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FOOD, B8

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Toddlers' Olympics

The call has gone out for toddlers to go for the gold at the annual Nursery School Olympics 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, March 3, at the Bailey Recreation Center, 36651 Ford, Westland.

The "events" include the Big Wheel Grande Prix, the Marshmallow Shot Putt and Obstacle Course. Every child will receive a certificate of participation.

The Olympics is for youngsters ages 18 months to five years. Pre-registration encouraged, but not required. The course takes about 30-45 minutes so children can register right up to 11:30 a.m.

The event is free of charge, with all admissions being sponsored by the Wayne Masons No. 112. Also supporting the event at the Westland Parks and Recreation Department, Westland Civitan Club, Dads' Athletic Club of Westland, Westland Christian Union and Westland Jaycees.

For more information, call (734) 722-7620.

Hockey time

Tickets are on sale for third annual Westland Wild Wings vs. Detroit Red Wing Alumni Hockey game set for Saturday, March 24, in the Mike Modano Ice Arena, 6210 N. Wildwood at Hunter.

Join the Westland Wild Wings made up of Mayor William Wild, other city officials and residents as they seek a win against the Detroit Red Wing Alumni. The game will be at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children. Children under age 3 are free. Tickets are available at the mayor's office, the Bailey Recreation Center and the Mike Modano Ice Arena. Seating is limited to 800, so get your tickets early.

Sponsorship opportunities also are available.

For more information, call (734) 729-4560 or e-mail parks@cityofwestland.com. The event will raise money for improvements at the Mike Modano Ice Arena.

Educating voters pays off; W-W sinking fund renewed

By Sue Mason
Observer Staff Writer

Education is the key to success for Wayne-Westland Community Schools.

Of seven millage requests that appeared on Tuesday's Presidential primary ballot in Wayne County, the Grosse Pointe Library tax and

Wayne-Westland's 10-year sinking fund renewal were the only ones to be approved by voters.

"We are grateful that the residents of Wayne-Westland continue to see the value in education and support our children and schools," said Wayne-Westland School Superintendent Greg Baracy.

"This support will allow the district to maintain quality school environments for our students to learn and our teachers to teach."

In unofficial results, the .9922-mill tax renewal was approved by a 2,211 vote margin - 5,188 yes votes to 2,977 no votes. In Westland, the largest por-

tion of the district, almost two-thirds of the votes cast favored the renewal. Yes tally was 3,427 votes compared to 1,889 no votes.

'Huge number'

"I'm really excited about this, 5,000 yes votes, that's a huge number," said Baracy. "I'm

very pleased with that."

In the month leading up to the election, school officials made numerous presentations to educate residents throughout the district, which includes the city of Wayne and portions of Canton Township, Inkster and Romulus,

Please see RENEWAL, A2

Westland joins state in backing Romney

By LeAnne Rogers
Observer Staff Writer

While Westland residents Karen and Glenn Wright weren't expecting to have to choose from among three ballots to vote in the presidential primary Tuesday, it didn't slow them down.

"It was no problem. We knew what we would do," said Karen Wright.

"I knew for a long time what I would do. I'm a Republican and a Teabagger," said Glenn Wright, who added he didn't object to the nickname for Tea Party supporters. "I've been called a lot worse."

Both the Wrights reported voting Republican and supporting Mitt Romney over primary challenger Rick Santorum, a former Pennsylvania senator.

"I like everything about him (Romney). He's not a Democrat number one. He's not (President Barack) Obama - that would number one A," said Glenn Wright. "Santorum seems to be some sort of religious fanatic. There should be some separation of church and state. Mitt is more kind of like me."

Almost 14 percent of Westland's 61,206 registered voters went to the polls on Tuesday. Those who participated in the Republican primary favored Romney. The former Massachusetts governor narrowly defeated Santorum with just 150 votes in unofficial results. He garnered 2,229 votes to Santorum's 2,079 votes.



Daniel Cruse was among more than 8,000 Westland residents who went to vote in Precinct 8 in Tuesday's Presidential primary election.



Poll workers Laurel White, Mel Pomerantz and Kelly Bates wait for Walter Grant to complete his registration form.

Pleased with field

Describing himself as pretty pleased with the Republican field of candidates, Glenn Wright said he did wish New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie was in the race.

Voting in Precinct 4, also housed in the Bailey Center, John Higgins said that he is a non-partisan voter and has been all of his life.

"I took the Democratic ballot. I guess that tells you who I voted for. I supported the (Wayne-

Westland Schools) sinking fund question," said Higgins. "They had samples (ballots) so you can go over it before you go in and request the ballot."

The candidates haven't been focusing enough what they would do if elected, he said, instead talking in their commercial about other candidates being incapable.

"I think they are not focusing on the issues that are important in a specific sense to every

Presidential Primary Results

| Republican Party | CITY OF WESTLAND |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Mitt Romney | 2,229 |
| Rick Santorum | 2,079 |
| Ron Paul | 787 |
| Newt Gingrich | 405 |
| Herman Cain | 14 |
| Rick Perry | 12 |
| Michele Bachmann | 9 |
| Buddy Roemer | 8 |
| Jon Huntsman | 7 |
| Fred Karger | 4 |
| Gary Johnson | 3 |
| Uncommitted | 167 |
| Democratic Party | CITY OF WESTLAND |
| Barack Obama | 1,878 |
| Uncommitted | 311 |
| Wayne-Westland Sinking Fund renewal | |
| YES - | 3,427 |
| NO - | 1,889 |

day working people," said Higgins. "They need to give more attention to that if they want to be taken seriously. They need to realize the people

voting are actually working for a living." Another voter, Josh Weir, said he considers

Please see ROMNEY, A2

Westland library offers Food for Fines plan

By LeAnne Rogers
Observer Staff Writer

If you have overdue fines at Westland's William P. Faust Library, March may be your lucky month.

Throughout March, the library is hosting a Food for Fines program that accepts non-perishable food along with toiletries in exchange for fines. Up to \$20 in fines can be forgiven at a rate of \$2 for every item donated (no travel size toiletries).

"We will also take straight donations of items or cash. This doesn't apply to lost items or repair fees for damaged items," said

Andy Schuck, a reference librarian.

The library had its first Food for Fines program in December 2010, collecting nearly 2,000 pounds of food and forgiving almost \$2,900 in fines. Like the upcoming program, donations will go to the Gleaners Community Food Bank.

"We waited (for a second food drive) partly because we didn't want people to expect it in December," Schuck said. "We are combining it with Women's History Month. What we collected will be for women's shelters."

Gleaners has more than 300 partner agencies,

so it's not guaranteed that everything will go a women's shelter, he said, but the hope is much of the donations will benefit local shelters.

Non-perishable food items must have an expiration date no sooner than June 2012, be unopened and not in glass containers. Personal care items needed include disposable razors, shampoo, deodorant and lotions.

"Gleaners has some high-demand items like canned tuna, canned beef stew and hearty soups, canned veggies and fruit in individual sizes," Schuck said. "They provide packed weekend lunches for kids. They

need anything in individual sizes - anything in a box or can is good."

Another reason for holding the food drive in March was that there are so many food drives and similar efforts around the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

"We thought we could really make an impact," Gleaners explained that to us. Christmas is a giving season. They definitely run low on items this time of year," Schuck said.

During this Food for Fines program, Schuck said he hopes at least 2,000 pounds of food will be collected and \$3,000 in fines will be forgiven,

levels similar to the first effort.

Donations to clear fines must be made at the circulation desk, however, people who simply want to make donations can utilize drop boxes in the library. Cash donations can be made at the circulation desk also.

"For every dollar donated, Gleaners is able to create three meals for someone who is hungry. They are much more efficient feeding people," Schuck said. "If people donate to Gleaners online or on the phone, they can get a deductible receipt."

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ROMNEY

Continued from page A1

himself a Republican and voted in the Republican primary.

"I'm becoming more independent. I supported Ron Paul. I think he's not afraid to state ideas that might not be the most popular," he said. "Most candidates say what they need to get elected. I think he is different."

For Weir, a bank mortgage underwriter, said that the economy is a big concern as it is for everyone. "But social issues are just as a big an impact on my vote," he said.

Light turnout

There was no waiting as Westland voters went to the polls Tuesday to cast their ballots in the presidential primary which had a close race between Republicans Mitt Romney and Rick Santorum. The voting was relatively low key in the traditionally Democratic community - Obama was the only candidate listed on the Democratic ballot.

Of the 2,308 residents who voted Democratic, 85.44 percent - 1,878 votes - favored Obama. Another 311 were



Gretchen Heinicke feeds her ballot into the machine to be counted in the primary.

uncommitted and there were nine write-in votes.

By 11:15 a.m., Precinct 8, one of two located in the Bailey Recreation Center, had seen only 37 voters. "Some voters weren't happy at having to choose a ballot (Republican or Democrat). They thought it

violated their (Constitutional right to) privacy," said Kelly Bates, Precinct 8 chairperson.

A couple of voters even announced they were planning to head to City Hall to complain. Voters had to decide whether to vote in the Republican or Democratic pri-

mary but those living in the Wayne-Westland Community Schools had a third choice - opting out of the primary and only voting a the nearly one-mill sinking fund renewal.

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AROUND WESTLAND

Constituent hours

The staff of U.S. Representative Thaddeus McCotter, Michigan's 11th Congressional District, is holding office hours in several locations. This time is set aside so that the citizens served by the representatives have the opportunity to speak with a staff member for assistance regarding any federal issue that they might have. This is not a political venue and no discussions of a political nature will be expected.

Office hours for Thursday, March 1, are 9-10 a.m. at the Canton Summit Senior Center. The Tuesday, March 6, office hours are 9-10 a.m. at Livonia Civic Park Senior Center, 10:30-11:30 a.m. at the Northville Senior Center, noon-1 p.m. at the Plymouth District Library, 1:30-2:30 p.m. at the Maplewood Center in Garden City and 3-4 p.m. at the Westland senior Friendship Center.

The congressman has two offices in Livonia and Milford the district to serve constituents. The Livonia office can be reached by calling (734) 632-0314 and the Milford office is available at (248) 685-9495.

Hockey time

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Join the Westland Wild Wings made up of Mayor William Wild, other city officials and residents as they seek a win against the Detroit Red Wing Alumni. The game will be at 7 p.m.

Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children. Children under age 3 are free. Tickets are available at the mayor's office, the Bailey Recreation Center and the Mike Modano Ice Arena. Seating is limited to 800, so get your tickets early. Sponsorship opportunities also are available.

For more information, call (734) 729-4560 or e-mail parks@cityofwestland.com. The event will raise money for improvements at the Mike Modano Ice Arena.

Chocolate Ball

Tickets are now on sale for the eighth annual

C.L.A.S.S. Chocolate Fantasy Ball which will be held Saturday, March 10, at Joy Manor, 28999 Joy, east of Middlebelt, Westland.

Enjoy a night of fun, dancing and LOTS of chocolate, all while gathering for a great cause. The C.L.A.S.S. Award will be presented to an individual followed by the unveiling of the Chocolate Extravaganza for all guests to enjoy. The event supports the Barbara Douglas Scholarship Program and celebrates the potential of all women as valued members and leaders of the community.

Tickets are \$25 each (will call is available). Contact Meghan by e-mail at mgiersdorf@mpgenterprises.com or call (248) 255-8241.

Relay for Life

The AMVETS Post Relay for Life Team is holding a PartyLite Show noon Saturday, March 23, at 36417 Glenwood, east of Newburgh, Wayne.

Come shop, laugh and catch up with friends while enjoying the newest fragrances and home accents PartyLite has to offer. Plus, sample the newest addition to the PartyLite line: Two Sisters Gourmet by PartyLite, a delicious and creative way of turning ordinary snacks and meals into extraordinary taste sensations.

For more information, call (734) 620-0688 or send an e-mail to jolly70nutt@yahoo.com

Class reunion

Wayne Memorial High School class of 1957 is looking for classmates for its 55th class reunion which will be held May 19. For more information, contact Wanda Putman Boice at boice@aol.com or pollygirl219@aol.com or Richard Smith at (248) 747-6817.

Easter Egg Hunt

Kirk of Our Savior Presbyterian Church will hold an Easter egg hunt 10:30 a.m. to noon Saturday, March 31, at the church, 36660 Cherry Hill, west of Wayne Road.

The hunt will be held rain or shine and include the egg hunt, creative activities, a healthy snack and service project.

All are welcome to attend. Free will donation will be appreciated.

RENEWAL

Continued from page A1

about the millage request.

Baracy conducted 60 informational meetings with parent and labor groups, ministers and senior citizens. In an e-mail Wednesday morning, he extended a heartfelt thank you for their support in helping with the sinking fund efforts. "It was an overwhelm-

ing success and illustrates that the community values our educational system and the children we serve," Baracy said. "When a school and community come together, wonderful things can happen. Thank you for everything you do for our children and remember ... Great Futures Start Right Here."

The request was a renewal of a sinking fund millage approved by voters in 2003. That request

is in its last year, with the last levy to appear on the July tax bill. In the first 10 years, the money was used to make capital improvements - new elementary media centers, additional gymnasiums at the high schools and parking lot improvements among other things.

"This a true testament that residents like what they've seen done over that past 10 years with sinking fund and bond issue," he said.

Going forward

The renewal will generate \$1.9 million the first year and an estimated \$19 million over 10 years. It will be used to make repairs and ren-

ovations to keep the districts' buildings in good condition.

"We're facing major roof repairs for most of our buildings, several elementary kitchen renovations, numerous boilers and chillers, some major plumbing and bathroom renovations, parking lot resurfacing and other significant repairs going forward," said Baracy. "All of them will be done on a priority basis."

"I personally want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all who supported the sinking fund and worked to share accurate and factual information," he added.

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CITY OF WESTLAND SYNOPSIS OF MINUTES MTG. 4 02/21/12

- Presiding: President Pro-Tem Hammons
- Present: Bryant, Hammons, Johnson, Kadi, Kehrer, Reeves
- 37: Appr. minutes of regular meeting held 2/6/12.
- Appr. req. of North Bros. 5K Run/Walk 5/19/12 & to open Bailey Ctr. for event.
- Appr. req. from VFW #3323 to sell poppies from 5/10-12th @ various intersections.
- Appr. contract ext. w/Reaction Direct thru 12/31/14.
- Adopted Land Div. Res., PID.050-99-0005-007, w. side of Superior Pkwy, s. of Ford, w. of Hix.
- 38: Adopt Ord.29-W-26-20 to amend rates for municipal water, sewer & industrial waste control charges.
- 39: Appr. Rev. Site Plan for prop. Service Station Redevelopment, 37400 Ford Rd. w/contingencies.
- 40: Conf. re-appt of J. Allen to EDC/TIFA for 4 yr. term to exp. 2/21/16.
- 41: Conf. appt. of R. Rodesiler to EDC/TIFA to fill unexp. term to exp.8/6/15.
- 42: Appr. checklist: \$ 553,084.03 & Prepaid: \$ 1,368,008.63.
- Mtg. adj. at 7:44 p.m.
- Minutes available in the Clerk's Office.

Adam Hammons Council President Pro-Tem Eileen DeHart City Clerk, CMC

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Walk 'warms up' neighborhoods

By Sue Mason
Observer Staff Writer

Hundreds of people will be putting on their walking shoes to help families in out-Wayne County who have been struggling to stay warm this winter season.

Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency will host its 16th annual Walk for Warmth Saturday, March 3, at Westland Shopping Center. The walk is the agency's only fundraising event and provides money to assist families in desperate need of utility assistance.

"There is a tremendous need for utility assistance and Walk for Warmth funds really help us provide a valuable service," said Louis Piszker, Wayne Metro CEO.

This is the second year the walk has been held at Westland Shopping Center and the hope is to have attract at least 400 walkers and raise more than \$50,000 to provide utility assistance to families that don't qualify for help under other programs. That's the number of walkers and money raised last year, allowing the agency to help more than 1,000 families.

Help needed

"The money raised will be unrestricted money that helps the agency help families that don't meet the guidelines of other programs," said Erin Southward, communications manager for Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency. "We just received utility assistance from our funders at the state level. We haven't had any assistance available since before the holidays."

