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BELIEFS & VALUES, PAGE C9



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PAGE, A10

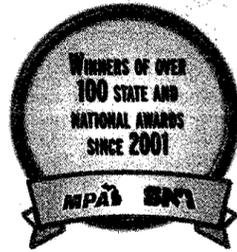


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THURSDAY

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VOLUME 40 NUMBER 76

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Taxing district could pay for road widening

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Westland city officials have initiated a plan that could ultimately lead to Cherry Hill Road being widened to five lanes west of Newburgh.

Officials hope that such a project could help boost the local economy and possibly create new jobs by improving access to local businesses, including an industrial park southeast of Cherry Hill and Newburgh.

The plan also could lead to left-turn traffic arrows in both directions on Cherry Hill at Newburgh - a busy intersection that has prompted complaints about traffic congestion.

"It sounds very ambitious," Westland City Councilwoman Cheryl Graunstadt said Monday, as city administration officials unveiled the plan.

Using revenues collected in a special taxing district in the Cherry Hill-Newburgh area, the city could spend as much as \$50,000 to accumulate property in the district's area.

Essentially, the city would pay for land surveys, right-of-way property appraisals, title transfers and other steps necessary for the plan to move ahead.

Cherry Hill improvements are the county's responsibility, but city officials hope to speed up the project by taking over some of the tedious, time-consuming work.

City officials hope to complete their work within a year, paving the way for the Cherry Hill Road improvements. Otherwise, the project could be

delayed several years.

Mayor Sandra Cicirelli said county officials have indicated that, if the city helps out with the project, they will move it higher on the priority list.

"They'll move it right up, right now," she said. Westland Planning Director Bruce Thompson has had preliminary talks with some property owners about right-of-way acquisition.

PLEASE SEE WIDENING, A7



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Linda Jackson of Westland works on Easter bunnies with her grandson Christiaan Irvine, 6, which will be sent to the soldiers in Iraq.

'I'm here for you'

Service personnel have their 'Grami'

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER



There really wasn't much of a Christmas for Linda Jackson and her husband, Roland. By agreement, the decided not to exchange gifts. There was no Christmas tree, just some lighted decorations in the picture window of their Westland home.

It wasn't because the family has fallen on

hard times. Far from it. By the time Christmas rolled around, Linda was "Christmased out." She'd been shopping since July for her military pen pals in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"I've never sat down and figured it out, but it's probably between \$5,000 and \$7,000," she said. "I've always wanted my teeth whitened, but that's probably \$500. I could do a lot for the troops with that."

Jackson is among a cadre of "angels" who send mail and care packages for service per-

PLEASE SEE GRAMI, A7

**Decision due Tuesday
on school tax renewals**

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

Livonia's City Clerk's office has issued 2,200 absentee ballots in preparation for the Feb. 22 renewal of three Livonia Public Schools millages.

Clerk Val Vandersloot has already received 1,400 of those ballots - which represents 100 more absentee votes than were issued in the previous millage election, held five years ago.

"Millages typically bring out more voters than just a school seat election," said Vandersloot Tuesday.

She described last June's school board election as "very slow."

The previous millage election brought out a total of 9,700 voters.

Vandersloot anticipates the Feb. 22 millage will encourage more voters - about 11,000 - to cast their ballots.

The renewals in question include one to approve an 18.4568 millage rate for non-homesteads and a 0.63-mill "hold harmless" tax on homes. That money makes up almost one quarter of the general fund

budget that pays for staffing, transportation, technology, materials and other day-to-day expenses.

The second request asks for 1.12 mills sinking fund millage, which will pay for major building repairs and maintenance, like replacing roofing, boilers, doors, or paving property.

The sinking fund is set to expire this year, and the other two millages last until December 2006.

School officials emphasize that the election represents a renewal of the same total tax rate, 1.75 mills - though the distribution of that rate would change and allow the district to collect .12 mills more than it has in the past.

Supt. Randy Liepa estimated the cost to taxpayers would be about \$12 more a year, for owners of a home valued at \$200,000.

Together, these millages represent \$43 million of the district's budget.

According to Lisa Levesque, director of finance, the state only allows districts to levy 18

PLEASE SEE RENEWALS, A2

**Police look for help
finding culprit in 2
exposure incidents**

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

In two separate incidents, teenage girls told Westland police that a man drove by them and exposed himself near the Farmer Jack store at Merriman and Cherry Hill roads.

Although it's possible the same man was the culprit in both incidents, authorities couldn't say with certainty.

Police Sgt. Debra Mathews urged anyone who may have a similar encounter to get as much of a description as they possibly can.

"The most helpful thing they could do is get a license plate number," she said Tuesday. The first incident happened

about 4:30 p.m. last Friday when a 16-year-old Garden City girl who works at Farmer Jack was outside collecting grocery carts, according to police reports.

The girl told police that the man drove up next to her with his pants pulled down, exposing himself and masturbating. He then drove off without saying anything to her.

The girl reported the incident to her store manager and, ultimately, to police.

The second incident occurred about 3 p.m. the following day, Saturday. A 14-year-old Garden City High School student told police that she and a friend were walking

PLEASE SEE EXPOSURE, A7

Lone female bandit holds up TCF Bank

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

FBI officials are investigating whether a woman who robbed a Westland bank Friday may be the same bandit involved in a similar incident in Ann Arbor.

The lone woman went inside the TCF Bank on Merriman Road near Cherry Hill just before 5 p.m. Friday, handed a note to a teller and demanded money, Westland police Sgt. James Dexter said.

The woman didn't reveal any weapon - only a note that, according to police reports, read, "This is a robbery. Act normal."

The female teller who was targeted during the robbery told police that the note had more scribbles on it, but, before she could read it, the robber took back the piece of paper.

Several bank employees and customers were inside the TCF branch when the robbery occurred, but no one was threatened with force or injured.

The bandit matched the description of a woman involved in an earlier bank robbery in Ann Arbor, Dexter said.

The teller described the robber as a white female, 30 to 40 years old, about 5-foot-4 and weighing 120 pounds. She had blonde hair and was wearing a dark blue knit cap,

glasses, a black scarf, a navy blue parka and dark gloves, according to police reports.

It is believed that the woman got into a red Ford Escort. She left with more than \$200 in cash.

Westland police scoured the neighborhood looking for the woman but didn't find her.

FBI officials planned to check with authorities in Ann Arbor to try to determine whether the woman may have been involved in a robbery there - and whether she may be a serial robber, Dexter said.

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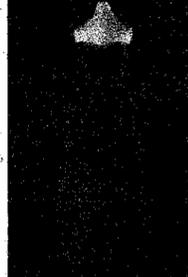
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Tax time

Liberty Tax Service recently opened in Livonia, just in time to provide help in tax preparation services. Owner Donald Luschas said tax services are the primary focus now through that ever-present deadline, April 15.

Typically, services are charged per tax form. But Luschas, of Novi, hopes to attract new customers to his business with a special offer. Senior citizens may come in and have their taxes done for free, and other customers will be charged a flat rate of \$50. The offer is available through March 20.

"We offer the best services around, and we're very friendly," said Luschas.

In addition, the business is licensed to handle first and second mortgages, long-term investments, life insurance and annuities. Liberty also participates in Toys 4 Tots and a cell phone donation program supporting soldiers.

It is located at 31098 Five Mile, on the northeast corner at Merriman. The number is (734) 427-1099.

High fashion, low prices

Attention shoppers: Loehmann's Inc. will celebrate the opening of its newest Michigan location - in Northville - at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, March 16.

Area shoppers can expect to find designer names including Donna Karan, Max Studio, Anne Klein, Nicole Miller, Ralph Lauren, Kenneth Cole and more, at a savings of up to 65 percent, when compared to department stores. And the Northville location will offer a large selection of designer shoes at discounted prices.

Grab an Italian leather handbag, or a new pair of shoes for springtime, starting at \$50. Accessorize with a silk scarf by Dolce & Gabbana, \$40-\$50 each. Choose a perfect pair of designer sunglasses for \$35.

Loehmann's Back Room features deep discounts on American and European designs.



The off-price, designer fashion retailer operates two other stores in the state - in West Bloomfield and Troy. This new location boasts 20,000 square feet of space in Village Square of Northville.

Loehmann's new location is 17615 Haggerty, between Six Mile and Seven Mile roads in Northville.

Accent on community

Redford-based Advertising Accents will celebrate 20 years in business on March 17.

Owners Tom and Sandy Krause started out in the advertising specialty business with what they refer to as "hard good giveaways." Think logo coffee mugs and logo merchandise. Since then, the business has expanded to include silk screen services and embroidery. They create logos and all sorts of signage.

"We're a one-stop shop," said Tom Krause.

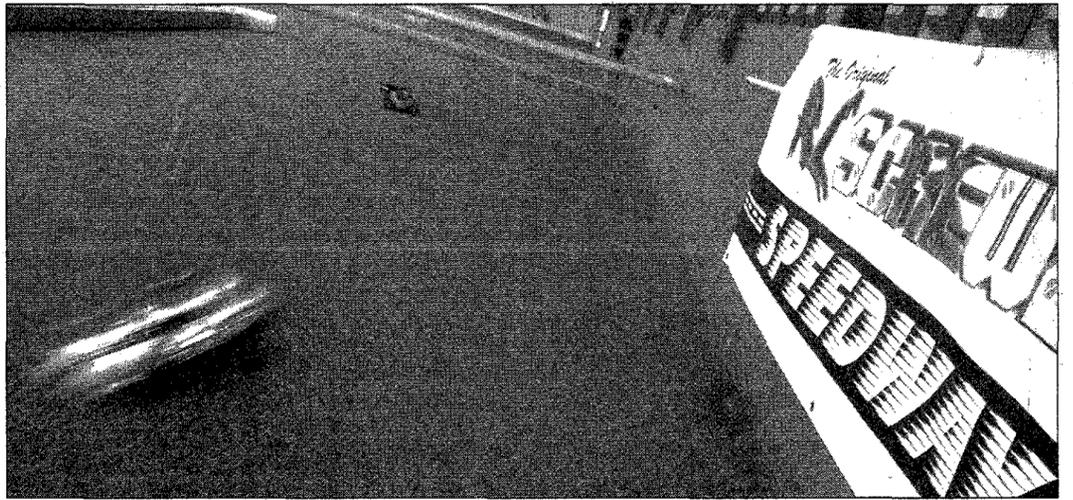
Longtime Redford residents, the Krauses have completely remodeled their 4,000-square-foot space, which is situated on five lots along Plymouth Road. Advertising Accents employs 18 people, and about to enter its second generation of ownership, under Matthew Krause, son of Tom and Sandy Krause.

Tom Krause said he believes the secret to a good business lies in giving back to the community.

"Nice things happen to nice people," he added. "We try to treat everyone fair and square."

Advertising Accents is located at 25917 Plymouth Road in Redford. For more information, dial (313) 937-3890.

Stephanie Angelyn Casola writes about new and changing businesses for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. E-mail tips on your new, favorite Wayne County shop to scasola@oe.hometownlife.com or call (734) 953-2054.



