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take center  
stage

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Class offers tips  
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PINK PAGE C8

1/15  
SUNDAY  
January 15, 2006

# WESTLAND Observer

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## New curriculum worries educators, parents

Michael Flanagan, state superintendent for public instruction, made the case for the state school board's new high school curriculum. **Page A8.**

BY SUE MASON  
STAFF WRITER

In a way, Nancy Zilka is glad her son and daughter are in college. They won't get caught up in the increased state high school graduation requirements that are coming. But that doesn't stop Zilka from

worrying ... worrying about Wayne-Westland students who won't be able to complete four years of math and English, three years of science and two years of a foreign language.

"I don't think every kid is college-bound, so what will happen to kids who can't keep up?" she said. "I think the graduation rate is going to fall off."

The State Legislature is considering a state Board of Education proposal that requires high school students to have 18 specific credit hours to graduate. State School Superintendent Michael Flanagan had recommended 16 credits, but the state board expand-

ed it by adding the foreign language credits.

### NEW CURRICULUM

The requirements include what is being called the Michigan Merit Curriculum that combines a core list of rigorous academic classes, along with a list of 21st century skill sets that will be integrated and taught in all courses. The plan includes:

- Four years of English language arts.
- One year each of Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and an additional math class in the senior year.

■ One year each of biology, physics or chemistry and one additional year of science.

■ Three years of social science, which must include a semester of civics and a semester of economics.

■ Two years of world languages.

■ One year of health or physical education.

■ One year of visual and performing arts.

Up until now, only one semester of civics has been required for high school graduation under state law, but most school districts have established their own requirements for gradua-

tion.

In Wayne-Westland, students need a minimum of 22 credits to graduate, including:

- Four credits in communication arts (literature, composition and communication classes and electives).
- Three credits of social sciences.
- Two credits each in mathematics and science.
- One credit in physical education.
- A half credit in computers.
- Two designated electives in subjects like fine arts, business, industrial

PLEASE SEE CURRICULUM, A4

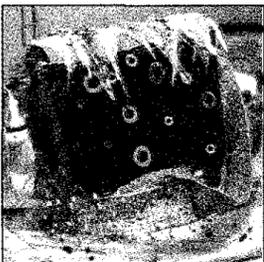


Kelly Darke has a home studio where she makes handbags, jewelry and paintings.

PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## Artist savors work's meditative effect

Using wire, leather, steel washers, feathers, satin and glass beads, Kelly Darke created this handbag.



BY DARRELL CLEM  
STAFF WRITER

At an age when many girls are content to dress up their Barbie dolls, Kelly Darke was using her creative flair to transform a pair of old shorts into a skirt.

"When I was in fifth or sixth grade, I would make some of my own clothes," she said.

She became immersed in drawing and painting by high school, and for her own

wedding in 1999 she made a tiara from silver, pearls and garnets.

Inside her Westland apartment, near Ann Arbor Trail and Merriman, Darke's abstract paintings bring rich colors to an artistic environment she shares with husband Vincent Cocciolone and their 3-year-old daughter, Grace.

Darke, pregnant with another child who is due any day, talked last week

PLEASE SEE ARTIST, A6

## Tell it to Toy

Senator holds town hall meeting about water rate increases

BY DARRELL CLEM  
STAFF WRITER

Area residents concerned about water rate increases will have a chance to spout off this week.

State Sen. Laura Toy, R-Livonia, will hear comments about water rates while hosting a town hall meeting 9-10:30 a.m. Friday at Westland's Bailey Recreation Center, behind City Hall on Ford Road between Newburgh and Wayne.

Her district includes Westland, Livonia, Garden City and Redford.

Toy is again sponsoring legislation to create a regional authority to oversee water rate increases and other financial issues related to the Detroit Water & Sewerage Department.

Detroit has announced it will impose water rates that will cost consumers more starting this summer. Westland is expecting a rate hike of just under 6 percent; Garden City, a startling 19 percent increase.

"Whoever is concerned about water rates or contracts - whether for or against - we welcome them to come out and let us know, because we need to be armed with that information as we proceed with this legislation," Toy said.

She remains concerned that Detroit isn't fully accountable for how it spends revenues from water rates. She said some will view her stance as racial - a view she rejects. She said all residents, including those in Detroit, face potentially unfair rate increases.

"Water is clear, and there is no color to this," Toy said.

Westland Mayor Sandra Cicirelli welcomed Toy's decision to host a public hearing on water rates.

"It will give our residents a chance to express their opinions," she said, adding later, "I don't think it's unreasonable for those of us in the suburbs to have some representation and some voice in how water rates are set and how increases are set."

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## Web site offers new real estate features

The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers Web site is designed with the user in mind.

The new site offers the best of local content and advertising and can provide worldwide reach. Readers and advertisers will find a lot to like about the expanded site.

If you're selling or buying a new home, you'll find more than 20,000 homes listed - more than any other newspaper Web site in Michigan.

In addition, all of the For Sale By Owner ads can be accessed online.

Users can search by agent, broker or new home listings.

There are three search options -

advanced, map and MLS. The advanced search allows you to limit by municipality or ZIP code, price, type of home, number of bedrooms and/or bathrooms and other amenities. The map search lets you navigate nine counties to find the area you want to search. The Multiple Listing Service search allows you to search by the MLS number.

Once you find a home you can map the property, save the listing to view later, e-mail the information or print a flier (with all the key information including price, details, map and photo) for later use. The print flier is a great feature because it provides a one-page document with all of the information on it - picture, price, details

of the house and a map of where it's located.

And finally you can use the mortgage calculator on the home listing page to get an idea of what your monthly payments will be.

In addition, click on Real Estate News to read about the local market, seminars, mortgage options and homes sold in your neighborhood, community or county.

"We're excited about improving and adding features to our site and we welcome comments," said Michael Mizner, director of information technology at the O&E. "Go to www.hometownlife.com and click on 'Contact Us' to tell us what you think and what you'd like to see."



It's a  
winner

A poster created by John Glenn High School senior Nicole Winekoff will be on display during the public show days of the North American International Auto Show 2006. For story and photos, see Page A3.

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**Coming Thursday  
in Filter**

**BLAST**

Motown Winter Blast kicks  
off Super Bowl week

# Concept cars take center stage at show

BY ALEX LUNDBERG  
STAFF WRITER

One of the highlights of the annual North American International Auto Show is the parade of concept cars.

Sleek or boxy, futuristic or retro, energy conscious or more powerful than a locomotive, these glimpses into the minds of auto designers are a popular feature of auto shows everywhere.

This year features redesigns of the Chevy Camaro and Dodge Challenger, the introduction of the red-hot Ferrari FXX, Jeep's new Compass and several electric and hybrid models that may only be a few years from incentives and low-APR financing.

