a clipboard and checked off items, making sure each care package had a little of everything. Students also made Christmas cards with personal notes.

One parent burned 60 music CDs with tunes from Sting to Led Zeppelin.

"A lot of love was put into this," Rebbe said. "It became much bigger than I thought it would be."

Fifth-grader Justin Baker brought in hard candy, lotion, deodorant and soap.

"It's very nice to help other people. They don't get a lot of stuff and they don't get to celebrate holidays," said fifth-grader Kiah Thomas.

This is the first time Johnson school worked on such a project, but the effort will probably be repeated next year.

Rebbe said it helped students meet their new classmates in the restructured fifth- and sixth-grade school.

Now, the students are collecting scarves, hats and mittens for Children's Hospital of Michigan.

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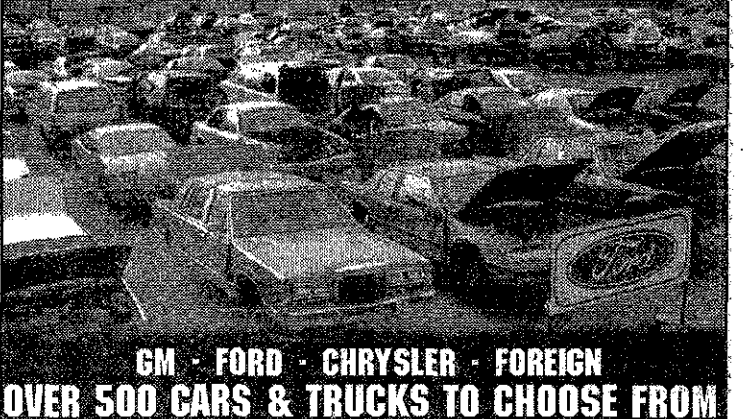
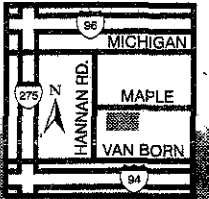
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1st book became 'Bear' of an adventure

Local author, illustrator team on educational children's story

BY BRAD KADRICH
STAFF WRITER

When Peggy Price Heiney would visit the lake house on northern Michigan's Little Traverse Lake, she would notice a teddy bear left behind by a child, and she would talk to it.

Quizzical friends would often ask her about the conversations with the bear. Price Heiney, a Plymouth resident since 1957 and a retired kindergarten teacher from Bird Elementary School, put the answer in print, publishing her first work of fiction, *Lonely Teddy*.

"I would pick up this bear and talk to it and someone said, 'What is the bear telling you?'" Price Heiney recalled. "The story just came out of my mouth."

Lonely Teddy, published by Ferne Press, an imprint of Nelson Publishing & Marketing of Northville, tells

BOOK TOUR

Plymouth author Peggy Price Heiney will read/sign copies of her book, *'Lonely Teddy'*, at:

Michigan Made, 1-4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 17. Michigan Made is located at 830 W. Ann Arbor Trail in downtown Plymouth.

of the adventures of *Teddy*, a *Lonely Teddy Bear* left behind by his owner and constant companion, a little girl named Elizabeth. Elizabeth leaves the bear after a visit to her grandfather's lake house and returns to her home in Seattle, Wash.

The bear misses Elizabeth and decides to strike out on an adventure of his own. After surviving a trip along Little Traverse Lake, Good Harbor

Bay and the Sleeping Bear National Park, *Teddy* eventually is taken back to the lake house, where he decides to wait for Elizabeth.

The concept made the book quite appealing the folks at Ferne Press.

"I believe the concept for the story is very heart warming," publisher Marian Nelson said. "We worked very closely with the author and illustrator to achieve the feelings of the teddy bear. The illustrations make the story come alive. All ages will identify with this lovely story and say, 'Ahhhh' when they read it. Though it takes place in Michigan, it will have a special place in any home."