Cars speed their way through the track at the RC Screwz Speedway in Livonia.

Remote control racing buffs find new track

BY DAN WEST
STAFF WRITER

Retired auto worker Woody Seymour is having fun at a new Livonia location to race his remote-control cars.

The Canton resident spends 20 hours a week toying with his remote-control cars and testing them at R.C. Screwz Speedway, one of only a handful of indoor racing tracks for remote-control cars in Michigan. The facility is located in an industrial building on Levan between Plymouth and Schoolcraft.

"I like the people and the competition and it gives me something to do in the winter," Seymour said of his hobby of 20 years. "You get addicted once you get into it."

Owner Keith Bergevin opened the track in September as part of the screw distribution business for remote-control cars. He said these operations are popular and abundant in California, Texas, Arizona and Ohio, however, R.C. Screwz Speedway is the only such track in Wayne County. There are similar tracks in Sterling Heights, Commerce Township and Ypsilanti.

"I knew the interest was out there but there wasn't a track in the area," Bergevin said. "I figured if you build it, they will come."

The 8,800-square-foot building features an adjustable track on a carpeted or asphalt surface.

The speedway also has a pro shop and pit area where racers can tinker with their cars and recharge batteries.

The building is open for practice laps Tuesday through Sunday and organized club racing and classes take place Tuesday evenings.

In club racing, competitors who spend thousands of dollars on their remote-control vehicles can crank them up to 40 mph on a straightway. Five cars compete on a twisting and turning track, completing 20 laps in about five minutes with an average lap speed of 15 mph.

"It's always a fun challenge to figure out why you got beat so you can make adjustments," Seymour said.

In the spring, Bergevin plans to periodically shift his asphalt track into an oval for races with electrical and nitrogen-oxide fuel cars.

Bergevin has been a remote-control car buff since he was a kid growing up in Ferndale and raced against his buddies in parking lots. He worked in computer systems for 15 years and started a screw-distribution business four years ago.

"I bought screws as part of my hobby



Owners Keith and Lisa Bergevin, and their 4-year-old son Brandon, stand in the remote racing track at RC Screwz in Livonia.



Allen Whisker takes a moment with fellow racers to make a few adjustments and tinker with the cars before a few more laps on the track.

and I would sell off what I didn't need," Bergevin said. "I ended up with more requests than screws, and it snowballed from there."

In December 2003, the married father of three quit his full-time job

because he was able to support his family with the business he operated out of his Canton home. He supplies specialized screws to some 900 hobby stores in 17 countries.

"I knew if I ever could afford my own building for this business, I had to have a track," Bergevin said.

He found a workable combination of space and rent rates in the industrial building on Levan.

One year ago, Bergevin would not have been allowed to use a Livonia industrial building for his business, but a policy change in March made it possible.

The Livonia City Council changed zoning rules that permit some recreational uses inside buildings in light industrial districts with a waiver-use permit.

This change was implemented in other communities looking for new ways to fill empty industrial buildings. For example, several of these buildings throughout metro Detroit have been converted into indoor soccer fields.

Bergevin's permit was endorsed by the Livonia Planning Commission on Tuesday and awaits a final review and approval by the Livonia City Council.

R.C. Screwz Speedway is located at 12119 Levan. For more information, call (734) 765-8870.

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RENEWALS

FROM PAGE 1

mills on non-homestead or business property, but the amount extra 4.568 millage would allow the district to avoid potential Headlee roll-backs that could reduce the tax rate. For example, due to roll-backs, this year the district levied 17.9568 mills. Putting that rate back at 18 mills would bring the district an additional \$80,000.

In addition, the hold harmless millage on homesteads would be reduced by 0.12 mills,

while the sinking fund would increase by that same amount. The equal shift would allow Livonia Public Schools to collect \$700,000 more to use on schools or facilities.

Trustee Joanne Morgan, at a meeting Monday, noted that the sinking fund increase of \$12 per year would help district residents protect their investment. "Schools are an investment that keep your property value high," she said. If passed, the renewals would last five years.

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Local students create cities of future

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

Imagine a city where the residential area is protected by a biotechnical dome – a place where people would be safe from the impact of any natural disaster, and where energy is derived from a solar power plant.

It sounds like a dream. But for one group of middle school students, these ideas constituted an entry in the Michigan Regional Future City Competition.

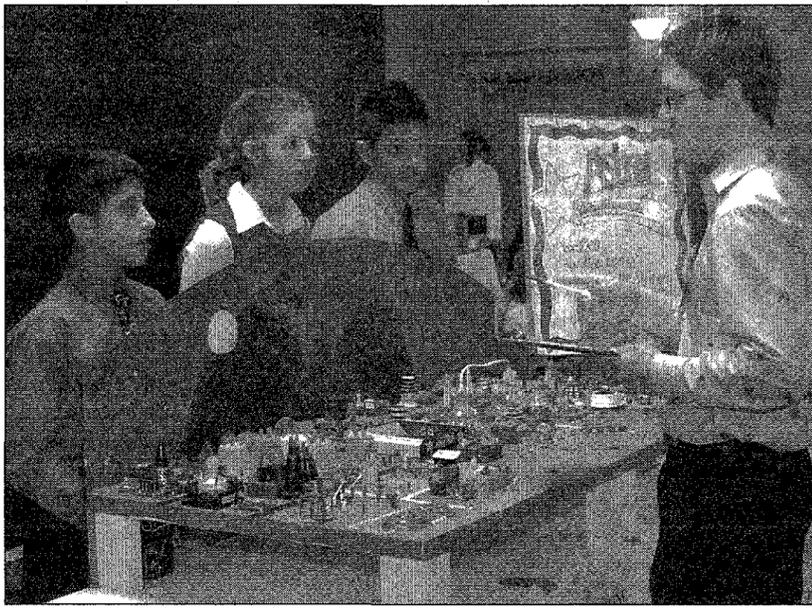
If you ask students like Tom Brama of Garden City, Kate O'Connor of Plymouth and Nick Marek of Westland, and they'll admit that the competition is a lot more fun than a regular day in their science or math classrooms.

"It's the first year our school has ever done this," said Kate.

The students attend St. Raphael School in Garden City. Working with about 27 of their peers, they created Peruvian Pacific, an underwater wonderland hypothetically located off the coast of Ecuador. The city would be powered by hydrogen and lit by sodium vapors rather than sunlight, they explained.

For Kate, working with such a large number of students was the most challenging aspect of the project. While Nick enjoyed building the model, Tom said he's having the most fun presenting it.

Each team member contributed his or her own strengths to the project. And they all agreed, it was worth the effort.



The St. Valentine School team of Joseph Pomponio of Livonia (left), Erica Parkinson of Livonia, and Jordan Ramirez of Detroit meet with Future City Competition judge Jon Hommes.

"I'd encourage anybody who is interested in science or math to try it," Kate said.

Forget the Rookie Award Tom said they were aiming to win. The team took two special honors – Best City for People with Disabilities Award and the Incorporation of Plastic Materials Award.

Teammates from St. Valentine School created Astra, their "city of the stars." About 26 students from the Redford school worked on the project. Only three presented the work

before judges at a day-long regional competition, held at Livonia's Burton Manor.

Joseph Pomponio of Livonia, Erica Parkinson of Livonia, and Jordan Ramirez of Detroit were ready to answer questions and introduce their fictional city located in Iceland in the year 2209.

"We're really confident about our city and the way we presented it," said Jordan.

Erica and Joseph said the project brought their classmates closer together as a

team.

And onlookers noticed their efforts, too.

Bryan Whitaker, whose son Keith was also part of the competition, said he was most impressed by St. Valentine's entry.

"What a bunch of amazing kids," he said. "We got a lot of good ideas."

St. Valentine's eighth graders have a reputation to uphold.

For the past two years, the school has made it to the state level in this competition.



The St. Valentine School team, like all the teams, used recycled materials to build their model future city.

That was enough incentive for Daniel Ryan to get involved. The former St. Valentine student now attends Detroit Country Day Middle School. This year marked the first Country Day entry in the regional competition.

"I thought it would be a fun project," said Ryan, who lives in Redford. "We started with brainstorming and picked the things we liked." His team created a city that might be located in a crater on the moon.

Alan Moore, a project manager at Durr Industries in Plymouth, witnessed plenty of creativity during the event Thursday. He served as a judge for the second year.

"We sponsor the Energy Efficient Design Award," Moore said. "We're judging different categories, and seeing how they distribute energy."

He said some schools found innovative ways to produce energy, by using volcano magma or robots, for example.

"They're all very inventive," added Dale Thomas, director of communications for the

Engineering Society of Detroit. "We provide an engineer mentor to help the kids."

The Engineering Society of Detroit, based in Southfield, hosts the competition each year. The event is open to seventh and eighth grade students interested in designing, building, writing about and presenting a city of the future.

The winning team at the national level is announced during National Engineering Week next week.

"There are a lot of secondary and subtle aspects (of the project)," said Thomas. "Students learn to work as a team, make decisions, conflict resolution and communication skills."

He called the project unique and complex. It represents about four months of work for those involved.

Each team is eligible for one of 15 special awards, including Most Creative Use of Materials, Best Planned City or Best City for People with Disabilities.

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Livonia Schools receives AYP status after all

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

Livonia Public Schools has been granted Adequate Yearly Progress status after all, according to the state's Department of Education.

The news was good, and expected by officials within the school district.

"We are confident our district is providing an excellent education for our students," said Randy Liepa, superintendent.

An initial AYP report, released in January, showed Livonia as one of the 20 percent of districts in Michigan that did not make AYP, which is a requirement of the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

The mandate outlines specific goals for students to show improvement and performance on standardized math and English language arts tests.

School districts must test at least 95 percent of its students, and performance is evaluated separately in "subgroup categories" with 30 or more students. Subgroups may be divided by the race, economic levels, and other factors.

There are approximately 130 ways for a school district not to make AYP. In Livonia Public Schools, the two sub group calculations in question involved special education students and African American students at the elementary level.

Special education students account for more than 10 percent of the district's 18,000 students.

Many come from neighboring areas to attend center programs housed at the Western Wayne Skill Center or Webster Elementary. Students with special needs may take an alternate MEAP test, but rules allow only 1 percent would count as passing that test. That rule, and the number of students impacted by it formed the basis of the district's appeal.

In addition, the district appealed a count that showed 30 African American students in a fourth grade testing subgroup. According to Livonia Public Schools, there were only 29 such students, not enough to constitute a subgroup.

"As we expected, all of our appeals were successful," said Jay Young, director of community relations.

Because both elementary-level appeals went

through, and the district had already earned AYP status at the middle school level, Livonia Public Schools received two of the three level requirements necessary to achieve district-wide AYP. Liepa said:

"In addition to the MEAP battery of tests, upon which AYP status is calculated, we measure achievement through our own benchmark assessments, a curriculum aligned with state standards, instructional best practices and other research-based interventions."

"These give us a multi-layered picture of student progress and guide us in making the necessary learning adjustments. However, we are pleased the state review has reversed our AYP status."