Or, that is, at least parts of them. While it's very uncommon for a concept car to make the leap to the showroom floor (Dodge's Viper is one of the few exceptions) many of the features and accents on them are very likely to show up in future production models.

David Wong was the lead interior designer for Nissan in Farmington Hills for a concept car called the Urge. He said the vehicle is targeted directly on the youth market and the easy incorporation of consumer technology into the design was a major priority.

"It's a three-seat, rear-wheel drive convertible car," Wong said. "We've eliminated cell phone power points so electronics (phones and Mp3 players) plug directly into the car and their displays come up on console displays that can be controlled on the wheel."

It also had to be safe. The car is targeted at young drivers but this is the kind of car parents are likely going to buy for their kids.

To that end, the Urge includes a reinforced roll cage and a centered third seat in the back. He said the hardest kind of impact to design against is the side impact. The front and rear of a car's passenger cabin are protected by the engine and the trunk — areas that can incorporate crumple zones. With the rear seat in the center of the car, there's more metal between the passenger and a colliding car.

The design has other advantages as well.



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

General Motors Vice Chairman Bob Lutz looks like a proud father at the introduction of the Chevrolet Camaro concept car.

## ABOUT THE SHOW

**What:** North American International Auto Show 2006

**Where:** Cobo Conference/Exhibition Center, Detroit

**When:** 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. (no admittance after 9 p.m.) now through Saturday, Jan. 21, and 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. (no admittance after 6 p.m.) Sunday, Jan. 22.

**Cost:** Adults \$12, senior citizen (age 65 and older) \$6 and children ages 7-12 \$5. Children age 6 and under free with their parent. Tickets may be purchased the day of the show at any ticket booth located in the Cobo Center concourse or online at [www.naias.com](http://www.naias.com).

"The rear passenger usually sits in the middle anyway," Wong said. "There they have a better view and can be more involved in the conversation."

Of course, no one can buy an Urge and they likely never will. Concept cars, he said, are opportunities for designers and engineers to show that technologies and theories have good potentials.

It gives creative minds a chance to test ideas both in terms of their functional feasibility and their ability to interest the public at venues like NAIAS.

Cydney Martin is a cost-reduction manager with Johnson Controls in Plymouth. Long after the concepts are part of the assembly

line, it's his job to make sure they are worth including in future iterations of a vehicle.

"The designers set all of the bells and whistles on a car when it goes into production," he said. "After a few years, we assess if all of those are utilized, do people care about them and whether or not they're competitive."

It's not just the number of cupholders or the placement of a console in the middle of the car, it's also about the materials used.

If the high-grade leather isn't selling very well and competitors aren't offering it, it's going to be discontinued.

"We make the cars cheaper to produce but not so the consumer notices it," Martin said.

"We do research on vehicles that have been in the market for a few years."

Dean of the College for Creative Studies Imre Molnar, who lives in Franklin, said the transportation curriculum is a significant part of the school's industrial design program.

"GM hired 13 graduates in May and only six or seven were from the transportation program," he said. "The car companies hire an incredible amount of creative talent."

CCS has a large display of concept car models in the lower level of the Auto Show. The school is in its 100th year and their alumni hold major positions in design departments in DaimlerChrysler, Ford, GM, Kia, Nissan, Hyundai and Toyota.

At this year's show, CCS grads directed the designs of seven 2006 and '07 production vehicles, seven concept cars and 10 car and truck of the year candidates from automakers worldwide.

In June of 2005, the school received a \$50 million bequest from the estate of Josephine Ford, granddaughter of auto pioneer Henry Ford.

School trustees will use the money to create an endowment, the interest from it will be used for fund scholarships for underprivileged students.

## AROUND WESTLAND

### Essay contest

State Sen. Laura Toy, R-Livonia, is looking for a "date" to Gov. Jennifer Granholm's 2006 State of the State address, and she's using an essay contest to find the perfect person.

Toy is asking high school students in her district in 500 words or less to describe what they would do as a state senator to make the state a better place to live in one of three categories — economy, education and environment.

Entries will be judged on the basis of thoughtfulness and creativity as well as the potential of the idea or ideas presented to have a positive impact in the chosen category.

Essays can be e-mailed to Toy at [senltoy@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senltoy@senate.michigan.gov) with the subject, "If I Were a Senator," faxed to (517) 373-3935 or mailed to Sen. Laura Toy, P.O. Box 30036, Lansing, MI 48909 by Jan. 20. Be sure to include your name, home address, home telephone number.

The winner will be notified by Monday, Jan. 23, and will accompany Toy to the State of the State address on Jan. 25 in Lansing. If the winner is unable to attend, a runner-up will be selected.

For more information, call Toy at (517) 373-1707 or e-mail at the aforementioned e-mail address.

### Open for business

If you have a bill to mail or stamps to buy on Monday, you can do it at the Westland Post Office.

The Westland facility at 6300 N. Wayne Road is one of several selected area offices that will be open for business on the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. The post office's retail lobby will be open and P.O. boxes will be available 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### King celebration

The city of Westland will sponsor its observance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday at 9:30 a.m. Monday at the Annapolis Park Church of Christ on the city's southeast side. The public is invited. The church is located on the southeast corner of Annapolis and Henry Ruff.

The event will include keynote speaker Benny Napoleon, former Detroit police chief.

It also will include musical performers and the announcement of winners of a poster contest honoring King.

### Coffee, please

State Rep. Glenn Anderson, D-Westland, will have his legislative assistant, Mike Hill

meet constituents for coffee 9-10:30 a.m. Monday, Jan. 16, at the Westland Big Boy restaurant, 6360 N. Wayne at Hunter.

### Surplus food

The city of Westland will distribute surplus federal food 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 18, at the Dorsey Community Center for residents who live north of Michigan Avenue.

Residents south of Michigan Avenue should pick up their commodities on Monday at St. James United Methodist Church, 30055 Annapolis, between Henry Ruff and Middlebelt roads. Senior citizens in Taylor Towers should call their building manager for their day of distribution.

Food to be distributed this month includes frozen ground beef, applesauce and pineapple juice. Call the Dorsey Center at (734) 595-0366.

### Italian Feast

John Glenn High School Instrumental Music Program is holding its third annual Italian Feast at 6 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 21, at Merriman Road Baptist Church, Merriman just south of Ford, Garden City.

Enjoy an evening of authentic Italian dining, along with performances from John Glenn students who will be attending the upcoming MSBOA Solo and Ensemble District Festival. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$8 for children ages 11 and under. Call Connie McLean at (734) 721-4465 or Penny Gierak at (734) 722-2637.

