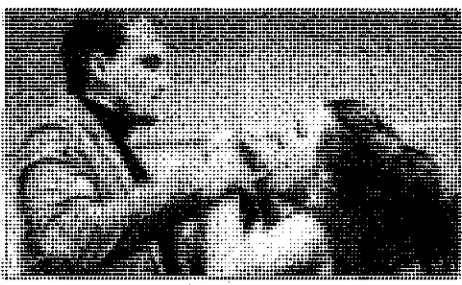
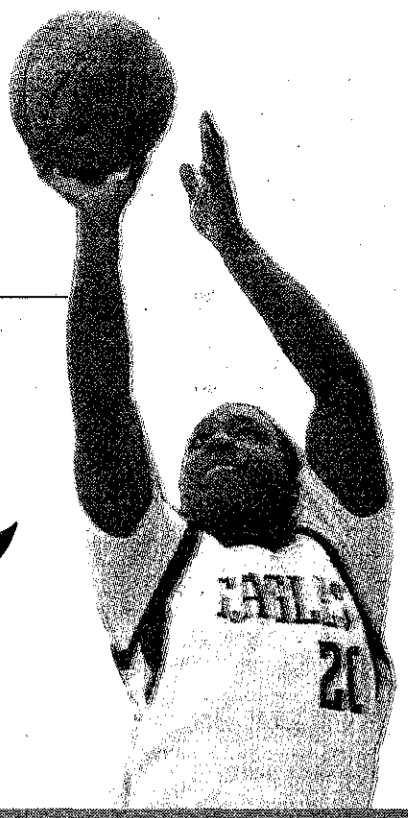


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Plan aims to make Trails nature's classroom

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Sassafras Trails, a sprawling wooded area northeast of Palmer and Wildwood, could become nature's classroom for Wayne-Westland students

under a new plan unveiled Wednesday by a school district consultant.

With backing from Westland city officials, district leaders hope to secure a state grant to transform the unused, fenced-off, 52-acre nature area into a

place where students can learn about trees, flowers, birds and other wildlife.

Wayne-Westland consultant Jack Martin, who already has succeeded at securing other district-city grants, shared the latest vision Wednesday as

Westland parks and recreation leaders led a goal-setting workshop at the Bailey Center.

Nearly half of Sassafras Trails would remain intact as a protected wetlands area, Martin said, and the project also would safeguard wooded

areas.

"Most of it is going to stay wooded areas," he said.

However, Martin envisioned nature trails with a few learning-based interpretive stations, an outdoor structure where students could observe wild-

life, a newly created pond and, eventually, a small classroom building that pupils and teachers could use year-round.

"We're trying to restore it as a nature center," Martin said

Please see **TRAILS, A2**

Students treat seniors to sounds of music

Maybe it was the venue, maybe it was the audience. Whatever it was, musicians at Wayne Memorial High School had one of their best showings in years at the District 12 Solo and Ensemble Festival after a group presented a mini concert at the Dyer Senior Center in Westland.

Music teacher Matt Diroff brought 15 students to the center for a short performance that rated a standing ovation from appreciative seniors.

"This is a great confidence builder for students to perform for you," he told the seniors who listened to violin and cello pieces as well as selections featuring wind instruments like the euphonium, saxophone, flute and alto flute.

Diroff brought mostly seniors for the mini performance, leaving freshman behind because they're "still getting use to playing."

"This might be too big of a crowd for them," he added.

Diroff also took time to explain to audience how the district festival works, pointing out that students practice in a room with 10-15 other students before performing before judges who award scores ranging from 1 to 5. Those with a first division rating move on to state competition.

He added that, "My goal is not to turn them into professional musicians but to foster a lifelong love of music."

As for the festival, more than 80 Wayne High instrumental music students performed solos, duets, trios, quartets and a chamber ensemble comprised of nine woodwind students. They participated in 76 events, with



PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Wayne Memorial High School junior Jory King (from left), senior Chris Carson, senior Cyndi Aslanian and sophomore Enrique Romulo perform for the seniors at the Dyer Senior Center.

33 performances receiving a first division rating and a blue medal and 34 earning second division rating and a red medal. Nine performances received third division ratings or performed for comments only, with no rating.

Students who received first division ratings now move on to the state festival at Chelsea High School on March 15.

"The performances resulted in the most number of state qualifying events in more than 10 years," Diroff said.

- By Sue Mason



An appreciative Bob Seaward (foreground) and Phil LaChance give the Wayne Memorial High School instrumental music students a round of applause after their performance.

5 candidates file in WW board race

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

Voters in the Wayne-Westland Community Schools will have a choice of five candidates to fill two seats on the Board of Education in the May 6 school election.

Filing nominating petitions were incumbent Cindy Schofield of Wayne and Shawna Walker of Westland. Paying the \$100 filing fee were Westland residents Jennifer Finley, Brian Mulligan and William Gabriel.

Missing from the list is Terrance McClain who announced Tuesday that he would not seek a second term on the school board.

Schofield, a residential property manager, is the current school board vice-president, a position she has held for six of her eight elective years. She has said that she decided to run again because "there are still things to be accomplished, especially at the secondary level."

Finley is a registered nurse and the mother of seven adopted children. She has been involved in programs at the Stottlemeyer

Early Childhood and Family Development Center and serves on its policy committee.

"I'm involved in the schools and education and what better way is there to make an impact on a community I've been a part of for 14 years," she said.

Gabriel is a consultant in airline management. He has served on the Westland Library Board and Local Officers Compensation Commission and currently is a member of the Westland Planning Commission.

"Education is probably the one most important thing to me," he said. "My experiences (on the Library Board) have reinforced my wanting to give back to the community. I also have more time to give and think I can do a good job."

Mulligan is making his second bid for a school board. He ran unsuccessfully in the 2007 election. A licensed electrician, he has said that he believes ordinary citizens need to take a more active role in their communities.

In campaigning last year, he stated that "all parents need to take responsibility

Please see **BOARD, A2**

Hearing postponed in sexual assault case

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

A nervous, 12-year-old girl came to Westland 18th District Court ready to testify Thursday against a great-uncle accused of molesting her when she was only 6.

The girl didn't get called to the witness stand, however, because a defense attorney asked that a preliminary hearing for defendant Raymond Lawrence Perkins, 55, be delayed to give the lawyer more time to review potential evidence.

Judge Sandra Ference Cicirelli granted the request

by defense attorney Richard Dwyer, but she ordered him to notify prosecutors if Perkins decides to waive his preliminary hearing, now set for Feb. 28. Cicirelli wants to spare the girl the worry of returning to a public courtroom -- if her testimony isn't needed.

"We want to have as less stress as possible on that young girl," Cicirelli said Thursday from the bench.

Cicirelli's remarks came after Assistant Wayne County Prosecutor Lora Weingarden indicated in court that the alleged victim would have "less anxiety" if she doesn't have to return to court to

testify against Perkins, who is charged with two counts of second-degree criminal sexual conduct.

The girl came forward in December and told police that she awoke during a 2001 incident to find her great-uncle fondling her, Westland police Sgt. Debra Mathews said during Perkins' Feb. 5 arraignment.

Perkins already served over three years in prison for sexually assaulting an 8-year-old nephew. He was released in June 1991. The nephew and his mother have been living with Perkins, telling authorities that they had forgiven Perkins,

Mathews said.

Perkins, in a recent confession, admitted he molested two other nieces and another nephew -- revelations that Mathews said won't bring additional criminal charges because the statute of limitations has expired.

As Perkins awaits his preliminary hearing, he is jailed in lieu of a \$1 million cash bond set by Cicirelli. A not-guilty plea has been entered for him.

The charges against him carry a possible 15-year prison term upon conviction, but any sentence could potentially be lengthier because he is considered a repeat offender.

moms

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- Kristen Jordan Shamus is editor of MotorCityMoms.com. She can be reached at (313) 222-5997 or kshamus@MotorCityMoms.com.

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Top LPS seniors thank their influential teachers

BY REBECCA JONES
STAFF WRITER

In fifth-grade at Hayes Elementary, Michael Krcatovich knew his teacher, John Santi, was always going to be one of his favorites.

He was the kind of teacher that "if you have him, that's great. If you don't, then you call the principal and complain," said Krcatovich, who's now one of Franklin High School's top seniors. He got a chance to say thanks on Wednesday at the 54th annual Livonia PTSA Founders' Day Celebration.

For each of the 15 outstanding seniors, at least three teachers played a significant role.

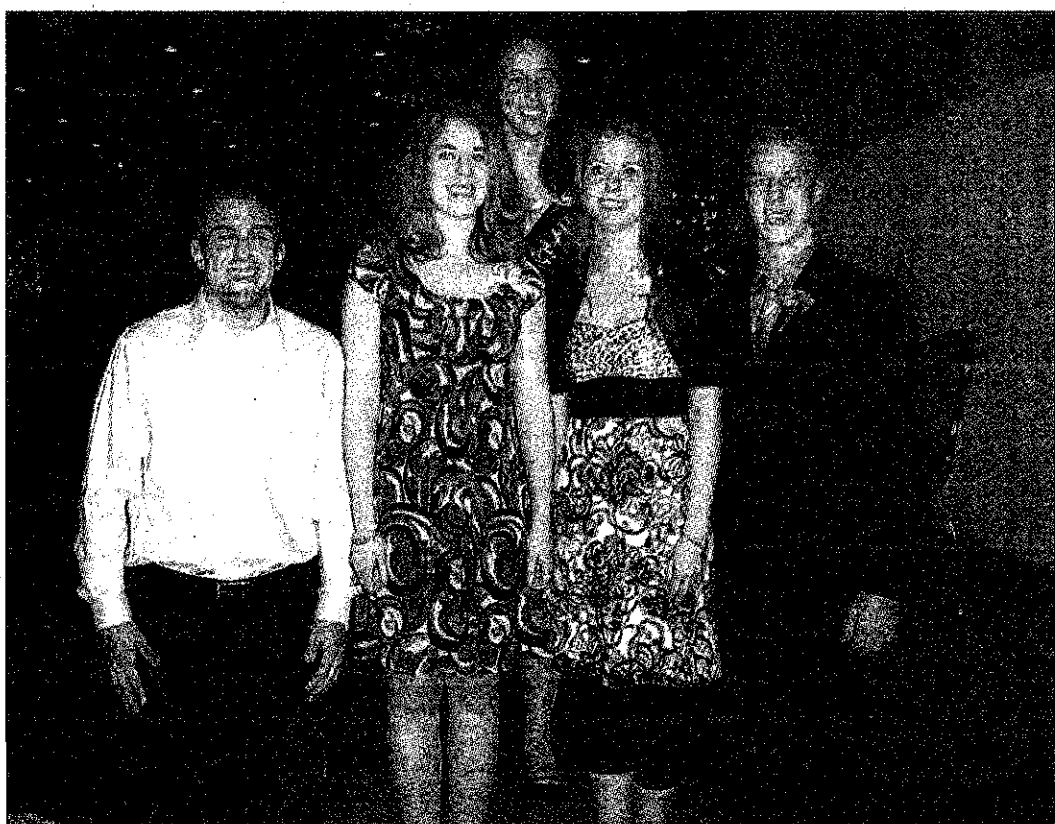
Churchill senior Meghan Murray honored Mary Buda, who retired last year. "She taught me so much more than that a day without math is like a day without sunshine."