"The funding had been totally cut, so for those who called during the holidays, there was nothing to give. That's why this is so

needed," she said.

The walk will be 9 a.m. to noon and is designed to be a fun, uplifting and positive event for the entire family. It includes a clown, entertainment, team awards and door prizes. There will be awards presented in both youth and adult categories for Best Team Name, Most Team Spirit, Highest Total Pledges and Largest Team of Walkers.

Teams must include at least five walkers, however, individuals can participate. Walkers are asked to raise a minimum of \$15 and the first 300 who raise that amount will receive a Walk for Warmth T-shirt. Walkers also will receive bags filled with coupons from mall merchants.

The individual who raises the most money exceeding \$1,000 will win the grand prize of a two-night stay at the Grand Traverse Resort and Spa in Acme.

"It's really a lot of fun. Teams get pretty competitive and it's all for a great cause" said Piszker.

There also will be a silent auction, featuring an overnight stay at Boyne Highlands, free lift tickets for Crystal Mountain and an autographed Detroit Red Wings Johan Franzen hockey puck.

Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano and Westland Mayor William Wild are serving as honorary chairs for the event. Ficano will be on hand for the walk as will be other elected officials, Southward said.



Organizers are hoping to attract as many participants as last year for the 2012 Walk for Warmth at Westland Shopping Center Saturday.

Year-round help

People who don't want to walk also can make donations at the event or at anytime during the year.

"We accept money for the Walk for Warmth year round," said Southward. "People can make donations in July, if they want. The more money we raise, the more people we can help."

This is the second year the walk has been held at

the mall, and, according to Southward, the center has "been great to work with."

"They've helped us advertise it and have helped us partner with businesses they have a relationship with," she said.

As the community action agency for the 42 communities in out-Wayne County, Wayne Metro offers more than 50 programs to assist income-eligible

community residents. Included in its service area are Westland, Garden City, Canton Township, Plymouth, Plymouth Township, Redford, Livonia and Northville.

For more information on the Walk for Warmth, go online to www.waynemet-ro.org or call (734) 246-2280, ext. 123.

smason@hometownlife.com
(313) 222-6751

Nankin Mills Center has bluebird program

Got the winter blues? Spring is just around the corner, and with spring comes bluebirds.

Bluebirds are some of the first birds to arrive from migration. Some even remain for winter in Michigan. Habitats and nesting holes are in short supply for these striking bright blue birds.

Come in to the Nankin Mills Interpretive Center in Westland 1-2 p.m. Saturday, March 3, for a cure to your blues, with the program, "Attracting Bluebirds." A county naturalist will explain the life history of bluebirds and how to build houses to attract them. Participants will also see the bluebird trail that is just outside of Nankin Mills.

The program is meant for adults only and costs \$4 per person for in-county residents. A limited number of spots available. Participants must pre-register before the event at Nankin Mills, 33175 Ann Arbor Trail, Westland. Cash, check, or credit card accepted. Call (734) 261-1990 to register by credit card.

The Nankin Mills Interpretive Center is located on Hines Drive just east of Ann Arbor Trail in Westland. Parking is available off of Hines Drive, and can be reached even if the road is closed at Ann Arbor Trail.

For more information about the program or any other Wayne County Parks events, call (734) 261-1990 or visit www.waynecountyparks.org online.

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Report: \$5,000 in rims stolen from box truck

WESTLAND

Break-in

Just before 1 a.m. Feb. 28, police responded to an alarm call at a home in the 1900 block of South Venoy. The suspects had fled eastbound from the rear of the home and a police dog was brought to attempt a track.

The dog tracked through a muddy field to the rear of a residence in the 32000 block of Leelanau where a 17-year-old Westland man was located wearing wet and muddy slacks.

Detained by an officer, the man admitted to being one of the people responsible for breaking into the home. The suspect told police he kicked the home's door while his friend used a pry bar to open it. He said they were looking

for money and power tools to steal.

The pair were frightened when someone arrived at the home, he told police. The man indicated he had dropped out of ninth grade at Wayne Memorial High School.

Larceny

An employee at Westgate Auto Parts, 156 S. Newburgh, told police Feb. 27 that someone had stolen 200-300 used automobile rims from a box truck used for storage. The rims were valued at \$5,000. A large piece of the fencing that surrounds the property had been cut and removed.

Break-in

On Feb. 26, a resident in the 300 block of Mari-gold Circle told police that he returned home to find someone had kicked the door open. The door

frame had been split down the middle.

The bedroom had been ransacked. The owner reported a digital camera, a 42-inch plasma television, an Xbox 360 with games and controllers and a fossil valued at \$2,720 had been stolen.

The owner initially also reported a semi-automatic handgun stolen but later told police he had located the gun.

Break-in

An Inkster man told police that he went to check on his mother's home in the 300 block of Daniel Feb. 27 and found the door had been kicked in. The deadbolt and door frame was damaged but no access had apparently been made to the home.

He said the alarm system may have scared the intruder away.

By LeAnne Rogers



PHOTO BY BRAD NOYES

Garden City firefighters douse flames the engulfed the engine compartment and interior of 1994 Saturn.

Fire damages GC man's car

The Garden City Fire Department responded to a car fire about 1 p.m. Feb. 27 in the 33400 block of Brown.

Upon arrival, they found a 1994 Saturn on fire in the driveway. "The fire fully involved the engine compartment and

extended into the interior passenger compartment," said Garden City Fire Chief Catherine Harman. "The owner reported having just returned from work and a neighbor alerted him his car was on fire."

The cause of the fire

is undetermined at this time.

The owner reported his car had been running fine, but he did replace the ignition about three weeks ago. There was no evidence to indicate the fire was anything but accidental, Harman said.

Resident finds van stolen from apartment lot

GARDEN CITY

Stolen vehicle

The owner of a 2001 Dodge Caravan told police Feb. 21 that somebody stole his vehicle overnight. It was parked in the lot of an apartment located in the 31000 block of Block.

The police found damage where the vehicle had been parked. The passenger door handle was broken.

The owner said that this was the second time that the vehicle was stolen. The first time that it was stolen was in September 2011. The vehicle was recovered in the area of Krauter and Merriman.

Attempted break-in

A burglar was unable to gain entry into a store located at 155 N. Ink-

ster Road on Feb. 22. An employee reported that someone used a brick to shatter a window on the main entry door. The police found the brick on the ground and are investigating a video.

Theft

An employee reported the theft of frames and sunglasses recently from the SVS Vision store at 5908 Middlebelt. He said that one custom-

er seems to bring more and more "friends" into the store, and one customer was spotted trying to place expensive frames into a case Feb. 22.

Suspended license

The police arrested a 40-year-old Southfield woman for driving with a suspended license in the area of Ford and

Central Feb. 21.

The woman said that the Ford Taurus she was driving was registered to her daughter. She also was arrested on a warrant in a surrounding community.

Home invasion

A resident in the 2000 block of Gilman reported that someone stole his flat screen TV with DVD player Feb. 26 while he was sleeping. He said

that he left his front door unlocked.

Property damage

A resident in the 3000 block of Marquette reported at 10 a.m., Feb. 26 that she found two BB holes in her picture window.

She also found a BB hole in her aluminum siding about a month ago.

-Compiled By Sue Buck

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Goci announces plans to run for Congress

Westland Democrat resident John Goci has announced his intention to run for Congress in Michigan's 13th District.

A Wayne-Westland Community Schools board member, Goci said he knows firsthand how federal policies impact communities. At a time when some politicians say the federal bailout of the automotive companies was the wrong move, Goci said he feels it saved not only General Motors, Chrysler and thousands of jobs, but also entire communities. His restaurant, for one, depends upon the patronage of local auto workers, he said, adding most businesses in southeast Michigan are in the same boat.

"My neighbors are struggling financially, and I am well aware that they and their kids are paying the severe price of joblessness and financial decline. I simply cannot stand by and tolerate politics as usual," Goci said.

Change needed

He vows to bring his business and entrepreneurial skills, commitment to public education, and independent voice to Washington, Goci said. He feels the residents of Michigan need a change.

"For decades we have been represented by per-

sons who claim to represent the disenfranchised and working persons of Michigan," Goci said. "Are we in better shape now than before? What has happened to the American Dream? The fact is that the familiar faces in Michigan politics got us into our current financial, educational, and political crisis and simply cannot be trusted to get us out of it."

"I come from the people and it is for the good of the people, and not special interest groups, I will steadfastly fight," he said.

Like millions of other immigrants, Goci said he came to these shores in search of a better life. At the age of 9, Goci and his family left a mountainous region of Kosovo, where poverty was common and government oppression made life difficult, and staked their fortunes on making it in America.

The family moved to Westland, where Goci and his siblings enrolled in the public schools and his family purchased a restaurant in the city of Wayne. It was a family operation through and through, Goci said, adding he spent countless hours working there throughout his teen years.

Goci now manages the business along with his

brother, Scott. In addition to the blood, sweat and tears he has put into the US 12 American Bar and Grill over the last 30 years, Goci said that he and his family have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars into the venture.

Answered the call

In 1999, when war broke out in his native Kosovo, the U.S. Army was in need of Albanian-speaking translators. Goci said he answered the call, serving as a linguistic specialist for the Commander of the U.S. military forces, Gen. John Craddock. Sen. Carl Levin (D-Michigan), who traveled to Kosovo during the war, honored Goci for his service in a speech.

In 2000, Goci said his entrepreneurial spirit flared up again when he took his idea for a jukebox that featured music videos and tried to make it a reality. He said he mortgaged his home, borrowed money where he could and founded Digital Video Jukebox Network, Inc., later to become Barden Entertainment when he partnered with the late businessman Don Barden. Goci served as president of Barden Entertainment until 2008.

As an inventor, Goci holds patents for his dig-



The vice-president of the Wayne-Westland school board, John Goci has joined a crowded field of candidates in the 13th Congressional District, which includes the cities of Westland and Garden City.

ital jukebox and an electronic voting system.

Being a business owner wasn't enough, however, Goci said, as he wanted to be more active in his community.

Local service

When a seat opened up on the Wayne-Westland Schools Board of Education, he decided it was time for him to serve. He said he felt his business acumen could help the district, where his four children attend school. He was elected in 2009, and then re-elected a year later. Goci now serves as the board's vice president.

As a public education advocate, he said he feels it is vitally important to ensure equitable funding for all public schools.

Like millions of other frustrated Ameri-

cans, Goci has watched with dismay as partisan politics have dominated Washington, D.C., creating a never ending atmosphere of gridlock. That is why he said he has decided to follow a life-long dream to run for Congress, which began when he took a seventh-grade class trip to Washington.

Goci is joining a crowded field of Democratic contenders in the redistricted 13th District.

No Republicans have yet filed. Already in the race are John Conyers, Jr, currently representing Michigan's 14th Congressional District; state Sen. Glenn Anderson, D-Westland; attorney Godfrey Dillard; State Rep. Shanelle Jackson, D-Detroit and State Sen. Bert Johnson, D-Highland Park.

Annual Home Improvement Expo coming to Summit

Canton's annual Home Improvement Expo will be held 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, March 3, and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, March 4, at Canton's Summit on the Park.

Highlights will include free parking and refreshments; live broadcasts from Murray Gula, Host of "Your Home with Murray Gula" on 1130 WDFN, and Joe Gagnon, "The Appliance Doctor" from 1600 WAAM; how-to workshops on a variety of topics from landscaping to solar energy; a hands-on children's project center; live woodcarving demonstrations; and multiple raffles throughout the weekend, including wood projects made by Canton Construction along with the Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters.

The venue will include a welcome station featuring a free Expo Advertisement Booklet. The booklet is filled with vendor coupons, a map of the show, workshop schedules and several home improvement tips.

To view a complete list of the vendors, obtain the Expo layout, and download the workshop schedule visit www.canton-mi.org/homeexpo.aspx. The Expo is free of charge and hosted by Canton's Building and Inspection Services Division, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Observer and Eccentric Newspapers.

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*Based on Medicare's 2011 and 2012 Overall Plan Star Ratings. See full results at www.medicare.gov. Plan Star Ratings are assessed each year and may change from one year to the next. Health Alliance Plan is a health plan with a Medicare contract. Alliance Medicare Rx (pdp) is a stand-alone Prescription Drug Plan with a Medicare contract.

Bar brothers share commitment to U.S. Navy

Serving in the U.S. Navy has always been a family affair for Westland natives Chris and Craig Bar.

They recently celebrated the 19th anniversary of their enlistment and active duty service in the U.S. Navy.

The brothers - Westland John Glenn High School graduates, Chris, the class of 1991 and Craig, the class of 1992 - both began serving in the Navy on Feb. 16, 1993.

A Senior Chief Petty Officer, Craig Bar, 37, chose that day to have his brother re-enlist for

another four years during a ceremony on the Battleship Wisconsin in Norfolk, Va. Both brothers are stations in the Hampton Roads area.

Chris Bar, 38, is now a Chief Warrant Officer and Assistant Officer in Charge of the Center for Information Dominance-Learning Site Norfolk. He and his wife Michelle have three children - Ashley, Meghan and Natalie. They live in Chesapeake, Va.

ELINT Program Manager with the U.S. Fleet Cyber Command/U.S. 10th Fleet, Craig Bar

and his wife Pamela (Gnacke), also a 1992 Glenn graduate, have been married nearly 19 years. The couple live in Virginia Beach, Va., with their seven children - Amber, 18, Alexander, 17, Autumn, 15, Alannah, 13, Abrianna, 11, Abigail, 10, and Aurora, 7.

The men still have family in the area. Their mother Leigh Adams and her husband Gil live in Westland. Their father Terrance Bar resides in Redford. Craig Bar's in-laws, Bill and Emily Gnacke, also live in Westland.



U.S. Navy Chief Warrant Officer Chris Bar (left) handled the re-enlistment ceremony for his brother Senior Chief Petty Officer Craig Bar. The Westland natives and John Glenn graduates, who joined the Navy the same day, recently celebrated 19 years of active service.



U.S. Navy Chief Warrant Officer Chris Bar (left) administers the oath to his brother, Senior Chief Petty Officer Craig Bar.



CITY OF GARDEN CITY BOARD OF REVIEW DATES

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN TO all property owners of the City of Garden City that the Board of Review will meet in session on the following date and time to examine the assessment roll for the current year:

Tuesday March 6, 2012 9:00 a.m.

The Board of Review will meet in session on the following days and times to hear appeals on the assessment roll:

NOTE: Meetings located in THE GARDEN CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT CONFERENCE ROOM with late night appointments on Tuesday & Wednesday

| | | |
|-----------|----------------|----------------|
| Monday | March 12, 2012 | 9:00am -5:00pm |
| Tuesday | March 13, 2012 | 1:00pm- 9:00pm |
| Wednesday | March 14, 2012 | 1:00pm- 9:00pm |
| Thursday | March 15, 2012 | 9:00am -5:00pm |
| Friday | March 16, 2012 | 9:00am -5:00pm |

APPEALS BY APPOINTMENT or WRITE-IN. Write-ins must be received by Monday, March 12, 2012.

Tentative ratios for the 2012 tax year are:

| CLASS | PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT RATIO | PROJECTED EQUALIZATION FACTOR |
|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Commercial | 52.97% | 0.9439 |
| Industrial | 53.31% | 0.9379 |
| Residential | 58.64% | 0.8527 |
| Personal Property | 50.00% | 1.0000 |

Taxes are paid on TAXABLE VALUE, which is the lesser of the calculated Assessed and Capped value, unless there is a property transfer. The capped value is based on the CPI (Consumer Price Index), which is 2.7% for 2012.

The 2012 Assessment Roll will be open for inspection March 7, 2012 and March 8, 2012 in the assessment office from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

ALLYSON BETTIS
TEASURER-CLERK

Publish: February 26, March 1, and 4, 2012

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CITY OF WESTLAND ORDINANCE NO. 29-W-26-20

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 46, SECTIONS 46-1(48), 46-1(49)c, and 46-1(49)d OF THE WESTLAND CITY CODE TO AMEND THE RATES FOR MUNICIPAL WATER AND SEWER AND INDUSTRIAL WASTE CONTROL CHARGES

THE CITY OF WESTLAND ORDAINS:

Section 1. That paragraph (a) of the portion of Section 46-1(48) of the Westland City Code entitled "Water consumption charges (Section 102-91)" shall be amended to provide as follows:

a. Water consumption charges (Section 102-91)

"(1) Per 1,000 gallons per quarter or any fraction thereof \$3.64"

"(2) Effective with the first billing on or after March 1, 2012, a bi-monthly fee of \$24.50 will be charged to every water and/or sewer account that receives water and/or sewer service from the City of Westland. This fee will be used to offset the fixed cost that the City of Detroit and Wayne County charges the City of Westland."