### Charity bowling

The Westland Chamber of Commerce will hold 2006 Winterfest charity bowling event 1-5 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 25, at Westland Bowl, 5940 N. Wayne Road. Partial proceeds benefit the Joseph F. Benyo Scholarship Fund.

Registration is at 12:30 p.m. with the tournament starting at 1 p.m. Four-person teams will bowl, alternating every fourth frame. Cost is \$120 per team or \$30 per person. Price includes bowling, two well drinks and dinner buffet after the tournament at Marvaso's Italian Grille, 6569 N. Wayne Road.

For more information, call the chamber at (734) 326-7222.

### Spaghetti dinner

The Westland Youth Athletic Association U14 Lightning softball team will hold a fundraiser spaghetti dinner 4-7 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 29, at the AMVETS Hall, 1711 Merriman, Westland. Cost is \$7 for all you can eat. There also will be a raffle, drawings and bake sale.

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USDA GRADE A	GOV'T. INSPECTED	GROUND FRESH HOURLY
Boneless • Lean TOP SIRLOIN STEAKS \$3.99 lb.	LOIN PORK CHOPS \$2.19 lb.	Ground Beef from GROUND SIRLOIN \$2.29 lb.
USDA GRADE A	GOV'T. INSPECTED	
Boneless • Lean TOP SIRLOIN STEAKS \$3.99 lb.	Whole Beef TENDERLOINS \$5.99 lb.	
USDA GRADE A	Sliced Free	
Boneless • Lean TOP SIRLOIN STEAKS \$3.99 lb.	Ground Beef from GROUND SIRLOIN \$2.29 lb.	
USDA GRADE A	Family Pace	
Boneless • Lean TOP SIRLOIN STEAKS \$3.99 lb.	Ground Beef from GROUND SIRLOIN \$2.29 lb.	

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Greater Detroit Newspaper Network



Showing off their filmmaking certificates are Melissa Sturm (left) and Alyssa Lasley.

# Talented teens have message in filmmaking

BY JULIE BROWN  
STAFF WRITER

Melissa Sturm, 18, a Wayne Memorial High School senior, had concerns about stereotyping of girls. She put those concerns into her film, *Girls*, the winner of the first teen film contest at the William P. Faust Public Library of Westland.

"It's kind of like a big issue with teens," the Wayne resident said after her film and the others were shown Tuesday at the library. She wanted to raise awareness "and we really shouldn't be talking about people."

She'll attend Washtenaw Community College after graduation to study photography. Sturm, daughter of Mary Robinson and Chuck Sturm, recently entered a digital photography competition and won a Gold Key award.

She was pleased to take top honors in the library contest: "It's exciting and I'm glad that I had a chance to do it."

Students in her digital media class at the William D. Ford Career Technical Center were interviewed on camera for *Girls*.

Sturm's not sure what film she'd make if money were no object, but wants to reach people with her work in documentaries.

She won a \$100 gift certificate to Best Buy. Other students whose work was shown Tuesday are:

- Alyssa Lasley, Wayne Memorial High senior, *Growing Up*.
- Crystal Herndon, Wayne Memorial High senior, *Piercing Culture or Trend*.
- Kris Wellman, Livonia Churchill High junior, *The*

*Terribly True Story of Darnem Productions.*

"This was part of a Teen Read Week event," young adult librarian Rori Bielak said of the contest. The American Library Association sponsors the Teen Read Week in October and chooses a theme. This year it was "Get Real at Your Library."

The Teen Advisory Board at the library, for sixth through 12th grades, opted for the movie contest. Bielak and Craig Welkenbach of city of Westland cable WLND put the event together, with WLND and Friends of the Library sponsorship.

The films were required to be nonfiction and one to 10 minutes long. The teen judges picked the winner based on creativity, technique and reflection of the theme. The students each received a book.

"All of them were wonderful," Bielak said.

City cable director Welkenbach was glad to be involved and impressed with the work.

"Oh, it's so encouraging to see what the youth can do today," he said. "Very talented kids."

He noted that video cameras are more readily available in many families, making filmmaking easier to pursue.

"You can literally take a phone and make a movie today," Welkenbach said. "It's a great way for them to express themselves."

The students will be interviewed on WLND and their work shown, he added.

For information on teen activities at the library in Westland, call (734) 326-6123 or visit [www.westland.lib.mi.us](http://www.westland.lib.mi.us) online.

# Student wins \$500 prize with poster

BY SUE MASON  
STAFF WRITER

Nicole Winekoff admits there were times she wanted to tell Steve Paulsen to do it himself.

The John Glenn High School senior didn't and now she's \$500 richer after winning Designer's Best of Show-Digital in the North American International Auto Show's 18th annual High School Poster Contest.

"It feels great, I really didn't think I'd win," said Winekoff. "I'm not one to win, so it made me feel pretty good." "We've won something every year since we started entering the contest," said Paulsen. "I thought all of our pieces were good, they were all excellent, all better than those chosen as winners."

More than 340 students participated in the contest. The top honor - the \$1,000 Chairman's Award - went to Derek Bennion, a 12th-grade student at Dakota High School.

The posters had to have an automotive-related theme and make reference to the auto show which opened to the public this weekend at Cobo Center in Detroit.

In addition to Winekoff's prize, there also were awards for the best of show among traditional entries as well as best use of color and creativity. The winning posters are on display during the public show days - of the North American International Auto Show 2006.

Winekoff is a student in Paulsen's graphic design class at the William D. Ford Career Technical Center in Westland. Her win marks the fifth consecutive year that Paulsen's students have won honors in the contest.

Winekoff did the first version of the poster rather quickly, but redid it not once but twice at Paulsen's behest. Her first try she filled the large block letters with car parts, but Paulsen has her mix in cars to bring more

color to the work.

"It was a lot of work to do," she said. "The first time I had to start completely over. I had more car parts with less color, so he had me redo it to make it more colorful and bring out the color. Most times he has you correct a few things here and there."

"I almost said, 'Do it yourself,' but I held in there and did it myself."

The seventeen-year-old Westland resident describes herself as a "big art person" and says it was her late grandmother who inspired her. O all her family, TD, as she called her grandmother, had the greatest love of arts and crafts.

"I loved helping her, that's what inspired me," she said. Winekoff added that she's taken plenty of art classes during her time in school and she opted for Paulsen's graphic design class after seeing what her sister Heather did in that same class.