Catherine Kent was fond of her middle school English and social studies teacher, Michael Vasich, (students just called him V) who had students march like Civil War soldiers.

Maybe Kathy Ladd's superb drawing skills cancel out the "handouts from hell." Four Stevenson seniors honored the English teacher, calling her funny and enthusiastic.

Over the years, some teachers were like second moms, the students said. Franklin senior Allen Sponenburgh credits one teacher for helping clean up his potty mouth, and said another is the kind of woman he would want to marry someday.

Two of the honored seniors (Churchill's Brian Ziemba and Franklin's Daniel Woodall) arrived late, after participating



Churchill's Founders' Day honorees are Brian Ziemba (left), Laura Tomassi, Meghan Murray, Sarah LaBerge and Ryan Whittum.

in a wrestling match — against each other. All of the students thanked their parents as well.

CHURCHILL HIGH SCHOOL

■ Sarah LaBerge, daughter of Mark and Brenda LaBerge, honored Judy Polce from Kennedy Elementary; and Keith McDonald and Heidi Richardson, both from Churchill.

■ Meghan Murray, daughter of Dennis and Denise Murray, honored Sister Carolyn Rutkowski from St. Michael School; and Mary Buda (retired) and Kelly Granowicz, both from Churchill.

■ Laura Tomassi, daughter of Bob and Patricia Tomassi, honored Leah Bisel, from Randolph Elementary; and Jennifer Hardy-Francis and Ron Zapalski, both from Churchill.

■ Ryan Whittum, son of Kenneth and Cheryl Whittum, honored Chad Jenkins, Rachel Rodriguez and John Filiatraut, all from Churchill.

■ Brian Ziemba, son of David and Ann Ziemba, honored Debbie Comb from Randolph Elementary; Brad Dennis, from Frost Middle School; and Ronald Zapalski, from Churchill.

FRANKLIN HIGH SCHOOL

■ Catherine Kent, daughter of Richard and Marie Kent, honored Michael Vasich from Frost; and Molly Evans and Terri Bennett, both from Franklin.

■ Michael Krcatovich, son of Rocky and Patty Krcatovich, honored John Santi from Hayes; and Walt Reasor and David Bjorklund, both from Franklin.

■ Christopher Noffze, son of Elaine and the late Robert Noffze, honored Ron Wilson, formerly of Emerson Middle School; and Lynn Massucci and the late Jack Kalousek,



Franklin Founders' Day honorees are Daniel Woodall (left), Michael Krcatovich, Catherine Kent, Allen Sponenburgh and Christopher Noffze.

both from Franklin.

■ Allen Sponenburgh, son of Mark Sponenburgh and Anna Sponenburgh, honored Laura Springer, from Dearborn Montessori; Joan Okins, from United Christian School; and Julie Smith, from Franklin.

■ Daniel Woodall, son of Robert and Linda Woodall, honored David Chiola, David Bjorklund and Molly Evans, all from Franklin.

STEVENSON HIGH SCHOOL

■ Kelsey Arsenaault, daughter of Chris and Hellen Arsenaault, honored Craig Barker, Kathy Ladd and Denise Makuch, all from Stevenson.

■ Mark Ingram, son of Ronald and Mary Ann Ingram, honored Ryan Krueger, from

Marshall Elementary; David Mitchell from Holmes Middle School; and Lt. Col. Louis Kuratko, from Churchill.

■ Kathryn La Belle, daughter of Robert and Elizabeth La Belle, honored Theresa Macek, from Webster Elementary; Joyce Butler from Frost; and Kathy Ladd, from Stevenson.

■ Katelyn Roberts, daughter of Mark and Lisa Roberts, honored Craig Barker, Kathy Ladd and Sean Horgan, all from Stevenson.

■ Julia Schroeder, daughter of David Schroeder and Margery Gudes, honored Sue Fraehlich from Webster; and Kathy Ladd and Marilyn Snabb, both from Stevenson.

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City Council considers compromise on citizen comments

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

A Westland City Council committee has proposed a compromise for balancing citizens' comments and conducting business during its twice-monthly meetings.

"We think it's a fair compromise, and we think it will work really well," Councilman Michael Kehrer said Friday.

Kehrer and council colleagues Bill Johnson and Dewey Reeves have fine-tuned the latest proposal, which the full council will discuss during a public session scheduled for 6 p.m. Tuesday — before

the 7 p.m. business meeting — at City Hall on Ford Road.

Although business meetings typically are held on the first and third Monday of each month, this week's session will be on Tuesday because of the Presidents Day holiday.

Under the newly proposed rules, citizens will be allowed to speak twice during meetings — each time for up to five minutes. The committee has dropped plans to reduce speaking time to four minutes, in what represents a compromise with council watchers.

Near the beginning of the meeting, citizens may address specific items on the council

agenda simply by raising their hands and seeking recognition. However, if they want to make general comments on issues not on the agenda, they will be allowed to do so during a segment closer to the end of the meeting.

"The same person could talk twice during the meeting," Kehrer said, once to address specific agenda items and once to voice general concerns or comments.

The council will eliminate general citizens comments from the beginning of the business meetings, but they will hear from all people who want to speak during the lat-

ter portion of the meetings.

"All citizens must be heard at the meeting according to the Open Meetings Act," Kehrer said, adding later, "They're still going to have their say."

Some council watchers have criticized attempts to change the way meetings are conducted, but some council members have indicated they want to streamline meetings and make them more business-like.

At no time will anyone have

to fill out a slip of paper to speak; they will only have to raise a hand at the appropriate times, Kehrer said.

The committee looked at meeting rules from other communities, and Kehrer said Westland's rules will continue to be more liberal than those of most cities with populations over 50,000.

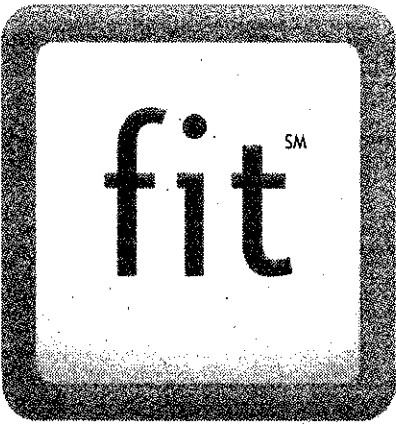
One resident, Shauna Jaynes, had suggested that general citizens comments be allowed near the end of the meeting, rather than the

beginning, if a choice had to be made. She said that would remove some of the early "negativity" viewed by business people who come to City Hall to conduct business.

Other residents, such as Judy McKinney and Elenor Swistak, had implored the council to leave the rules as they were, allowing for general comments at the beginning and again at the end of the meetings.

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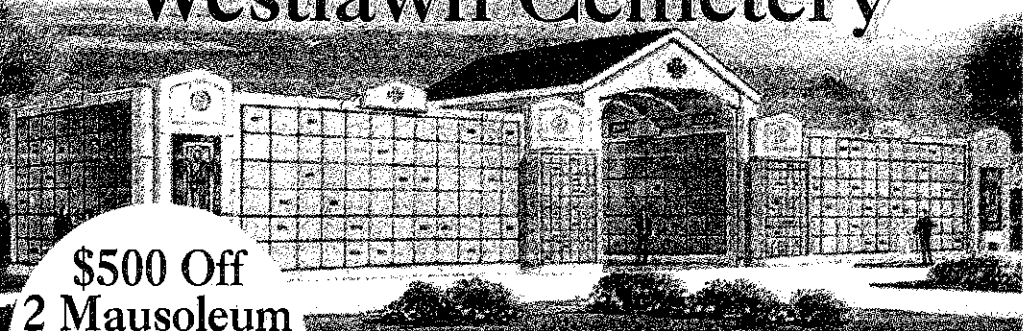
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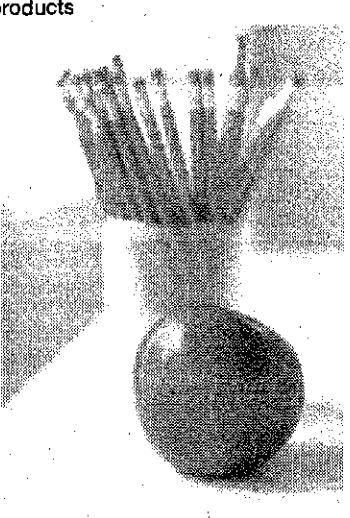
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Business views vary on stimulus money impact

Retailers hope you'll come shopping with checks

BY JULIE BROWN
STAFF WRITER

Local retailers have their eye on the rebate checks due to taxpayers this spring, although not all think they'll make a big difference.

Kate Rosevear, owner of Carlson Wagonlit Travel in Plymouth, didn't expect a big rush the day after the president's signature came through.

"In truth, my business is doing fine," Rosevear said. "I had a good year last year. A lot of my colleagues had a good year."

She gets a lot of baby boomers whose kids are now through college, meaning they have some disposable income. "They're young enough to travel," she said.

Buyouts from local employers have also boosted the

travel business for Rosevear and others.

Talk of the rebates — expected by May and to range from \$300 to \$1,200 — came up Thursday morning at Laurel Park Place in Livonia among mall walkers.

"I'm going to buy a brand new TV if it's made in the United States," said Mel Karfis of Livonia, a retired construction ironworker. His wife noted few such TVs are now.

Jack Morrison of Plymouth Township, retired from brick sales, had no immediate purchases in mind. "Probably just put it in the bank, I guess," said Morrison, adding he doesn't know how much he'll get. "I think maybe I'll pay my income tax."

Over at Bill Brown Ford in Livonia, sales manager Mike Schrieber was pleased.

"Business is pretty good," Schrieber said. "Any money that's put in the hands of people that live in this area is good for the economy in general."

He thinks customers mulling a car purchase but cautious about a down payment or making payments "will now have that little extra to work with." Those concerned about property values will buy American, the sales manager added.

"It allows them to make some of those purchases they've been dreaming about," Schrieber said.

Westland Floor Covering owner Richard Strausbaugh said this is their normal slower season, with January normal and February thus far slower. "We're hoping the final figures aren't too bad" for February, he said.

"I sure hope so," Strausbaugh said when asked if the rebates will boost business. He plans to offer 110 percent to customers who come in to spend rebate checks. "We're

definitely going to help the economy, personally," he said of his family, noting a TV purchase is in the works.