Section 2. That paragraph (c) of the portion of Section 46-1(49)c of the Westland City Code entitled "Sewage disposal rates (Section 102-124)" shall be amended to provide as follows:

2. Industrial waste control charge (Section 102-124(b)):

| Meter Size (inches) | Monthly Charge |
|---------------------|----------------|
| 5/8 | 8.24 |
| 3/4 | 12.37 |
| 1 | 20.61 |
| 1 1/2 | 45.34 |
| 2 | 65.94 |
| 3 | 119.52 |
| 4 | 164.85 |
| 6 | 247.28 |
| 8 | 382.57 |
| 10 | 535.37 |
| 12 | 611.89 |
| 16 | 917.39 |
| 18 | 1,070.19 |
| 24 | 1,375.80 |
| 30 | 1,528.61 |
| 36 | 1,681.42 |
| 48 | 1,834.22 |

Section 3. That paragraph (d) of the portion of Section 46-1(49)d of the Westland City Code entitled "Minimum sewage disposal bills per quarter (Section 102-125)" shall be amended to "Minimum sewage disposal bills bimonthly (Section 102-125)" and provide as follows:

d. Minimum sewage disposal bills per billing period (section 102-125):

- Metered premises:
Actual consumption multiplied by \$4.83 per 1,000 (no minimum)
- Residential premises with no available water mains, bimonthly.....\$50.00
- Residential premises not connected to available water mains, bimonthly..... \$55.00
- Commercial premises with no available water mains, per unit bimonthly..... \$50.00
- Commercial premises not connected to available water mains, per unit bimonthly..... \$55.00

Section 4. That all other provisions of Chapter 46 of the Westland City Code, except as amended herein, shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 5. Severability. The various parts, sections and clauses of this Ordinance are hereby declared to be severable. If any part, sentence, paragraph, section or clause is adjudged unconstitutional or invalid by a Court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of the Ordinance shall not be affected thereby.

Section 6. Repeal. All other Ordinances inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance are, to the extent of such inconsistencies, hereby repealed.

Section 7. Publication. The City Clerk shall cause this Ordinance to be published in the manner required by law.

Section 8. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall become effective upon publication.

EILEEN DEHART
WESTLAND CITY CLERK

ADOPTED: FEBRUARY 21, 2012
EFFECTIVE: MARCH 1, 2012

Publish: March 1, 2012

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Service planned for union activist, celebrated waitress Pearl Asher

A memorial service will be held Saturday, March 3, at the First United Methodist Church in Ann Arbor for long-time Westland resident Pearl Eldora Asher.

An "uncompromising union activist," devoted mother, doting grandmother and celebrated waitress, Mrs. Asher died in her sleep on Feb. 21. She was 84.

Mrs. Asher lived at the Holiday Park Townhouse Cooperative in Westland, following a career which began in union activism that landed her in jail briefly in 1951 for her involvement in a workplace strike.

"She was a 30-year Westland resident who finished her career running the counter at the Senate Coney Island on Plymouth Road," said her son Richard Asher. "Mom hasn't worked at the Senate for 10 years, yet people still remember her."

It was during the labor strike that she met her future husband George Asher. She went on to become a celebrated waitress at many high-end Detroit area restaurants, ultimately being lauded by local media for her abilities.

Although she worked many split shifts over the years to support her children after the untimely deaths of her late husbands, George Asher and Lewis Craig, she also made time to be both mother and father to her five children and became an integral part of her nine grandchildren's lives.

Born March 21, 1927, Mrs. Asher left school before graduating in order to help her parents support a family of seven children. By the age of 16, she had become somewhat of a surrogate mother to her three-



Pearl Asher was on the picket lines of Richard's Drive-In in 1951 when she met her first husband George.

year-old sister Connie. Her involvement with her younger sister was so great that many observers who didn't know Mrs. Asher thought she actually was Connie's mother, according to her son.

She married Craig Lewis in 1946. The couple later divorced, leaving her to raise their son Patrick who was born in 1947.

In the early 1950s, she worked at Richard's Drive-In, the site of the Teamsters strike which landed her and future husband and highly successful union negotiator George in jail for contempt of court. According to a 1951 *Detroit Free Press* article, Mrs. Asher wept openly when her sentence was pronounced after being found guilty of failing to testify completely at the court hearings. A photo of Patrick looking up at his mother prior to sentencing was included in the coverage.

'Marvelous spirit'

In a personal letter to Mrs. Asher during the court hearings, former labor leader Myra Wolf-

gang wrote, "Knowing that you are the kind of person who would rather die on your feet than live on your knees, I don't think there is anything I can say to add to your marvelous spirit, inspiring courage and honorable instincts."

According to her family, Mrs. Asher's relationship with George began only after she pretended to need a ride home at the end of a long day of picketing and ultimately, she was the one who proposed marriage to him. Their wedding in 1953 was widely covered on the pages of nearly every AFL labor newspaper in the country as well as many metropolitan daily newspapers.

According to a front page article in the trade publication, *Michigan Hotel, Bar, Restaurant Review*,

"Meeting on the picket line of strike-bound Richard's Drive-In, the couple managed to keep a romance going in spite of the juvenile antics of irresponsible hot rodgers, a flare up of vio-



Former Detroit Tigers manager Sparky Anderson was one of the celebrities Pearl Asher served many times when she worked at Carl's Chop House.

lence which saw the whole complement of the Shaeffer Police Station converge on the scene and the romance-dampening atmosphere of the Wayne County Jail."

Mr. Asher's death in 1963 due to complications from hemophilia resulted in Mrs. Asher having to raise four children, ages 4, 6, 7 and 15, alone. On Feb. 1, 2012, the University of Detroit Mercy announced that a new law clinic, opening in December, would be named after Mr. Asher who was just months shy of obtaining his law degree there. However, Mrs. Asher did not hear the news because of her worsening condition, her family said.

Mrs. Asher married Craig Lewis for a second time in 1969, but the marriage ended in divorce

in 1975. He died in 1976 and Mrs. Asher "swore off men forever, a promise she kept until the day she passed into eternal life, even though she had many suitors along the way," said her son. A year later, she changed her name back to Pearl Asher.

Renowned waitress

Mrs. Asher became a renowned waitress at a number of Detroit area restaurants, including Gagens, Thunderbird Inn, Hillside Inn in Plymouth and Carl's Chop House. She served thousands over the years, including a number of local Detroit celebrities, such as former Detroit Red Wings Sid Abel, newsman Bill Bonds and Tiger's manager Sparky Anderson.

Her ability as a wait-

ress was so highly regarded that on Sept. 12, 1980, the *Detroit Free Press's* Anonymous Gourmet wrote, "Two encounters at the Hillside are not to be missed. One is the dessert tray. The other is Pearl. No restaurant serving staff should be without its own Pearl - genial, attentive, patient, accommodating. When she served our table, Pearl embodied the reason the Hillside draws such a great and regular crowd. She - and it - are warm and friendly and unpretentious."

Mrs. Asher her illustrious restaurant career at the Senate Coney Island on Plymouth Road in Livonia, serving a packed counter of customers with the same warmth and efficiency she had shown her entire career.

After her waitress days were over, Mrs. Asher's growing brood of nine grandchildren gave her the opportunity to become an integral part of their lives, serving as both granny and nanny to many of them.

She loved all children deeply and dearly until the day she passed away, often reaching out to any youngster who came her way for a wave, hug or smile, her family said.

The memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 120 S. State St., Ann Arbor.

Mrs. Asher is survived by daughter Annamarie, sons Roy, Richard and Wesley, grandchildren Patrick, Rory, Stephen, Alison, Katie, Robert, Rachel, Ryan and Matthew, brother Bill and sisters Liz, Dorothy and Connie.

She is preceded in death by husbands George Asher and Craig Lewis and sons Joseph and Patrick.

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FREE ADMISSION

Monkeys will fly in GCHS's 'Oz'

THE WIZARD OF OZ

Time/Date: 7 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, March 22-24, and 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, March 24-25

Location: O'Leary Auditorium at Garden City High School, 6500 Middlebelt

Details: Dorothy and her little dog Toto meet witches, a Cowardly Lion, Tin Man and Scarecrow as she tries to get back to her home in Kansas after being transported to Oz during a tornado.

Tickets: \$12 for adults and \$10 for students and senior citizens, now on sale online at www.gradcityschools.com and at the O'Leary box office 2:45-5 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

By Sue Mason
Observer Staff Writer

Denise Schimskey isn't giving away too many secrets about this year's spring musical. However, she promises that if you like the 1939 movie version of *The Wizard of Oz*, you're sure to enjoy the Garden City High School production later this month.

"We're doing it as close to the movies as we can," said Schimskey who is directing the show. "When Dorothy's in Kansas, everything, including the costuming, will be in black and white. When she gets to Munchkinland, everything will be very colorful."

Schimskey admits that the musical, which will be presented March 22-23 in O'Leary Auditorium, is very ambitious for high school thespians. She felt the same way about the staging of *Beauty and the Beast* two years ago. But everything is all about ambitious when the thing they hear most from people is that they "can't believe it's a high school show."

The magic of Oz will be created with the help of seven professional backdrops rented from Tobin Lake Studios. A flying company out of Chicago will help with the aerial action. Yes, there will be flying monkeys - two - and Glinda will glide onto the



Dorothy, played by Madison Cabanaw, meets her Toto, played by Jixter Brown.



The cast includes Andrew Barikmo (from left) as the Lion, Jordan Thrun as the Scarecrow, Madison Cabanaw as Dorothy, Jacob Verville-Callahan as the Tin Man, Kathryn Linzmaier as Glinda and Samantha Stark the Witch.

stage in her sphere. And there will be a real live Toto, played by Jixter Brown.

The cast includes 40 students who have been rehearsing since the first of the year, and

beginning next week six high school staff members will be joining the group. The production also has a crew of 36 students and a 12-member pit orchestra under the direction of music teacher

Steven Olsen.

Teachers Danielle Mitoraj and Chad Davis are the artistic designers and are doing all the artwork and projection of the Great Oz and the tornado scene in which



Director Denise Schimskey works with Jordan Thrun on his dance steps.



Among members of the Garden City High School staff appearing in the show are Lawne Hillert (from left) Gail Basalla and Robert Fulton.

things will fly by the house, Schimskey said.

"The amount of the support from the staff here at the high school has been overwhelming," she said. "They're excited about the play, they ask about it every day," she said. "This is a big community production. I hope the community comes out and shows their support for the arts."

As for the house falling on a witch or the melting witch... "I can't give away all of the secrets," said Schimskey.

"It takes 10 weeks to do a musical," said Schimskey who holds rehearsals for more than three hours a day Monday through Friday. "We're in good shape, but the next four weeks will be crazy. Everyone has to come together for this."

"It's going to be very stressful for the kids. They have the Michigan Merit Exam next week, the week after is finals and the week after that is opening week and the start of the new trimester," she said.

Schimskey decided to do Oz "because so many people love it." She's also looking to fill the auditorium for the five shows

which include three evening performances and two matinees.

"Last year we did more of an adult musical, this year we wanted to do something for the whole family, something for the whole community," she said.

Ticket sales help finance the show. Last year's sales provided the \$6,000 to pay for the flying company. *The Wizard of Oz* will be presented at 7 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, March 22-24, and 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, March 24-25, and a first is their availability online. Tickets, priced at \$12 for adults and \$10 for students and senior citizens, are available at www.gradcityschools.com. They're also on sale at the O'Leary box office 2:45-5 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

"We're expecting a sellout... we're hoping for a sellout," Schimskey said. "These kids are really awesome. Every one of them looks forward to rehearsals. They keep their school work up, they know their lines and they know what to do."

smason@hometownlife.com
(313) 222-6751

GARDEN CLIPPINGS

Relay fundraisers

• The third annual Relay for Life dinner dance will be held 5 p.m. to midnight Saturday, March 24, at Joy Manor, 28999 Joy Road, east of Middlebelt, Westland.

The cost is \$15 per person and includes dinner, dancing and select beverages. There will be entertainment, a DJ, prize drawings and more. Doors open at 5 p.m. Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m.

• Tiger Fans for a Cure will be hosting a Zumbathon 1-4 p.m. Sunday, March 18, at the Garden City High School gym, 6500 Middlebelt Road.

There will be three 45-minute sessions, come for one or stay for all three. Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door. You can buy tickets online at www.gcrelayzumbathon.webs.com or contact John Fleming at (734) 604-0227 or john@flemingfinancialsvcs.com.

Wellness Expo

Guardian Martial Arts and Fitness will host a Spring Wellness Expo 6-8 p.m. Thursday, March 8, at the studio, 30942 Ford Road, Garden City.

The Wellness Expos will help renew fitness goals begun at the first of the year and get the warm weather season

off to a healthy start. Spring is a great time to improve your overall health and has been the favored season for fasts, cleanses and tonics.

Among the featured guests will be chiropractic care from Canton Center Chiropractic, healers representing Reikki, Massage, supplements and energy drinks including Protandim, Visalus and X-S, healthy home products from Melaleuca. There will even be healthy food for your pets from Morgan's Healthy Choice!

The Spring Wellness Expo is free of charge. For more information, call, (734) 266-0565 or go to www.guardianmartialarts.com.

Charity bowl

The Garden City lions club is holding a bowling benefit 6-11 p.m. Saturday May 19, at Town & Country Lanes, 1100 S. Wayne Road, Westland. The cost is \$15 per person and includes three games of 9 pin no tap, pizza, pop, raffles and shoe rental.

For more information please contact Cindy at (313) 407-0239, Larry at (734) 660-0920, Terry at (734) 686-8786 or Vicky at (734) 502-7951. Call now to reserve your team of four or come by yourself and they will team you up. Either way

it's a night of fun entertainment.

Ready to Relay

It's time to fight back against cancer.

The sixth annual American Cancer Society Relay for Life of Garden City has set the 2012 event date, from 10 a.m. Saturday, June 2, to 10 a.m. Sunday, June 3, at the Garden City Middle School track on Radcliff south of Ford Road.

A kickoff celebration will be held Thursday, March 8, in the gymnasium of Farmington Elementary 5-6 Campus, 33411 Marquette. Registration and refreshments will be at 6:30 p.m., with the program at 7 p.m.

So far, 16 teams and 84 participants have registered for the Garden City Relay for Life. Participants can start a team by visiting relayforlife.org or calling (800) 227-2345.

Travel show

Party Animal Travel is having a Senior Free Travel Fair 5-7 p.m. Wednesday, March 14, at Joy Manor, 8999 Joy Road, Westland.

There will be a meet-and-greet for seniors who may want to travel, but need a travel buddy. Party Animal has museum, casinos, restaurants and summer tours set up for the older and still active crowd. The cost of the

fair is free and seniors could win a trip at the show.

Community Chat

Join your host Kerry Partin along with Kelly and her real estate tips and tricks, Doppler Tom's weather, Derek with sports and much more every Thursday night at 9 p.m. This is an internet talk show recorded live where the residents and surrounding communities are welcome to participate. Share your events, promotions or comments with your fellow residents and the communities.

Listeners can call in live at (724)444-7444 and enter the call ID 82757, or go to the chat room at <http://talkshoe.com/tc/82757>.

Zumba Fitness

Try calorie-burning fitness workout with Zumba Fitness classes at Merriman Road Baptist Church, 2055 Merriman, Garden City.

The class features feature rhythms set to high-energy Latin, international, and Christian music. The classes are on Thursdays through May. Registration is at 7:30 p.m., and the class begins at 8 p.m.

Attendees must be 18 years or older. Wear comfortable workout wear and bring a sweat tow-

el and a bottle of drinking water. A donation will be taken at the door for every class to cover the cost of the certified Zumba instructor.