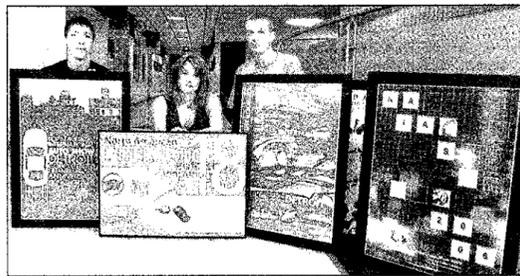
"I went on a tour of the center while in high school to see what my sister did," said Winekoff who is in her second year at the career/technical center. "I'm not sure she entered the poster contest, but she entered Scholastic Awards and won."

The \$500 prize will come in handy for Winekoff who plans to study graphic design at Schoolcraft College for a few years before transferring to a four-year university.

This is the fifth year Paulsen's students have entered the contest which went from roughly 40 entries five years ago to around 313 this year.

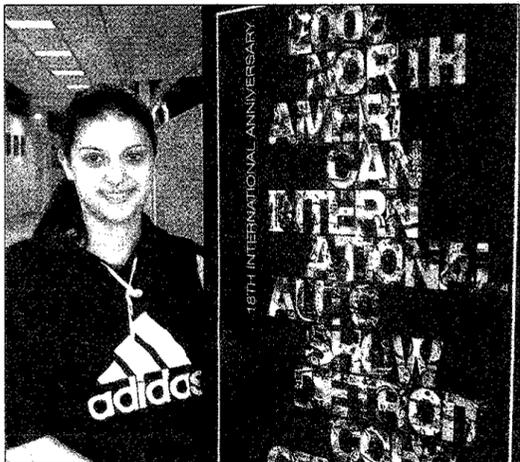
He likes student contests like this one because it's juried by professional design people. He looks for contests where students can win scholarship money and get real life experience.

His students recently did a poster contest for Apple Computers. Two students won iPod Shuffles, a hard-to-find commodity around Christmas time.



PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Wayne Memorial High School seniors JJ McKenzie, Holli Hanna and Tim See show off their posters and others done by graphic design students for the auto show.



John Glenn High School senior Nicole Winekoff, a student at the William D. Ford Career Technical Center, won Best in Show for the digital poster she designed for the auto show.

"I think real jobs are the way to go," he said. "It gives them an incentive and they have to deal with a client on what the design is about and they have provide a finished product."

"They learn that they won't succeed if they don't follow the rules."

Paulsen is on the lookout for similar contests for his students and has praise for the metro Detroit auto dealers who support the contest and other activities for students during the auto show.

"To put on a competition

with that much money as prizes ... it's the biggest thing we do," he said. "They're first class."

Winekoff planned to be at the auto show Saturday with an entourage of family members, including her father, mother, step-father and several aunts, to see her winning poster on display. And with good reason. It's also won a silver medal in Scholastic Art competition.

"I think he (Paulsen) looks for what he likes," she said. "And if he likes it, it's got to be pretty good."



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**CURRICULUM**

FROM PAGE A1  
arts, life skills, world language or career technical education. The Michigan Merit Curriculum would begin with the freshman class next year, if any necessary legislation is passed and enacted by March 1. If legislation isn't enacted by that time, the requirements would begin with the following freshman class.

**CAUSE FOR CONCERN**

Wayne-Westland School Superintendent Greg Baracy shares Zilka's concern about student achievement and the potential increase in the high school dropout rate. "I'm supportive of a rigorous curriculum and accounting, but one shoe doesn't fit all," said Baracy. "It has unrealistic expectations for all students. It's extremely restrictive, it doesn't leave much time for a high school experience. It's going to have a negative impact on career technical and other elective classes." But Baracy's concerns go beyond that. The district has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars buying textbooks to bring its classes in line with the state's core curriculum. The new high school requirements will mean more textbook purchases and hiring new high school math and science teachers. "It's already difficult to find highly qualified teachers, now we have to compete with other districts to hire the math and science teachers," he said. "This makes our job even more diffi-

cult. The timing isn't good at all." School board trustee Steve Becher echoed Baracy's comments, urging parents to look at the requirements and see how they will impact their children. He used his child to see "how it would play out with the schedules, how it would impact over the years." "It takes away the options for exploring high school when high school should be a time for exploring," he said. "Students who like art and marketing will lose out because they have less options." However, state school board members see the new requirements as "a great balance that creates flexibility for school districts," according to state board member Reginald Turner. "It gets us where we should be today and challenges us to think more of where we need to get to tomorrow," he said. Zilka disagrees. A longtime school activist who served on the building improvement teams in elementary and high school, she thinks the plan hasn't been thought through completely. "I think schools generally want kids to succeed, there's a lot of programs in the schools to try and help them to succeed," she said. "But I think some of the classes need to start in middle school to have these kids ready for college. If students are required to take all higher math classes, it should start in middle school."

**MAKING CHOICES**

Zilka's daughter Kristen chose a college preparatory path

through Wayne Memorial High School, while son Brian tended toward career technical classes. Kristen, according to her mother, wasn't good in math and struggled until she connected with a teacher. She will graduate from Eastern Michigan University in April with her teaching degree. Son Brian had planned to study conservation, but gave it up when he saw what was required. He took classes at the career tech center. He's now at Muskegon Community College, preparing to transfer to Ferris State University to study heating and cooling technology. "I can't believe all the legislators can agree with this, that no one has questioned what will happen to kids who can't keep up with this schedule," Zilka said. "The kids who want to go to college are already on college path, I don't understand why they're making this such stringent a thing." Zilka believes that the changes are due in part to the colleges which think kids aren't prepared enough when they go to college. She favors all students attending community college to see what college is like before moving on to four-year schools. "I think it's being pushed through too fast, it needs to be studied more," she said. "I think they need to start slow and add a class each year. I'm not saying that kids don't need to be challenged, but I think they're going at this too gung-ho." "I think they're moving along way too fast."

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**Observer & Eccentric wins awards**

The *Observer & Eccentric* Newspapers walked away with 25 awards in the Suburban Newspapers of America's annual Editorial Contest.

The awards were announced Jan. 5. The SNA announced that the 2005 contest was the most competitive in the association's 35 year history with more than 3,100 entries, a 40 percent increase over last year's record number. The American Press Institute judged the contest this year.