"I would imagine there's a pent-up demand for goods," Strausbaugh said. "I would hope it would help our business." Westland Floor Covering will mark its 48th anniversary this year.

Tracey Pawlowski owns Back Home Bakery in Canton. "I know personally ours is going in the bank," she said of the family's check, citing the volatile economy. "That money is our padding" in case her husband loses his job.

Pawlowski would like to take a vacation, but isn't rushing to make plans. "The beauty is everybody has a birthday, thank God," she said of business at Back Home Bakery.

Pawlowski, who grew up in Garden City, was a "jumper" with her sister for UPS this past holiday season, helping deliver packages. The women saw a lot of vacant, foreclosed homes, and an eviction. That was hard for her to

watch, and Pawlowski said even losing a business wouldn't be as bad. She hopes people hang on to their money, "just to help themselves."

Laura Van Vliet, owner of Eva's Bridal & Fashions in Garden City, is pleased with what she views as "a windfall" for customers.

"We were just discussing that. It certainly couldn't hurt us," said Van Vliet, who wouldn't want people to ignore mortgage payments but is hoping for increased business. Her store has moderate prices, which she said will help.

"Right now, we're into

proms." Eva's Bridal & Fashions also has bridal and mother of the bride dresses, said the owner, who's a member of the National Federation of Independent Businesses. That group anticipates help from the stimulus money.

"It will be a little extra cash," said Van Vliet. "I would think they would" spend.

"I really feel that people are going to hang onto the money for emergencies," said Mary Jo Mullen, executive director for the Redford Township Chamber of Commerce. "I don't think they're going to go out and buy."

Excelsior Energy Fund still a good investment after management change

Dear Rick: I received notice that Excelsior Funds has become Columbia Funds. I know you recommend Excelsior. I am curious about your thoughts now that it is Columbia.



Money Matters
Rick Bloom

I have liked the Excelsior Energy & Natural Resources Fund (UMESX). A number of years ago, I did some research and I confirmed that a natural resource fund does belong in a portfolio. This allows an investor to further diversify and also to provide some hedge against rising energy prices.

The Excelsior Energy & Natural Resources Fund has been managed for more than 10 years by Mike Hoover. Members of the Investment Committee at my firm had the opportunity to discuss the changes happening with the company with representatives from Excelsior. They have been assured there will be no fundamental changes to

the fund and that Hoover will continue to manage the portfolio.

The Excelsior Energy & Natural Resources Fund has been very good and for current investors, I recommend they stay put. Despite having a difficult year so far, if you look at the fund's long-term track record, it has been very productive.

The Columbia Funds are managed by Columbia Management, which is the investment management division of Bank of America. Columbia Management, for the last number of years, has been aggressive in acquiring different mutual fund companies. In some cases, it has merged and consolidated funds. It has also acquired a fund company and left some of the funds as is.

Although I continue to like the Excelsior Energy & Natural Resources Fund, I will judge it like I do all other funds, based on performance over the long term. If other things occur such as defections from the portfolio management team, I will reconsider my opinion. That being said, my present recommendation is keep the fund.

Dear Rick: I've always done my own tax return. I am getting to the point where it's getting too difficult to do on my own. Should I buy a software package or should I hire a professional?

I agree that tax returns have become more complex. If you are going to attempt to do your tax return on your own, use a software package such as Turbo Tax or Tax Cut. It makes preparing your return much easier and eliminates mathematical errors. If you file a return with mathematical errors, the IRS will take closer scrutiny of your tax return and that is something none of us want.

For filers who do not want to do their own tax return or have a complicated situation — such as they own a business or they have income in more than one state — it makes sense to hire a professional.

Just because someone knows how to prepare tax returns does not make him or her a professional. If you are having your return professionally prepared, spend a few extra dollars and make sure you are dealing with a professional

— someone who is dedicated to keeping current on the tax law changes and who is available to assist you on any issues throughout the year with regard to your tax return.

As a taxpayer, you are responsible for your return — whether you prepare it, use a software package or hire a professional.

As I have mentioned in previous columns, there is a program where you can obtain free software and do your return for free.

The IRS has partnered with many software companies to offer this service. To see if you qualify, visit the IRS Web site, www.irs.gov and click on "free file."

It is important to remember that tax returns, like everything in our society, have become more complex. So don't be stubborn. If you need help, hire a professional.

Rick Bloom is a fee-only financial adviser. Observer & Eccentric readers can submit questions at moneymatters@hometownlife.com. For more information, visit Rick's Web site at www.bloomassetmanagement.com. You can hear Rick from noon to 3 p.m. Sundays on WDTK-AM (1400).

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BY NEIL SIMON

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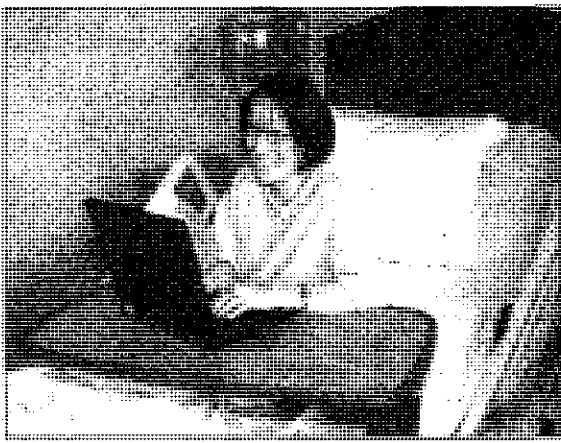
At Garden City Hospital, patients recovering from illness and injury, together with their visitors, now have fewer "ailments" to contend with.

The addition of free hospital-wide Wi-Fi and a 24-hour, state-of-the-art deli and convenience store alleviate monotony and the munchies, turning downtime into productive time and offering a nutritious boost—even in the middle of the night.

"We want our patients and their visitors to feel comfortable and relaxed during their time with us," said Gary Ley, Garden City Hospital president and CEO. "By offering Wi-Fi for anyone who enters the hospital, we know family members, and often patients themselves, can keep in touch with loved ones through e-mail. New fathers can send birth announcements and photos immediately after the baby is born, and patients who are feeling up to it can use the Internet and stay connected with family, friends, and even work."

Because the munchies can strike any time, Garden City Hospital took the initiative to become the first hospital in the nation to utilize Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology in the high-tech Fast Track convenience store. Meals, snacks and beverages can be purchased instantly.

"Visitors, patients, and of



Patients - and their visitors - can stay connected to friends and family through free Wi-Fi now available at Garden City Hospital.

course, hospital staff, can purchase fresh salads, sandwiches, microwaveable meals and snacks 24 hours a day, seven days a week," said Julie Carrigan, director of food and nutrition services. "What makes the Fast Track store unique is that it is completely unmanned."

Merchandise is automatically detected at checkout through a computer chip found on every item. Scanning takes only seconds to complete, and customers can use cash, credit, debit, their driver's license and even a thumbprint to complete purchases. Security systems guard against loss, which has proven to be a minor concern.

"We know it's sometimes difficult to leave a loved one's bedside. Visitors are relieved to know they can purchase a sandwich, that was made today,

and return to their loved one," confirmed Carrigan. "For us, Fast Track just makes sense in a hospital environment."

While delivering high-quality medical care is Garden City Hospital's focus, the comfort of patients, visitors and guests is important, too.

"We listened to our customers and recognized that while time in the hospital is sometimes essential for good health, that time also needs to be comfortable and convenient," said Ley.

Located on Inkster Road north of Ford in Garden City, Garden City Hospital provides comprehensive health care services, osteopathic medical education, and health care related programs to the community at large. For more information about Garden City Hospital, call (734) 458-3300 or visit its Web site at www.gchosp.org.

Hospital programs focus on wellness

Garden City Hospital, 6245 Inkster Road, offers a weekly schedule of health and wellness programs for residents. The lineup this week includes:

Monday, Feb. 18
Power Hour at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. An intense exercise class designed to take you to the next level in fitness. Every class will be different, but we guarantee that each one will be challenging and fun, with a variety of aerobic exercises to experience. Fee is \$30 per month. For more information, call (734) 458-3242.

Childbirth Education (fifth of six classes) at 6 p.m. This six-week course prepares the expectant mother and coach for labor and delivery. Class runtime is 2½ hours and there is a \$60 fee. Medicaid is accepted. A refresher course also is available. Call (734) 458-4330 for more information or to register.

Tuesday, Feb. 19
Get Up and Move at 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. This is an invigorating exercise program designed to help you get up and get moving, and is the perfect compliment to your diet program. These classes will help you to make an easy transition back to an exercise program or help you to get started for the first time. Fee is \$30 per month. For more information, call (734) 458-3242.

Diabetes Self-Management Education (first of four classes) at 9:30 a.m. This comprehensive series is planned to help people Live Well With Diabetes. Participants learn self-care skills of nutrition, exercise, medication management, monitoring of blood sugar levels, foot and skin care, prevention of problems and psychosocial issues. The program

is certified by the Michigan Department of Community Health to assure quality and compliance with State and National Diabetes Education standards. Physician referral is required. There is a fee, but reimbursement is available by Medicare, Medicaid and most commercial insurance plans. Call (734) 458-3481 for more information or to register.

Strength and Stretch at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. This is a non-aerobic exercise class designed to help you strengthen and define your muscles, as well as increase your flexibility. Each class will combine a variety of equipment, including free weights, medicine balls, balance balls, and Therabands in order to isolate and tone each of the major muscle groups. Fee is \$30 per month. For more information, call (734) 458-3242.

Power Hour at 3 and 5 p.m. An intense exercise class designed to take you to the next level in fitness. Every class will be different, but we guarantee that each one will be challenging and fun, with a variety of aerobic exercises to experience. Fee is \$30 per month. For more information, call (734) 458-3242.

Yoga (third of four classes) at 4 p.m. Learn how to relax, stretch and breathe while creating balance, strength and flexibility for both the body and mind. This four-week session is \$32. Classes meet at Garden City Hospital's Cardiac Rehab. Call (734) 458-3242 for details and to register.

Cerebral Aneurysm and Stroke Club at 7:30 p.m. Support is offered to those who have had an aneurysm or stroke as well as to their family and friends. The club meets every third Tuesday of the month to listen to various presentations and to promote interaction between people who have something in common. This free group is held in Garden City Hospital's Rehabilitation Unit dining room. For more information, please call (734) 458-4392.

Wednesday, Feb. 20
Power Hour at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. An intense exercise class designed to take you to the next level in fitness. Every class will be different, but we guarantee that each one will be challenging and fun, with a variety of aerobic exercises to experience. Fee is \$30 per month. For more information, call (734) 458-3242.

Free blood pressure testing for senior citizens at 10:30 a.m. The staff of Garden City Hospital's Community Services offers blood pressure testing free of charge every other Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. at the Maplewood Community Center on Maplewood just west of Merriman. Call (734) 458-4330 for more information.