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CLUBS IN ACTION

Listings for Clubs in Action should be submitted in writing. They can be mailed to Sue Mason at 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150, by fax at (734) 591-7279 or by e-mail at smason@oe.homecomm.net. For more information, call (734) 953-2112.

T.O.P.S.

Take Off Pounds Sensibly No. M128, a support group for sensible weight loss, meets 6:30 p.m. Tuesdays at Good Shepherd Reformed Church, Wayne Road and Hunter in Westland. Call Jackie at (734) 722-7225.
n Take Off Pounds Sensibly No. M153 meets at 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays at St.

John Episcopal Church, 555 S. Wayne Road, Westland. Call (734) 721-5023. Call Rosalie at (734) 728-0299 for more information.

Toastmasters

The Westland Easy Talkers Toastmasters Club No. 6694 (formerly Holy Smokemasters) teaches public speaking at the club's weekly meetings 6:30 p.m. Thursdays at Denny's Restaurant, 7725 N. Wayne Road, next to Westland Shopping Center. Call John Elbe at (734) 414-3401 noon to 8 p.m.

■ The Dearborn Dynamic Toastmasters meets 6:30-8:30 p.m. Tuesdays at the Hawthorne Valley

Country Club, 7300 N. Merriman in Westland. For information, visit www.toastmasters.org.

■ Toastmasters International meets 7 p.m. every first and third Monday of the month at St. John Episcopal Church, on Sheldon in Plymouth. Guests are welcome, and there is no pressure to speak. Call (734) 459-0715 for information.

Hospital retirees

The Oakwood-Annapolis Retirees meet at 1 p.m. the first Monday of the month at Oakwood Hospital Annapolis Center, Venoy at Howe in Wayne. All Oakwood Retirees are welcome to attend.

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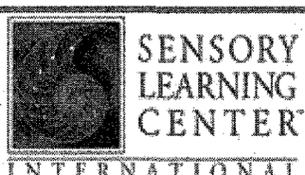
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DEATHS

A
John A. Augspurger, 39, formerly of Birmingham, died Feb. 11.

B
Mary Elizabeth Baldie (nee Roshirt), of Livonia, died Feb. 6.
Martha Louise Berels, 48, of Bloomfield Township, died Feb. 13.

C
Mary M. Cirrincione, 88, of Independence Township, died Feb. 5.

D
Mildred C. Dunningan, 86, of Shelby Township, died Feb. 6.

G
Mike Grabis, 89, died Feb. 5.

H
Charles W. Heil, 67, died Feb. 10.
Doris Marion Hirzel died Feb. 8.
Richard D. House, 50, of Troy, died Feb. 8.

K
Nelson Karney, 79, died Feb. 13.

J
Daniel Lee Johnson, 82, of Bloomfield Hills, died Feb. 12.
Jessica Lynn Johnson, 22, of Plymouth, died Feb. 7.

L
Wallace E. Lemmons, 83, of Clarkston, died Feb. 10.
Mary A. Lendzion, 80, of Rochester Hills, died Feb. 4.
Amy L. Lyzenga (Nichols), 39, died Feb. 13.

M
Helen F. Martens, 82, died Feb. 6.
Thomas L. Matheson, 52, of Redford, died Feb. 11.
Grace E. McQueen, 90, of Birmingham died Feb. 11.
Emmett West Mills, 84, of Beverly Hills.

N
Marie Nichols, 86, of Mancelona, died Feb. 11.

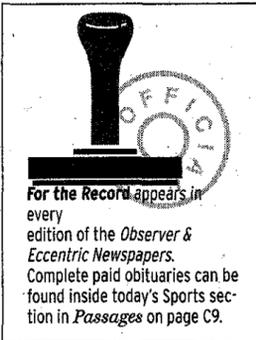
P
Winifred E. Polk, 91, of Bloomfield Hills, died Feb. 12.

R
Robert V. Radway, 77, died Feb. 11.

S
Edwin Smolarek, 78, of Canton, died Feb. 6.

CRIME WATCH

Woman robbed
A Westland mother told police that a gunman pointed a handgun at her 9-year-old daughter during a robbery that happened about 8 p.m. Saturday at Trafalgar Square Apartments, on Venoy south of Cherry Hill. No shots were fired; no one was injured. The 33-year-old mother told police that she had just parked her car and gotten out with her daughter and infant child when a stranger approached them.



For the Record appears in every edition of the *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*. Complete paid obituaries can be found inside today's Sports section in *Passages* on page C9.

He "walked past the eldest child and pointed a gold-colored handgun at her," according to a police report. The man demanded money from the mother, who told him that she didn't have any. He then ordered her to give up her purse. She told him that she didn't have one. "Just don't hurt my kids," she told the man. The man forced her to remove her jacket and ordered her to open the trunk of her vehicle. He told her to "walk away, run" as he searched the trunk for valuables. The woman grabbed her children and fled into an apartment building, where she pounded on a neighbor's door and sought help from someone who called 911. The woman later told police that the only item missing from her car was a George Foreman grill and a leather bag that it was in.

INFORMATION CENTRAL

Usually the first sign of spring is that first sighting of a robin. But birds are present no matter what the season. Celebrating its eighth year, the Great Backyard Bird Count is conducted by the Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology with the help of thousands of individuals who observe and count the birds in their own backyards. The collected data is then used to analyze what birds are where and their patterns of behavior. Last year, more than 42,000 checklists were submitted; 554 total species were observed and more than four million birds were counted across the United States. The most species observed in Michigan last year were American goldfinches, followed by house sparrows, mourning doves and dark-eyed juncos. This year's Bird Count will be Feb. 18-21. More information about how to participate can be found at the official Web site: www.birdsource.org/gbbc. The William P. Faust Public Library of Westland has many resources to help

you learn more about birds. Examples of books that help with bird identification include: *America's Favorite Backyard Birds* by Kit Harrison; *Birds of Michigan* by Gail McPeck; *Peterson Field Guides to Birds* by Roger Tory Peterson. If you're interested in learning about birding and bird watching, check out these titles: *Birding Basics* by Sandy Cortright; *Birding Across North America* by Philip E. Keenan; *Great Birding in the Great Lakes* by Tom Powers, and *Bird Watcher's Bible* by George Laycock. *Bird Garden* by Stephen W. Kress, *Birdscaping Your Garden* by George Adam and *Bird Feeder Book* by Thom Boswell can help you learn ways to attract and keep birds coming to your own backyard. The library also provides Internet access to help you access the Bird Count Web site mentioned above.

The William P. Faust Public Library is at 6123 Central City Parkway, Westland. Call the library at (734) 326-6123.

YOUTH ASSISTANCE

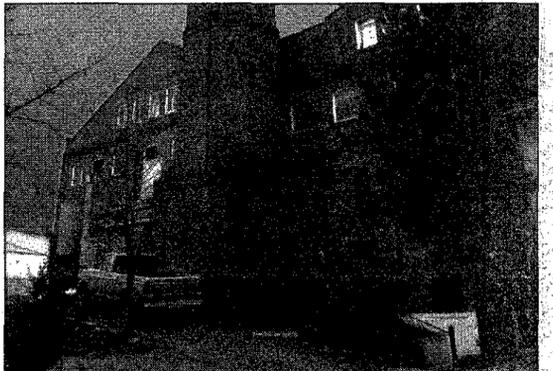
The Westland Youth Assistance Program is at 36701 Ford Road in an addition to the Westland Police Department. The separate glass entrance facing City Hall and comfortable waiting area allows for private, professional, environment to assist families in Westland. Westland youth ages 7 through 16 are referred to Youth Assistance by the police, courts, schools, parents and other agencies. Once referred, an intake appointment is scheduled to explain the program's services to the youth and parents (guardians), and to offer them the opportunity to discuss their concerns and to ask questions. All information discussed is confidential. All services are free to Westland residents. If the assessment determines that a youth is appropriate for Youth Assistance, the following services may be required for the youth: Life Choices classes. Drug screens. Supervised Community Work Service. Jail/prison tour. Team Adventure Challenge. Mentoring. Karate. Counseling. Parents are required to participate in a Parenting Skills and Support Group. Office hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Evening appointments are available by request. You also can contact the WYAA via e-mail at wyaaw@wyaaw.org. Contact Executive Director Ronael Bowman or Deputy Director Paul Motz at (734) 467-7904.

MIKE MODANO ICE ARENA

Open Skating
Open skating is available noon-1:45 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday and Friday now through March 31. Cost is \$3.50 for children and seniors and \$4.50 for adults. Get \$1 off on weekdays admissions. Skate rental is \$2.50, and skate sharpening \$4.

Drop-in Hockey
Drop-in hockey is available 10-11:45 a.m. Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Cost is \$5 per player (daytime hours) and goalies skate free. There also is a Friday evening session 10 p.m. to 12:45 a.m. Cost is \$10. Full equipment is required.

Freestyle Ice
Ice time for freestyle skating is available 2:30-4:50 p.m. Monday, 6-8 a.m. and 2:30-5:50 p.m. Tuesday, 2:30-5:50 p.m. Wednesday 6-8 a.m. and 2:30-4:20 p.m. Thursday and 2:30-5:50 p.m. Friday. Fifty-minute sessions cost \$5.25, while 30-minute sessions are \$3.50. There's an additional \$1 charge for drop-in. The arena is at 6210 N. Wildwood, just south of Hunter. Call the arena at (734) 729-4560.



Bill Bresler | Staff Photographer
The building now known as the Winery was originally the power plant for the interurban trolley.

Those were the days
Historian tracks history of trolley

BY PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER

Joan Whittingham doesn't remember the trolley's heyday in Michigan, but her mother, Margaret, told her stories when she was a young girl. The trolley would take Margaret from Detroit to the "country" to such places as Farmington and Northville. "My mother talked about them like they were the best things in the world," Whittingham said. The Novi resident and her friend, Syl Taylor of Farmington, were among a group of people who attended one of the several presentations of Farmington Trolley History, hosted by Farmington resident and historian Brian Golden in the middle of the exhibit. It is part of Golden's Farmington Trolley Exhibit on display at the Winery Building at Grand River and Orchard Lake through Saturday, Feb. 19. Attendees of Monday's presentation gained insight into the massive, but short-lived transit system that grew in the 1880s, but met its demise in the early 1930s. Attendees learned, among other things: The cost to ride an electric-powered trolley was a quarter, the cost to ride the bus was a nickel. An electric trolley from Farmington to Saginaw ran as fast as 60 mph, at a time when vehicles reached a top speed of about 20 mph. The electric powerhouse in Farmington, now the Winery Building, had nine generators that powered the trolleys through a 21-foot-tall line suspended above the rails. Powerhouses generated enough power to run trolleys up to 30 miles away. Golden is showcasing his impressive private collection of trolley memorabilia, including old route maps, pictures, tickets and even an old metal "Farmington/Northville" designation sign that one time was affixed to a trolley from that era. The historian is also putting together a scale model of the Farmington Junction in the middle of the exhibit. Golden is referencing old pictures of the junction as it once stood. Golden explained the Detroit United Railway reached from Redford to downtown Farmington then to Pontiac. The stop in Farmington became a successful venture. The interurban connected different railways around the state and then adjoining states and Canada. The Trolley History exhibit hours are noon to 3 p.m. and 7-10 p.m. today and Friday, Feb. 17-18, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 19.