- The awards included:
- Best News Photo Class B Third Place - photographer Tom Hawley of *Redford Observer*.
  - Best Non-Page One Layout Class B Third Place - Jennifer Foley, *Redford/Garden City Sports Front*.
  - Best Opinion Columns: Class C First Place - Hugh Gallagher.
  - Best Front Page: Class B First Place - *Redford Observer*. An award marking layout, headlines, photography, stories and more for the paper.
  - Best Editorial Writing Class C Third Place - Dave Varga of the *Redford Observer*.
  - Best Special Section: Class D Second Place - Pink/Wensdy White.
  - Best Editorial Page: Class C Third Place - *Livonia Observer*/Dave Varga.
  - Best Non-Page One Layout: Class D Third Place - *Livonia Observer* Beth Jackman.
  - Best Coverage of Local Education/School Class B Second Place - *Plymouth Observer* Tony Bruscato.
  - Best Sports Section Class B First Place - Ed Wright Plymouth/Canton Sports.
  - Best Opinion Column Class B First Place - Brad Kadrich/*Plymouth Observer*.
  - Best Sports Writing: Class B Second Place - *Farmington*



This photo by Tom Hawley earned a Third Place award for Best News Photo in the Suburban Newspapers of America contest. It shows Tania Mason (center), who was employed at 7 Grand Cleaners, holding onto Roosevelt Claxton after she found out his stepson Faye Lea, owner of the cleaners, was killed inside his store. At right is Marcia Lowe, who was with Mason.

- Best Local Election Coverage Class C Third Place - *Rochester Eccentric* staff.
  - Best Opinion Column Class B Second Place - Wayne Peal/*Southfield Eccentric*.
  - Best Sports Photo Class C Third Place Tie - "Chargers Clip Mustangs," Larry McKee/*Southfield Eccentric*.
  - Best Graphic Artwork (supporting editorial) Class A & B combined First Place - Randy Masters/*Southfield Eccentric*.
  - Best Lifestyle Section Class B Third Place - Susan Steinmueller/*Eccentric Life*.
  - Best Editorial Writing Class B Third Place - Wayne Peal/*Southfield Eccentric*.
  - Best Local Election Coverage Class B Second Place - *West Bloomfield Eccentric* "Democrats Rule West Bloomfield"/Larry Ruehlen.
  - Best News Series Class B First Place - *Troy Eccentric* "Prayer Group's Bid"/Megan Pennefather and Sandy Armbruster.
  - Best Front Page Class B Third Place - *Troy Eccentric*/Sandy Armbruster and Megan Pennefather.
  - Best Editorial Writing Class B Second Place - Sandy Armbruster/*Troy Eccentric*.
  - Best Headline Class B First Place - *West Bloomfield Eccentric* "Arrested, Arraigned and Sworn In"/Larry Ruehlen.
- "Considering the volume and quality of entries, it was difficult to pick winners," said contest judge Jody Calendar. "Outstanding journalism is alive and well as evidenced in this contest. In many categories I awarded ties and honorable mentions and in each case it was always a difficult decision what not to honor. Congratulations to all for an impressive body of work."

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Thursday, January 26, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

The Henry Ford Academy entrance is on the west end of Henry Ford Museum facing Oakwood Boulevard.

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Henry Ford Academy is a partnership between The Henry Ford and Ford Motor Company and is chartered by Wayne County Regional Educational Service Agency.

INFORMATION CENTRAL

# Camera business goes online

PHOTOS FAST

After 20 years in business, Livonia's Express Photo & Camera has launched a new online photo center and Web site.

The move will expand the services and add convenience, according to owners John and Lynn Kemski. Customers can download photos from a home or work computer, place an order online, and either pick up photographs at the store, or have them delivered.

Express Photo is a family owned, full service, digital imaging lab. For two decades, the business has grown in the community.

"We developed photos of newborns, and hired them 16 years later to help in the store," said

John Kemski. "This is a family business serving the needs of our friends and neighbors. We hope with the launch of our Web site and online ordering capabilities that the community will let us continue to serve them for many more years to come."

The new site, [expressphotodigital.com](http://expressphotodigital.com), offers complete photo services including online editing, ordering and sharing, photo storage, and customized greeting cards and calendars.

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@hometownlife.com](mailto:scasola@hometownlife.com) or call (734) 953-2054.



**H**  
Ruth J. Holland  
Holland, 81, of Westland, died Jan. 13.

**L**  
Anna Londeau  
Londeau, 83, of Westland, died Jan. 12.

**S**  
Erika G. Sizemore  
Sizemore, 64, died Jan. 9.

**W**  
David M. Watt  
Watt, 36, formerly of Livonia, died Dec. 12, 2005.

Carol Wayland  
Wayland, 42, formerly of Clawson, died Jan. 10.

Thomas D. Whidden Jr.  
Whidden, 37, of Westland, died Jan. 3.

**For the Record** appears in every edition of the *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*. Complete paid obituaries can be found inside today's newspaper in *Passages* on page C4.

Frank Harold Worden  
Worden, 63, died Jan. 11.

The Super Bowl is turning 40! Jan. 15 marks the anniversary of the very first Super Bowl game, held in 1967, in Los Angeles, between the Green Bay Packers (35) and the Kansas City Chiefs (10).

Circumstances were different back then. Tickets sold for \$12 apiece and winning team members took home \$15,000 per man, not to mention the fact that it was called the AFL-NFL World Championship Game, not the Super Bowl, the first two years.

The Super Bowl is undoubtedly the most popular and most lucrative sporting event on television. Some people watch it for the game, while others tune in for the commercials and the half-time entertainment.

Whether you have been playing or watching football your whole life, or are new to the sport, the William P. Faust Public Library of Westland has many items available to help you appreciate the game.

Books, such as *The Making of the Super Bowl* by Don Weiss and *NFL Super Bowl Companion: Personal Reflections on America's Favorite Games* by John Wiebusch, along with the DVD, *Greatest Moments in Super Bowl History*, can fill you in on the history of the event, or just refresh your memory.

*The Football Book*, by *Sports Illustrated*, is a terrific new history of football, which complements the many other books we own on the history, rules and how-to of football.

The library offers a number of sporting magazines filled with up-to-date information on coming events, such as *Sports Illustrated*, *Sports Illustrated for Kids*, *The Sporting News* and *ESPN*.

Although there are many Web sites featuring information about the Super Bowl, the most inclusive are [www.superbowl.com](http://www.superbowl.com) and [www.nfl.com](http://www.nfl.com).

Whatever your interests may be the library has books, magazines and audio-visual materials, along with internet access and computer access to many informative databases, at your disposal. Stop in for a visit or call us at (734) 326-6123.

**Adult Book Club:** 7 p.m. Jan. 17. This month's book is *Accordion Crimes* by Annie Proulx. Please read the book before the meeting. All are welcome.

**Microsoft Word for Beginners:** 2 p.m. Jan. 21. Learn the basics of Microsoft Word, a word processing program that lets users create a variety of documents, including letters and resumes.

**Chinese New Year's Party:** 2 p.m. Jan. 22. Learn about this yearly Chinese tradition, listen to a Chinese story, make a craft and other fun activities. Ages 6 and up, register at the Children's Desk.

The William P. Faust Public Library is at 6123 Central City Parkway, Westland. For More information, call (734) 326-6123.