CPAP and BIPAP Mask Fitting Clinic at 5 p.m. Attention, CPAP and BIPAP users: Did you know that most insurances cover new supplies every year? Have you been wanting to try a new style of mask, but don't know how to get one? Garden City Hospital's Sleep Disorders Center can help. Visit the Sleep Disorders Center in Room 329 at Garden City Hospital, 5-6 p.m. any Wednesday for a free mask fitting clinic. No appointment is needed. Call (734) 458-3330 with any questions or for more information.

CPR -Adult at 6 p.m. Approved by the American Heart Association, the class provides hands-on CPR training to adults. Participants are prepared to respond to breathing and cardiac emergencies in victims, age 8 and above. This class is offered at Garden City Hospital's Health & Education Center, 6701 Harrison, just north of Maplewood. There is a \$40 fee.

Participants will receive certification upon successful completion. Call Community Education at (734) 458-4330 for more information.

Eating Disorders Support Group at 7 p.m. This support group is for those individuals with anorexia, bulimia, and compulsive and binge eating disorders. Both males and females are invited to attend. This meeting is held in the Garden City Hospital Auditorium. Call (734) 458-4330 for more information.

Thursday, Feb. 21
Strength and Stretch at 11 a.m. This is a non-aerobic exercise class designed to help you strengthen and define your muscles, as well as increase your flexibility. Each class will combine a variety of equipment, including free weights, medicine balls, balance balls, and Therabands in order to isolate and tone each of the major muscle groups. Fee is \$30 per month. For more information, call (734) 458-3242.

Get Up and Move at 4 p.m. This is an invigorating exercise program designed to help you get up and get moving, and is the perfect compliment to your diet program. These classes will help you to make an easy transition back to an exercise program or help you to get started for the first time. Fee is \$30 per month. For more information, call (734) 458-3242.

Diabetes Self-Management Education (first of four classes) at 6:30 p.m. This comprehensive series is planned to help people Live Well With Diabetes. Participants learn self-care skills of nutrition, exercise, medication management, monitoring of blood sugar levels, foot and skin care, prevention of problems and psychosocial issues. The program is certified by the Michigan Department of Community Health to assure quality and compliance with State and National Diabetes Education Standards. Physician referral is required. There is a fee, but reimbursement is available by Medicare, Medicaid and most commercial insurance plans. Call (734) 458-3481 for more information or to register.

Yoga (third of four classes) at 6:30 p.m. Learn how to relax, stretch and breathe while creating balance, strength and flexibility for both the body and mind. This four-week session is \$32. Classes meet at Garden City Hospital's Cardiac Rehab. Call (734) 458-3242 for details and to register.

Friday, Feb. 22
Get Up and Move at 9 a.m. This is an invigorating exercise program designed to help you get up and get moving, and is the perfect compliment to your diet program. These classes will help you to make an easy transition back to an exercise program or help you to get started for the first time. Fee is \$30 per month. For more information, call (734) 458-3242.

Power Hour at 10 a.m. and 1, 3 and 5 p.m. An intense exercise class designed to take you to the next level in fitness. Every class will be different, but we guarantee that each one will be challenging and fun, with a variety of aerobic exercises to experience. Fee is \$30 per month. For more information, call (734) 458-3242.

Strength and Stretch at 2 p.m. This is a non-aerobic exercise class designed to help you strengthen and define your muscles, as well as increase your flexibility. Each class will combine a variety of equipment, including free weights, medicine balls, balance balls, and Therabands in order to isolate and tone each of the major muscle groups. Fee is \$30 per month. For more information, call (734) 458-3242.

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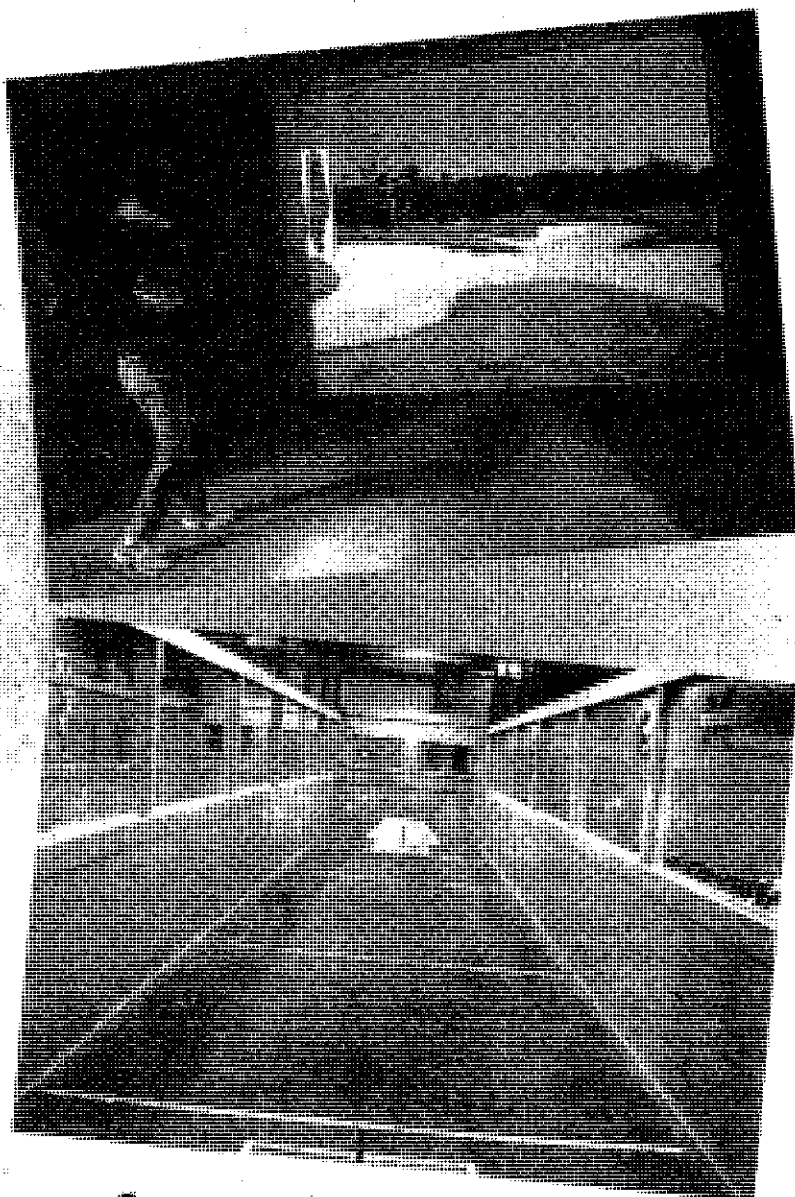
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Westland man gets caught by CUPID

A 45-year-old Westland man was struck by CUPID's arrow, but instead of a Valentine, he ended up being arrested for felony non-payment of child support.

Bradley Bingham was arrested as a part of Operation CUPID (Children Unsupported by Parents Intervention Detail) on felony warrants related to their failure to pay significant amounts of child support.

The three-day sweep during Valentine's Day week nabbed 80 individuals on felony warrants related to their failure to pay significant amounts of child support. Currently, there is an estimated \$3.5 billion in unpaid back child support owed to Wayne County children and their custodial parents. Bingham



Bingham

owes \$82,000 in child support for his two sons, according to the Wayne County Sheriff's Department. Wayne County Sheriff Warren Evans and Prosecutor Kym L. Worthy developed and coordinated the intensified effort, which is an extension of the work their offices do through their Felony Non-Support units to hold non-custodial parents. Some 40 sheriff's deputies were involved in the three-day sweep that ended Valentine's Day.

"Failing to financially support your own children when you have

the ability to pay is a crime, both legally and morally speaking," Evans said. "Every dollar that is collected as a result of this effort can be used to by custodial parents to purchase their kids the new clothes, school supplies - or even food - they need to thrive."

For this operation, Worthy's office identified 400 individuals who owe a collective \$14 million and have been charged with felony child non-support, have not-in-custody warrants issued for their arrest, have violated the terms of their probation on prior child support related convictions and have failed to appear in court on a prior case involving their failure to pay child support.

"The money we collect makes a tremendous impact and enhance

the quality of life for so many children," Worthy said. "Without these funds some children are forced to go with out the basic necessities of life."

In addition to Bradley. Operation CUPID also arrested Michael Fryer, 47, of Detroit, who owes \$120,000 in child support for three sons, and John Head, 48, of Dearborn, who owes \$100,000 in support for a daughter and son.

All of those arrested have been charged with four-year felonies, but can have the charges dropped, if they begin making regular payments, Worthy said.

"It is important to note that we did not target anyone who may be just a couple of months behind or who have no income to make payments," Evans said. "These are the most egregious and recalcitrant deadbeat parents in Wayne County who have failed, often multiple times, to comply with court orders to pay."

Evans and Worthy both pointed out that their ultimate goal is not to put people in jail or prison, which would affect their ability to pay child support, but to use the possibility of a felony conviction as an incentive for noncustodial parents to own up to their legal obligations to their children.

Legislative proposals focus on encouraging energy efficiencies

A local state senator is co-sponsoring a bipartisan package of bills that will help create a market for renewable energy in Michigan. This legislation provides various tax incentives to encourage the production and purchase of renewable energy as well as providing financial incentives for people to increase the energy efficiency of their homes.

"These measures, along with a strong Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) like the ones passed in 20 other states and efficiency standards, will help make Michigan a leader in the field of renewable energy," said State Sen. Glenn S. Anderson, D-Westland. "This package will help people save money, limit our dependence on foreign oil, and preserve our precious natural resources."

Last year, Anderson co-sponsored Senate Bill 385, which would establish an aggressive RPS for Michigan. The bill would mandate that 20 percent of electricity used in Michigan come from renewable resources such as wind, biomass from

agriculture, hydro, or solar power by 2020.

Highlights of the new renewable energy package include bills that would:

- Require the Department of Management and Budget to enter into contracts with electrical energy providers to purchase increasing amounts of electricity from renewable sources.

- Require energy companies to offer "green energy" programs to their customers.

- Provide an income tax credit for the purchase of renewable energy.

- Provide a sales tax exemption for equipment used to construct a renewable energy facility or to rehabilitate an existing facility to enhance its renewable capacity.

- Provide residents with a tax credit to purchase energy efficient products.

- Create 20 additional renaissance zones for renewable energy facilities.

- Create a Renewable Energy Commission to promote renewable energy research.

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OUR VIEWS

Diversity of candidates shows how far we've come

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."
- Declaration of Independence

With Presidents Day being observed on Monday, we couldn't help but think about the current presidential race and reflect on how far we have come as a country.

Never before in U.S. history has a more diverse group of candidates been seriously considered by voters for the highest office in the land.