Price Heiney was talking about her book venture during a visit to her ophthalmologist's office, a conversation overheard by technician Megan Wellman. Wellman, who grew up in Redford and now lives with her husband, Brent, and two Great Danes in Canton, asked the author if she needed help illustrating the book.

"I've always been looking for outlets for my art," Wellman said. "I ended up in ophthalmology by default... it was hard for me to find anything to do in art, unless it was graphic design, which isn't my forte. I mentioned to her if she needed an illustrator, I'd be interested. I drew

up a couple of bears for her, and it kind of evolved from there."

When Price Heiney saw Wellman's work, she fell in love with it, particularly her vision of *Teddy*.

"The bear's face got me," Price Heiney admitted. "She did a beautiful job."

A frequent visitor to the Leelanau Peninsula, Price Heiney actually took the bear to all the spots the bear visits in the book, snapping pictures to use as support material for Wellman. The finished product was exciting to see for the first-time artist.

"It was a process, which you really don't know what you're getting yourself into, with a lot of time that goes into what's in the author's mind and what you're seeing, and compromising and seeing the final product," Wellman said. "As a finished piece, it's amazing to see your work on the page with the printed words, and on the hardback cover. It's pretty cool."

According to Price Heiney, who holds a bachelor's degree in education from Michigan State University and a master's from Eastern Michigan University, those details and the book's faithful depiction of all things Michigan contribute to the value of the story for children who read it.

"It's informative of the area, particularly the Leelanau



Peggy Price Heiney, a Plymouth resident who taught at Bird Elementary School for 30 years, recently published her first work of fiction, *Lonely Teddy*.

Peninsula, so it's very educational," said Price Heiney, who retired 12 years ago after teaching at Bird for 30 years. "The lesson the book tells is family unity. (*Teddy*) has been up there with family, and he's waiting for family to come back."

The book ends with *Teddy* waiting for Elizabeth to return.

Price Heiney, who still reads and dramatizes with children at the Plymouth District Library, said she considered actually bringing Elizabeth back at the end, but thought better of it.

"It's a matter of trust," Price Heiney said. "I decided to show that (*Teddy*) just trusts

that she's coming back for him."

After spending 30 years Bird — "I think I taught every kid in town," Price Heiney said with a laugh — she now hears from former students who now have students in school, all asking about the book.

"Kids I taught who now have their own kids have been calling me wanting the book," said Price Heiney, who will donate a portion of the book's proceeds to the Plymouth Symphony Orchestra. "It's gone pretty well, and I'm very pleased by that."

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Kawasaki Bike- Vin#- JKAENGA18F8A002714
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- 3042- Terrie Sherrard- dresser, ladder, toys
- 5043- Yvonne Blanding- bikes, filing cabinet, sofa
- 3041- Samuah Crawley- chair, couch, freezer
- 9092- Rick Doyle- bike, pictures, 30 totes
- 6034- Kevin Davanzo- sofa, desk, speakers
- 9014- Vivian Byrd- bags, totes, computer monitor
- 7135- Marlon Parry- 50 boxes, chair, sofa
- 7016- Jamie King- 20 boxes, sofa, dresser
- 6119- Sherre Roy- 30 boxes, chair, stereo
- 6107- Robert Kortas- mattress set, freezer, TV
- 6026- Patrick Sampson- sofa, power tools, refrigerator
- 5081- Reinhard Sendow- misc. items
- 5059- Jason Floyd- mattress set, boxes, totes
- 5039- Scott Winer- boxes, dresser, tool box
- 5037- Flowers by DeAvila- boxes, table lamp, freezer
- 5003- Dennis Pustel- mattress set, refrigerator, washer
- 4033- David Simmons- boxes, clothing, speakers
- 3091- Jason Dicks- mattress set, boxes, totes
- 3050- Becky Kirkland- mattress set, sofa, dining table
- 3022- Michael Howell- china cabinet, dresser, couch
- 2075- Marsh@Work Solutions- misc. cardboard totes
- 2043- Robert Peecher- 3 restaurant freezer, vending machines