## Franklin hosts scrapbooking event Jan. 21

Franklin High School's Senior All-Night Party is hosting a day-long Scrapbooking Fund-raiser from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 21, at the school's cafeteria.

Cost is \$35 which includes a table for the day, refreshments (coffee and muffins), a goodie bag and several demonstrations throughout the day by Creative Memories consultant Dawn Bovia. Drawings for prizes will also be held throughout the day.

Participants are invited to bring along pictures and scrapbooking supplies and join in a day of preserving memories. Those who have never tried scrapbooking are invited also. Creative Memories will also sell supplies that day.

All ages are invited. Parents of June graduates are invited to get a jump on ways to display 18 years of memories, while parents of freshman are urged to get ahead of the game, and start now.

The Senior All Night Party is an event that takes place after commencement exercises. It's an alcohol- and drug-free party designed to keep seniors safe for the night.

Money raised by the scrapbooking fund-raiser will help defer costs of entertainment, food and special activities for the party.

Registration is due by Monday, Jan. 16, call Kelly Pay at (734) 793-0115 to register. For questions on the Senior All-Night Party, contact Marge Gault at (734) 522-3897 or [tgault@twmi.nrr.com](mailto:tgault@twmi.nrr.com)

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## ARTIST

FROM PAGE A1

about her life as an emerging artist.

Her work is shown regularly at Orchard Lake Framing & Gallery in West Bloomfield and at Ornamentum Gallery in Hudson, N.Y., which is run by friends she knew in college.

Darke, 33, even landed a spot last November on a Home & Garden Television show, *That's Clever*, when that show's crew visited select artists in Michigan.

"It was cool, and they really showcased my artwork," she said.

Darke's work includes sterling silver jewelry, unique handbags and oil paintings. She works out of her home studio.

She seemed destined to become an artist. Her mother often made clothes for her and her four siblings. One of her grandmothers flourished at painting, and a younger brother is an artist and lawyer.

**After graduating, Kelly Darke started a Web site for emerging artists called The Lounge Gallery of Art and worked as a designer for QuatraMedia - an Internet Web site design company. She has been an art consultant at The Avenue Gallery in Birmingham.**

Darke grew up in Grosse Pointe and attended college at New York City's Parsons School of Design before receiving her bachelor of fine arts degree, with honors, from Wayne State University.

After graduating, she started a Web site for emerging artists called The Lounge Gallery of Art and worked as a designer for QuatraMedia - an Internet Web site design company. She has been an art consultant at The Avenue Gallery in

Birmingham.

Now, she is working at Wayne State on her master's degree in art education and art therapy. The latter uses art to help people work through mental or physical difficulties.

At home, Darke uses the thinnest of silver, gold or copper wire, along with such items as beads and birthstones, to create bracelets, necklaces and earrings. She uses a crocheting technique for her creations.

One piece that has drawn attention is a purse she made of sterling silver, leather, steel washers, satin, feathers and glass beads. She spends many hours on some items.

"I find it kind of meditative," she said. "It's very relaxing."

Darke has sold hundreds of pieces of her work, with a price range typically of \$40 to \$350. Much of the jewelry that she creates is commissioned by people who have some idea of what they want.

Darke also is passionate about her painting. One abstract that dominates a wall inside her apartment has many



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Kelly Darke enjoys painting abstracts. Here, she stands in front of one she titled 'Storm.'

colors competing for attention, and in some areas it has the appearance of water running. She named it "Storm."

"I like to give my paintings one-word titles," she said. "What it reminds me of is what I call it."

Darke also does floral paintings. And, one of her abstract pieces looks like many squares - with slightly contrasting

shades of color - bunched together. It almost has the feel of a busy Manhattan street or some other place where many people would gather. She contemplates calling it "Crowd." She paints with no preconceived notion of how the finished product will look, or what it will mean to her or someone viewing it.

Although Darke's life is

about to get busier with a new baby, she will find time to continue her art. She feels inspired, compelled to create. "It's not a choice."

Some of Darke's work can be seen at [www.kellydarke.com](http://www.kellydarke.com). She also can be reached by e-mail at [kelly@kellydarke.com](mailto:kelly@kellydarke.com) or by phone at (734) 502-7902.

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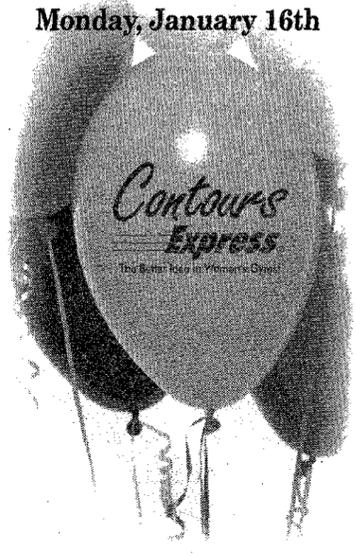
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# Many scientists are skeptical about the theory of evolution

With regard to Judge (John) Jones's decision in the Dover, PA Intelligent Design (ID) case, and Hugh Gallagher's column on the decision, there appears to be a major misunderstanding about the nature of science. There are two different classes of scientific study, experimental and historic. Experimental science is the commonly understood version, where experiments can be conducted to repeat the observations to test and verify a theory. For instance, the speed of light can be measured by one researcher and confirmed by many others. Historical science involves the study of phenomena which have occurred in the past and cannot be repeated, such as a crime where a break-in results in a rape and murder. Evidence can be collected that may point to a specific individual, but without an eyewitness account or evidence uniquely linked to the culprit, his identity cannot be determined with certainty. The difficulty of this form of science is indicated by the number of convicted inmates that have been released once DNA test results have cleared them.

Judge Jones took issue with separation of the study of evolution from other scientific studies such as physics or chemistry. If he understood the difference between experimental and historic science, the reason for the application of special considerations to evolution would have been clear.

The key aspects of evolution theory cannot be confirmed by experiment, as they occurred in the distant past without witnesses. I have yet to see any specific experiments which indicate that mutation and natural selection are responsible for the variety of organisms observed on earth today.

As a scientist, I am not alone. In 2001, a group of 100 scientists from a wide variety of scientific fields, with doctorates from prestigious universities such as Cambridge, Stanford, Michigan, Princeton and others, including professors from many universities like Yale, MIT and Rice, took the dramatic step of publishing a two page advertisement in The Weekly Standard stating: "We are skeptical of claims for the ability of random mutation and natural selection to account for the complexity of life. Careful examination of the evidence for Darwinian theory should be encouraged."