The candidates, including Mitt Romney, a Mormon who recently dropped out of the race, have varied in age, religion, race and gender.

The Nov. 4, 2008, election may see America electing its first woman president or its first black president since its founding more than 232 years ago.

Even voters who don't agree with Hillary Rodham Clinton's or Barack Obama's political platforms must admit we've come a long way in recent decades toward truly believing one of our core founding truths: That all men (people) are created equal.

It wasn't until 1920 that women won the right to vote.

And it was even later, in 1964, that the Civil Rights Act was passed outlawing discrimination based on race, color and religion.

Now a woman and a black, who even has support from Southern states, are the top two contenders for the Democratic nomination.

Of course, one area remains where the playing field is not yet equal. It takes money - millions - to run for president. The diverse group of candidates does not include one pauper.

But Presidents Day is a good time to celebrate how far we have come - and it's been a long way, baby.

The bottom line is jobs

"Jobs" are the bottom line during this era of economic turmoil in Michigan. It is encouraging to see that Speaker Dillon has done his part to secure jobs for this district.

Social issues and programs are nice where and when they're warranted, but without jobs, no one will be around to enjoy them. Speaker Dillon understands that. Andy, I am proud to have you serving this community.

Amy Hichez Redford

Disturbing situation

The TV ad campaign that Blue Cross is running to promote a bill in the Michigan Legislature is very disturbing to me.

I am disturbed by two of the three reasons the ads speak of. First it would "cap insurance company profits." Who would cap them and what gives that person or committee the financial, business, economic, accounting and moral wisdom to know what should be the limit? Is 8% all right, but 8.1% too much?

Likewise the next statement in the ad is that the bill would "stop unfair premium hikes." Unfair by whose standard? To one policyholder a hike of \$5 per month is "unfair," yet another wouldn't blink at a \$30 a month hike. Yet others would consider any premium hike at all as "unfair."

What if a health insurance company started to lose money and needed a premium hike to avoid bankruptcy and closure, yet to stay in business might require an "unfair premium hike." Of course, if the present company went out of business those with pre-existing medical

LETTERS

conditions might not be able to replace their health insurance even at the rates they might have paid with those "unfair premium hikes."

As almost always, government actions have unintended consequences. I guarantee that if this bill passes with those provisions it will further mess up health care in Michigan. The sadder thing is that the majority of Michigan residents are almost totally ignorant of economics and will think this bill is a great idea.

(Disclosure: I am not a stockholder or employee of any insurance company nor involved in the sale of insurance. I also have not read the bill in question, but then I doubt most members of the Legislature have or will read it either.)

Lee Zende Rochester Hills

'Supers' disfranchise vote

As a reasonably intelligent senior - my academic credentials are somewhere between a G.E.D. and a Ph.D. - and having passed Civics 101 during the building of the Great Pyramid, and just when I was beginning to fathom the RNC/DNC-controlled gobbledegook of the Electoral Kindergarten, a new and further bastardization of the system envisioned by the founders has ratched up my political quandary.

Now we're told that if the Clinton-Obama race becomes inconclusive, another anomalous, mind-boggling, quixotic political obfuscation called super delegates will decide the nominee. Who are these supers? Ostensibly they're a coven of 800 super wise, contemplative Merlins, i.e., party big shots and a smorgasbord of unknown political lackeys, who will tell us who our choice is. Gawd! And to think we used to make jokes about the Soviets' one-candidate system!

If anyone still believes the "Your vote counts"

mantra, I have \$1 each shares in Dubai's man-made island paradise. Given P.T. Barnum's famous prognostication, I expect a tsunami-level sales bonanza.

William Carruth Royal Oak

Disgraceful Democrats

Has Hillary pulled another scam? First, her faked crying. Second, more crying at Yale.

Third, has she faked the writing of her personal check of \$5 million to her campaign in order to make her followers feel bad so they would send the \$6 million she received after the announcement from her staff that they were not being paid?

Of course the Clintons have the plan to have the super delegates to vote her in instead of being elected by the people and will do so if Obama is the choice. Just look at the super delegates she trusts - Gore, Berger, Carter, Dean, Reno, and the list goes on and on. The entire group has lots of baggage and carries no credibility in the Washington political scheme.

Haven't we experienced enough untruths with the Clintons since coming out of Whitewater and the other disgraces the president and the first lady did while they reduced our national security with all their cuts in military spending, the opening of several gate scams and the expense of the impeachment process?

Every voter should be made aware of all the scams we in the Detroit area have seen with our own elected governor and mayor's election - it will be the same no matter which Democrat is the final candidate. Either Democrat will disgrace the USA by pulling our troops out of Iraq before we win this war.

Don Wharff Rochester Hills

GOVERNMENT CONNECTION

Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm Send correspondence to P.O. Box 30013, Lansing, MI 48909, or call Constituent Services at (517) 335-7858. The fax number is (517) 335-6863.

State Sen. Glenn Anderson Contact him by mail at P.O. Box 30036, Lansing, MI, 48933; by phone at (517) 373-1707; or by e-mail at SenatorAnderson@senate.michigan.gov.

State Rep. Andy Dillon Send e-mails to andyadillon@house.mi.gov and written correspondence to his attention at 166 Capitol Building, P.O. Box 30014, Lansing, MI 48909-7514 or by fax at (517) 373-5976. His Lansing phone number is (517) 373-0857. He also has a Web site, house.mi.gov/adillon.

State Rep. Richard LeBlanc Send e-mails to richardleblanc@house.mi.gov and written correspondence to his attention at N0697 House Office Building, P.O. Box 30014, Lansing, MI 48909-7514 or by fax at (517) 373-5962. His Lansing phone number is (517) 373-2576 and he has his own Web site, house.mi.gov/rleblanc.

State Rep. Bob Constan Send e-mails to bobconstan@house.mi.gov and written correspondence to his attention at N0695 House Office Building, P.O. Box 30014, Lansing, MI 48909-7514 or by fax at (517) 373-5967. His Lansing phone number is (517) 373-0849. He also has a Web site, house.mi.gov/bconstan.

U.S. Sen. Carl Levin His Washington, D.C. mailing address is 269 Russell Office Building, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510-2202. Call him at (202) 224-6221. The fax number is (202) 224-1388. He also has offices in Patrick V. McNamara Federal Building, 477 Michigan Ave., Room 1860, in Detroit. The local phone number is (313) 226-6020, TTY (800) 851-0030 and fax at (313) 226-6948. He also has a Web site, levin.senate.gov.

U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow In Washington, D.C., the address is 133 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. Call her there at (202) 224-4822, TTY (202) 224-2066, or e-mail her at senator@stabenow.senate.gov. In Detroit, her office is at 243 W. Congress, Suite 550. Call (313) 961-4330. She also has a Web site, stabenow.senate.gov.

U.S. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter His Washington, D.C., mailing address is 1632 Longworth House Office Building, Washington D.C. 20515. Call him at (202) 225-8171 or send a fax by dialing (202) 225-2667. His district office is at 17197 N. Laurel Park Dr., Suite 161, Livonia, MI 48152. Call him at (734) 632-0314 or send a fax at (734) 632-0373. He also has a Web site, mccotter.house.gov.

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SPORTS

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Sunday, February 17, 2008

The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers

Brad Emons, editor · (734) 953-2123 · bemons@hometownlife.com

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Chargers stun Spartans to ice Lakes title

BY BRAD KADRICH
STAFF WRITER

There's an old adage that says, roughly, if you don't learn from history you're bound to repeat it. Apparently, history was a good lesson for Churchill's hockey team. Third-ranked Churchill, just two weeks after a 5-1 pasting at the hands of top-ranked Stevenson on Jan. 31, turned the tables on the Spartans, handing them their first loss of the season, 6-2, and claiming the Western Lakes Activities Association Lakes Division title. The Chargers depended heavily on their top line — Garrett Miencier, Nathan Milam and Keith Yackley — to advance

to Friday's WLAA title game against Northville, 6 p.m. at the Eddie Edgar Arena. "I think the first game (Jan. 31) we got too excited and made it bigger than what it was," said Churchill coach Pete Mazzoni. "They jumped out to an early lead, their special teams were better than ours. (Wednesday) was just the opposite. Our special teams got us a couple goals and we got the early lead." Miencier (two goals), Milam (two goals) and Yackley (goal) did most of the damage for Churchill (19-4), helping the Chargers score six times on 30 shots. Goalkeeper Greg Wirick made sure the barrage stood up, stopping 14 of 16 shots to get the victory.

"(Wirick) played a good game, played well enough to keep us out of trouble," Mazzoni said. "(Miencier-Milam-Yackley) have been our go-to line all year, and they came to play (Wednesday). "I thought we did a pretty good job of limiting (Stevenson's) second chances," Mazzoni added, "and we were much more disciplined with our forecheck." Stevenson got goals from Sean Lerg (with assists from John Vella and Mike Voran) and Cole Rochowiak (assists coming from Mark Bekkala and R.J. Kierdorf), but it wasn't enough. "Churchill is a quality hockey team," Stevenson coach Dave Mitchell said. "You know if you



Stevenson senior Michael Jahn and Churchill senior Nicklaus Harakas do battle during the Chargers' 6-2 upset of top-ranked and previously unbeaten Stevenson Wednesday.

Please see **CHARGERS, B2**

Signlines

CHS Hall of Fame

The sixth annual Livonia Churchill Athletic Patrons Hall of Fame induction dinner will be Thursday, March 13 at the Italian-American Hall in Livonia.

Hors d'oeuvres and cash bar begin at 6 p.m. followed by welcome and introductions and dinner at 6:45 p.m. The program follows from 7:30-9 p.m.

This year's honorees include former football and baseball coach Herb Osterland, football standout Mike Brooks (1991) and the 1985 and 1995 boys golf teams coached by Roger Strong and Kirk Osler. Tickets are \$35 per person (prior to March 1); or \$40 (after March 1).

Checks should be made payable to the Churchill Athletic Patrons (CAP) and sent to: Kathy Varilone, CAP Treasurer, 14384 Hix Road, Livonia, MI 48154.

Livonia ice show

The City of Livonia Department of Parks and Recreation will stage its 21st bi-annual ice show "On the Radio" at 7 p.m. Friday, March 14 and 7 p.m. Saturday, March 15 at Edgar Ice Arena, 3384 Lyndon (north of I-96 between Stark and Farmington roads).

Tickets go on sale beginning Monday, Feb. 25 at the Livonia Community Recreation Center, 15100 Hubbard (at Five Mile Road). Tickets are \$4.75 (children 12-and-under); \$7 (seniors 55-and-up); and \$8 (adults).

For more information, call (734) 466-2900.

Baseball camp

Livonia Franklin will stage its second annual Future Stars Spring Baseball Camp for boys and girls in grades 4-6 on Saturday, March 1 at the high school field-house.