BAILEY RECREATION CENTER

Court costs are based on prime time hours - 4-10 p.m. Monday-Friday and all day Saturday and Sunday - and non-prime time hours - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday-Friday.

- Racquetball Courts - \$9 per hour prime time and \$8 per hour non-prime time for residents and \$11 per hour non-prime time and \$12 per hour prime time for non-residents.
- Wallyball Courts - \$11 per hour non-prime time and \$12 per hour prime time for residents and \$16 per hour non-prime time and \$18 per hour prime time for non-residents.
- Brewball - \$7 per hour non-prime time and \$8 per hour prime time for residents and \$10 per hour non-prime time and \$11 per hour prime time for non-residents.

Court Gold Cards (10 hours of time) are available at \$80 resident racquetball and \$110 for non-resident racquetball; \$110 for resident wallyball and \$170 for non-resident wallyball; and \$70 for resident brewball and \$100 non-resident brewball

Open Gym
The hours vary, so call ahead for times. Cost is \$2 for residents and \$4 for non-residents. Students pay \$1, but must show middle school or high school identification card.

Facility and Park Rentals
Various room sizes are available for all occasions, including showers, wedding receptions, parties, classes, business meetings, etc.

Students get hands-on French lesson

Randy Baker, owner of Naturalist Endeavors, transformed into "the French guy" during a recent presentation to Coolidge Elementary students. During the hour long historical reenactment, titled *Voyageurs of the Michigan Fur Trade Era*, Baker portrayed role of a French voyager and gave the students a hands-on lesson of that time. It was all part of Coolidge's monthly Whole Lotta' Learning Going On program. Organizer Rayleen Morgan said students were fascinated by stories detailing what French voyageurs ate and drank, how they applied for the job of a voyageur, how long they worked each day, and other tales. "There were groans of disbelief from the students as (Baker) revealed that the most important thing in his diet was bear fat," Morgan said. "The groans grew even louder when



Randy Baker of Naturalist Endeavors, shows Coolidge students a beaver pelt during a lesson about French voyagers.

he produced a jar of the fat to show the students." The next Whole Lotta' Learning Going On is set for Feb. 25, when the acting troupe, Brainstormers! will visit Coolidge.

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SUN FRI/SAT 11:30, 12:20, 1:00, 1:50, 2:30, 3:20, 4:00, 5:00, 5:30, 7:00, 8:30, 10:00
FRI/SAT LS 11:30
BEING JULIA (R)
6:40, 9:00 FRI/SAT LS 11:10
HIDE AND SEEK (R)
(SAT/SUN 11:15) 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:45, 9:50 FRI/SAT LS 11:55
ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13 (R)
7:10, 9:20
FRI/SAT LS 11:30
IN GOOD COMPANY (PG-13)
1:00, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30, 9:40
FRI/SAT LS 11:50
RACING STRIPES (PG)
(SAT/SUN 11:10) 1:10, 3:10, 5:10
PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (PG-13)
LIMITED ENGAGEMENT
1:30, 4:10, 6:50, 9:30

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Appointment

Westland Mayor Sandra Cicirelli has been named to chair the Conference of Western Wayne - a consortium of 18 western Wayne County municipalities formed to work together to enhance public services.

"The CWW region is home to 700,000 citizens, and we will emphasize speaking with a collective voice to influence policies that will enhance our quality of life," Cicirelli said. "There are steps we can take working together that help us continue to provide public services to our citizens in a cost-effective manner."

Cicirelli called it "a privilege" to work with other mayors and supervisors to help improve services.

Best mother, father

Mayor Sandra Cicirelli has announced that nomination applications are available for Mother of the Year and Father of the Year - awards she will give during her State of the City address in April.

Applications are available at the city cable station WLND, 33455 Warren Road, or on the city's Web site at www.ci.westland.mi.us. Applications are due in the mayor's office by 5 p.m. Friday, March 4.

The program will be held at 6 p.m. Wednesday, April 13, at the senior citizen Friendship Center, 1119 N. Newburgh.

"The tradition of honoring the mother and father of the year at the State of the City is one that I look forward to every year," Cicirelli said. "Together with Teacher of the Year, High School Senior of the Year, the Senior Citizen of the Year for Leadership and the Senior Citizen of the Year for Service, these tributes honor some of Westland's finest residents. It is always a very hard decision for the selection committee to make."

Relay kickoff

Relay for Life of Westland will kick off its 2005 fund-raising season 6:30-8 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 24, at Marvaso's, 6569 N. Wayne Road.

Information will be available about getting involved in the 24-hour event that raises money to fight breast cancer. This year's relay will be in June.

For more information, call Megan Holt at (248) 483-4344 or email her at megan.holt@cancer.org.

Bit of history

The Friends of the Westland Historical Museum will host a talk, "What is an Interurban?," at 1 p.m. Sunday, March 6, Richard Andrews, at the William P. Faust Public Library of Westland, 6123 Central City Parkway, just north of Ford, Westland.

Richard Andrews, a local historian and author, will give the presentation. Admission is free. For more information called the library at (734) 326-6123 or by e-mail at nankinhistorian@comcast.net.

Spring bazaar

The Edison Elementary PTO will have its Spring Bazaar 6-8 p.m. Wednesday, April 20.

The bazaar will feature a collection of 20 vendors, mostly direct-sell businesses like Tupperware, DK Books and Party-Lite candles along with a few cash-and-carry vendors selling jewelry, denim purses, stamped greeting cards and other fun items. There will also be a bake sale held in conjunction with the bazaar, which will be held in the gym.

No children will be allowed in the gym, however, babysitting will be available. Edison School is at 34505 Hunter, Westland.

Tuning up

The Wayne Memorial High School and John Glenn High School Instrumental Music Programs will present the annual Festival Preview Concert at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 23, in the Stockmeyer Auditorium at Wayne High, Glenwood east of Wayne Road.

Scheduled to perform is the

John Glenn Symphony Band and Symphony Orchestra, the Wayne Memorial Concert Band 9, Concert Band, Symphony Band and Symphony Orchestra.

Going for gold

Time to get your toddlers in shape.

The Westland Parks and Recreation Department will once again sponsor the Nursery School Olympics 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, March 5, at the Bailey Recreation Center, 36651 Ford.

Tots will be able to compete

in 18 different events, including the Marshmallow Shot Put, the Toddler Trot, the I-Did-A-Rod Hurdles and Obstacle Course.

Every child will receive a certificate of participation. To be able to have enough time to compete in all the events, children should register before 11:30 a.m. For more information, call (734) 7227620.

The Nursery School Olympics is sponsored by the Westland Civitan Club, Dad's Athletic Club of Westland, Westland Youth Assistance, Westland Jaycees and Praise Chapel. Additional donations have been

made by Kröger and Rocker Soccer.

Toy show

The Westland Rotary Club will host a toy show 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, March 6, at Joy Manor, 28999 Joy, east of Middlebelt.

The show will feature new and antique toys, collectibles, Beanie Babies, action figures, die cast toys, slot and model cars, Matchbox, Hot Wheels and more. There also will be 50/50 raffles and drawings for door prizes. Show admission is \$3 for adults with children

under age 12 free. Proceeds will support Rotary charities.

Table space is available at \$30 per table and is available by writing to Westland Rotary Toy Show, 6600 Burnly, Garden City, MI 48135. For more information, call Mary McGaw at (734) 748-8515.

Free seminar

William Gramzow, an advanced planning counselor and funeral director with R.G. & G.R. Harris Funeral Home, will conduct a funeral planning seminar at Westland Convalescent Center on

Thursday, March 10.

The seminar will be 2:30-4:30 p.m. at the convalescent center 36137 W. Warren, between Wayne Road and Central City Parkway in Westland.

Gramzow will cover such funeral planning topics as funeral prearrangement planning, how to select a funeral home and understanding Medicaid and SSI as it relates to funeral planning.

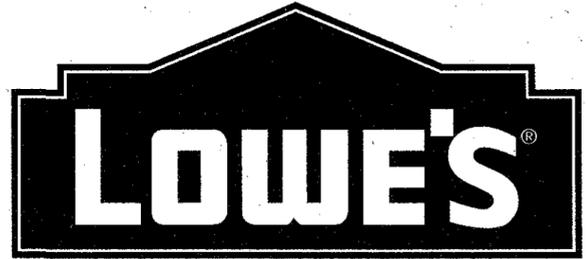
The public is invited to attend the free seminar. Call Judy Bianchi at (734) 728-6100 to sign up for the special event.



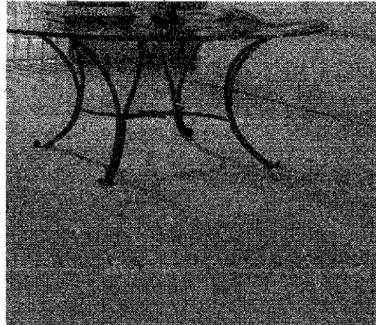
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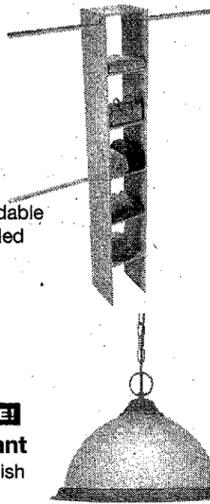
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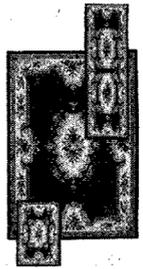
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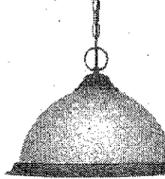
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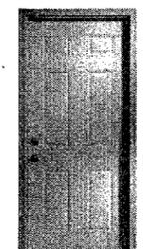
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Named to the honor roll for the third marking period of the 2004-2005 school year at John Glenn High School were:

James Abraham, Ashley Acosta, Kyle Acuna, Ryan Acuna, Curtis Adams, Asia Agnew, Hammed Ajerunmobi, Latasha Albert, Nazjel Alexander, Qurat Ali, Elyse Allard, Jamie Allen, Maria Allen, Darnell Alleyne, Asia Andrews, Jeremy Armstrong, Katrina Armstrong, Borislav Atansov, Eric Austin, Jeremiah Austin, Lashawnda Autry, Victoria Awosika.

Anita Azeta, Jesse Backman, Stephanie Bader, Elizabeth Bailey, Christopher Banaszak, Sean Barone, Linda Barrett, Eric Barry, Shannon Barton, Andrew Bartrum, Joshua Bartrum, Dominique Battle, Brenden Bednark, Jacob Bee, Caitlin Beliste, Navjot Benipal, Joshua Benko, Bridget Berg, Ashley Bess, Kevin Bessinger, Gregory Bevel, Stephanie Beveridge.