Publish: December 10 & 17, 2006

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- 1121- William hubbard- 15 boxes, microwave, coffee table
- 137- Donna Alexander- dryer, vacuum, 8 totes
- 214- Jason Wozniak- bike, dining table, washer
- 241- Thomas Harvey- couch, tv, entertainment center
- 332- Chaunte Roberts- 10 boxes, kitchen chairs, TV
- 335- Carlon Construction- mattress set, ladder, entertainment center
- 417- Michael Rowell- box springs, mattress, china cabinet
- 637- Michael Sanderlin- 15 boxes, sofa, entertainment center
- 839- Stephen Pandel-dryer, stove, washer

Publish: December 10 & 17, 2006

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- 1486- Paul Klingensmith- washer, dryer, tool boxes
- 1544- Be Da 1st Inc - misc. display cases
- 1550- Be Da 1st Inc - shelving, misc. boxes
- 1560- Benautrice Roland- entertainment center, computer, boxes
- 2314- Wayne Elsbrie- mattress set, tool box, boxes

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At 200, Woodward remains a remarkably vibrant byway

Plans are being drawn now to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Woodward Avenue. That's right: 200th anniversary.

This nation isn't that much older than 200 years and to realize that the road many of us ride down each day has been there for 200 years is quite stunning when you think about it.

The Woodward Avenue Action Association, a broad coalition of leaders, businesses, churches and county organizations in the towns along and near Woodward, is planning a series of events to mark the anniversary. There will be more on that in the coming weeks.

They will have a lot to work with. Woodward is one of the most historically rich byways in

America. It was named after Augustus Woodward, probably the most colorful character in Detroit's history. Woodward was chief justice of the Michigan Territory and was one of the people charged with rebuilding Detroit after the great fire of 1805.

He laid out downtown Detroit's confusing street system including the main thoroughfare, which he dubbed

Woodward.

Of course, that had nothing to do with his name. He just meant that Woodward referred to the fact that the road went toward the woods.

No one believed him then. No one believes him now.

Woodward (the man) drifted into obscurity even in his own time as he eventually was appointed to a position in Florida. Woodward (the road) is still with us although it has undergone many changes through the years. The original Woodward was a dirt road that once was lined by long greenspaces called the park lots. It was a great concept: preserve land alongside the road to maintain a park-like atmosphere. But that idea didn't last long. In fact, by the 1820s it was realized that the roadside property was far too valuable for just growing grass, and the park lots were filled with buildings.

One of Detroit's first markets stood at the foot of Woodward. It was in use from 1817 to about 1835. Over the years, Woodward went from being a dirt road to a paved thoroughfare. Although you can't easily notice it, Woodward was widened on its east side in the 1930s. That caused some building owners to literally shear off the fronts of their structures and retreat from the streetside. You can still see a few of the

Woodward is one of the most historically rich byways in America. It was named after Augustus Woodward, probably the most colorful character in Detroit's history. Woodward was chief justice of the Michigan Territory and was one of the people charged with rebuilding Detroit after the great fire of 1805.

buildings that suffered that indignity.

Woodward also passes one of the most historically significant - and most forlorn - buildings in Michigan.

Look closely and you can still see the state historical marker standing miraculously in front of Henry Ford's old factory in Highland Park. The once-sprawling factory has been greatly reduced in size, but is still pretty substantial.

If you want to get a real sense of history, go down the side street east of Woodward alongside the old plant. You can touch the weathered old bricks that have been there nearly half as long as Woodward has passed in front of the factory.

Dear old Henry abandoned the plant in favor of the River Rouge site, just as the Chrysler Corp. deserted Highland Park for Auburn Hills decades later. But neither company could take the past with them.

Just north of the Ford factory, where Woodward widens considerably, is Palmer Park. In 1897 Thomas Palmer - another great Detroit figure - donated 187 acres of land to Detroit to create the park, which bears his name. That section of town is loaded with history. And if you look closely you can still see the remnants of the once-famous Merrill Fountain, which was paid for by Palmer and adorned Campus Martius downtown until it was moved to the park in 1926.