Session 1, consisting of hitting and base running skills, will be from 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m. followed by Session 2 focusing on pitching, infield and outfield defense will be from 12:30-3 p.m.

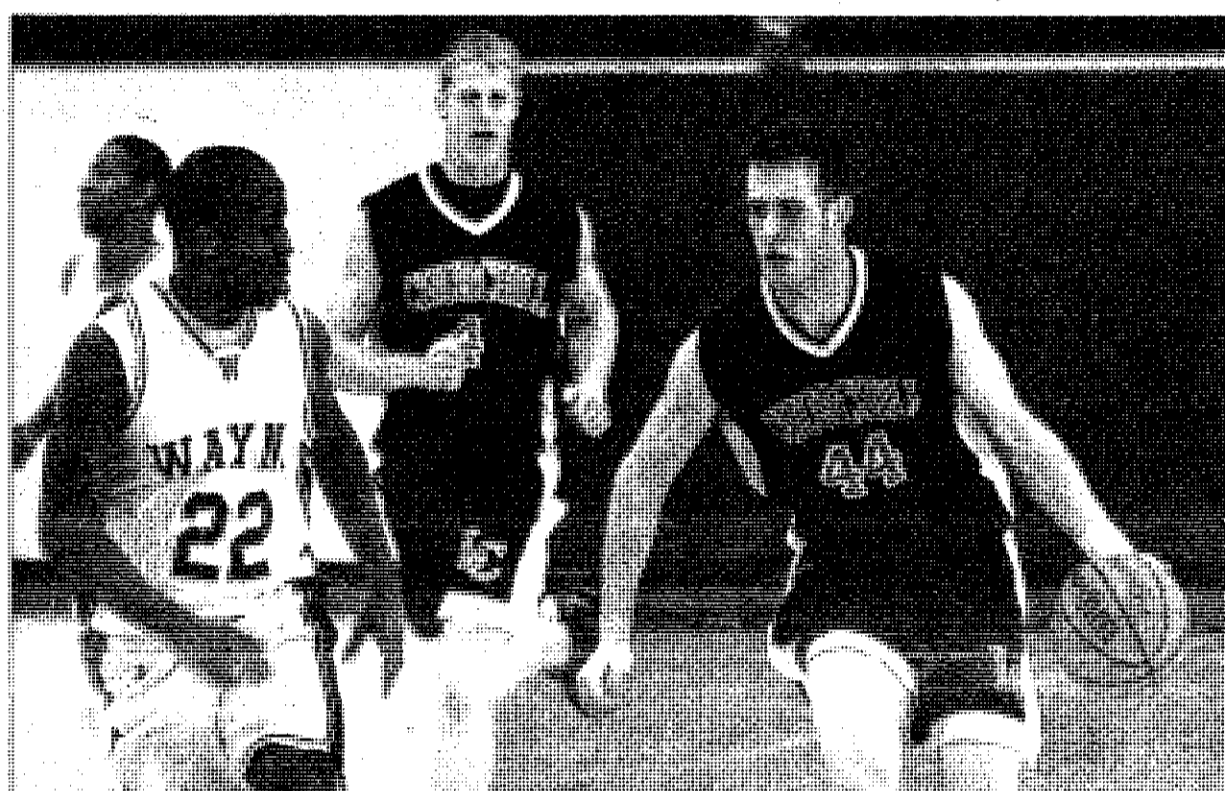
Each camper will bring their own sack lunch, which break between 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

The cost is \$25 per session or \$45 for both. Campers should bring a glove, bat and athletic shoes.

Checks should be made payable to Franklin High School and sent to: Matt Fournier, Franklin Baseball Camp, 31000 Joy Road, Livonia, MI 48150.

For more information, call Fournier at (734) 968-0499; or e-mail him at mfournie2@livonia.k12.mi.us.

Wayne, Glenn reach WLAA hoop final



Livonia Churchill's Ryan Rosenick (right) tries to drive past Matt Lewis of Wayne Memorial in a WLAA semifinal game Friday. Wayne Memorial won, 75-50.

Zebras run away from Chargers in WLAA semifinal

BY BRAD KADRICH
STAFF WRITER

When host Wayne Memorial took a 34-29 halftime lead over Livonia Churchill Friday night, the hundred or so fans scattered throughout the stands hunkered down for a tight Western Lakes Activities Association semi-final prep basketball battle.

But they didn't get one. The Zebras (17-2) scored the first six points of the third quarter, then opened the final period with a 10-0 burst and ran away for a 75-50 win over the Chargers to land a spot in Thursday's WLAA championship game.

Wayne coach Wayne Woodard said his kids took a couple of questionable shots in the first half, a fact

of which he reminded them during the break. "I told them at halftime I never put reins on them (as far as shooting) but there is a difference between good shots and bad shots," Woodard said. "We had a couple of guys hit some shots (in the second half), and we just caught fire."

Please see **HOOP, B2**

Rockets rebound well in win over Mustangs

BY BRAD KADRICH
STAFF WRITER

When John Glenn beat Northville, 56-55, last Thursday, the Rockets had to hold their collective breath while the Mustangs missed a last-second chance to win.

There was no such breath-holding necessary in the rematch Friday.

Using tight defense and a punishing rebounding effort, the Rockets (18-1) pounded Northville, 55-39, in a Western Lakes Activities Association semi-final matchup that earned Glenn a spot in Thursday's league final against Wayne Memorial.

The Zebras hammered Livonia

Churchill, 75-50, in the other Friday semifinal. The Rockets grabbed 27 offensive rebounds and dished out more than 20 assists in a team effort that won them the game.

"We just really defended, we rebounded the ball and we shared the ball," Glenn coach Dan Young said. "It was a tough game, they were guarding, too, but we didn't give them anything easy."

It was a far cry from last week's game, when Glenn gave up a 16-point lead they led with a minute left in the third quarter, then had to hang on for the victory. On Friday, the Rockets built a 10-point halftime lead and never looked back.

In last week's game, Northville's Dan Kirkpatrick scored 20 points. Friday

night, Glenn's Stefan Marken held Kirkpatrick to just nine points, while scoring 11 himself.

Earl Hardison led the Rockets with 16 points and grabbed 11 rebounds, while Austin Anderson scored 10 points and dished out 11 assists.

Junior Derrick Crosby scored only two points, but he had 13 rebounds, and 6-8 center Jordan Manier had 18 rebounds, including eight on the offensive glass.

"They are a physically strong, well-coached team, so this was huge for us," Young said. "To hold those guys to 39 points ... was obviously playoff-type basketball."

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As a freshman, outfielder Rikco Rhoades provided an offensive and defensive boost to the Crusaders. He is one of several excellent fly-catchers in the fold for 2008.

Madonna eyes top of baseball standings

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

It's just mid-February. But, believe it or not, the Madonna Crusaders' baseball team plays games that will count in the standings this weekend in Jackson, Tenn.

The Crusaders get to work at Lambuth University for a three-game set before embarking on a 13-game

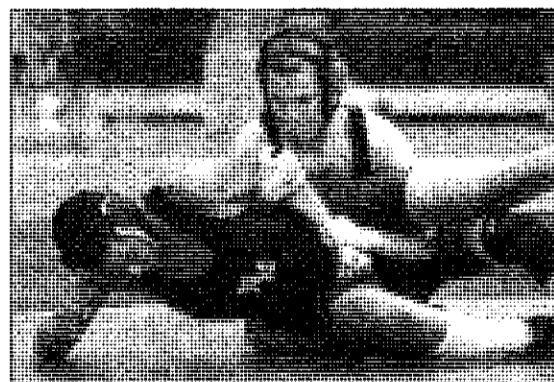
spring trip in Arizona. But head coach Greg Haeger is excited about the 2008 squad, with a blend of power, speed and outstanding pitching that could make it one of the best in the Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference.

There are eight top-notch pitchers, including holdover right-hander Will Kennedy (Westland John Glenn, 1.15 ERA in 2007), vying for a six-man starting rotation.

"This is the best team we've had here," said Haeger, following yet another indoor workout at the Madonna Activities Center. "We have so many components."

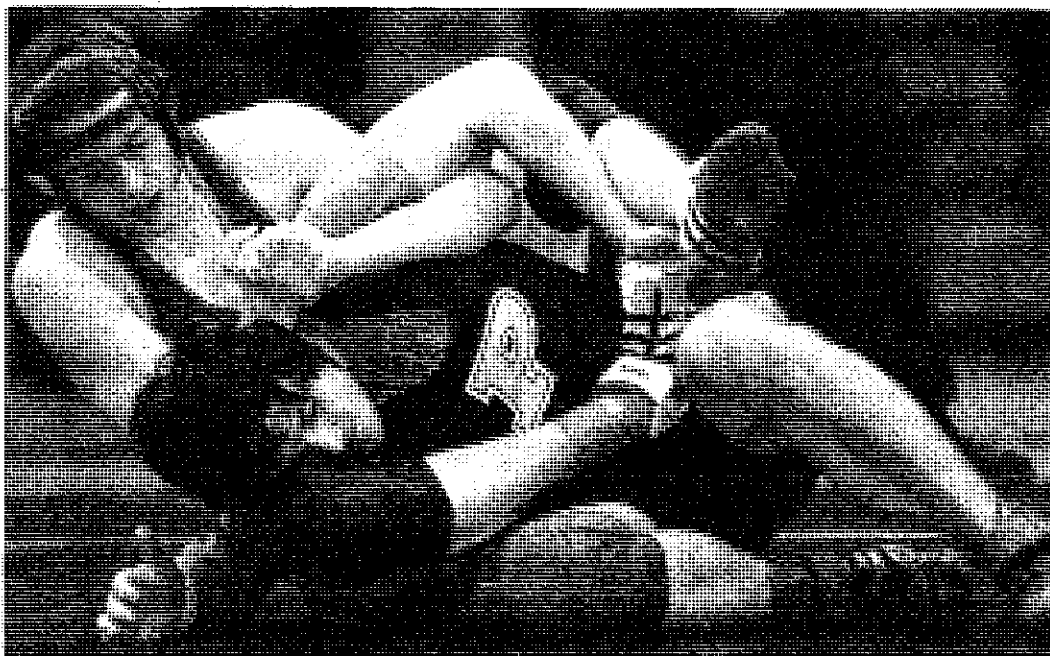
Madonna went 34-20 overall and 15-9 in the conference in 2007, bowing out to Spring Arbor in the NAIA Region VIII regional championship.

Please see **MADONNA, B2**



John Glenn's Jeremiah Austin tries to turn Wayne's Jalen Jones in the first period in their district semifinal match Thursday evening.

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TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Livonia Franklin's Dan Woodall, here turning Plymouth's Vince Daroffi in the Observerland tournament, helped the Patriots win their third straight district title Wednesday.