Enter the building through the gym doors on the north side of the facility. Arrive at 7:30 p.m. the first night of class to get registered.

For more information, visit www.MRBC.us and click on Women's Ministries, Girlfriends of Grace and Zumba Fitness for Women or send an e-mail to info@mrbc.us. Or call (734) 421-0472.

Each attendee will be required to sign a liability waiver releasing the church and the class instructor from any and all liabilities related to the attendee's participation in the exercise class.

East reunion

The Garden City East High School Classes of 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972 and 1973 are holding a combined reunion Saturday, Sept. 22, and organizers are looking for former classmates.

That's the easiest part. The hardest part is finding those old classmates. Information can be found or posted on the Facebook reunion page, Garden City High School (East) Reunion 2012. It also can be e-mailed to the Reunion Committee - Cindy Eads Frens at irish4200@hotmail.com.

com, Debi Cassidy Haller at debi.haller@gmail.com, Doris Fugaban Williams at doris1226@wow-way.com, Lee A. Gilligan at ee.gilligan@att.net, Sue Cook at stasselmyer@charter.net, Suzie Wright Rogiero at suzierogiero@yahoo.com, Jackie Kalifut at jackieideson@gmail.com and Jeff Fordell at jeffreyfordell@comcast.net.

District hours

Wayne County Commissioner Diane Webb, D-District 9, is holding office hours, beginning February, in Garden City, Dearborn Heights and Redford Township.

Webb's office hours will be:

• At 10 a.m. the second Monday of each month at the Maplewood Center, 31735 Maplewood, in Garden City.

• At 10 a.m. the third Monday of each month at the Berwyn Senior Center, 26155 Richardson Road, in Dearborn Heights.

• At 10 a.m. the fourth Monday of each month at the Redford Community Center, 12121 Hemingway, in Redford Township.

These hours are scheduled to permit constituents the opportunity to discuss important issues and express concerns in a comfortable setting with Webb.



Matt Bobby, a Westland police officer and co-founder of Boys in Blue Protection Education, speaks to students.

Boys in Blue business focuses on personal safety

There is a simple reason almost every police officer working the streets carries pepper spray.

"Because it works," said Matthew Bobby, a Westland police officer and co-founder of Boys in Blue Protection Education, a Westland-based business geared toward personal safety.

Pepper spray is carried by everyone from police officers to grandmas. Bobby, a Westland officer for nearly 19 years, said most people don't know how to use it properly.

Bobby said many people buy pepper spray over-the-counter not knowing that the particular formula may be illegal to possess in Michigan, one of a few states that does not have regulations on pepper spray possession, Bobby said, so for this reason it is important to take a class on legal issues pertaining to pepper spray.

"In an assault or robbery, there is going to be a critical window where a person is going to be expected to defend themselves," Bobby said. "Your police officers are going to try to get to you as fast as possible; however, that may take several critical minutes. If your closest available police officer is ten miles away, what are you going to do when faced with an attack?"

Personal defense is something most people don't think about enough, Bobby said. A person properly trained to use pepper spray can make a 120-pound housewife, 90-year old grandmother or 18-year old college student a force to be reckoned with, Bobby said.

"A good burst of pepper spray to the eyes is going to be more effective than a punch or a kick," Bobby said. "It is time our citizens



Matt Bobby shows a student how to properly shoot a shotgun.

raise their odds to survive a potentially lethal encounter with the criminals who are out to hurt them."

Bobby's company, Boys in Blue Protection Education, offers a Civilian Safety Awareness Program, a class designed to give students tools to defend themselves in a violent encounter.

The three-hour class also covers how to become less of a target for criminals.

"We can come to your place to teach a class or we can arrange a place for you to come take the class," Bobby said. "The great thing is our class can be taught just about anywhere."

Everyone should be armed with some type of personal defense tool, Bobby said.

"We wear our seat belts and have smoke alarms in our homes, so take your safety a step further and have something to even your odds against an attacker," he said. "You are more likely to be faced with a situation where you may have to defend yourself or another than being involved in a house fire. Still, it is wise to pro-

tect yourself and family against both."

The CSAP class is geared toward females and males, Bobby said. The cost is \$65 which includes books, practice canisters of pepper spray, a certificate of completion and a can of Michigan legal pepper spray.

In the class, the student will fire inert canisters of pepper spray at targets so they can see first hand how to make an effective shot. The class can be taken by persons under the age of 18, however, the can of Michigan legal pepper spray will be given to the parent as it is illegal for a person to sell pepper spray to a person under 18.

If you would like to take your personal defense a step further, Boys in Blue Protection Education offers CCW/CPL classes and firearms training. Bobby adds that all Boys in Blue instructors are police officers at the local and federal level.

For more information about personal defense classes, CPL/CCW and firearms training, call (734) 323-4038 or visit www.boysinblueinc.com.

Time for digital spring cleaning

By Jon Gunnells
Guest Columnist

Don't let the snow on the ground fool you — spring is almost here. And what better time to take care of some much needed digital spring cleaning.

Many of the items you need to properly clean your electronics are already in your home, but that doesn't mean you should simply grab a bottle of Windex and start wiping down everything you own. Follow these helpful tips when it comes to cleaning and maintaining your electronic devices.

Never clean screens, monitors or other delicate devices with a multi-purpose cleaner or potentially damaging cloths. Take the same care with your computer monitors and television screens that you would with the clear coat paint on a fancy car. Use microfiber, fleece or other soft cloths to dust and use a combination of water and alcohol to remove marks and stains from screens.

Be sure to remove all excess water on screens, especially around edges so moisture doesn't reach behind the viewing surface and near speakers.

When cleaning handheld devices like smartphones, a damp, soft cloth is all you need. Alcohol or other cleaning products could damage the touch screen on the iPhone.

Air cleaner

If you are looking to clean computer towers, keyboards or other small delicate places, try purchasing compressed air (sometimes called canned duster). A 10-ounce bottle can be purchased from ABC Warehouse for \$6.99 and will come with an extension tube to help you clean crevices like the ones all over your keyboard.

Canned air is odorless and can be moisture-less in some circumstances. When used for long periods of times, however, the can and the compressed air may become cold and make devices appear frosty for a few moments. The cold air won't damage your keyboard or most household products. Just be sure that you don't get any frost or moisture on circuits like the circuits found in your DVR, or your computer motherboard.

Digital cameras are another household item that can be cleaned with canned air, but more expensive devices and lenses require more sophisticated equipment. You can purchase digital camera, video camera and lens cleaning equipment at ABC or specialty camera stores. Many electronics stores also carry

lens-cleaning products for CD players, DVD players, Blue Ray players and the discs themselves.

Cleaning tips

Nearly any electronic device in your home, from video game units to speakers, can be cleaned with dusters or whisks. Dirtier items can be wiped down with a damp cloth but, again, avoid getting moisture inside a speaker grille or video game console.

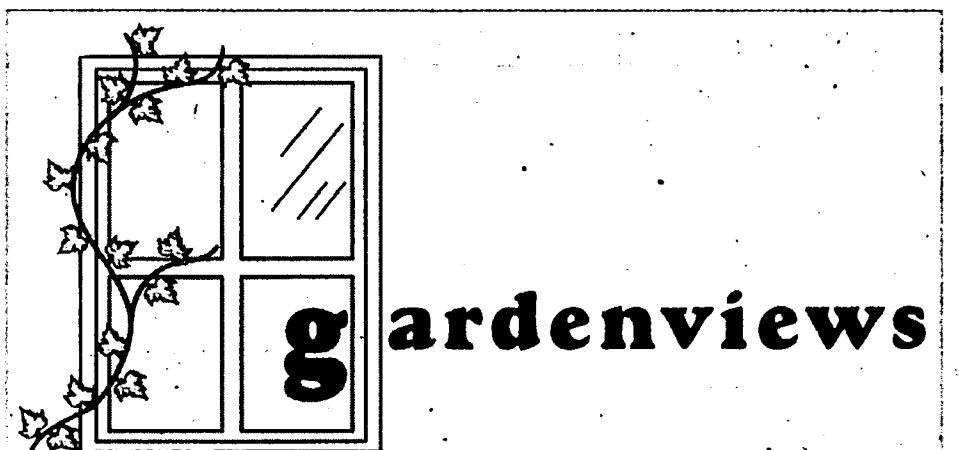
If your main goal is to disinfect your tech toys, you can always clean them with antibacterial wipes, or cotton swabs with rubbing alcohol. Cotton will clean and disinfect surfaces without leaving lint behind.

Of course, the dirtiest electronics you own are almost assuredly your cell phone and your tablet. Those filthy items that you touch with your dirty hands hundreds of times a day might be damaged with rubbing alcohol.

A solution: Wipe the screen down more often with water, and wash your hands with soap and water even more.

Jon Gunnells, a Northville Township resident, is a social media planner at a Detroit-based advertising agency. A 2007 graduate of Michigan State University, he holds a B.A. in journalism. When he's not working, Gunnells enjoys college sports, social media and playing basketball. He can be reached at jonathan.gunnells@gmail.com. Follow him on Twitter @GunnShOw.

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Design Professional with much published work
DENISE BROWN
OF DAZZLING DESIGNS
will answer questions on how to blend function, lifestyle and aesthetics into your home design.
2pm-4pm

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BUSINESS NEWSMAKERS

Wellness Expo

Guardian Martial Arts and Fitness will host a Spring Wellness Expo 6-8 p.m. Thursday, March 8, in Garden City.

The Wellness Expos will help you to renew fitness goals begun at the first of the year and get the warm weather season off to a healthy start. This time of year is an excellent time for adding healthy additions to your nutrition and supplement use. Spring is a great time to improve your overall health and has been the favored season for fasts, cleanses and tonics.

Among the featured guests will be chiropractic care from Canton Center Chiropractic, healers representing Reiki, Massage, supplements and energy drinks including Protandim, Visalus and X-S and healthy home products from Melaleuca. There will

even be healthy food for your pets from Morgan's Healthy Choice!

The Spring Wellness Expo is free of charge. Guardian Martial Arts is at 30942 Ford Road, Garden City. Call the studio at (734) 266-0565 and go online to www.guardianmartialarts.com for more information.

Now open

Shoppers in Westland have a new place to shop for everyday essentials at low prices. Dollar General recently opened a new store at 8042 N. Middlebelt at Ann Arbor Trail.

The new store features a fresh layout, designed to make shopping simple for customers. Dollar General stores offer convenience and value to customers by providing a focused selection of national brands and private brands of food, housewares, seasonal

items, cleaning supplies, basic apparel and health and beauty care products.

The store employs approximately 6-10 people. Anyone interested in applying can find more information and a job application at www.dollargeneral.com in the Career Center.

Dollar General is involved in the communities it serves and is a supporter of literacy and education. In 1993, the company founded the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, which has awarded more than \$64 million in grants to non-profit organizations, helping more than 3 million individuals take their first steps toward literacy or continued education. For more information about the Dollar General Literacy Foundation and its grant programs, visit www.dollargeneral.com.

OUR VIEWS

Right sizing

Faith carries one despite church closings

Right sizing is a phrase that has been used by school districts and manufacturers to talk about the layoffs of thousands of workers and the closing of schools, plants and businesses.

It's not a word you would expect to associate with religion, but last week the Archdiocese of Detroit did just that in announcing what will happen during the second phase of its Forward in Faith plan. Its footprint - the number of churches it has in the metro Detroit area - will shrink as it right sizes to accommodate the problem of too many churches and too few priests.

The decisions are painful for the churches involved like those in Westland. St. Richard will eventually merge with St. Mary of Wayne. St. Damian and St. Theodore have to develop a plan to merge and submit it to the archdiocese by no later than June 30. And a new parish will need to partner with Divine Savior and develop a cluster plan to be implemented when a current pastor is no longer available, if a replacement is not available to be assigned, or when either parish begins to experience a deficit.

The losses of the churches will be profoundly felt by those who have considered them the rock of their faith and an important part of their social and cultural life.

We are not surprised at the scope of the plan, after witnessing the cataclysmic changes following the economic collapse in 2008. Auto companies shed hundreds of thousands of jobs and shuttered one plant after another and cities. Families fled the state in search of work, forcing school districts to close schools and lay off employees to stay fiscally viable.

For the archdiocese, the mission of the church is harder to accomplish with fewer and fewer priests. The statistics speak to the problem. Across the archdiocese, the average priest-to-people ratio is 1 per 2,839 parishioners, compared with 1 per 2,135 10 years ago.

The archdiocese is projecting a loss of nearly one-third of 290 priests who now run parishes in Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Monroe, Lapeer and St. Clair counties. By 2021, it's looking at having 192 priests to serve the faithful. And with the average age of priests serving in parishes about 57, the archdiocese could lose almost half to retirement and death in the next 10 years. It's a loss that's hard to cover when an average of only four priests are ordained each year in the archdiocese.

The loss of these churches to the local communities cannot be overlooked. A closed church is another vacant building on a landscape filled with vacant homes and businesses. Finding someone to buy them will be a challenge at best until the economy turns around.

We understand the need for these changes. We understand that it will be painful for parishioners. And we also understand that there needs to be more to the second phase of Forward in Faith.

Archbishop Allen Vigneron has said that the mission of the church is evangelism, but that "you can't do your mission, if you can't pay your bills."

This is not an attempt to weigh in on the decisions made by the church hierarchy, which has spent much time studying the issues.

Instead, we want to offer encouragement to those who will be making adjustments. After all, what is a church? Does brick and mortar cement one's faith?

No, the body of a church lies with its people who gather together for everything from Sunday worship services to St. Richard, Divine Savior and St. Damian.

With determination, nothing will change that faith in God and in each other.

COMMUNITY VOICE

The first day of spring is March 20. Do you think we'll have a major snowstorm before then?

We asked this question at Westland Shopping Center in Westland.



"I hope not, I surely hope not."
Lucille Capraro
Livonia



"Maybe, it could happen."
Savannah Miles
West Bloomfield



"No, there isn't going to be any snow in the spring."
Keannen O'Neil
West Bloomfield



"I don't think so."
Moe Kaawar
Dearborn Heights

LETTERS

Numbers deceiving

I am very appalled by the deceiving numbers that the Westland City Council used in their so called 12.1 percent water rate increase.

Sure the water and sewer rate is a combined 5.7 percent rate increase, but when the bi-monthly current fixed rate charges increase from \$14.45 to \$24.50 that is a 58 percent increase. If my heating costs rose 58 percent, I would get a different carrier. If my phone company raised my rates 58 percent, I would find a new company.

A government monopoly is the only entity that can get away with a rate increase like this. Citizens of Westland you have been deceived by the city council and should remember who voted for this rate increase come next election.

Billy Brooks
Westland

Safe spring break

As we approach spring break season, take a minute as a parent to talk with your child and consider safer options for them. Many parents think it is a right of passage for our kids to take spring break vacations with no adult supervision.

"Let kids be kids" we say before they enter the real world. I urge you to think again.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

We welcome your Letter to the Editor. Please include your name, address and phone number for verification. We may edit for clarity, space and content. Submit letters by the following formats:

Web: www.hometownlife.com
Mail: Letters to the Editor, Observer Newspapers, 615 W. Lafayette, Second Level, Detroit, MI 48226
Fax: (313) 223-3318
E-mail: smason@hometownlife.com

Blog: You may also let your opinions be heard with your own blog at hometownlife.com.
Deadline: Letters must be received by 9 a.m. Monday to be published in the Thursday edition.

When we let them go off to Mexico, Florida, etc., and join in with other students who are under age, drinking, possibly doing drugs and staying out all night, we are setting them up for many possible poor outcomes. Some may get arrested, suffer car accidents and sustain injuries, or possibly suffer from alcohol poisoning or drug overdoses and may possibly die as a result. Fights and sexual assaults are also common when kids are

impaired.

I implore you to think of different and safer options for your kids to enjoy Spring Break. There are many fun and safe ideas right here close to home. Consider accompanying them, if you choose to let them go out of the country or state. Make it a family week vacation, if you can. Spend some quality time with them here, if you can or take a few days to see and do things here in Michigan.

We have many water parks close by, such as Avalanche Bay, Kalahari in Sandusky, Ohio, visit Frankenmuth, or maybe rent a cottage here in Michigan. The Double JJ Ranch located in Rothbury, Michigan, has an indoor water park along with horseback riding and other options for things to do that are right here close to home.