You could do a building-by-building, lot-by-lot history of Woodward along its 28 mile length from the Detroit River to Pontiac, and every page would be fascinating.

Think about that the next time you are stuck in traffic.

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



Greg Kowalski

Despite Times' assessment, Livonia is doing just fine

Almost every morning, I stop at my favorite coffee spot and settle down to read the best daily newspaper in the United States and probably the world.

In breadth and depth of coverage, access to centers of power, commitment to journalistic principles, no metro daily compares to *The New York Times*.

And when they get it wrong, as all newspapers do, they are generally good about making corrections. On page 2 every day, they correct errors of fact, errors of emphasis, even errors in grammar. Every Sunday, they run a column by an Ombudsman, who is free to openly criticize the paper's judgments and often does so with comments that would make any reporter's heart curdle.

The newspaper stood behind their reporter Judith Miller when she refused to reveal a confidential source. But after she was freed from jail, the newspaper was the first to begin airing doubts about her rather too upbeat assessment of the Bush administration's assertions about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

The discovery that a young reporter, Jayson Blair, was inventing stories led to the dismissal of Blair and the forced resignation of his superiors.

But it's all well and good for *The New York Times* to run stories about troubles in some distant foreign land, it's another thing when they come to Livonia and describe it in terms they usually reserve for Third World nations.

On Monday, the *Times* business section led with a story by Micheline Maynard and Nick Bunkley (who did the Livonia reporting) that contrasted and compared the decline of "stumbling" Livonia with the "booming" Georgetown, Ky. (the birthplace of bourbon).

It's no secret that the decline in the auto industry has had a devastating effect on southeast Michigan. A day doesn't pass without bad news from the Big Three and their local suppliers. Layoffs seem to come in rushes and they create a domino effect in other businesses in the area.

Perhaps Livonia seemed like a particularly good target. It has long been a model community - an attractive middle-class residential settlement supported by a healthy industrial corridor and serviced by dynamic commercial areas. Livonia had it all and in most ways it still does.

The New York Times made a classic error, one we all fall prey to at times. They began their article by setting out to prove a point. They had their storyline before, not after, doing their reporting.

The story, as they saw it, was that northern,

The 'New York Times' made a classic error, one we all fall prey to at times. They began their article by setting out to prove a point. They had their storyline before, not after, doing their reporting

industrial cities are in decline and southern cities, where successful companies like Toyota have taken root, are on the upswing. That's the story, now choose any two cities to prove it.

The only problem is, Livonia doesn't quite fit. Yes, western Wayne County is hurting from the slump in the American auto industry. Yes, Livonia has been hard hit by layoffs and announced layoffs at Ford.

But as Livonia Mayor Jack Engebretson pointed out in an *Observer* story on Thursday, automakers are not the only businesses in town. Ninety percent of the city's industrial space is occupied. Many successful businesses operate in Livonia.

This isn't a town of boarded up buildings, derelicts begging on the streets, muggers on every corner, children abandoned at doorsteps.

Livonia's unemployment rate is 3.3 percent, compared to 6.9 percent statewide.

The article makes some stunning errors of omission. The writers note that Wonderland was torn down, but they don't say it was torn down to make way for a new and more contemporary shopping environment. They make a point to share the woes of Livonia Mall but don't mention the full parking lot at Laurel Park. Other developments are in the works because the community is still so attractive.

They write about how hard it is for residents of Rosedale Gardens to sell their homes, but don't say that home sales are down everywhere in the country.

Rather than provide any statistical support, the reporters quote an 80-year-old resident about the increase in crime. I've never met a person older than 70 who didn't think that crime was accelerating out of control and that their city was going to hell in a handbasket. From their perspective, maybe it is, but it's not valid reporting.

These are hard times but false contrasts and skewed perspectives aren't going to help get us through them or correctly put them into perspective for people who aren't lucky enough to live or work in Livonia.