Pats claim 3rd straight mat district

BY BRAD KADRICH
STAFF WRITER

When Livonia Franklin wrestled Churchill a couple of weeks ago, the Patriots rested the vast majority of their varsity lineup and took a beating from the Chargers.

In a Division I team district final Wednesday night, Franklin returned the favor.

The Patriots (21-4) won nine of the first 10 matches and cruised to a 43-12 victory at Franklin. The win, which followed a 68-10 rout of Redford Union in the district semi-final, sends Franklin into the Novi regional against the Salem district winner Thursday.

"Overall I thought we wrestled pretty good, not the best I've seen all year, but good enough to win," Franklin

coach Dave Chiola said. "We knew there would be a lot of close matches because when we saw them at the city meet there were a lot of close matches. The meet was much closer than the final score indicated."

Franklin's Grant Phillips (125 pounds) got the party started with an 11-0 shutout of Brian Fortney.

After Churchill's Andrew Miller beat Ryan Haarala when Haarala withdrew with an injury, the Patriots reeled off eight straight wins, five of them by three points or fewer.

Matt Hintz (135) beat Adam Roe 9-2; Brandon Smith (140) edged JonPaul Gaffke, 3-2; Brandon Billiau (145) pinned Josh Gustitus in 5:32; Elvin Ferreira (152) beat Dan Smalls 7-3; Don Stratz beat Grant Morgan 9-6; Garrett Hay (171)

nipped Curtis Castlebery 4-3; Dan Woodall (189) beat Brian Ziemba 1-0; and Cody Hay (215) beat Jon Sneckall 9-7.

Churchill heavyweight Mark Parrish shut out Franklin's Mike Modes 3-0 to stop the string, but Franklin ran off wins in the final three matches - Steve Tuyu (103) beat Jacob Meadows 11-6, Jared Pieknik (112) pinned Kane Kanouse in 2:27 and Justin Jacobsen (119) pinned Keith Roberts in 3:24 - to close out the win.

The win gave Franklin its third straight district title, but Chiola said the wrestling has to improve if the Patriots want to go farther.

"If we want to advance from here we'll have to turn it up a notch," Chiola said

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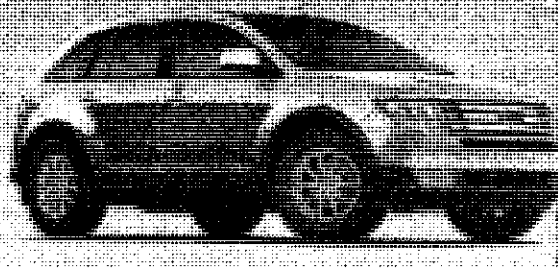
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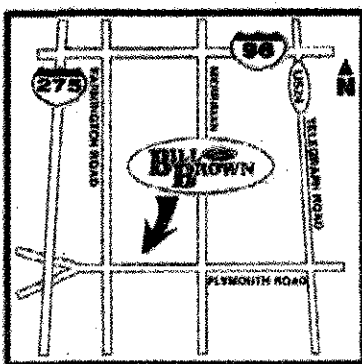


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Finding happiness in turbulent times

Times are tough in our neighborhood, in neighboring neighborhoods, and in neighborhoods across the country. Locally, news of Big Three employee buyouts has become so commonplace that it seldom commands headline status anymore. GM's latest attrition effort extends to



Donna Rockwell

46,000 workers; or rather, 46,000 families feeling betrayed, despondent, displaced, and desperately in search of alternative employment. Metro-Detroiter's hearts and minds are numb with job loss overload. Of course, this is also a national problem: the U.S. economy lost

17,000 jobs in January, the worst in over four years. Atlanta-based Home Depot recently announced a layoff of 500 of its 5,000 corporate employees, blaming current belt-tightening trends in customer spending. Starbucks, for goodness' sake, says it is dumping plans to open hundreds of stores, and even closing some.

From penny stocks to blue chips, companies are reporting earnings below expectations, and businesses across the board are reassessing projections downward; many businesses, small and large, are falling victim to the overwhelming undertow of this turbulent economic tide. As the word "recession" grows from a murmur to a roar, many Americans are finding themselves in need of fiscal and emotional life preservers.

On a personal level, it is depressing driving past empty storefronts, "For Sale" signs, and banners promising future developments, only to realize that years have passed and no buildings have yet risen on that spot. Evidence lies all around us: our area is in an economic funk. On grey days, a turnaround can seem improbable. But, on those beautiful, cold, crisp Michigan days, when the snow glistens in the bright yellow sun, you dare to believe in a comeback.

In State House offices, and planning committees across the state, leaders are exploring ways to engage new industries in innovative ways in order to lure capital back to our state. A thriving local economy is necessary to support our family-oriented, quintessential Middle American lifestyle, something surely worth fighting for. And there is reason to be optimistic that somewhere on the horizon a recovery awaits. Meanwhile, though, how can we get through this difficult time and still live happy, fulfilling lives? If we give in to a pervasive sense of melancholy, in the end, what good will that do?

It has become a cliché: the only constant is change. Though we know it, we still try and hold onto what we want to be true, rather than acknowledging what is true. Human beings are very resistant to change. That is why the fear of job loss is so deeply felt; it is beyond our control. While situations like retraining or relocation seem burdensome, they do, at least, allow us a hand in our own destiny, so important for self-esteem. By examining the link between reality and what we wish were true, we discover, in the intersection of these two points, how to stay grounded in this ever-changing world.

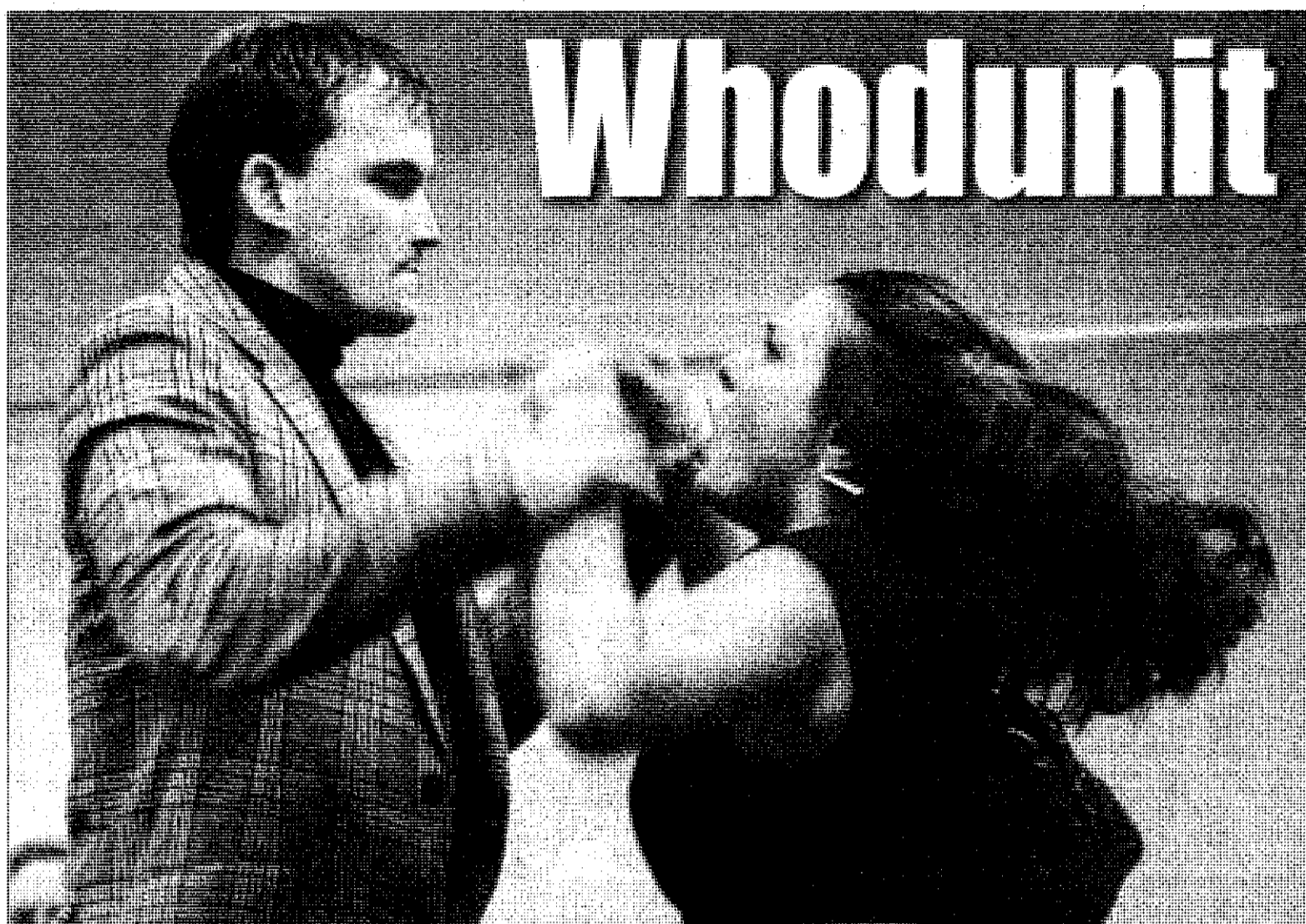
No matter how much fear we generate, it will not help us escape from the places in which we find ourselves: out of work, looking for work, or contemplating moving to find work. After spending a certain period thinking "what if" and "how did this happen," it might be time to make a plan.

Start by looking realistically at the way things are. Decide what you need to do to take care of yourself and your family. Hold to no limits or parameters; simply imagine the best-case scenario for your life and your family members' lives. With no restraints, envision how, together as a family, you could make this life-view come true. Chart out the small, manageable steps you could take to bring this plan to fruition. Think outside the box. By taking tiny steps, one day at a time, and not taking "no" for an answer — from others or yourself — life becomes a creative process as you build a new future. By making a plan and taking the steps to realize that plan, we reclaim ownership of our lives from a corporate conglomerate that may have held us under its spell, dependent and afraid.

Belief-in-self is the best way to break this spell. It is a cure for the affliction of fear, and a way to stay personally and professionally motivated. The Declaration of Independence proclaims as self-evident, "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

For information on ways to cope with job loss, and emotional, physical, financial, and career suggestions during work transition, go to the Michigan School of Professional Psychology Web site: www.mispp.edu and search: resource folder.