We as parents need to think out of the box and go the extra mile to keep our kids safe and offer them alternative ideas to the traditional Spring break vacation. We are their role models and, if you work with your teen to come up with safer ideas on how they can celebrate this time safely, you will thank yourself in the end.

As a parent you always need to "Be Aware and Show You Care."
Sharlene Frizzell
Garden City

GUEST COLUMN

Cut tax loopholes to reduce the deficit

By Sen. Carl Levin
Guest Columnist

Recently, I introduced the Cut Unjustified Tax Loopholes Act, or CUT Loopholes Act. Sen. Kent Conrad of North Dakota, the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, joined me in proposing this legislation to help us meet three important goals: Reducing the budget deficit, protecting important priorities, and restoring some of the fairness to our tax system.

Our legislation would reduce the deficit by \$155 billion by closing tax loopholes that favor wealthy individuals and corporations, loopholes that raise the tax burden that American families must carry. It would provide more than enough revenue to pay for a full-year extension of the payroll tax cut now in place, or put a significant dent in the deficit reduction we need to avoid draconian automatic cuts that could take effect next year.

It is clear to almost everyone that revenue must be a part of our deficit reduction strategy. Presidents from Reagan to the elder President Bush to Clinton have used balanced strategies that included revenue as well as spending cuts to reduce deficits.

I will continue to fight for a number of other revenue measures, such as a surtax on millionaires and billionaires; eliminating tax subsidies for oil and gas companies; ending the Bush-era tax cuts for those earning more than \$250,000; and ending

the carried interest loophole. We need to make those changes. But so far, they have run into an ideological brick wall, as too many in Congress refuse to consider reasonable revenue measures. But even that rigid ideological stance should allow for ending the kinds of egregious loopholes our bill would combat.

First is offshore tax haven abuse. The Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, which I chair, has spent years shedding light on how these abuses aid the wealthy and corporations.

The bill would give the Treasury Department authority to combat tax haven banks and jurisdictions that help U.S. clients hide assets and dodge U.S. taxes; crack down on offshore corporations that are managed from the United States from claiming foreign status to dodge taxes; eliminate tax incentives for moving U.S. jobs overseas or for transferring intellectual property offshore; and establish the presumption that, unless a taxpayer proves otherwise, a corporation formed by, receiving assets from or benefitting a U.S. taxpayer is considered under that taxpayer's control for tax purposes.

These provisions and others would reduce deficit by at least \$130 billion over 10 years.

The bill's second focus is on a tax loophole that subsidizes corporations giving stock options to corporate executives. Today, corporations can take massive tax deductions for stock options, but usually show a much lower expense on their books. Our subcommittee found that from 2005-2009, this loophole allowed excess tax deductions ranging from \$12 billion to as high as \$61 billion in a

single year.

The CUT Loopholes Act would prevent corporate income tax deductions for stock options that exceed the expense shown on company books. It would preserve current tax treatment for individuals receiving options and for incentive stock options used by start-up companies.

According to Joint Committee on Taxation, these measures would reduce the deficit by \$25 billion over 10 years.

The time for these measures is now. Here's why.

First, the math is inescapable. We can't reduce the deficit and do other important things - protect our country, care for our seniors, educate our young - if tax revenue remains at its lowest level in decades, and if the effective corporate tax rate is at historic lows, thanks in part to these and other tax loopholes.

Second, there is a growing recognition among Americans that loopholes like these and many others leave the deck stacked against them and their families. Overwhelmingly, Americans tell us: Close those loopholes down. Public opinion polls show strong support for closing tax loopholes, support that crosses partisan and ideological lines.

Reducing the deficit and protecting important programs is hard. We face many tough decisions and difficult fights in the months ahead.

But this decision should be easy. We should close these loopholes and make a strong statement that we can reduce the deficit, serve important priorities and restore fairness to the tax code.

Carl Levin is the senior U.S. senator from Michigan.

WESTLAND OBSERVER

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Look at investments in considering Social Security

By Rick Bloom
Guest Columnist

I recently gave a speech at the Plymouth District Library and was asked when should one start collecting Social Security - at age 62, 65 or at 70?



Money Matters

Rick Bloom

Like most things in the world of personal finance, there is no one right answer. Everyone's situation is different. However, I explained there are some issues to consider in reaching an

individual decision.

The first issue to consider - and as far as I'm concerned the most important - is do you need the income?

Decision making

Some people have pensions, a working spouse, or other sources of income that cover living expenses. Do you have your living expenses covered without Social Security and without drawing from your investments? If the answer is yes, then generally you want to defer Social Security for as long as possible.

On the other hand, if you don't have other sources of income to cover living expenses, then taking Social Security is

the way to go.

Where it gets a little difficult is if you need income from either Social Security or your investments, which one do you access first?

One of the key issues to look at is the type of investor you are. If you're a conservative investor who feels comfortable in CDs and U.S. treasuries, use investments first.

My reasoning is based upon the return on your investments in CDs and treasuries, versus the return you get by delaying Social Security.

Are you a risk taker?

On the other hand, if you're an investor who understands risk and you feel comfortable having

equities in your portfolio, I recommend taking Social Security now and letting your investments reinvest and grow. Once again, the theory being that the return on your investments over the long run will be a greater rate of return than by delaying Social Security.

The key is to be honest with yourself as to the type of investor you are. Looking at how you invested over the last few years is a great way to determine this. If over the last few years you've kept your money in CDs and treasuries, then you are a conservative investor and you should use investments first.

If, however, you stayed invested in the market,

that's a sign that you are a more moderate risk investor and delaying Social Security may be the way to go.

When it comes to personal finance, there is rarely, if ever, one right answer for everyone. When you read advice, whether it's in my column or elsewhere, always remember to apply it to your individual situation.

What's wise for you

Unlike the past when everyone in a certain age group was pretty much in the same financial condition, that's no longer the case. Don't do what's good for the majority of people but rather make financial decisions that work best for your indi-

vidual situation.

One last note, don't beat yourself up if you make the wrong decision. That accomplishes nothing. Some mistakes are irreversible and you have to make the best out of it. However, other mistakes can be fixed.

The bottom line is don't focus on the past, always look to the future and what you will do now to put yourself in a better financial position. Good luck!

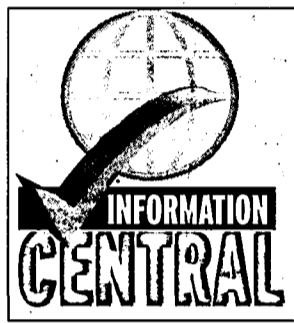
Rick Bloom is a fee-only financial adviser. Observer & Eccentric readers can submit questions at moneymatters@hometownlife.com. For more information, visit his web site at www.bloomassetmanagement.com.

The pill: From controversy to acceptance

Recently there was much uproar when House Republicans held a hearing on women's reproductive rights without any women having a say in the matter. The hearing was supposed to be about religious freedom in relation to the mandate that health insurers must cover birth control in the United States. Supposedly this could be done without a single female voice being represented.

This throwback released a wave of criticism and even led to a sharp and funny spoof by Amy Poehler on *Saturday Night Live*.

Birth control was once a highly controversial topic. But nowadays, it is something widely accepted and desired by the majority of the population. When the pill was first developed, Presi-



dent Eisenhower stated in 1960 that birth control "is not a proper political or government activity or function or responsibility." In addition to preventing pregnancy, birth control pills are also used to treat some severe women's health disorders.

By the 1980s, it was estimated that between 50 and 80 million women were on the Pill. As a result, 60 percent of women of reproductive

age were employed. The Pill, along with other forms of contraception, allowed not just a new found freedom and autonomy, but also provided treatment for health risks for women. After all this time, it is difficult to understand the benefit of debating women's contraceptive rights now.

For an understanding of the positives of birth control, check out Matthew Connelly's *Fatal Misconception: the Struggle to Control World Population*. To see how the U.S. government has played a role, there is Donald Critchlow's *Intended Consequences: Birth Control, Abortion, and the Federal Government in Modern America*.

It's also important to give proper credit to those who started the fight. We get this sto-

ry with *Women Advocates of Reproductive Rights: Eleven who Led the Struggle in the United States and Great Britain* by Moira Reynolds. All of these titles are available at the Westland Public Library. Stop by or call us at (734) 326-6123 anytime. Also check us out online at www.westlandlibrary.org

HIGHLIGHTED ACTIVITIES

Yoga for Beginners: 5:45 p.m. March 1 and 10 a.m. March 2, Adults and Teens

Join Lois Gannon of evolve studio in Ypsilanti for beginning yoga class. Lois will bring mats for all participants unless you have one like to use. Class size is limited so we ask that participants sign up no more than four classes at this time.

Sign up at the Reference Desk.

Friday Night Movie: 7 p.m. March 2

Join us for award nominated movies during our March Friday Night Movie. This week's movie is, *Drive*. "A mysterious man who has multiple jobs as a garage mechanic, a Hollywood stuntman and a getaway driver seems to be trying to escape his shady past as he falls for his neighbor - whose husband is in prison and who's looking after her child alone." (imdb.com) The doors for the movie will open at 6:30 p.m. Movie starts at 7 p.m. Snacks and refreshments provided. Trivia and prizes. This movie is rated PG-R.

Job Seekers Lab: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesdays, 5-8 p.m. Wednesdays and 1-4 p.m. Fridays.

Have a question regarding formatting your resume, setting up an e-mail account, attaching your resume to an online application, searching for a job, or any other job-related activity? Stop by the library, where computers are set up specifically for job seekers. A librarian will be available to help. Drop in. No reservation needed.

Drop-in Knitting Nights @ the Library: 7 p.m. every Wednesday. Everyone welcome, including crocheters.

Information Central was compiled by Andrea Perez, homebound delivery coordinator. The William P. Faust Public Library is at 6123 Central City Parkway, Westland. For more information, call (734) 326-6123 or go online to westlandlibrary.org.

Attention Boys, Girls, Teachers and Parents!



Look for Scoop's Hound Dog Highlights page monthly right here in this newspaper!

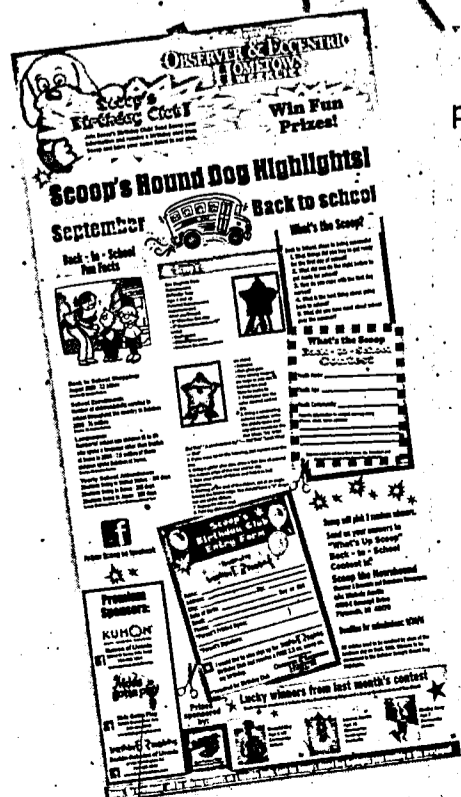
Kids ages 7 - 13 are invited to participate in monthly contests!

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Suspect arraigned in 37-year-old Livonia murder case

By Ken Abramczyk
Observer Staff Writer

A national database of DNA has helped Livonia police locate a suspect accused in the 1975 double homicide of two brothers in Livonia.

During Monday's arraignment on first-degree murder, a plea of not guilty was entered for David Glenn Fowler, 55, in connection with the murders of Michael Belt, who was 34 at the time of his death, and Jeffrey Belt, who was 18. The victims were beaten with a wooden



Fowler

board and stabbed in their home on the 37000 block of Plymouth Road. Robbery was the motive,

said police.

Fowler was remanded to Wayne County Jail without bond by 16th District Judge Sean Kavanagh. A preliminary examination is scheduled for 9 a.m. Thursday, March 8. Fowler requested a court-appointed attorney.

Livonia police arrested two suspects early in the investigation in 1975. They were charged, tried, convicted and served time in prison for their roles in the crimes. The police investigation also led to Fowler, but he fled the state in 1975. An open murder warrant and a federal warrant for unlawful flight to avoid prosecution was issued at that time.

Fowler and the other two men who were convicted knew the victims. "They were acquaintances," said Police Lt. Tom Goralski.

Fowler was located and identified using technology not available at the time he fled the state, according to Goralski.

"DNA at the scene was recovered," Goralski said, but he would not comment on specifics. "It was put into the nationwide CODIS database."

In June 2011, a hit on that DNA occurred in Georgia on a subject known as Richard David Taylor, who was in a Georgia prison on a car theft conviction.

Livonia Police Detectives went to Georgia

and, with the assistance of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, were able to locate and confirm that Taylor was the wanted fugitive, David Glenn Fowler, Goralski said.

An extradition hearing took place Friday, Jan. 13, and Fowler was ordered back to Michigan to face the murder charges. He was transported back to Michigan on Sunday.

Fowler managed to elude police by using an alias and varying his Social Security number, police said, but the DNA database helped investi-

gators locate the suspect and make an arrest.

Usually, DNA links a suspect found in prison to a crime, but in this case, police knew the identity of the individual they were looking for, Goralski said. The Livonia Police Department is pleased with the arrest of the suspect in the case.

"It allowed us to find a fugitive who had fled after 36 years," Goralski said.

kabramcz@hometownlife.com | (313) 222-2591 | Twitter: @KenAbramcz

AROUND WESTLAND

Red Wings raffle

How would you like a suite for 10, including beer, pop and food, and a chance to watch the Detroit Red Wings take on the Nashville Predators at 7:30 p.m. Friday, March 30?

You could have it if you buy a \$10 raffle ticket that currently being sold by the Westland Rotary members to benefit the organization's scholarship fund and other charities.

Tickets are available at the Westland Chamber of Commerce Office, 36900 Ford Road, west of Wayne Road, or any Rotary members. The drawing to be held at 1 p.m. Thursday, March 22, at Joy Manor, 28999 Joy Road, Westland.

For more information, call Mary McGaw at (734) 748-8515.

First Step

ZONTA Club of Farmington/Novi Area and Parisian are present-

ing the 18th annual Step-pin' Out in Style 6:30-9:30 p.m. Sunday, March 18, at Parisian at Laurel Park Place, Newburgh at Six Mile in Livonia.

The event is an evening of shopping, food, fashion and fun to benefit First Step: Western and Downriver Wayne County Project on Domestic and Sexual Violence. Enjoy after hours private shopping, with a 20 discount on most items, entertainment and fashion. Enjoy signature food from local restaurants and caterers. Participate in a raffle with exciting prizes, including \$500 cash.

All proceeds from ticket and raffle sales will be used to help victims of domestic abuse and sexual assault. Ticket information and an order form are available on line at www.firststep-mi.org. The form and payment can be mailed to Step-pin' Out in Style, 38550 Alma Lane, Westland, MI, 48185. The deadline for advance ticket sales by

mail is March 12. After that date, tickets can be purchased at the door for \$25. For more information, call (248) 496-9841 or send an e-mail to heraschke@comcast.net.

Flea Market

Kirk of Our Savior Presbyterian Church is holding a flea market 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, May 19, at the church on Cherry Hill between Wayne Road and Newburgh, Westland.

Do you have things you're looking to clear out of your house? Do you have craft items you would like to sell? Do you have antiques you don't want anymore? Do you have a business such as Tupperware, Party Lite or Creative Memories that you would like to promote? This is a great opportunity to cleanup, clear out, and promote your small business. It's an outdoor event, rain or shine. Cost is \$20, non-refundable, to secure you a parking space. Food

concessions will be available.

Call Sharon Garcia to sign up at cackles55@gmail.com or (734) 637-2662.

Indoor garage sale

Space is available for an indoor garage sale that will be held 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday and Friday, March 22-23, at the Westland senior Friendship Center, 1119 Newburgh Road, south of Ford Road, Westland.

The sale is a fundraiser for the center. Six-foot-long tables are \$10 for two days, available on a first come, first serve basis. Sign up at the center's front desk.

