

## Memories of Holocaust

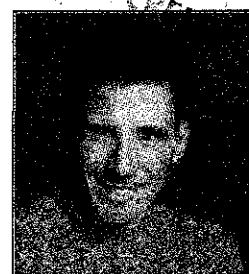
## Through song

OBSERVER LIFE SECTION C

## Peter Nielsen

Fitness expert  
answers readers'  
questions

HEALTH, PAGE C6



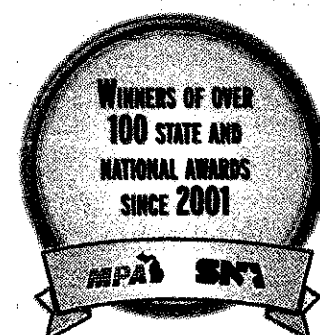
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SUNDAY

March 6, 2005

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# WESTLAND Observer



VOLUME 40 NUMBER 81

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# Man gets prison in drive-by shooting

BY DARRELL CLEM  
STAFF WRITER

A Taylor man was sentenced Friday to two years in prison for firing an assault rifle on a Westland neighborhood while searching for two men who earlier assaulted him.

Marc Alexander Davis, 23, became the last of three defendants sentenced for a Sept. 25 drive-by shooting incident on Elbridge, near Palmer and Wildwood in the city's Norwayne subdivision.

Davis was sentenced by Wayne County Circuit Judge Annette Berry after earlier pleading guilty to felonious assault and felony firearm charges, according to a court clerk. The latter charge carries a mandatory two-year prison term.

Davis opened fire with an AK47 assault rifle after residents on Elbridge fired a paintball gun and threw rocks and beer bottles at a 2003 Monte Carlo in which he was riding.

The two sides clashed after Davis and two other defendants drove repeatedly up and down

Elbridge, arguing with residents as they sought - but never found - two men who had earlier assaulted Davis, according to police Sgt. David Heater.

Davis stood through the sunroof of the Monte Carlo as he fired the shots.

No one was seriously injured, but one woman received minor injuries after bullets struck a parked vehicle and sent metal shards flying, Heater said.

A second defendant, 23-year-old Daniel Jeffrey McGrath of Wayne, is serving one to four

years in prison for his role in the drive-by shooting. He was accused of concealing the Monte Carlo's license plate during the incident.

A third defendant, 18-year-old Kimberly Ann Wells of Westland, was released from jail in February after serving 138 days. She was accused of driving the Monte Carlo.

McGrath and Wells had pleaded guilty to felonious assault charges. Unlike Davis, they didn't face a felony firearm charge.

dclem@oe.hometowncomm.net | (734) 953-2110



Churchill seniors Sasha Allen (back), Francisco Beltran (left), and Mike Gougeon already are working on new Chief Architect software in their CAD class, thanks to a grant from the company.

## Software puts reality TV spin on classes

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA  
STAFF WRITER

A little slice of reality television has come to Churchill High School.

Students in Jeff Hatley's Intro Drafting/CAD and Architectural Drafting/CAD classes will soon be using the same software as

has been featured on *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*.

"My wife's big into the show," said Hatley. While watching the show he saw the software, which is produced by Chief Architect, he thought it could benefit his students.

When Principal Janet Haas, of the Livonia Career Technical

Center, was on her way to a conference, Hatley asked her to bring back information about Chief Architect software.

She did more than that. Haas won one license for the software as a door prize during the conference.

"Once we used it in the classroom, I knew we needed to try

to find a way to get it for all of our computers," said Hatley.

The software allows students to create a basic 2-D floor plan, but also shows an instant rendering of that floor plan. Hatley said a camera in the floor plan allows users to generate a view

PLEASE SEE SOFTWARE, A5

## Hearing delayed for man charged with sex crime

BY DARRELL CLEM  
STAFF WRITER

Deemed as wrongly accused by his attorney, a Livonia man will have to wait two weeks to learn whether he will face trial for allegations he sexually molested two mentally disabled women.

Karl Mandel Robinson, 35, appeared in Westland District Court on Thursday for a preliminary hearing on multiple charges of criminal sexual conduct

involving two women, ages 22 and 29.

His defense attorney, Samuel Posner, asked Judge C. Charles Bokus to delay the hearing, saying he plans to bring in another lawyer to help with the case, according to a court officer.

Bokus granted Posner's request and rescheduled Robinson's hearing for March 17.

Robinson, who has been jailed in lieu of a \$150,000 cash bond, could face penalties ranging up

to life in prison if convicted of one count of first-degree criminal sexual conduct and four counts of second-degree CSC.

"All I can tell you is, he's not guilty," Posner told the *Observer* in February.

Robinson is accused of having the 22-year-old woman perform oral sex on him in his van while he worked for a company that provides transportation for disabled people.

He also is accused of groping

her after he gave her a ride to a friend's house in Westland.

The 29-year-old victim told authorities that Robinson groped her during a separate incident at the same house.

She and the younger woman have a mutual friend who lives there.