Jessica Biglow, Timothy Bingham, Brandon Bise, Chelsea Blake, Catherine Blanck, Alexis Bland, Patrick Blay, Kathleen Blight, Joseph Blouse, Sara Boczar, Brittany Bojanic, Anthony Bolen, Elizabeth Bomya, Jennifer Bone, April Borda, Jennifer Boris, Carson Boron, Kelly Borowiak, Samantha Bosman, Nathan Bou, Alisha Boucher, Toni Boucier.

Natalie Bower, Nicole Bower, Sarah Bowers, Ronney Bowman, Jaret Bozigian, Zachary Bozigian, Stefan Bozman, Brian Bradley, James Brancheau, Alexandra Brandt, Johanna Brandt, Marshae Brazier, Emily Brennan, Stephanie Brennan, Katherine Brewer, Brittany Brincat, Kaylie Brincat, Stacey Britt, Olivia Brooks, Mallory Brosious, Emily Brothers, Christopher Brown.

Daniel Brown, Scott Brown, Tiffany Brown, Elizabeth Brozek, Mary Bruce, Todd Bruhnsen, Chantel Bryant, Amanda Buelow, Kean Buluc, James Burger, David Burgess, Jaclyn Burgess, Caitlin Burns, Jessica Burns, Nicole Burns, Virginia Butler, James Byberg, Alexander Cabildo, Cristina Calbajos, Amarilda Cami, Garrett Camilleri, Scott Campenella, Amanda Campbell.

Ryan Carlington, Michael Caudill, Lorraine Caulkins, Rebecca Cesleski, Jonathan Celmer, Angela Cetrone, Justin Chadwick, Shardaé Champagne, Schieffer Chapman, Brandy Chaston, Angelica Cheeks, Ashley Cherry, Situniwe Chirunga, Kayce Choate,

Jamel Chokri, Gary Cingel, Anna Clark, Brandon Clark, Jessica Coatney, Jacquelyn Coats, Karry Coats.

Eriona Coka, Kailey Coleman, Evan Collins, Sarah Collins, Alexander Colosimo, Anthony Colosimo, Kija Colts, Amanda Colwell, James Compton, Sarah Conley, Gregory Copeland, Jennifer Corney, Kimberly Costello, Christina Cox, Jeffrey Cox, Maurice Cox, Brittany Crawford, Brandon Crooks, Sharonda Crump, Ashley Curtidor, Gabriel Curtidor, Richard Curylo.

Megan Daniel, Christopher Daniels, Lorenc Dashi, Jonathon Daugherty, Brandon Davis, Christopher Davis, Dalonna Davis, Megan Davis, Sara Davis, Andrew Dean, Jonathan Dean, Megan Dean, Rebecca Debono, Bruce Debruhi, Andi Dede, Joslyn DeGroot, Julia DeGroot, Michelle Deguzman, Jessica Delaforce, Salina Delarosa, Vincent Deluca, Donald Demiri.

Michael Dennis, Christopher Deron, Stephen Derosia, Robert Destrampe, Amy Deverich, Melanie Devuev, Brisida Dhemmbi, Ashley Dobos, Chantel Doe, Jennifer Dotson, Kayla Downing, Ryan Downs, Kaitlin Dresler, Sarah Drum, Melissa Dudash, Jessica Duncan, Jonathan Dunn, Kristin Dutchak, Jessica Dwyer, Jerin Eapen, George Easter, Jessica Easter.

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Offer, Amarachi Ogbuaka, Chidinma Ogbuaku, Justin O'Hara, Jonathan Olver, Enea Onuzi, Hayley Orzech.

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Rachel Smith, Shannon Smith, Todd Smith, Timothy Smolen, Brandon

Sneddon, Brandon Sneed, Ashley Snyder, Whitney Sonak, Ashley Sorensen, Sean Southard, Amber Sportsman, Cody Stacy, Richard Stanek, Heather Stanfel, Holly Stanfel, Natalie Starbuck, Paul Starks, Shannon Starks, Melanie Stawkey, Jessica Steltzriede, Philip Stephens, Jennifer Sternal.

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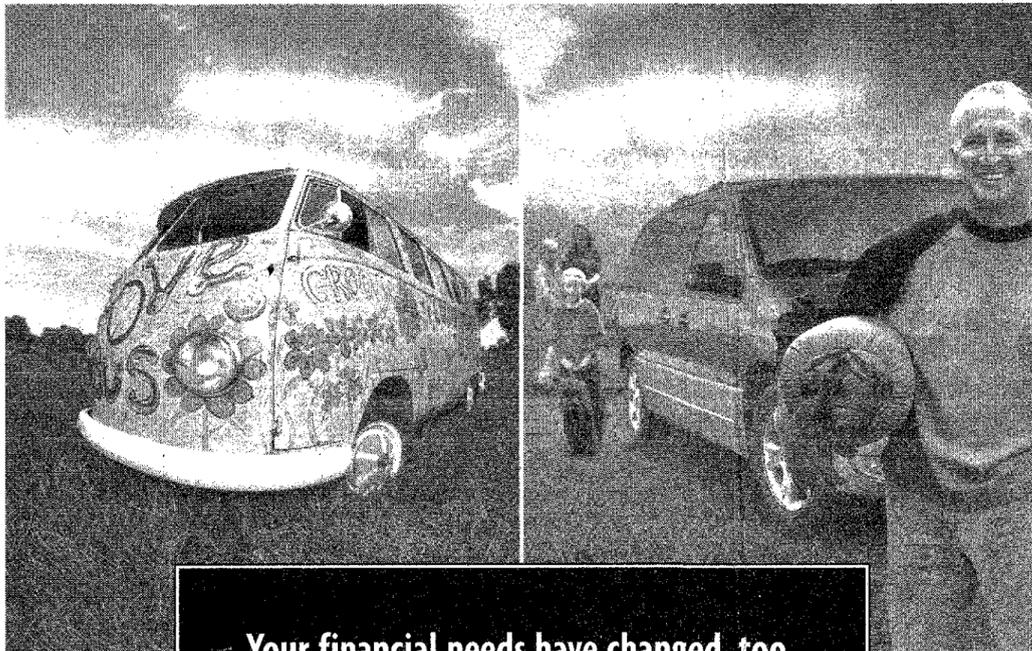
Melissa Talerico, Daniel Tamaroglio, Jourdene Tanap, Christopher Taylor, Deidre Taylor, Jesse Taylor, Jason Tenorio, April Thomas, Brandee Thomas, Chrystal Thomas, Tiffany Thomas, Carly Thompson, Chelsea Thompson, Courtney Thompson, Megan Thornberry, Ian Thornton, Markelisha Thurman, Charmane Thurmond, Joshua Thurmond.

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GRAMI

FROM PAGE A1

sonnel through Operation Make a Life Enriched-Saying Thanks and Remembering. The stateside volunteer group which writes to soldiers started in 1994 when founder and organizer Pat Dwiggins answered a request from her grandson to find families to adopt soldiers at Ft. Carson, Ky., for the holidays.

Jackson is Grami. She has 50 pen pals. She writes them and tells them, "I'm here to share your joys and fears or if you want to vent. I'm Grami and I'm here for you."

"I've gone through births and deaths of their loved ones, but I haven't lost one yet," she said. "I've been very, very fortunate to not have lost one of them, except one did break a leg and it happened on his time."

"I shouldn't brag, but I'm Grami and I won't let God take a grandson from me."

KEEPING IN TOUCH

She sends cards and care packages and spends hours writing e-mails. She already has filled one four-inch binder with printouts of the e-mails she's received.

She's included small Christmas stockings and Christmas trees and even patriotic boxer shorts in her packages. When someone says they need hats and blankets to keep warm, she gets out her knitting needles and makes some hats and ships them out with fleece blankets.

When she joined OPM.A.L.E.-STAR, she asked for a name. Dwiggins offered the USS Cleveland ... yes, the whole ship. Dwiggins told her to do what she could for Easter 2002.

"I asked myself, now how much would it cost to do Easter eggs, and went out shopping," she said. "I did enough candies and notes to cover the whole ship. I wrote crazy things and ended up with nine pen pals."

She's usually good for 400 gifts at every holiday. That's the number of handmade hearts she sent out for Valentine's Day, all with handwritten personal messages on them. She will top that by 100-150 for Easter thanks to the help of 11 classes at Madison Elementary School.

KIDS HELP

"I originally asked my grandson's kindergarten class, but they sent out an e-mail to see if other classes wanted to do them," she said. "I love what I'm doing, but by the 100th rabbit, they're not multiplying as fast as you're told."

She tapped into the resources of the Dickerson Center in Livonia, using her paper and their die cuts to cut out



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Grami Linda Jackson holds up a few bunnies that have a letter written on the back that she's sending to her pen pals in Iraq to give out to other soldiers.

Easter eggs and bunnies that the kids decorated and wrote messages for the soldiers. She also took pictures of the classes to include with their cards, so the soldiers can see who's writing to them.

She is thankful for e-mails in keeping in touch with her pen pals. Snail mail, as she calls the U.S. Postal Service, would mean several months between letters. That and her postage is already "horrendous" for what she does. At Christmas, she spent more than \$360.

"That includes 16 boxes I took in at one time," she said. "My husband asked if he needed to work an extra day that week."

The folks at the post office have been good to Jackson. When the Postal Service put out a new flat rate box that costs \$7.70 to mail, they set aside some for her. And they made sure they had new forms set aside for her.

UNCLE C.B.

Being a pen pal to the troops has been a good experience not only for Jackson, but also for her grandchildren Nathaniel and Christiaan. They help her make cards for the troops and have gone on her many shopping trips, so much so that they reminded her who they were shopping for when they went to get decorations for their mother's birthday.

One of her special pen pals is Carl Blessing. He was the first one to write

back from the Cleveland. Her grandchildren call him Uncle C.B. and he has adopted them as his nephews, sending e-mails meant just for them. He also has sent them a stuffed moose from Canada and postcards from Alaska.

"He writes the most explicit letters," said Jackson. "In one he describes a sunrise so that I felt I was there. He is very, very good with words."

Another pen pal has left the service and is training to become a firefighter. He sends firefighter things.

"All of the guys are my adopted children, even though some are older than me," she said. "I have one in the original batch of pen pals who's 62 and he still calls me Grami. The youngest was probably 18."

Among her prize possessions is an American flag that was flown over Al Asad Air Base in Iraq by a Huey helicopter on Nov. 10, 2004. Neatly folded, it still shows the dust from being in Iraq. It's under glass with other mementos from the unit, and now she's looking for a way to protect a prayer rug she received from another pen pal.

"It's my pride and joy," she said. "I wanted the flag under glass before the dust came off."

Jackson understands what families go through when a loved one is deployed. It wasn't that long ago that her husband was in the service. She and Roland had been married 1 1/2 years when it became apparent he would be

WHAT IS OPM.A.L.E.-STAR?

The one thing Patricia Dwiggins stresses on the OPM.A.L.E.-STAR (Operation Make a Life Enriched-Saying Thanks and Remembering) Web site is that the organization is "not now nor will we ever be a dating or mating service."