For more information, call (734) 722-7632.

American Legion

The American Legion, Westland Post 251, meets at 7 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month at the Harris-Kehrer VFW Post, 1055 S. Wayne Road,

Westland. All veterans, male and female with an honorable discharge are welcome to join. Visit the post Web site at www.post251.org or call (734) 326-2607 for more information.

Free workshop

Westland residents at risk of losing their homes can attend a free Loan Modification and Short Sale Workshop held 6-7 p.m. the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Dorsey Community Center, 32715 Dorsey east of Venoy.

Annette Compo of WJR Real Estate 411 and Linda Miller, an MSHDA-certified foreclosure counselor with National Faith Homebuyers, will be on hand to meet with residents one-on-one to do an overview of the foreclosure process and present them with various options for their situation.

The city of Westland is working with developers to assist residents that lose their home to fore-

closure to try to remain in the same neighborhood.

To register for the workshop, call (313) 378-5418 or send an e-mail to lindamiller@national-faith.org.

Healing Hearts

Hope 4 Healing Hearts, a grief support group for adults who have lost a loved one to the prison system provides a safe environment allowing members to share in a non-judgmental atmosphere. Individuals share ideas, resources and experiences that are helpful to one another.

Meetings are 6:30-8:30 p.m. the second and fourth Monday of every month at the Kirk of Our Savior Presbyterian Church, 36660 Cherry Hill, west of Wayne Road, Westland. Donations only.

For more information, contact Bonnie at (734) 646-2237, by e-mail at bonnie@hope4healinghearts.com or visit www.hope4healinghearts.com.

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Wayne bowlers Battle Creek-bound

By Brad Emons
Observer Staff Writer

The Wayne Memorial boys bowling team appears to be peaking at the right time.

The Zebras, a state semifinalist a year ago and recently coming off a first-place finish in the Kensington Lakes Activities Association tournament, ran away with the MHSAA Division 1-Region 5 team tourney title last Friday at West-



Arnold

land Bowl with a total of 4,170 pins.

Also qualifying for a trip to the Division 1 state finals this weekend at M-66 Bowl in Battle Creek were region runner-up Howell (3,942) and third-place finisher Canton (3,820).

"Getting ready for the regional they practiced a lot, drilled some new balls,

and some practiced on their own," Wayne coach Bob Jawor said. "They deserve all the credit for what they accomplished, and I couldn't be more proud or any happier for them."

Last year's Division 1-state runner-up, Westland John Glenn, missed the cut in fourth place with a 3,771 total. The Rockets failed to qualify for the first time in three years.

The tourney format consisted of six Baker games

(alternating shots) and three match games.

Wayne posted a high Baker of 221, while going 1,098, 919 and 971 in match games.

"I thought all season long we had a very good chance to make it to the state finals," Jawor said. "But with only two players returning from last year's team — Elliot Arnold and Zack Huffman — sometimes it takes a little time for things to come together.

"Matt Mikulec improved greatly over the last year," while Shane Rambaldo has bowled very well, especially in the tournaments. And Kody Wojewski, fortunately for us, got dropped into my lap on a transfer. Austin St. Peter and Darrick Craig, while they didn't bowl much, never complained, never missed practice, supported the team on the bench, and performed admirably

Please see BOWLING, B2

Moore leads S'craft men

Karl Moore celebrated Sophomore Day with a game-high 32 points in leading the Schoolcraft College men's basketball team to an 89-83 triumph Saturday at home over St. Clair County Community College.

The 6-foot-5 Moore also snared 11 rebounds as the Ocelots improved to 18-10 overall and 10-7 in the MCAA's Eastern Conference.

Richmond Jackson also recorded a double-double with 20 points and 10 rebounds as Schoolcraft overcame a 46-43 halftime deficit.

Other contributions came from Lydell Mason (Westland John Glenn), 11 points, six rebounds; Daniel Hill (Wayne Memorial), seven points, nine rebounds; and Mohamed Elhaj, six assists, three steals.

Johnnie Mills tallied a game-high 28 points for the Skippers (14-15, 7-10).

Deion Stegall and Lionel Hicks added 13 and 11, respectively.

Schoolcraft won despite committing 21 turnovers, but the Ocelots shot 27-of-34 from the foul line (79.4 percent).

St. Clair made 13-of-19 free throws (68.4 percent).

Stevenson eliminated by Flyers

North Farmington-Harrison achieved a first in the seven-year history of its hockey program by winning a pre-regional tournament game Monday night.

Senior Derek Ried completed a hat trick with 50 seconds remaining in the third period to give the Flyers a 4-3 win over Livonia Stevenson.

Ried scored on a power play, assisted by Eric Stanis and Reede Burnett, in the Division 1 tournament game at Orchard Lake St. Mary's Arena.

"I couldn't be more proud of this team," North-Harrison coach Ken Anderson said. "They've battled through some injuries this year, worked hard as a team, supported each other all year and never quit. I'm just very happy for them."

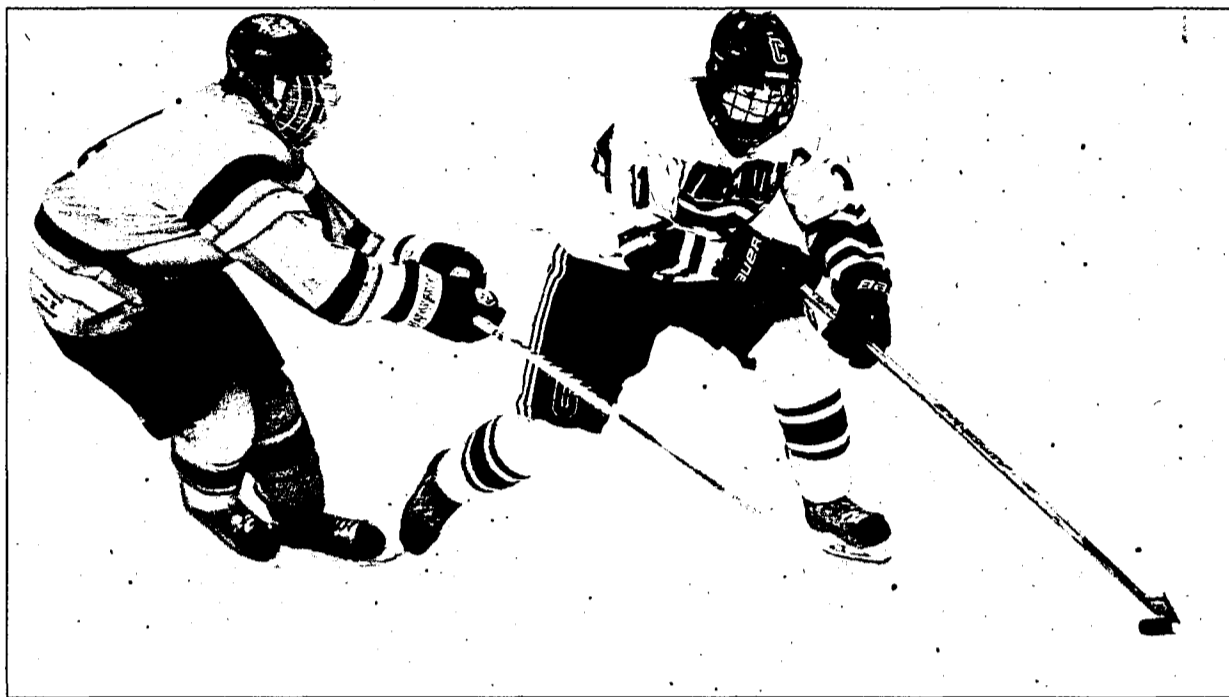
North-Harrison (15-7-2) advanced to the second round Wednesday night to play the host and No. 2-ranked Eaglets on the same ice.

In the time remaining Monday, the Flyers didn't let the Spartans get too close to their net, even when Stevenson pulled goalie Connor Humitz (19 saves) for an extra attacker.

The Flyers started with two first-period goals by Jared VanValkenburg (from Stanis) and Ried (from TJ Zak). Ried buried a slapshot from the top of the circle for a 2-0 lead.

Stevenson got on the

Please see ICERS, B2



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Churchill's Michael Rybinski (11) keeps possession of the puck pursued by Plymouth's Jake Zaborowski (4) during Monday's pre-regional opener at Edgar Arena.

Tournament tested Churchill icers stymie Plymouth, 4-1

By Brad Emons
Observer Staff Writer

It's only the first leg of the MHSAA Division 1 boys hockey tournament, but Livonia Churchill appears poised for another strong run.

The Chargers, who reached the state quarterfinals last year before losing in four overtimes to Orchard Lake St. Mary, improved to 19-6 on the season with a 4-1 pre-regional victory Monday night over Plymouth at Livonia's Edgar Arena.

Churchill, avenging a 4-3 OT loss on Feb. 4 to the Wildcats, moves into the pre-regional final Wednesday to face Canton, which also advanced Monday night at Edgar with a 4-3 victory over rival Salem.

Plymouth led 1-0 after one period thanks to a power play goal from John VanDenBeurgery off a two-on-one play from Cody Staub.

Churchill then came back at 5:09 of the second period to tie it on Kevin Louwers' rebound goal off a shot from the left circle by Tommy Carey.

And at 8:16 of the second, Churchill took the lead for keeps on senior defenseman Jim Lelekatch's goal from Nick Proben and Riley Brown.

"I thought the first period both teams were kind of feeling each other out a little bit, then in the second period we kind of took it to another level," Churchill coach Pete Mazzoni said. "And I thought we were real-

ly able to maintain the puck down in their zone. I think we just kind of wore them out."

Plymouth took four penalties during the second period and successfully fought off a 5-on-3 situation for over a minute, but that couldn't prevent the Chargers' building momentum.

"We took the penalties because we weren't moving our feet," Plymouth coach Gerry Vento said. "They were beating us to every puck. They were more physical than us. But give our guys credit, they battled and killed them off."

"But you expend a lot of energy killing off penalties like that and Churchill had a lot of jump tonight, and took it to us. They're a heckuva team and we saw it

tonight." Churchill's third goal — 1:29 into the third — came on Devin Smythe's opportunistic short-handed effort from Jake Otto.

"We've really emphasized special teams this year," Mazzoni said. "We actually have more short-handed goals than we've given up on the PK. It was 'Johnny on the Spot,' a big momentum swing right there. That's kind of what play-off hockey is."

The goal came as a result of a mix-up in the Wildcats' end as they were trying to move the puck out of their own end to start a power play.

"It was a little bit of a breakdown," Vento said. "We kind of rushed it

Please see HOCKEY, B2

Lady Ocelots win handily

Sophomore forward Domonique Jones scored 21 points to go along with six rebounds and four assists Saturday as the Schoolcraft College women's basketball team captured its final regular season home game against St. Clair County Community College, 68-45.

Shawnicka Thomas added 14 points and eight rebounds for the Lady Ocelots, who improved to 23-5 overall and 14-3 in the MCAA's Eastern Conference.

St. Clair (15-15, 8-9), unable to overcome a 42-22 halftime deficit, got 14 points from Heidi Highstreet.

MU's Lindsey earns honor

Madonna University junior forward Michelle Lindsey (Bloomfield Hills Marian), who averaged 13 points per game, was named Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference Newcomer of the Year and earned third-team All-WHAC honors.

Junior guard Shantelle Herring, who averaged 2.7 steals per game, was named to the WHAC's All-Defensive team, while head coach Carl Graves earned the Coach of Character award which best displays the NAI's five core values.

Making All-WHAC Academic honors included Erin Bentley, Katie Martin Kaylee McGrath (Livonia Stevenson), Megan Murphy, Kristie Porada and Heather Pratt.

To earn the academic salute, you must be an upperclassman (junior or senior) and carry a cumulative 3.25 grade point average.

Difficult schedule awaits Crusaders

By Brad Emons
Observer Staff Writer

The old expression, "Out of the frying pan, into the fire," certainly applies to the 2012 Madonna University softball team.

The Crusaders launch their season Friday in Panama City, Fla., in the prestigious three-day National Fastpitch Coaches Association Leadoff Classic before moving on to a pair of tournaments the following week in Mobile, Ala.

And before returning for their first home game March 24, MU will have already played seven nationally-ranked opponents and two other teams that have received votes in the NAIA coaches poll.

So much for a spring break. "We're nervous, scared and excited all at the same time with this team," said MU coach Al White, who guided the Crusaders to a 38-12 record a year ago.



Barley



Mayes

"With the caliber of teams that we're playing, we really don't have any easy games. We have to play good. But our coaching staff has done an outstanding job getting these kids prepared, and that's all you can do."

Four key players graduated from a year ago, led by four-year starting pitcher Jess Irwin, who owns just about every mound record in MU history. Irwin, now an assistant coach, went 19-8 as a senior with a 1.71 earned-run average. The hard-throwing right-hander struck out 252 in 175 1/3 innings.

Senior Hallie Minch (Garden City) assumes the ace role after put-

ting up good numbers as a backup a year ago, posting a 19-4 record with a 2.33 ERA in 153 innings. Minch also remains a valuable asset in the outfield, where she hit .308 as a junior.

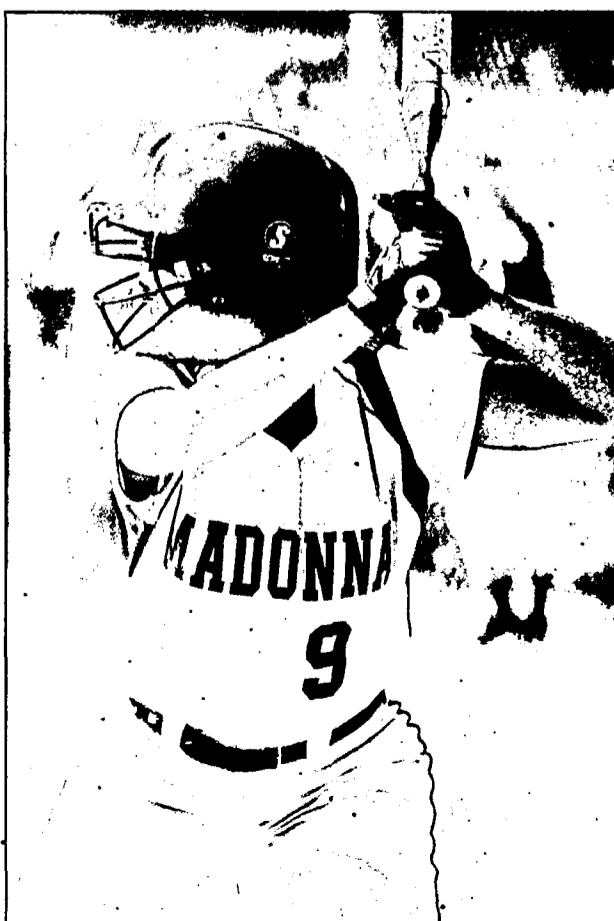
"Minch has done really well," White said. "We're excited about her. She uses control, changes speeds and she's got the experience, which makes her so tough."

"And when she doesn't pitch, she'll play left field where she's one of our best defensive outfielders."

Freshman Angela Pavlanis (Flat Rock) will be Minch's backup, while sophomore Kristen Drabek (Monroe St. Mary Catholic Central) takes over behind the plate to replace the graduated Ashley Shay (.350, 33 RBI).

"Drabek will probably play 75 percent of the time and (Caitlyn) Keuve-

Please see MU, B2



PATRICK MOORE | MADONNA UNIVERSITY

Senior Hallie Minch (Garden City) batted .308 a year ago and will play left field again this season for the Crusaders as well as pitcher.

Livonia Civic Chorus gets a bite out of restaurant's sales



The Livonia Civic Chorus performs its winter 2011 show. The Chorus' spring show is May 6.

By Sharon Dargay
O&E Staff Writer

The Livonia Civic Chorus will hold its first fundraiser Monday, March 5 — 47 years after its members began singing together.

It will participate in the Good Neighbor Rewards program, 11 a.m.-midnight, at Max and Erma's restaurant, 37714 Six Mile, Livonia and will earn 20 percent of sales from supporters' lunches or dinners that day. Patrons must submit an event flyer along with their bill when they pay for their meals. Flyers are available on the Chorus website, <http://www.livoniacivicchorus.org>, at the UPS Store at Five Mile and Newburgh, from a Chorus member, or call (734) 542-9071.