This is in conflict with the contention that the vast majority of scientists support evolution. In my experience as an industrial scientist, I have not run into any scientists who believe in evolution. The people who most fervently support evolution are those whose livelihood depends on federal grants they receive to study it. It is a unique area of science, where one can propose just about any explanation for a specific anatomical feature; because this is historical science that cannot be experimentally repeated, challenges to the assertion are impossible to prove.

This relegates evolution to a belief system, as its occurrence in the past cannot be proven, and has to be accepted by faith, as any other theory of origins. In accord with this view, Dr. Eugenie Scott of the National Center for Science Education (the public relations arm of the evolution movement), proclaimed "I am an evolution evangelist!" This sounds as zealous as the supporter of any other religion.

I also found Gallagher's definition of scientific theory from the American Heritage Dictionary troubling. It states that a scientific theory is "a set of statements or principles devised to explain a group of facts or phenomena, especially one that has been repeatedly tested or is widely accepted and can be used to make predictions about natural phenomena." (emphasis added)

My 1969 version of the dictionary does not include "or is widely accepted." On this basis, we would still have to accept that the earth is the center of the solar system, as this idea was once widely accepted, and was used to make predictions of sunrise and sunset. Only by challenging the "accepted" theories can true progress be made.

While Judge Jones states that the assumption that evolution is antithetical to a belief in a higher being is "utterly false," it is difficult to see why a higher being would be necessary if evolution can completely account for the complexity of life.

Judge Jones's decision effectively gives legal protection to a weak scientific theory, preventing scientific discussion of the known difficulties of evolutionary theory (such as the origin of the first organisms on which mutation and natural selection can operate).

In effect, this establishes the atheistic belief in evolution as the official religion of the Dover public school system, violating the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment, and puts us on a par with communist nations where the consequences of such belief are apparent.

Judge Jones made another interesting statement in his decision: "... we find that while ID arguments may be true, a proposition on which the court takes no position, ID is not science." Is our philosophy and legal system as a society so convoluted that arguments that may be true are rejected from consideration because they do not adhere to the (changing) definition of science?

The world is real, and many aspects of its existence are unexplainable on the basis of materialistic science. If God truly did create the world, aren't we silly, arrogant people to turn our backs on that possibility? I do not advocate teaching ID in a public school classroom, but it should be fairly discussed if brought up in context. As a scientist, I expect all aspects of a theory that cannot be experimentally verified to be discussed in a classroom, both the positive and negative.

**Jack A. Kramer** lives with his wife and family in Troy. He earned a Ph.D. in chemistry at the University of Illinois in 1979 and works as a senior research scientist for an automotive supplier.

Jack Kramer

Jack Kramer

# Protecting the Great Lakes should be our top priority

Consider all these titles: *Great Lakes Charter. Great Lakes Charter — annex 2001. Water Resources Development Act of 1989. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. Great Lakes Restoration Plan. Great Lakes Interstate Compact.* Now imagine having to read all of them.



Phil Power

No one state has complete responsibility for the lakes; authority is dribbled out among the eight states bordering them.

Vesting authority in the hands of the U.S. Congress is akin to letting the fox guard the chicken coop, if only because population growth in the region is slow and our share of votes in Washington is, well, ebbing with the tides. And because the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Quebec also border the lakes, any definitive actions must be a matter of international law and agreement.

That's too bad, because the Great Lakes together hold 95 percent of our nation's fresh water. They are an enormous economic driver to the region, supporting something like 250,000 jobs in the region. Boating alone is a \$35 billion-a-year industry, while fishing, hunting and wildlife account for \$18 billion.

More to the point, the Great Lakes — one of the few landmarks on earth visible from space — define Michigan's environmental present and represent our economic future as does nothing else.

Unlike manufacturing jobs or the auto industry, you can't move the Great Lakes offshore to China. They are going to be there essentially forever and if we let them be ruined it will be our forever-lasting sin. And we don't have much time to save them.

A report released last December by a group of the region's leading scientists concluded "the immune system of the Great Lakes is breaking down and the ecosystem is in danger of collapse."

One scientist, Alfred Beeton, former director of the Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory, says "the Great Lakes are deteriorating at a rate unprecedented in their recorded history and are nearing the tipping point of ecosystem-wide breakdown. If we want to restore this resource, it is time now."

Whew! Pretty strong words. But they're needed to bring a sense of urgency to what up to now

have been largely well-meaning — but relatively ineffectual — efforts.

But the second week of December "was probably the greatest week for the Great Lakes in the past 100 years," according to Andy Buchsbaum, who directs the National Wildlife Federation's Office of the Great Lakes. Together with representatives from state and federal authorities and industry — including, importantly, George Kuper, director of the Council of Great Lakes Industries — Buchsbaum has been centrally involved in the astonishingly complex negotiations that have led to breakthrough agreements.

One, the so-called "Great Lakes Restoration Plan," a 15-year, \$20 billion effort, is the first comprehensive program to restore the lakes that has gained a broad consensus agreement among the major players. These include our federal government, the states and Canadian provinces in the Great Lakes basin, municipalities, Indian tribes, industry and environmental groups.

Now \$20 billion sounds like a lot for the environmentally tepid Bush administration, but Buchsbaum notes that something like \$13 billion of it is close to attainable from federal and state funds for sewage and water runoff repair.

The other step forward is an agreement just signed among governors and premiers on a compact to protect and retain the Great Lakes water supply within the watershed. It's the greatest rewrite of Great Lakes water policy in the past 100 years, according to Buchsbaum, who thinks it's likely to pass all eight states and two provinces because support is bipartisan and from a wide range of stakeholders. Michigan hasn't moved yet, but the well-regarded Sen. Patty Birkholz, R-Saugatuck, is working on legislation.

All this sounds pretty good, at long last. But there is still the enormous confusion over the various legal, policy, treaty, financial and bureaucratic entities involved in what might be the most important single environmental and economic initiative of our times.

I have a modest proposal for Buchsbaum, Kuper and so many others who have labored so hard to get to this point: Join together to put on the 2008 Michigan ballot a multi-billion dollar bond issue to fund our share of the money to restore the wetlands, clean up the polluting sewers and put pressure on the feds to keep out of the Great Lakes shipping with polluted ballast water.

In matters like this, where so many have been bogged down for so long, there is absolutely no substitute for the radically clarifying step of putting up your money and charging ahead.

**Phil Power** is a longtime observer of politics, economics and education issues in Michigan. He would be pleased to hear from readers at [ppower@hcn.net](mailto:ppower@hcn.net).