It also won't ever get involved in the Politics of the war or wars.

Dwiggins is the originator/founder of the which celebrated its 10th anniversary on Oct. 5, 2004. It is a group of 100 percent volunteer organized, primarily through the Internet to provide deployed and stateside armed forces personnel morale support by supplying them with STAR packages, individual adoptions for support and pen pals. STAR packages are sent all year long and especially during special mail-outs for holidays.

"We never want our troops to feel forgotten," Dwiggins wrote on the Web site. "We are a friendship group so gender, age, race, religion, marital status or nationality does not matter."

The organization wants to make sure that U.S. troops regardless of where they are - air, land and sea - are treated with the greatest of respect.

"We want all the troops to know there are people here that care all the time and not only where there is a war," Dwiggins wrote.

OPM.A.L.E.-STAR has a pen pal list that includes the people's names. It is, according to Dwiggins, pick and choose from the troops' end. Military names are not placed on the list.

People interested in becoming part of OPM.A.L.E.-STAR can send an e-mail to OPMALAE@aol.com. For more about the organization, including its history, visit the Web site at www.opmalestar.com.

drafted during the Vietnam War.

"I told him we needed to think of another choice, he said he wasn't going to Canada," Jackson recalled. "I told him I'd rather have him floating in water than standing in the water of a rice paddy, so he picked the Navy."

Roland enlisted for four years. The Navy came looking for him to ship out to Vietnam, but because of confusion and similar names, it was Ronald Jackson who was sent to Vietnam. He never came back.

What happened so many years ago had an impact on Jackson.

"When the war started, I wasn't for it," she said. "But I decided I was not going to do nothing, I wasn't going to sit on my butt and do nothing."

Thousands of cards, e-mails and packages later, she can truly say she hasn't done that. And she knows she has made a difference. One of her e-mails tells her so: "Your package brightens the day."

smason@oe.homecomm.net | (734) 953-2112

EXPOSURE

FROM PAGE A1

near the Farmer Jack when a man drove up next to them.

The girl told authorities that the man exposed himself and masturbated as he drove next to them. The victims started walking toward a male friend they saw in the parking lot, and the driver left the area.

Only one police report included a description of the driver, who was a white male, about 19 years old, with dark hair, a goatee and glasses.

The teens gave a similar description of the car.

During the Friday incident, the man was driving what was described as a large, two-door, older-model, blue vehicle. On Saturday, the man was in what was believed to be an older-model, blue Lincoln.

Anyone who has information about the incidents is encouraged to call the Westland Police Department at (734) 722-9600.

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WIDENING

FROM PAGE A1

"They seemed amenable to jumping on board with this," he said.

The city would have to pay the fair-market value for the land.

Local officials would pay for the city's work with special tax revenues captured in what is called a Local Development Finance Authority district.

The money is typically spent on projects aimed at boosting the economy.

Much work already has been completed in the area:

■ Newburgh Road was changed so that traffic passes under the CSX railroad tracks south of Cherry Hill.

■ Newburgh Road was widened from Palmer to Glenwood, making it a five-lane road through the city.

■ The Newburgh-Palmer Road intersection was realigned to help ease east-west traffic congestion.

■ Palmer Road was widened to three lanes between Edwin and John Hix Road.

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HOUSE CALLS

By Botsford General Hospital

WARNING SIGNS OF A STROKE

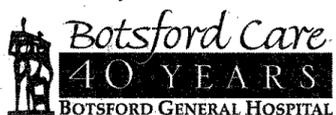
In the cases of strokes or mini strokes, getting emergency medical attention right away can dramatically help reduce the chance of permanent damage. Make sure you and your family can recognize the warning signs of a stroke. Someone having a stroke may have some or all of these signs.

1. Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially if it's on one side of the body.
2. Sudden, severe headache with no known cause.
3. Sudden trouble seeing out of one or both eyes.
4. Dizziness, trouble walking, loss of balance or coordination.
5. Trouble speaking or understanding or sudden, overwhelming confusion for no reason.

"Mini strokes" or TIA's have the same warning signs as a stroke, but symptoms only last a few minutes. Don't ignore the signs just because they don't last long - get medical attention right away.

NEXT WEEK: REDUCING STRESS

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This health tip is brought to you by Botsford General Hospital. For a board-certified physician near you, call Botsford's HealthMatch toll-free at (877) 442-7900.

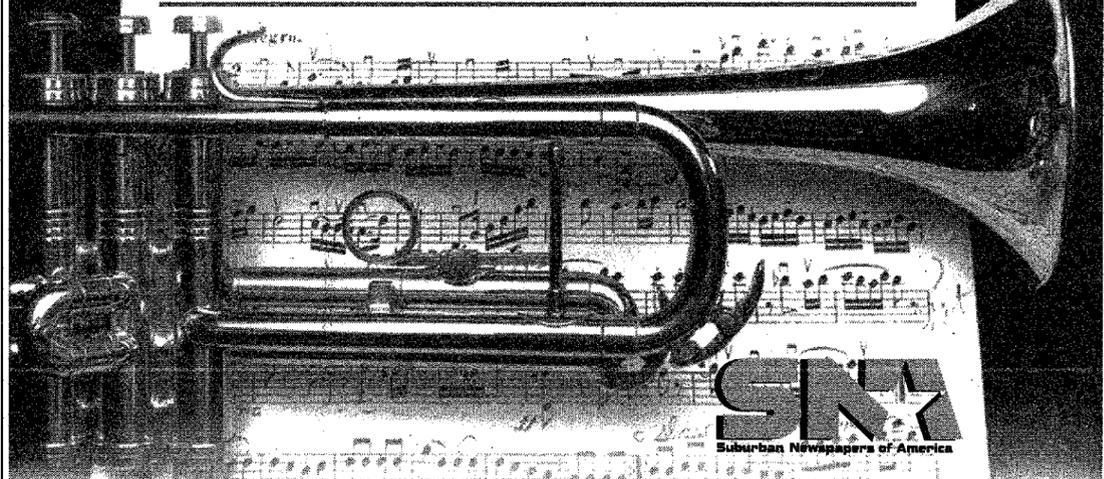
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THE Observer & Eccentric

NEWSPAPERS

WHERE HOMETOWN STORIES UNFOLD



PARDON US WHILE WE TOOT OUR OWN HORN.

We grabbed our horn because we've just received the results of the 2004 Suburban Newspapers of America's (SNA) annual competition.

Our staff received nine awards for excellence in journalism in 2004. What makes this even more exciting is that of the 2,246 entries, we brought home more awards than any other non-daily newspaper in the state.

And here they are:

Best Lifestyle Section
Susan Steinmueller - Second Place, Birmingham Eccentric

Best Entertainment Section
Third Place - Filter, Keely Schramm, Nicole Stafford, Lana Mini, Stephanie Tardy, Megan Pennefather, Randy Masters, Dan Dean

Best Editorial Writing Second Place - Troy Eccentric
"Stop Recall, Insure Freedom, Don't Mess With Charter"

Best Column Writing
Third Place - Sandy Armbruster, Troy Eccentric

Best Editorial Page Cartoon
Second Place, Geof Brooks "Budget Cartoon."

Best Opinion Column
First Place - Brad Kadrach, Plymouth Community Editor

Best Sports Writing
First Place, Jim Toth, Troy/Rochester Special Editor Sports
"Court Ruling."

Best Sports Writing
Second Place - Ed Wright, Plymouth/Canton Special Editor/Sports "Aluminum Bat Usage Spurs Debate."

Journalist of the Year
Third Place - Kurt Kuban, Canton Community Editor

HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

OUR VIEWS

City is beneficiary of Rotary's work

This Feb. 23, the Westland Rotary Club will observe the organization's centennial, 100 years of contributing to the quality of life in this city, this state, this country and this world.

Like the 31,936 other clubs that have sprung up since the organization was founded by Chicago attorney Paul Harris on Feb. 23, 1905, the Westland club has been active in helping those in need.

Nick Duncan had a very special 11th birthday. The Westland Rotary Club provided the handicapped youngster with a new set of special wheels — a tricycle — as a very special birthday present.

The club also remembered one of its own — the late Barbara Douglas — by dedicating a bench in her memory at Westland Rotary Park. It also made improvements to basketball courts and a parking lot at the park, located behind Stottlemeyer School.

And as a member of Rotary International, it is involved in the PolioPlus polio eradication effort in Asia and Africa to bring good health and a brighter future to those countries. Literacy, water management and a host of other areas also are supported by Rotary International, its districts and clubs.

The 100th anniversary is a time for pride in accomplishments, but also a time for reflection. Rotary's Four-Way Test of the things we think, say or do remains relevant in 2005: Is it the truth? Is it fair to all concerned? Will it build goodwill and better friendships? Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

As Rotary International President Glenn Estess Sr. writes in the current issue of *The Rotarian*, "But our centennial is not just a time to reflect upon our past accomplishments. It is also a time to look to the future, to set new goals, and to face new challenges. We must continue to dedicate ourselves to world peace, promote high ethical standards, and seek new opportunities for service."

Best wishes to Rotary on reaching this milestone, and may the next 100 years bring equally great accomplishments.

Aggressive approach can build economy

Gov. Jennifer Granholm has taken an aggressive approach to dealing with the state's needs in such fundamental areas as jobs, the infrastructure and education. It's about time.

Her State of the State and budget presentations show she is determined to turn Michigan's economy around. What is less clear is whether Republicans will set partisanship aside, focusing instead on what's best for the state.

Consider her two big money requests — \$2 billion in bonds to create 72,000 jobs over 10 years, and another \$800 million to improve the state's infrastructure and create another 36,000 jobs. Republicans aren't likely to approve placing that on November's ballot. But those sizable requests are among the few concrete approaches to improve the economy that have been offered by state elected officials.

The job creation approach follows what Granholm has long championed, and that is the need for improved research and technology sectors. The \$2 billion bond, if approved, would create research centers, largely at state universities, which would spill over into the growth of technologically oriented companies. And that means sorely needed jobs would be created.

More jobs mean more people buying more goods, a chain reaction that in itself stimulates the economy.