Why did the Chorus wait 47 years to raise money in partnership with a local business?

"The issue is we weren't eligible because we weren't a 501c3 organization," said Peggy Gaskill, publicity chair. "We just acquired the designation in the fall. It's a designation from the IRS.

"Organizations from Max and Erma's to other restaurants make that a requirement."

The all-volunteer group decided to start the move toward becoming a nonprofit, 501c3 organization approximately two years ago. The change creates more opportunities for fundraising partnerships and grants.

"We didn't have the tax advantages and designations for people who make donations," Gaskill. "When we'd do a spring show, we'd have a patron section in our program. We'd ask people to donate money and we'd put in their name in recognition. Now, if they chose to do so, they can deduct that donation from their taxes."

The chorus performs two shows every year. Members who sign up for the fall-winter semester pay \$50 in dues and sing at a show in December. Those who participate in the winter-spring session also pay \$50 in dues and sing at a concert in May.

Scholarships

Dues, ticket sales and patron advertisements in the

show programs raise money for venue rental, a portion of costume costs and other necessities, in addition to funding annual scholarships. Livonia Civic Chorus awards two scholarships annually to Livonia students for Interlochen Academy or Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp. It also gives a scholarship each fall to a music student at Madonna University.

"Another thing the 501c3 allows us to do is to apply for possible grants from organizations," Gaskill said. "We applied for a grant from the Livonia Community Foundation. It opens up a number of doors."

Gaskill said the chorus' 45 members chose Max & Erma's for its first fundraiser through a survey.

"We looked on websites to see what policies were and saw several restaurants. We did a survey of members and asked where they'd want to go out to eat to support the chorus."

Upcoming shows

In addition to the fundraiser next week at Max & Erma's, the Livonia Civic Chorus will perform at the Livonia Symphony Orchestra's "Water Music" concert, 4 p.m. Saturday, April

28, at the Louis Schmidt Auditorium, Clarenceville High School, 20155 Middlebelt, in Livonia.

The chorus' spring concert, "Legends" is planned for 3 p.m., Sunday, May 6, also at Schmidt Auditorium.

The program will include music from the 1930s-50s, such as *I Left My Heart in San Francisco*, *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy* and *Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend*.

"We don't hold formal auditions. We love to

sing...and all of our music has to be memorized for concert performance."

For more information about joining the Livonia Civic Chorus, its shows or future fundraisers, visit www.livoniacivicchorus.org.

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Zoo seeks volunteers to assist visitors

The Detroit Zoological Society will offer four monthly orientation sessions through June for prospective volunteers.

The organization seeks individuals 18 and older to guide and assist visitors at the Detroit Zoo for 2012 season.

Recruitment and training of volunteers begin in the spring to prepare for the peak summer season, starting with the Detroit Zoo's annual Bunnyville event on April 7. Training will be offered for both seasonal and year-round opportunities in the Zoo's Arctic Ring of Life, Australian Outback Adventure and Wildlife Interpretive Gallery.

Volunteer positions at the zoo include:

- Docents train to become educators and interpreters at animal habitats throughout the zoo. They also lead tours and assist with educational programs at the zoo and in the community.

- Mob Squad members volunteer at the Australian Outback Adventure, where visitors get a close view of kangaroos, wallabies and emus.

- Gallery guides are based in the Wildlife Interpretive Gallery and spend their time talking about butterflies.

- Ford Education Center assistants help as needed. No specific training is required.

- Arctic Ring of Life guest assistants help



FILE PHOTO

Visitors get a close-up view of a kangaroo in the Australian Outback Adventure Exhibit at the Detroit Zoo, where members of the "Mob Squad," volunteer.

with crowd control in the exhibit.

- Staff aides offer clerical and telephone skills

- Special events offer opportunities to volunteer as greeters, craft assistants, face painters, storytellers, costume wearers and registration helpers. Each event has its wish list of specialized assistance. No specific training is provided.

Orientation times and dates are:

- 9-11:30 a.m., Saturday, March 24

- 6-8:30 p.m., Thursday, April 19

- 9-11:30 a.m., Saturday, May 12

- 6-8:30 p.m. Thursday, June 7

"Volunteering with the DZS is fun and interesting for individuals who enjoy continuing education. A minimum commitment of 20 hours annually makes it easy for those with busy schedules.

Try it out for one season, April to October, and see how it fits," stated Linda Denomme, volunteer services manager, in a press release.

No experience is necessary to become a Detroit Zoological Society volunteer — just a friendly and outgoing personality. Volunteers enjoy benefits in exchange for their valuable time, including discounts and an annual volunteer appreciation party.

Volunteer orientation sessions are held in the Detroit Zoo's Ford Education Center. Advance registration is required. For information and an application, call (248) 541-5717 ext. 3802 or e-mail volunteer@dzs.org. Last year, 1,133 vol-

unteers contributed 98,195 hours of service to the Detroit Zoological Society, representing \$2,097,445 in support.

The Detroit Zoo is located at 10 Mile (I-696 service drive) and Woodward Ave., in Royal Oak.



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So, craving a burger and fries? Believe it or not, it's easy to make this traditional comfort food into a healthful meal. Use lean ground beef for the burger patty, and skip the cheese to lower saturated fat. Top with healthful veggies, and go light on the condiments to create a well-balanced meal. Even frozen fries are lower in fat and sodium than in the past.

For more recipes and serving ideas from the U.S. Potato Board, visit www.potatogoodness.com.

Burger and Shoestring Fries

This meal is an excellent source of potassium, fiber, protein, vitamin C, riboflavin, vitamin B6, folate, vitamin B12, iron, phosphorus, magnesium, zinc and copper, and a good source of vitamin A, vitamin E, niacin, pantothenic acid and calcium.

Serves 4

- 1 pound lean ground beef (5% fat), thawed
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 medium tomatoes, sliced
- 1 medium red onion, sliced thinly
- 4 leaves red lettuce (or other leaf lettuce)
- 4 whole wheat hamburger buns
- 8 teaspoons ketchup
- 2 teaspoons mustard
- 4 cups frozen shoestring French fries

In a medium bowl, mix ground beef with seasonings; shape into patties. Grill or pan fry. Bake shoestring French fries according to package directions.

To complete the meal, serve with about 1/2 cup blueberry, red raspberry and kiwi medley, or other fresh, frozen, or canned fruit medley, and sparkling water with a lemon slice or wedge.

Nutrition per serving: Calories, 490; total fat, 13g; saturated fat, 3.5g; % of calories from fat, 24%; % calories from sat fat, 8%; protein, 31g; carbohydrates, 66g; cholesterol, 65mg; dietary fiber, 10g; sodium, 670mg.



Buffalo Chicken Potato Skins Recipe

Buffalo Chicken Potato Skins Recipe

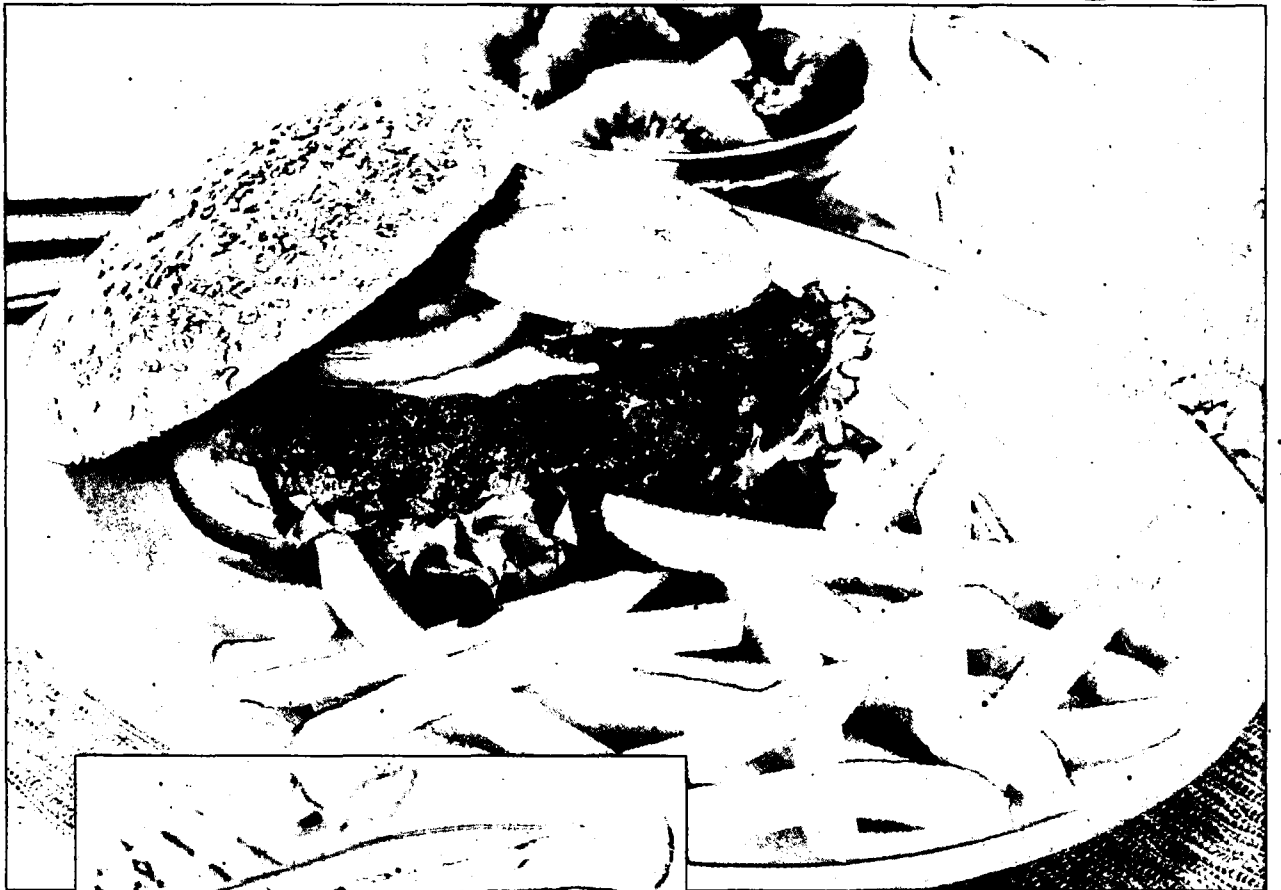
- 12 ounces boneless, skinless chicken breast
- 1 cup water
- 4 medium russet potatoes (about 6 ounces each)
- 3 tablespoons hot pepper sauce (like Frank's, not Tabasco)
- 1/2 cup non-fat milk
- 1/2 cup fat-reduced sour cream
- 1 tablespoon margarine
- 1/2 cup crumbled blue cheese
- 2 green onions
- 2 medium tomatoes
- 4 celery stalks

Center oven rack and preheat oven to 425°F. Place chicken in a sauté pan, add water, and cover. Simmer for 20 minutes and remove from pan; let cool slightly. When chicken is cool enough to handle, shred using two forks, one in each hand.

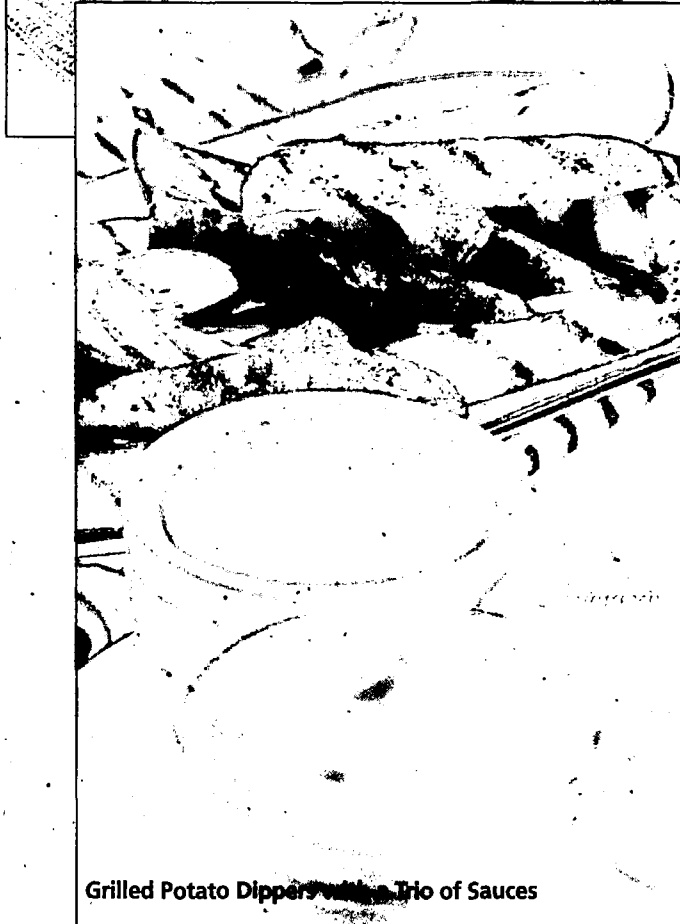
While chicken is simmering, prepare remaining ingredients: Wash potatoes and slit each one lengthwise about 1-inch deep. Place potatoes in a microwave-safe dish and microwave on high, uncovered, for about 10 minutes. Let cool slightly. Slice each potato in half length-wise, scoop out potato, leaving a 1/4-inch shell. Mash potato together with hot pepper sauce, sour cream, margarine, and milk. Fold in blue cheese and shredded chicken. Spoon mixture into potato skins slightly denting center (to hold fresh toppings after baking).

Place filled potato skins on a 9- by 13-inch baking sheet and bake about 15-20 minutes until tops are golden brown. Dice tomatoes and green onions. Cut celery stalks into four-inch sticks. To serve, top potatoes with onions and tomatoes. Serve celery sticks on the side for scooping potato contents.

Nutrition: Calories, 360; cholesterol, 45 mg; sodium, 550 mg; fat: 12 grams; fiber: 8 grams; protein: 20 grams



Burger and Shoestring Fries



Grilled Potato Dippers with a Trio of Sauces

Grilled Potato Dippers with a Trio of Sauces

Serve these potato dippers as a side dish or a fun appetizer at your next gathering. The dipping sauces all use fat-free Greek yogurt as a base and can be made up to 24 hours ahead and stored tightly covered in the refrigerator.

- 2 pounds russet potatoes, scrubbed and cut into wedges
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Sea salt to taste
- Sauces (see below)
- Red Pepper Basil Dipping Sauce:
 - 1/2 cup fat-free Greek yogurt
 - 1/2 cup roasted red peppers, drained and patted dry
 - 2 cloves garlic
 - 1/2 cup each: sliced green onions and basil leaves
- Sea salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- Caramelized Onion and Chive Dipping Sauce:
 - 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
 - 1 medium onion, quartered and thinly sliced
 - 1 cup fat-free Greek yogurt
 - 1/2 cup sliced chives or green onion tops
 - 2 tablespoons fresh rosemary leaves
- Sea salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- Avocado Cilantro Dipping Sauce:
 - 1/2 cup fat-free Greek yogurt
 - 1 ripe avocado, peeled and pitted
 - 2 cloves garlic
 - 1/2 cup lightly packed fresh cilantro leaves
 - 1/2 tablespoon lime juice
- Sea salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Place potato wedges in a large bowl with olive oil; toss well to coat. Grill over medium-high heat for 10 minutes, turning once or twice, until lightly charred and cooked through. Season with salt and serve immediately with dippers.

Red Pepper Basil Dipping Sauce

Puree yogurt, peppers and garlic in a blender or small food processor. Add onions and basil and pulse on and off until finely chopped. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories, 15; fat, 0g; cholesterol, 0mg; sodium, 105mg; potassium, 20mg; carbohydrates, 2g; fiber, 0g; sugar, 1g; protein, 2g; vitamin A, 15%; vitamin C, 15%; calcium, 2%; iron, 0%.