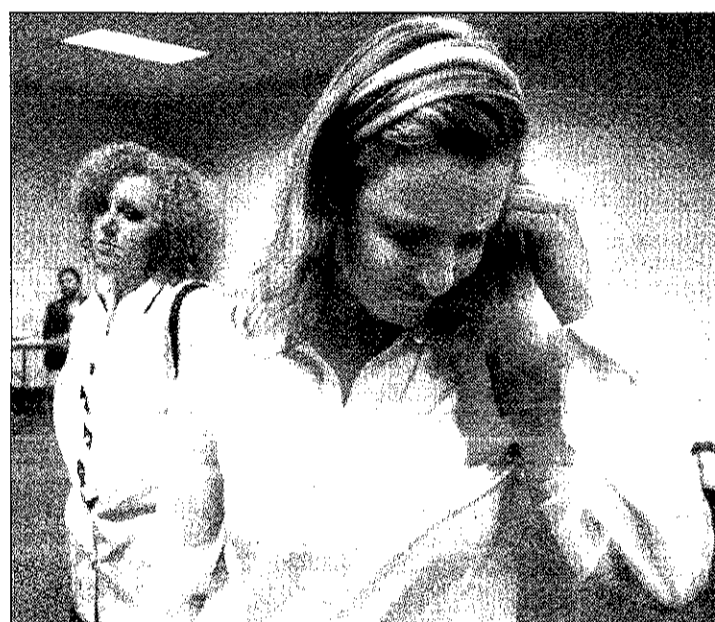
Donna Rockwell, Psy.D., is a professor and the Community Outreach Public Relations Liaison at the Michigan School of Professional Psychology in Farmington Hills.



Whodunit

PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

David Matthews' (Drew Martin) plans to seduce Monica Welles (Kori Bielaniec) fail and their argument turns violent.



The playwright's young assistant Sally Bean (played by Wendy Ascione) turns away after a cold greeting from Karen Daniels (Meg daPonte).

Playwright Alex Dennison (played by Steve Sedore) introduces his new play to Karen Daniels (Meg daPonte), Lloyd Andrews (Joe Cone), Leo Gibbs (Richard Holland), and David Matthews (Drew Martin).



Director Mike Cuba watches intently as the actors run through their lines.

Spotlight Players invite audience to solve crime

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER

The dialogue comes on like rapid fire once Steve Sedore pulls the revolver out of his briefcase at the beginning of the play. This is only a run-through, but the actors already have their lines down pat three weeks before Spotlight Players open *Rehearsal for Murder* Feb. 22, at The Village Theater of Cherry Hill in Canton.

Director Mike Cuba says the mystery will keep the audience guessing as to who murdered the fiancée of the lead character played by Sedore. Playwright Alex Dennison has gathered the producer, director and actors from his show that flopped one year ago. It is the anniversary of Monica Welles' death which was ruled a suicide. Dennison is determined to

Please see **WHODUNIT, C3**

REHEARSAL FOR MURDER

What: A murder mystery
When: 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Feb. 22-23, Feb. 29 and March 1, March 7-8, and 2 p.m. Sunday, March 2 and 9
Where: The Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill at Ridge, Canton
Tickets: \$18 adult, \$16 youth/seniors age 60 plus, and \$15 for groups of 15 or more, and available at (734) 394-5460, www.spotlightplayers.net, and the box office one hour before performance.

Meet the First Ladies at Presidential Tea

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER

Sarah Polk was her husband James' biggest adviser long before Hillary Clinton proposed a national health care program during her husband's administration. In this election year, Linda Wiacek thought it would be interesting to hear more about the wives from the wives so she invited the Petticoat Ladies to don their Victorian dress for a Presidential Tea Saturday, Feb. 23, at Greenmead Historical Park in Livonia.

Jackie Zopff of Plymouth performs as Polk, Debbie Eleson as Mary Todd Lincoln, Gini Miles as Julia Grant, and Gail Smalley as Ida McKinley. A total of nine women form the Petticoat Ladies who began giving presentations at Victorian Teas in 2003 as members of Garden City Presbyterian Church. Any donations they receive go back to the church. In addition to Presidential wives, they portray Women of the Old West, Vaudeville, and Mothers of Invention as well as Cranks and Charmers through history. Polk was First Lady in the mid 1800s when she came up with the idea of playing Hail to the Chief whenever the president walked into the room.

"Each researches our own history through books, the Internet," said Gail Smalley of Garden City. "There



Denise Salo (left front), Jackie Zopff, Wanda Jarvis, Louise Salvatore, and Debbie Eleson (back row), Gail Smalley, Vera Siefers, Rita Gibbs, and Gini Miles perform around town as the Petticoat Ladies. On Saturday, Feb. 23, Zopff, Eleson, Miles, and Smalley take on the roles of former First Ladies for the Presidential Tea at Greenmead Historical Park in Livonia.

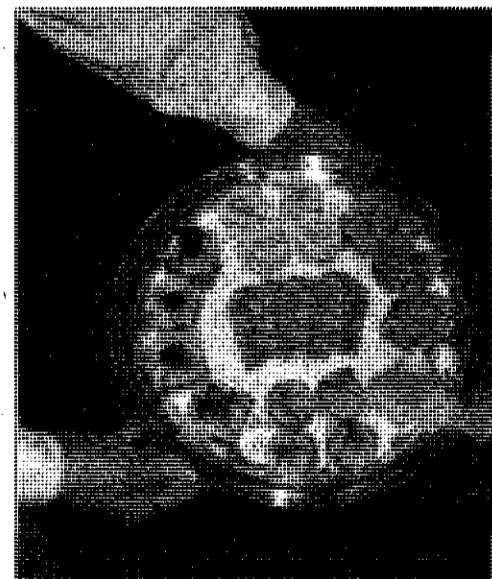
are a lot of behind the scene things we found out. Ida McKinley was an epileptic. It's something they didn't talk about back then. She lost both her children, was practically an invalid and her and her husband became the center of each other's lives."

In addition to listening to the former First Ladies and enjoying crab bisque, tea sandwiches and scones, guests will be treated to favorite cookies of the presidents. Afterwards guests receive a booklet with the recipes including one for Abraham

Lincoln's fruit cookies made with currants, raisins and walnuts.

"We'll have George Washington's Jumballs made with butter, sugar, salt and orange rind, a recipe from over 200 years ago when they didn't have all the ingredients we have today," said Linda Wiacek, Greenmead's recreation supervisor. "George W. Bush's Cowboy Cookies is more of a modern cookie and like a chocolate chip dough with oatmeal and pecans."

Please see **TEA, C3**



Finger sandwiches are some of the delights on the menu at the Presidential Tea.

PRESIDENTIAL TEA

When: 3-5 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 23
Where: Alexander Blue House at Greenmead Historical Park, 20501 Newburgh, south of Eight Mile, Livonia
Tickets: \$25, advance sales only. All proceeds used to preserve and restore Greenmead.
For reservations, call (248) 477-7375

WHODUNIT

FROM PAGE C1

prove it's murder. He has written a new play, *Killing Jessica*, which reveals motives for each of the characters who, one by one, read their lines.

The work originally won writers Richard Levinson and William Link an Edgar Award from the Mystery Writers of America in 1983.

Cuba originally saw the teleplay starring Robert Preston, Lynn Redgrave and Jeff Goldblum in 1982. He's following in the footsteps of his mother Kelly who directed the play when she was a high school teacher in Missouri. Cuba is a retired high school chemistry teacher who's just getting his feet wet as a director. This is his second production in that role, but he's served as an assistant to directors twice before. As a Spotlight Players' board member, he proposed the mystery for the 2007-2008 season.

"Rehearsal is basically a whodunit," said Mike Cuba of the play. "The play is actually written about Monica not a fictional character. Three of five have alibis except for a former husband and wife. At the end of evening you're going to know who killed Monica Welles. Every piece of information is presented to you well before you have to sit down and figure out who did it."

Jon Milan's music adds to the mystery. The Westland resident writes especially for the Spotlight Players' production in the style of Bernard Herrmann, the composer whose music set the mood for films including *Taxi Driver* and the Alfred Hitchcock thrillers *Psycho* and *The Birds*. A CD of Milan's score will be available at the performances.

"It's all minor key," said Cuba of Livonia. It provides a somber note. It's very haunting music."

Kori Bielaniec is especially spooky since she comes to life as Monica Welles in a flashback focused on her plummet from a 10-story building. Even though the 19-year-old Livonia resident studies theater at University of Detroit-Mercy, she had to take a lesson on how to fall from Julie Evans at Guardian Marshal Arts in Garden City.

"My death scene is a challenge," said Bielaniec. "My knees are pretty bruised. I had to learn how to fall without hurting myself."

Sedore called on his years of studying German for his taxing role as the playwright who appears in all but two scenes. Sedore grew up in Canton but didn't start acting until a student at Albion College. He's done four plays with Spotlight Players including *Dial M for Murder*.

"I spent some time in Germany in a work study program so it's not as difficult for me because to speak German you first have to memorize all the words," said Sedore, a

Plymouth resident and German teacher at Edsel Ford High School in Dearborn.

Joe Cone says Sedore isn't alone when it comes to being on stage for much of the play. Cone of Canton plays the director. From 1999 to 2003 he worked in theater in England.

"It's a small enough cast where every actor has a major role. Each actor is important to the story," said Cone, a Spotlight Players board member. "It grabs you right away from the minute Alex pulls the gun out of his briefcase and puts it in his pants."

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TEA

FROM PAGE C1

Eating off of presidential china is sure to make the afternoon memorable as well. Greenmead owns reproductions of china used by 14 different commanders-in-chief.

"I think it's the most elaborate tea we do," said Wiacek. "We'll have a cockade, a ribbon

that's sewn into a floweret with streamers that's been around from Revolutionary War times to World War I. People wore them to show support to the troops. Soldiers wore them on their hats. Both North and South used them during the Civil War. The women would pin them onto their clothing like a brooch."

An exhibit highlighting Teddy Roosevelt carries through the

red, white and blue theme of the tea.

"The food is generous. The atmosphere is wonderful. We have a lot of things going on," said Wiacek. "We're looking for it to be fun and patriotic all at the same time. We welcome democrats, republicans and independents but there will be no campaigning of any kind."

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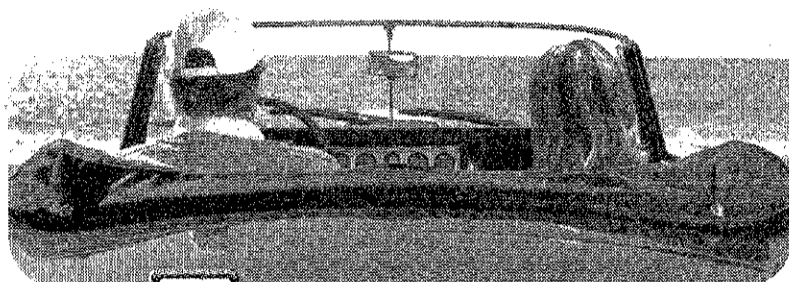
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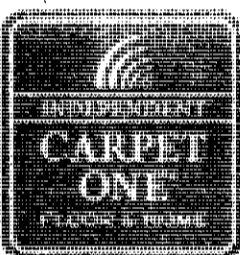
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