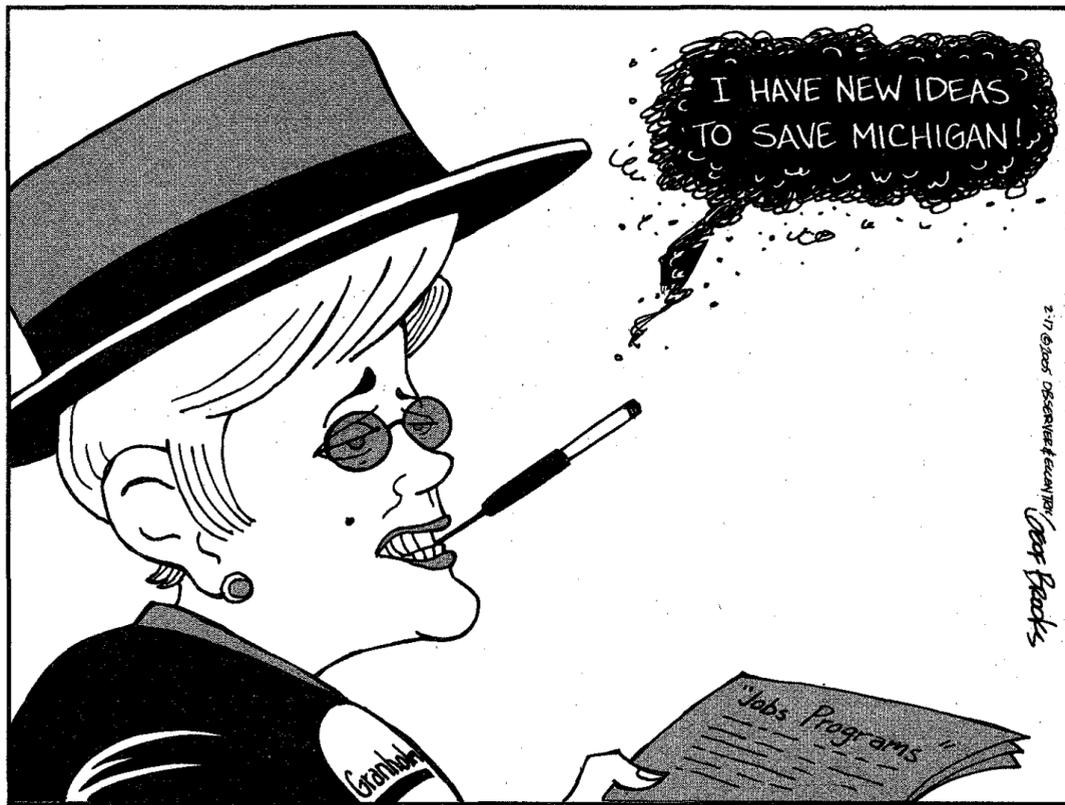
But her infrastructure proposal is important to the state's economy as well. The small gas tax approved years ago can't keep up with crumbling roads and bridges.

Without a good road system, prospective businesses could decline relocating to Michigan, knowing that they would have a difficult time bringing in supplies and getting their products to market.

Granholm also is keenly aware that the state needs a cadre of well-educated workers with good technological skills, something that is in short supply in Michigan. Local educators are welcoming a call for an increase in state funding for K-12 education, but they point out that it's been a long time in coming. Will it be enough, they ask?

Certainly it is a start, but Granholm's proposals for higher education are a mixed bag. Tuition increases are limited to five percent, and Merit scholarships are increased to \$4,000 — after a student successfully completes two years of higher education.

Everyone agrees on what the state's problem is — jobs, jobs, jobs. Now it will be up to the state Legislature to work with the governor in making them happen.



LETTERS

A weak excuse

The Local Officers Compensation Commission (LOCC) has been in the news again and hopefully more people in Westland have increased knowledge of the existence of that commission and their important roles regarding setting salaries for elected officials.

I was at the meeting in 2003 when the first decision was made to slash an existing city clerk salary based, in part, on the illogical reasoning that they (the LOCC) didn't know who might run for the job or what kind of qualifications this person might have.

We were told it was best to make this newly-elected position a lower salary and if and when the person elected was able to prove their ability to function in that capacity, the salary could be adjusted and/or increased at a later date.

Illogical, I say, because there was no reason to speculate entirely about just who might seek the job of city clerk, since former Mayor Thomas Taylor announced his candidacy, and Richard LeBlanc had expressed his own intent shortly after Joann Seaberg resigned to become Mayor Cicirelli's administrative assistant.

LeBlanc had even garnered support from a majority of council members to fill the vacancy, but as I've learned, a person's word cannot always be relied upon.

There is no doubt that Richard was qualified and would have served the citizens well, whether appointed or elected, but then again, it wasn't really about ensuring who would be qualified was it?

Gutting the pay was a direct move to keep him out of that position. With two sons in college, his family could not afford for him to leave his job for that kind of money. There was to be no opportunity to put an election behind and serve the residents, a courtesy that was later afforded another candidate.

If the LOCC felt it was logical to base a salary on the fact that we didn't know who would run for an elected office, why aren't all elected officials' salaries reduced prior to all elections? After all, you just never know who will win, what their qualifications will be for the job or how they'll do. Is it about the position or the person?

The unanimous decision to raise the clerk's salary back to where it had been resulted in even more confusion. The comment in the paper that our current clerk works 10 times harder than most department heads was an unfortunate slam to the directors and chiefs. Should their salaries be gutted or docked 10 times less, if they are thought to be working 10 times less?

Lastly, I'm disappointed, but not surprised, that only councilman LeBlanc agreed to co-sign a request to put the LOCC decision to a council vote. Should not the citizens have the right to observe their elected council voting on their own pay raises?

Some have suggested that calling for votes would be nothing more than politics, I ask, what act undertaken by an elected official isn't viewed as political?

And since the LOCC always meets in odd years, its decisions naturally fall in election years. Does that mean council should shun the opportunity to vote upon those decisions for fear of appearing political?

I've witnessed blatant political acts in the

council chambers for years and yet the call for a vote by this decision-making body on salary increases is labeled as a political potato too hot to handle. Tougher decisions have come before, but weaker excuses I've never heard.

Cheryl Graunstadt
Westland

Should be a vote

Feb. 22 is the last council meeting before the 3 percent pay raise for the council and the mayor goes into effect without having to say a word, and I don't know about you, but I feel it's a coward's way of getting it without saying YES I want it.

Councilwoman Graunstadt asked for support from two other members to have it on the agenda so it can be voted for or against on Feb. 22, but it seems getting two to support it is very, very hard to get.

Two years ago, the LOCC set the soon-to-be elected city clerk's pay at \$50,000 per year. All the council could do was vote no and have it set at \$0, or say nothing and have it set at \$50,000, and that's what they did ... prior to the vote, and after, Mr. Stottlemeyer said he thought that was too high.

And when the council was putting the city budget together by making cuts for the city clerk they voted and talked of why they voted the way they did. They said they would look at it again in two years, and here we are, but when it comes to saying YES to a 3 percent raise for themselves and the mayor, they seem to become cowards who can't speak, and I guess when running for re-election will try and say we didn't vote for it, but we have to take it.

Councilwoman Graunstadt, how does it feel to set on the council with five sissies, I hope they don't rifle through your purse for your lipstick.

Jim Davis
Westland

She shouldn't be there

During the last couple of days there has been a story on TV news channels regarding a Detroit animal control worker that feeds two puppies to a python snake.

She was fired, but now is back working doing the same job. Apparently, after filing a grievance with the city, she was given her job back. Their logic is that after she attended sensitivity classes, they feel she is fit for duty.

If a child molester does it once, gets counseling, they won't do it again? She was never prosecuted for this act of cruelty because no one actually witnessed the puppies being eaten.

I personally don't think she deserves to be working around animals, that can't defend themselves. The city of Detroit Department of Public Health regulates these employees.

I would like to obtain a list of names of people who feel the same way I do. Eventually, I will forward this to TV-7 Action News and others. Please add your name. I can be reached at (734) 728-0527.

God gave us the animals to enjoy, not abuse. In the wild, I understand nature and the food chain. But when innocent animals are put in a cage for lunch, they have no place to run.

Thanks. Let's get this done for the puppies.

Vince Berna
Westland

Injection well-questioned

I am asking for a special prosecutor to look into the financial dealings of Environmental Disposal Systems of Birmingham, state Sen. Sikkema's campaign finance funds (from out of state natural gas operators), the Detroit Police and Firefighter's Pension Fund and the Bank of New York in relation to the high-pressure injection toxic waste well in Romulus.

Recently in South Carolina, a chlorine spill — just chlorine — caused the evacuation of an entire town. The area in which that accident occurred was not half as populous as the area in which this high-pressure injection toxic waste well is to be situated. If that accident had occurred at that railroad siding in Romulus, many people would be dead and maimed.

In fact, the land is being declared wasted for 10,000 years because no one will be able to build on it or otherwise use it for any other purpose during all of those extended eons.

This well, if put into operation, will impact on the ability of the local industries, which traditionally have used the layer into which you want to inject imported chemical waste, as a natural resource for pickling, manufacture and recently as a means to extract and store natural gas.

You are undermining in more ways than one the federal tax aspects of the water rights and interests of the people in this area.

It is clear that in this case the state of Michigan may be liable for this attack upon the local community because it has approved and stepped aside while others in this state have constructed and operated similar wells, most of which have failed or do not operate in the manner intended.

The dioxin poisoning by Dow at Midland and by a well in Ann Arbor are the responsibility and direct result of the Department of Environmental Quality refusing to admit that it approved, permitted, licensed and inspected the wells only to find that they had poisoned Michigan citizens.

The DEQ has done well, but it has not done enough in this matter. There is no legal barrier to striking down all the permits for this ridiculous scheme and I expect this well to be plugged and abandoned by this company.

Alfred Brock
Canton

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"The times I've been in Edison I've been impressed by the sense of family and community. When you come in, you feel the warmth. It comes through that this is a school that cares about children."

— School board Vice President Cindy Schofield, about Edison Elementary School, which has been named a state Blue Ribbon school

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Granholtm reneges on her promise to state's colleges

Last week was a busy one for those in the politics business in Michigan. Gov. Jennifer Granholtm delivered her State of the State speech last Tuesday and, two days later, submitted her budget proposals.

And both efforts received mostly negative reactions from the Republicans who control both houses of the Legislature. Taken together, these events set the stage for the political debate that will go on from now until the November 2006 election.

The governor's speeches were significant. Whatever you think about the details of her proposals, Granholtm, for the first time since being elected in 2002, has set out a coherent long-term agenda for the state. The first two years of her administration were preoccupied with mostly piecemeal attempts to get around the chronic (and so far entirely unresolved) structural state budget deficit of more than \$1 billion per year.

This time around, the governor proposed significant changes to the clumsy and badly out-of-date Single Business Tax. Her reforms are intended to help manufacturers, small businesses and high-tech startup companies.

She wants to take a \$2 billion bonding measure to the voters; if passed, she believes it will create 72,000 jobs. She also offered up an accelerated \$800 million public works program that's supposed to build roads and bridges and produce another 36,000 jobs. She offered the schools increased per-pupil funding and successful college juniors a \$4,000 merit scholarship.

The main themes that come through loud and clear are jobs — jobs right now and jobs in the future. For a governor presiding over a state with a 7.4 percent unemployment rate (the highest in the nation) and a Republican opposition beginning to sense blood in the water, talking jobs right now is a simple exercise in political survival. And for a state facing a fundamental erosion of its historic high-wage, low-skill manufacturing base, nothing could be more needed than steps to produce a highly skilled, educated and competitive workforce.

But selling this package won't be easy, especially in Lansing, where narrow partisanship has become the name of the game. Frankly, I thought the spectacle of the GOP lawmakers sitting dourly on their hands during the State of the State speech was both gratuitously rude and disappointingly partisan. Granholtm will need to be nimble over the next months in painting the Legislature as obstructionist and do-nothing, and she'll need to assemble a big-time coalition to sell her program to the public.