Caramelized Onion and Chive Dipping Sauce

Heat oil in a medium skillet. Add onion and cook over low heat for 20 minutes stirring frequently; let cool. Puree onion and yogurt in a blender or small food processor until smooth. Add chives and rosemary and pulse on and off until finely chopped. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Nutritional analysis per serving: calories, 40; fat, 2g; saturated fat: 0g; trans fat, 0g; cholesterol, 0mg; sodium, 55mg; potassium, 31mg; carbohydrates, 3g; fiber, 0g; Sugar, 2g; protein, 3g; vitamin A, 2%; vitamin C, 4%; calcium, 8%; iron, 0%.

Avocado Cilantro Dipping Sauce

Puree yogurt, avocado and garlic in a blender or small food processor until smooth. Add cilantro and lime juice and pulse on and off until finely chopped. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Nutritional analysis per serving: calories, 70; fat, 4g; saturated fat, 0.5g; trans fat, 0g; cholesterol, 0mg; sodium, 60mg; potassium, 162mg; carbohydrates, 4g.

Potato and Egg Dinner Bake

Breakfast for dinner is one of our favorite things. Just whip together this veggie filled potato-and-egg casserole and pop it in the oven. In 45 minutes you'll have a nutritious and delicious dinner that's easy on the budget at just \$1.62 per serving.

- 1/2 pound red potatoes, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1/2 cup each: chopped red bell pepper and zucchini
- 1/2 cup sliced green onions
- 2 cups coarsely shredded 2% or regular sharp cheddar cheese
- 8 eggs
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic salt
- 1 cup low-fat cottage cheese

Preheat oven to 350°F and spray an 11- by 7-inch casserole dish with nonstick cooking spray. Spread potatoes, pepper, zucchini, green onions and cheddar cheese into prepared pan. In a separate bowl, whisk together eggs, flour, baking powder and garlic salt. Stir in cottage cheese and pour into prepared dish; stir lightly. Bake for 45 minutes or until eggs are puffed, golden brown and set in the center.

Nutrition: Calories, 310; cholesterol, 315mg; sodium, 800mg; fat, 14g; vitamin C, 60%; potassium, 379mg; fiber, 2g; protein, 23g.

Creamy Potato Leek Soup with Tangy Tarragon Drizzle

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 5 cups leeks, cleaned and thinly sliced (white and light green parts only)
- 1/2 cup chopped shallots
- 1/2 cup diced onion
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 5 cups reduced sodium chicken broth
- 3 medium (5.3 ounce) russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 slice whole wheat bread, lightly toasted and torn in to small pieces

- 1 cup low-fat evaporated milk
- Tangy Tarragon Drizzle:
 - 1/2 cup reduced fat or fat-free mayonnaise
 - 6 tablespoons buttermilk
 - 2 teaspoons chopped fresh tarragon
 - 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
 - Salt and pepper to taste
 - Tarragon leaves for garnish (if desired)

In a large Dutch oven or heavy pot, melt butter and olive oil together over medium heat. Add leeks, shallots and onions and stir to combine and coat with melted butter. Season with salt and pepper. Reduce heat to medium and cook until vegetables are softened, stirring frequently, about 10-15 minutes.

Increase heat to high and add chicken broth, cubed potatoes and bay leaves. Bring mixture to a boil, reduce heat and simmer until the potatoes are soft and tender, about 12-15 minutes. Remove half the potatoes and set aside. Add toasted bread and cook until bread begins to dissolve, about 5 more minutes. Remove bay leaves. Puree soup until smooth using a blender or food processor. Stir in reserved potatoes and evaporated milk. Top with Tangy Tarragon Drizzle before serving.

Tangy Tarragon Drizzle

Mix all ingredients in a medium bowl. Season with salt and pepper. May be covered and refrigerated until ready to use. To serve, drizzle on soup and garnish with tarragon leaves.

Nutrition: Calories, 280; cholesterol, 25mg; sodium, 820mg; fat, 15g; vitamin C, 25%; potassium, 731mg; fiber, 2g; protein, 9g.

Report: Metropolitan Detroit housing market improves in recent months

The list of housing markets showing measurable improvement expanded by 29 metros in February to include a total of 98 entries on the National Association of Home Builders/First American Improving Markets Index (IMI), released Feb. 6. Thirty-six states are now represented by at least one market on the list.

Michael Stoskopf, CEO of the Building Industry Association of Southeastern Michigan, said the market has improved recently. "Over the last couple of months, locations in Michigan start showing up," he said. Those included Grand Rapids and Muskegon.

The metro Detroit area showed up in February's report, for the four counties of Wayne, Oakland, Macomb and St. Clair.

"They look at three factors." Those are sustained improvement in home sale prices, new home permits, and employment. "All three of those areas have improved consistently," a pleased Stoskopf said.

"Pleasantly surprised. You hope that the Lions make the playoffs and all of a sudden they do. Hopefully we stay on this list for a while."

He had looked monthly at statistics, and found "all of those factors are holding. It comes down to jobs."

"Once they get back to work and they feel secure in that job ..." Typically consumers who feel secure will begin to move or perhaps buy a car.

"That economic activity spurs additional activity. I think that's really what we're seeing," Stoskopf said.

In the last six months in the four-county metro area, 27,000 people have returned to work, he said. "That's 27,000 people that now have that potential to buy a home."

"It's pretty good news, we're

very excited about it. Hopefully we can sustain the momentum," Stoskopf added.

The index identifies metropolitan areas that have shown improvement from their respective troughs in housing permits, employment and house prices for at least six consecutive months. The February index adds some metropolitan areas that have been particularly weak; this is due to the fact that the IMI measures improvement from a bottom, and some of the hardest hit markets are showing signs of coming off of extreme lows. Keeping this in mind, notable new entrants to list in February include Miami, Fla.; Boston; Detroit; Kansas City, Mo.; Portland, Ore.; Memphis, Tenn.; and Salt Lake City.

"The number of improving housing markets has risen for six consecutive months, and 36 states now have at least one metropolitan area on the list," said NAHB Chairman Bob Nielsen, a home builder from Reno, Nev. "This indicates that despite the many challenges that continue to drag on a housing recovery — including the tight lending environment for builders and buyers — improving conditions are slowly but surely spreading from one housing market to the next."

"While many of the markets on the February IMI are far from fully recovered, the index points out where employment, home prices and housing production are no longer retreating and have held above their lowest recession troughs for six months or more," said NAHB Chief Economist David Crowe. "This is a sign that a large cross section of the country is starting to turn the corner as local economic conditions stabilize."

"The fact that there are nearly 100 markets now on



the improving list shows that the momentum is building for a housing recovery and that more buyers and sellers are starting to feel confident enough to return to the market," said Kurt Pfothner, vice chairman of First American Title Insurance Company.

The IMI is designed to track housing markets throughout the country that are showing signs of improving economic health. The index measures three sets of independent monthly data to get a mark on the top improving Metropolitan Statistical Areas. The three indicators that are analyzed are employment growth from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, house price appreciation from Freddie Mac, and single-family housing permit growth from the U.S. Census Bureau. NAHB uses the latest available data from

these sources to generate a list of improving markets. A metropolitan area must see improvement in all three areas for at least six months following their respective troughs before being included on the improving markets list.

Seven markets dropped from the NAHB/First American Improving Markets Index in February as they experienced softening house prices. These metros include San Jose, Calif.; Washington, D.C.; Kankakee, Ill.; New Orleans; Worcester, Mass.; Jackson, Miss.; and Sherman, Texas.

A complete list of all 98 metropolitan areas currently on the IMI, and a separate breakout of metros newly added to the list in February, is available at: www.nahb.org/imi.

O&E staff writer Julie Brown contributed to this report.

Nashville shows some high notes

By Robert Meisner
Guest Columnist

Q: I understand that downtown Nashville is a source of redevelopment, but do you have any information about it?

A: Like many cities, including Detroit, there was a mass exodus of commercial and retail from downtown Nashville about 20 years ago. Slowly, but surely, however, retail and office building



Robert Meisner

development has returned to downtown Nashville particularly with the stadia that have been constructed as well as the commuter railroad which offers an opportunity for people to come directly to the downtown area have helped revitalize the area. Of course, there is still the honkytonk streets filled with bars providing all sorts of music which is a major attraction and results in increased activity. Also, a new convention center is planned which will also spur development and the increase in real estate property values.

Q: Our board has some concern about coyotes and other potentially dangerous animals entering our condominium project. Are we, in effect, responsible for the behavior of indigenous wild animals?

A: Generally not. Generally speaking, community associations are not responsible for the behavior of indigenous wild animals — a legal doctrine known as *ferae naturae*. However, a recent ruling in Georgia poses an inroad into the blanket immunity that community associations have enjoyed. In that case, the majority in the Appellate Court said that it is reasonable to consider whether liability exists for the association, based in part on its policy of removing alligators that were more than seven feet long. In that situation, the alligator that killed a woman was more than eight feet long. So in any situation, you should consult with your community association attorney and insurance carrier.

Robert M. Meisner is a lawyer and the author of *Condominium Operation: Getting Started & Staying on the Right Track*, second edition. It is available for \$9.95 plus \$1 shipping and handling. He also wrote *Condo Living: A Survival Guide to Buying, Owning and Selling a Condominium*, available for \$24.95 plus \$5 shipping and handling. Call (248) 644-4433 or visit bmeisner@meisner-associates.com. This column shouldn't be construed as legal advice.

HOMES SOLD/REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS-WAYNE

These are the area residential real estate closings recorded the week of Nov. 14-18, 2011, at the Wayne County Register of Deeds office. Listed below are cities, addresses, and sales prices.

CANTON
39580 Cather St \$95,000
50137 Grant St \$227,000
5873 Meadowview Dr \$285,000
4242 Monarch Ave \$154,000
289 Selkirk St \$145,000

6921 Sylvania Ln \$350,000
GARDEN CITY
6148 Cardwell St \$93,000
623 Gilman St \$65,000
31983 Leona St \$75,000
31930 Rosslyn Ave \$53,000
LIVONIA
30257 Acacia St \$108,000
18975 Bainbridge Ave \$170,000
36184 Fairway Dr \$45,000
20626 Golf Ridge Cir \$262,000
35638 Grennada St \$110,000
18608 Irving St \$134,000
11100 Karen St \$82,000
29447 Mark Ln \$125,000

9870 Merriman Rd \$65,000
30989 Orangelawn St \$130,000
29870 Richland St \$115,000
20218 Saint Francis St \$50,000
9921 Seltzer St \$110,000
15953 Woodring Dr \$124,000
9289 Woodring St \$125,000
NORTHVILLE
16775 Black River Dr \$446,000
46597 Crystal Downs W \$467,000
39640 Rockcrest Ln \$115,000
17697 Rolling Woods Cir \$448,000
16115 Thornndyke Ct \$305,000
39507 Village Run Dr \$240,000
PLYMOUTH

676 Burroughs St \$190,000
13200 Cambridge Ct \$320,000
46490 Rockledge Dr \$280,000
REDFORD
25280 Five Mile Rd \$17,000
14210 Breakfast Dr \$134,000
9103 Dale \$35,000
19512 Garfield \$35,000
19452 Lexington \$45,000
19782 Sumner \$45,000
26245 W Six Mile Rd \$18,000
WESTLAND
32250 Hazelwood St \$70,000
32726 Winona St \$98,000

HOMES SOLD/REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS-OAKLAND

These are the area residential real estate closings recorded the week of Nov. 7-11, 2011, at the Oakland County Register of Deeds office. Listed below are cities, addresses, and sales prices.

BEVERLY HILLS
32355 Eastlady Dr \$483,000
BIRMINGHAM
976 Bird Ave \$100,000
2196 Manchester Rd \$210,000
309 N Eton St \$40,000
452 Park St \$260,000
1889 Pine St \$379,000

1431 Washington Blvd \$547,000
2601 Windemere Rd \$170,000
BLOOMFIELD HILLS
2735 Ayrshire Dr \$200,000
518 Kingsley Trl \$555,000
BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP
2816 Birchwood Ct \$575,000
1042 Brenthaven Dr \$152,000
702 Browning Ct \$1,100,000
1839 Golf Ridge Dr \$137,000
7285 Kingswood Dr \$370,000
COMMERCE TOWNSHIP
8627 Cooley Lake Rd # 309 \$256,000
8648 Hummingbird \$265,000
FARMINGTON
23731 Ely Ct \$80,000
33718 Grand River Ave \$150,000

35527 Heritage Ln \$78,000
21246 Larkspur St \$118,000
FARMINGTON HILLS
26315 Drake Rd \$215,000
27948 Gettysburg St \$148,000
38887 Holsworth Ct \$196,000
30139 Kimberly Ct \$230,000
28634 Kirkside Ln \$240,000
24829 Lakeland St \$185,000
29041 Summerwood Rd \$200,000
36838 Tanglewood Ln \$178,000
31120 W Eight Mile Rd \$450,000
35231 White Pine Trl \$160,000
MILFORD
803 Atlantic St \$212,000
373 Whitewater St \$225,000
NOVI

50829 Calvert Isle Dr \$463,000
50708 Chesapeake Dr \$686,000
25890 Clark St \$128,000
24065 Cranbrooke Dr \$165,000
23485 Winthrop Ct \$238,000
SOUTHFIELD
15834 Fairfax St \$90,000
28530 Fairfax St \$12,000
21420 Frazer Ave \$19,000
29809 N Bedford St \$85,000
19307 Nadol Dr \$69,000
29351 Rambling Rd \$40,000
23558 Russell St \$66,000
20702 Woodburn Dr \$47,000
WHITE LAKE
8797 Cooley Beach Dr \$77,000

REAL ESTATE BRIEFS

On the job

RE/MAX Classic announced Teresa McCollom has joined the Canton office. McCollom is a longtime resident of Canton and has branded herself as a real estate professional in Western Wayne, Oakland, Livingston, Washtenaw and Macomb counties



McCollom

for the past 10 years. She specializes in residential and commercial sales and leasing, executive properties, golf course communities and buyer representation. McCollom is certified as a Short Sale and Foreclosure Resource Specialist and brings with her a strong

background in interior design and staging offering home sellers a unique edge selling their home in today's market.

"Teresa is genuine, professional and extremely dedicated when it comes to servicing her clients. Her knowledge and exceptional communication skills and caring have made her a much sought after Realtor in the industry," said Carol Boji, broker/owner of RE/MAX Classic. "Real estate isn't just my career, it's my lifestyle," said McCollom on the secret to her success. "I live it continually in all facets of my life. I see a new door opening every day for families buying their first home, moving up or scaling down."

Wayne Investors
Wayne Real Estate Investors Association will

host Noel Selewski of Noel Selewski Insurance Agency Tuesday, March 6, speaking on insurance on empty or rented units. Meetings are 7:30 p.m. the first Tuesday of the month at Red Lobster on Eureka on Southgate. Call Wayne Koehler, (313) 277-4168.

Investors

"Mr. Landlord" (Jeffrey Taylor), a nationally known "Landlording Expert" and author, will cover finding qualified prospects, having tenants leave the property in move-in condition and how to increase monthly cash flow when filling vacancies at the regular meetings of the Real Estate Investors Association of Oakland on Thursday, March 8, 5:30-9:30 p.m. at Club Venetian, 29310 John R, north of 12 Mile, Madison Heights.

Seminar free to members. \$20 nonmembers. www.REIAofOAKLAND.com; (800) 747-6742.

Real Estate Career Seminar

A free Real Estate Career Seminar will be held 6:30-7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 15, at Keller Williams Realty 40600 Ann Arbor Road, Suite 100 Plymouth. For more information, contact Lesley Aiello at (734) 459-4700 or laiello@kw.com.

BIA courses

Building Industry Association of Southeastern Michigan will present all three courses needed for Certified Aging-in-Place designation by the National Association of Home Builders. Don Pratt, CAPS, CGB, CGR of CECS of Michigan,

LLC will be the instructor for all three. He will cover the technical, business management and customer service skills essential for competing. CAPS I, Marketing and Communication Strategies for Aging and Accessibility, will be held on Monday, March 12. CAPS II, Design/Build Solutions for Aging and Accessibility, will be held on Tuesday, March 13. Business Management, the third course required for this designation, will be held on Wednesday, March 14. Each session runs from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Association Offices, 2075 Walnut Lake Road, West Bloomfield. Registration for each course is \$195 per person for BIA members and \$225 per person for guests. For information, call (248) 862-1002 or register online at www.builders.org.