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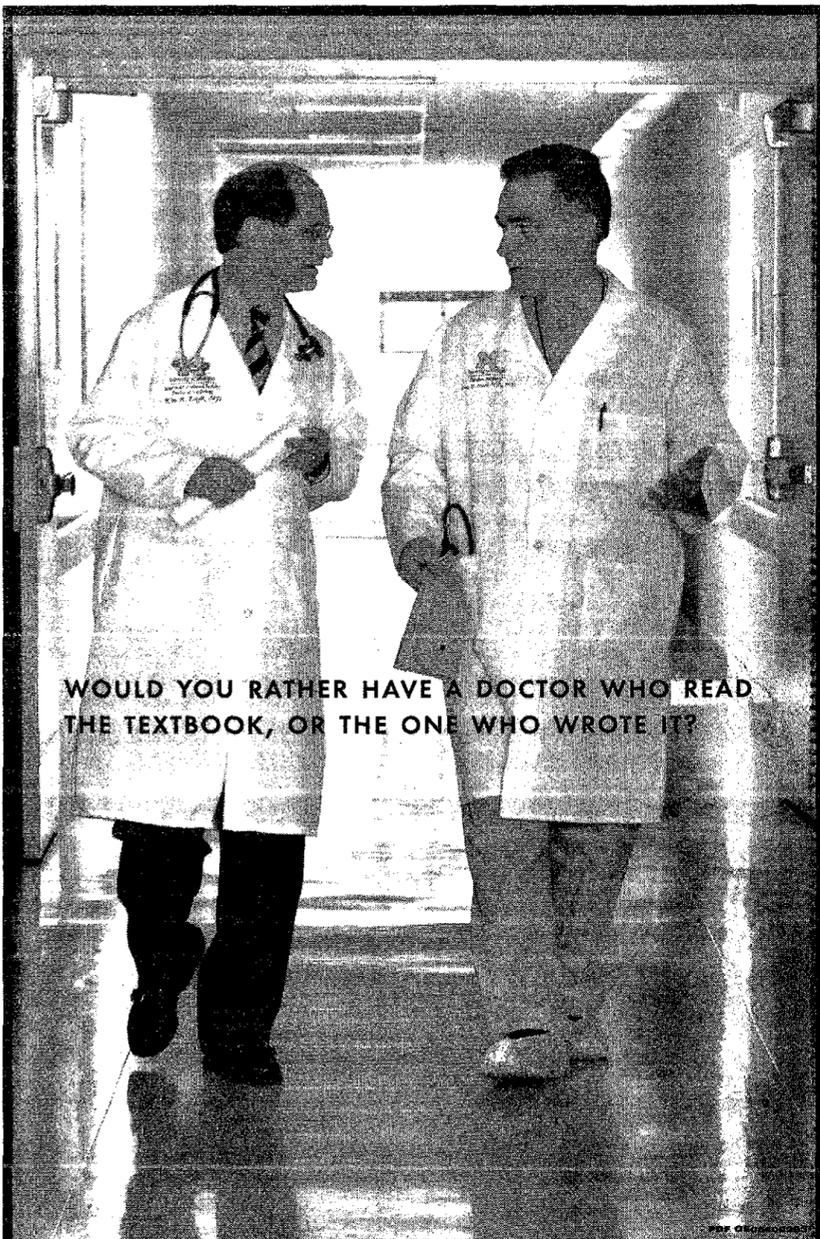
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# Flanagan says high school plan important for state's future

BY HUGH GALLAGHER  
STAFF WRITER

If the state legislature fails to approve a plan to beef up high school graduation requirements, the state may be "going down the tubes."

That's the dire warning that Michael Flanagan, state superintendent for public instruction, presented to an audience of primarily local educators at Schoolcraft College's VisTaTech Center Thursday evening. Flanagan made the case for the state school board's proposal to require 18 credit hours in math, science, English, foreign language, social science, physical education and the arts.

Flanagan's appearance was sponsored by state Sen. Bruce Patterson, R-Canton.

"Frankly, it really is a perfect storm, with the auto industry and its problems and a mindset in this state that only 23 percent of parents think their children need more than a high school education," Flanagan said in an interview prior to his presentation.

In December, the state board of education approved Flanagan's plan requiring 18 credit hours in specific academic classes for graduation. Flanagan had initially requested 16 credit hours with an emphasis on math and science classes. The board added two credit hours in foreign language. The plan would also require that one class be taken online. Currently the state requires only a civics class.

The plan would have to be approved by the state legislature and signed by the governor.

"If we do this now. If the House, the Senate and the governor can pull this off by let's say March 1, which is tight but it can happen, we're talking about the class of 2010. We may be turning the lights out by 2010," Flanagan said.

The plan would be phased in beginning with the freshman class of 2006, if approved this spring.

Michigan's civics only requirement has placed it far behind other states, Flanagan said.

"No wonder we're losing these businesses to South Bend, Ind. Indiana has the core 40, which may be too much without enough room for electives, most schools have 24 to 26," he said.

Critics of the proposal have complained that the recommendation doesn't leave enough room for electives, especially for students in a career and technical education program. But Flanagan said he has worked closely with people involved in career tech education, including Patty Cantu,



State School Superintendent Mike Flanagan talks to a group of educators and media at Schoolcraft College Thursday night.

former head of career tech for the state department of education.

Flanagan said requirements for geometry and algebra could be incorporated into a technical course. He said local districts can design career tech programs that use algebra in the context of the program.

"You can learn the Pythagorean theorem in a building trades class," he said. "Most kids are going to learn the Pythagorean theorem better in a building trades class anyway. The reason most of us don't remember it that we can't apply it. If anything career tech is going to blossom under this because they are already on this and they're figuring out how they can build algebra into their career tech sequence."

Flanagan also dismissed complaints that the requirements take away local control. He said many suburban school districts already meet many of these requirements. He said he has the support of most state educators.

"I knew enough by being in this business a long time that I wasn't about to trounce into this until I had them first," he said. "I spent a lot of time in the summer with them and we built this together."

Flanagan is a former superintendent for the Farmington School District and the Wayne County Regional Education

Services Agency.

"This is a little more about what the children need to take," he said. "We're already into mandates but we have a civics only mandate and we're beefing it up."

Flanagan said he didn't think the requirements would create a financial burden for most school districts or come under the Headlee Amendment, which requires the state to pay for all mandated programs.

"I don't think there is any new money to this and I don't think we'd be subject to a Headlee charge. We have to do the homework," he said.

Schools already teach students six hours a day, he said.

"This is just saying you have to teach the good math instead of the watered down math," he said.

Flanagan acknowledged that there may be a shortage of math teachers capable of teaching geometry and algebra II classes, but he said this will be an opportunity for the state's teaching colleges to improve their math teaching programs.

He said he didn't think the algebra requirement, which some have criticized for being too difficult, would drive anyone to quit school.

For more information on the proposal, see the department of education's Web site at [www.michigan.gov/mdc](http://www.michigan.gov/mdc).

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