Which is why last week's mess over her budget proposals for funding higher education was so embarrassing and unnecessary.

Without getting into "insider baseball" detail, the governor's budget called for a \$30 million cut in this year's base funding for Michigan's 15 public universities, supposedly offset by a pledge of \$100 million in capital out-

lay and maintenance if they keep tuition increases below 5 percent.

Going ballistic is a mild way to describe the reaction from college presidents around the state. Those I talked with used terms like "betrayal," "astonished" and "plain and simple welsing on a deal" — together with some other comments not wholly suitable for inclusion in a family newspaper.

How come? At the end of last year's budget negotiations, the college presidents cut a deal with the governor: You hold your tuition increases below the rate of inflation and I'll guarantee your base funding won't get cut this year or next. If you read the text of last year's Executive Order, you'll see it right there in black and white. So from the perspective of the universities, Granholtm's budget plan was an outright betrayal of last year's deal coupled with a funding cut two-thirds of the way through the school year. "A kick in the teeth," one president called it.

I reached Mike Bolus, head of the presidents' council, on his way to MSU President Lou Anna Simon's inauguration. He was so mad he wouldn't trust himself to an on-the-record interview. His written statement made these points: "A \$30 million cut this late in the school year is the same as a \$120 million cut at the beginning of the fiscal year. ... During the last three years, Michigan's Legislature and governor have steadily cut state allocations to higher education. More than \$250 million has been cut during that time ... Per student state spending has dropped from \$6,840 in 2000 to \$5,720 today."

One president I know well told me that the governor's budget had succeeded in doing something previously considered impossible: uniting all the university presidents in the state.

Then Granholtm herself called me to say she was "amazed and distressed" at the rumpus that had been stirred up. "We thought that offering \$100 million in capital outlay and maintenance was a real sign of support for our universities," she said. "We're going to get together early next week to try to work out our differences."

Good idea. Granholtm has rightly made the core of her policy for Michigan doubling the number of college graduates over the next decade and increasing enormously the transfer of new technology from university research labs to high-tech companies. To do this, she needs help and cooperation from our state universities, just as they need her aid in trying to reverse the long, dismal and dangerous slide in state support.

Let's hope they succeed. Tin ears in Lansing and dark suspicion in the halls of academe are hardly the stuff on which Michigan's economic future is going to be constructed. Benjamin Franklin never got to Michigan, but he still may have said it best. To paraphrase a bit, if we don't all hang together, the state's future will, most assuredly, be left hanging out to dry.

Phil Power is a former regent of the University of Michigan. He is also the chairman of the board of the company that owns this newspaper. He would be pleased to get your reactions to this column either at (734) 953-2047 or at ppower@homecomm.net.



Phil Power

As MSU's new president, Simon plots future course

Attending a community college and then transferring to a university is nothing new. For years, students have used this method to save money on required basic courses or to buy time while trying to figure out what field to major in. But transferring those credits can sometimes backfire if the university you choose doesn't accept them.

At Michigan State University, nearly 60 percent of the East Lansing school's transfer students come from community colleges, according to Lou Anna Simon, the university's new president. These basic courses are the most cost-effective for MSU to offer, but with one million credit hours per year, "it's not a problem for us at all," said Simon of the financial impact.

"The issue is how to maintain the integrity of the degree," she noted. "Right now, there's no reverse transfer for an MSU student to go back to a community college and get an associate's degree."

Although one wonders how often that scenario unfolds, there is a definite movement to get more students graduating from Michigan universities. At just 22 percent, the state's undergrad rate is well below the national average, and that doesn't stack up well with Michigan's unemployment rate hovering around 7 percent.

More science and tech grads are needed to shift Michigan from a manufacturing to high-tech economy, according to the Commission on Higher Education and Economic Growth. Chaired by Lt. Gov. John Cherry, the Cherry Commission in December concluded that the state needs to double its number of college graduates.

"The goal is right if Michigan is to prosper," said Simon, but she questioned the additional expense. "Can we afford it? It's going to require higher education being a priority. People don't have a good understanding of what higher education really costs. We need to make it simple for people."

Universities seem to always take the hit, at least before K-12 education, when push comes to shove in the state budgeting process. In fact, higher education was below a lot of other priorities and is just now getting back in the field of vision, according to Simon. Historically, state budgets have

taken a short-term-solution approach, but the time is now to support the intellect of higher education, said Simon.

"We have to look at long-term issues and build for the future."

One of the problems might be the number of universities in Michigan, and consolidation is a possible answer that the Cherry Commission offered. However, MSU is not one of the institutions mentioned, so Simon is sure to steer clear of that conversation.

"There has to be more collaboration," she said. "But we'll just have to let the issue of too many universities unfold."

Simon is more focused on the university she's been in charge of since Jan. 1 of this year. She took over the helm of the 150-year-old institution when Peter McPherson ended his 11-year reign, becoming its 20th — and first female — CEO. But this Indiana native, born in 1947, is in no way a new face on campus.

She came to MSU as a grad student in 1970 and earned a doctorate in philosophy, administration and higher education four years later. Simon became a member of the faculty and assistant director of the Office of Institutional Research, and then served as provost and vice president for academic affairs in 1993.

Simon actually ran MSU when McPherson was in Iraq helping to rebuild that country's economy in 2003. Ten years prior, she was the faculty favorite for the president's position but the Board of Trustees made a last-minute move and picked McPherson.

Don't expect a 180-degree shift in philosophies from her predecessor. Simon will continue to champion MSU's study-abroad program and actually hopes to get more graduates involved. She'll focus on solidifying MSU's "brand" while allying with key universities on international research projects.

"Part of the money you spend on public research universities is for us to anticipate tomorrow's problems," she said.

But a problem of today is money, or a lack thereof. Even with tuition increases, the university has increased by 5,000 students since the 1990s. To grow more will demand additional residence halls and infrastructure, issues that will require fair treatment in the governor's next budget proposal.

Cal Stone is the editor of the *Novi News*. He can be reached at (248) 349-1700, Ext. 113, or by e-mail at cstone@ht.homecomm.net.



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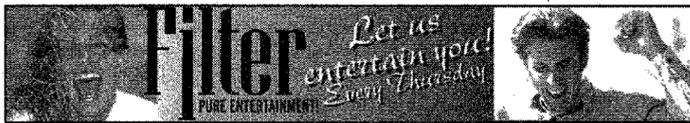
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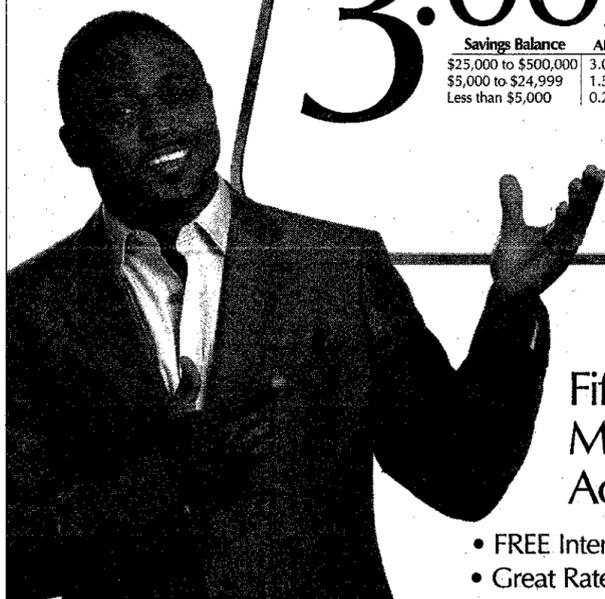
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Bouchard drops out from U.S. Senate race

BY ALEX LUNDBERG
STAFF WRITER

The race for the Republican Party nod to run against U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow in 2006 again is wide open following Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard's surprise withdrawal from the contest. In a statement released Tuesday, Bouchard cited "health issues, while not life-threatening," which made a statewide senatorial campaign a bad idea at this time. The same release said the medical condition, for which he was hospitalized, would not get in the way of him performing his duties as sheriff.

"I am extremely disappointed at this unforeseen development," Bouchard wrote in a press release. "Given these circumstances, I feel I cannot fairly discharge my important duties as sheriff of Oakland County, focus on my health and undertake the additional demands that are required for a successful Senate campaign." Bouchard, who could not be reached for comment Wednesday, said he would continue to focus on his work as sheriff and may consider a future run at statewide office once his medical problems are behind him. "I feel it unfair to my many

constituents and supporters not to pursue as vigorous a campaign as they and the State of Michigan deserve," he said. Also Tuesday, Oakland County Prosecutor David Goryca announced he too was removing his name from anyone's short list for the race. Citing family pressures, the prosecutor said he could not devote the time necessary to running against Stabenow in 2006. Oakland Republican Party Executive Director Diane Harnisch said her constituents can breathe easy, knowing there will be other quality candidates to come forward.

"I'm looking forward to having another well-respected Oakland County Republican to come out and declare his intentions," she said. While not naming names or announcing anyone else's candidacy, Harnisch said there were some who were interested in the race who will be re-evaluating where they stand in light of Bouchard leaving the race. She said she was confident that, once certain people were ready, they will step forward and announce. Until then, there's one thing that hasn't changed: who Republicans will target and why.

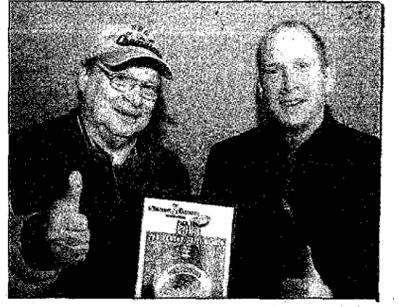
Retiree wins O&E 'Pick the Pros' contest

Ronald Tate's favorite sport is hockey — there is even a reference to the game on ice in his e-mail address.

have won that, too, Carry said. His winning percentage was tops for the O&E and ranked

But with the NHL lockout, he's been thinking about changing allegiances. "Since there's no hockey, I have no choice," he said.

A contest sponsored by the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers gives Tate another reason to list football as his favorite, in a landslide.



JOHN STORMZAND | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Ronald Tate (left) receives a plaque from Observer & Eccentric Advertising Director Marty Carry.

Tate, a 61-year-old Army veteran and retiree from Oxford, won Pick the Pros, a 22-week NFL game picking contest published inside the O&E sports sections in partnership with Baseview. Tate's name was randomly drawn from a field of nearly 700 contestants, according to Marty Carry, O&E advertising director. He wins a trip for four to Las Vegas, including airfare and hotel, Carry said. Had there been a winner for picking correctly, Tate would

seventh nationally among hundreds of other newspapers which run the same contest, according to Carry. "I went with my gut feeling," Tate said. The more a person played, the better his or her chances at winning, Carry said. Because Tate played every week there were 22 slips of paper with his name inside the drawing box. "We'll be back at the start of next year's season," Carry said. — By Steve Kowalski

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