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



Hugh Gallagher

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— NEW YORK POST
December 7, 2006

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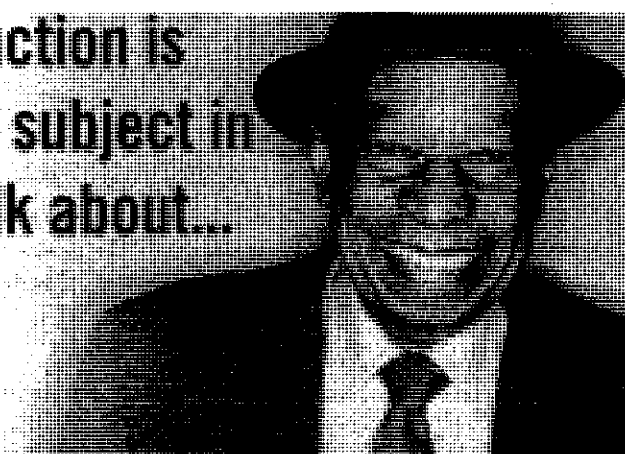
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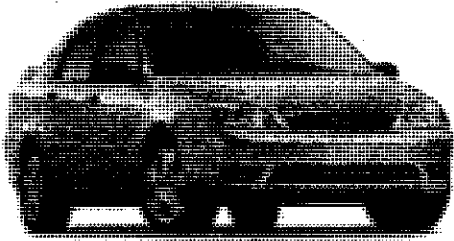
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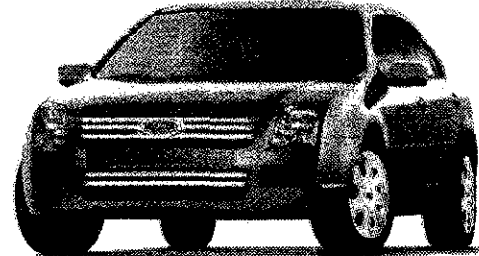
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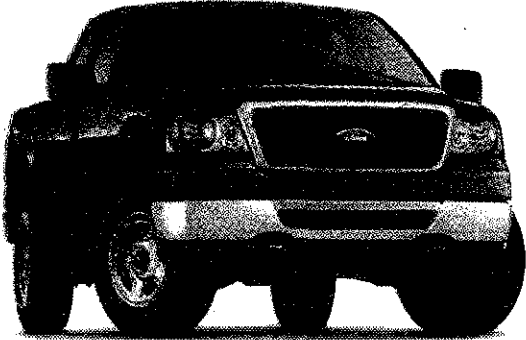
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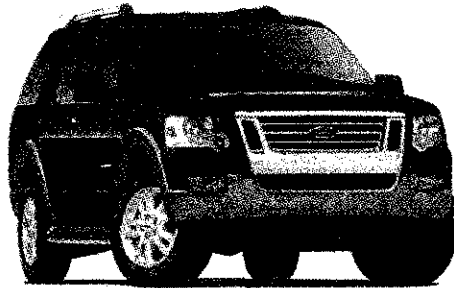
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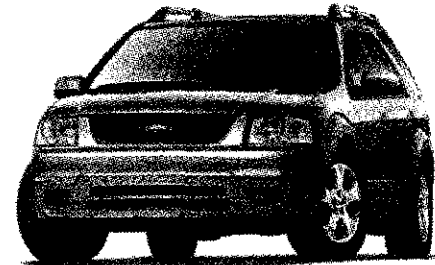
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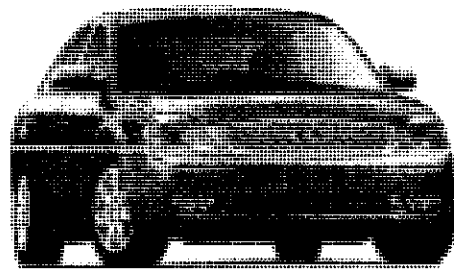
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