Robinson is accused of molesting the two women in January.

dclem@oe.hometowncomm.net  
(734) 953-2110

## 'Good people': Rotary benefits community

BY DARRELL CLEM  
STAFF WRITER

Whether giving a bicycle to a disabled boy, paving a basketball court or awarding scholarships to high school students, the Westland Rotary Club continues to help this community.

"It's good people," club member Richard Strausbaugh, 65, said.

He should know. His club colleagues say he's one of them.

As an international organization, the Rotary Club last week marked its 100th birthday. Attorney Paul P. Harris formed the first club in Chicago in 1905.

In Westland, Strausbaugh, owner of Westland Floor Covering, hasn't missed a local Rotary Club meeting in 24 years.

"A neighbor mentioned the club to me and invited me to attend, and I went," he said. "I like the international aspect of the Rotary Club. It creates goodwill internationally, and I like the things that Rotary does within the community."

Westland club President Margaret Harlow cited several ways that local Rotarians have made a difference:

- They have given a physically disabled boy a new bicycle (another Rotary club earlier gave him another bicycle).

- They gave money to repave the parking lot and basketball court at the city's Rotary Park.

- They give scholarships each year to three students, who receive \$1,500 each.

- They are working to buy swings to accommodate local elementary students who use wheelchairs.

- They've set aside money for tsunami relief efforts.

"I think the significance of Rotary is that we're able

PLEASE SEE ROTARY, A5



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## Ready for a chiller

Girl Scouts Katie Conklin and Kelsey Woodford of Troop 1752 prepare the packing box shelters they used for their stay outside last Friday night. The troop gathered outside of St. Matthew Church in Westland to call attention to the plight of and to collect donations for homeless people. For more photos, see Page A3.

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### Coming Thursday in Filter

St. Patrick's  
Day roundup  
of events





## Metro Detroit Scouts staff cookie booths

If you love Girl Scout Cookies, but don't know any Girl Scouts, you can still stock up at Girl Scout Cookie booths in Westland and Garden City.

With two cookie booth locations in Garden City, residents can not only enjoy Girl Scout Cookies, but can also contribute to an important cause. In addition to providing funding for essential Girl Scout programs, the Cookie Program also helps girls learn valuable skills.

Through the Cookie Program, girls are able to develop decision-making skills, set realistic goals, work to achieve them and become financially literate.

"Every year we've found that our Girl Scouts look forward to the Cookie Program as much as other metro Detroiters," said Girl Scouts of Metro Detroit President and CEO Arlene M. Robinson. "While everyone appreciates the taste and quality of our cookies, our girls also anticipate the fun and excitement of the Cookie Program."

In Garden City, the Girl Scout Cookie booths will be at:

■ Kmart, at 29600 Ford, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. today (March 6) and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, March 12.

■ Kroger at 5866 Middlebelt, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, March 12.

Cookie booths in Westland will be at:

■ Sav-A-Lot, 8244 Merriman, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, March 12.

For a complete list of Girls Scouts of Metro Detroit cookie booths in Wayne and Oakland counties, visit the Web site at [www.gsofmd.org](http://www.gsofmd.org) or by call the Cookie Hotline at (800) 326-0309, Ext. 297.

Girl Scouts of Metro Detroit is the sixth largest council in the United States, providing developmental activities for more than 30,000 Girl Scouts ages 5-17.

It offers a variety of contemporary and traditional programs designed to prepare girls to be responsible, productive and fulfilled adults.

## Martial arts studio offers Wellness Weekend

BY SUE MASON  
STAFF WRITER

Looking around her martial arts studio, Kelly Perkins estimates she could accommodate 150 women for her second annual Women's Wellness Weekend.

And so that's how many women she hopes will come for a weekend filled with pampering and learning by women for women.

"Women will have an opportunity to explore the world and the gifts they have to offer the world," she said. "Women have more opportunities than ever before and more opportunities to share their gifts with the world at large."

"This is an opportunity to explore themselves and the gifts they have to offer."

Perkins' Women's Wellness Weekend will be 6-9 p.m. Friday, March 11, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, March 12, and 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Sunday, March 13, at Guardian Martial Arts and Fitness Inc., 30942 Ford, Garden City.

The program features mainstream and alternative health options, in addition to goods and services from such companies as Arbonne Skin Care, Natural Home Care Products, Pampered Chef and handcrafted jewelry.

Lunch will be available Saturday and Sunday, and women attending the program will be able to get a chance to experience different modalities like massages and palm reading by paying \$1 per minute for the service.

Featured speakers include: ■ Claudia Ogden, a certified healing touch practitioner and a registered nurse of Integrated Medicine at the University of Michigan

Hospital, who will talk about essential oils and mode enhancements.

■ Laura Siggins, also a registered nurse with the University of Michigan Health System, who will discuss Project Red Flag, women's bleeding disorders.

■ Darlene Denning, who specializes in palmistry and is manager of Spiritual Reflections in Farmington.

■ Alita Marlowe of Marlowe and Associates in Farmington Hills, whose presentation, "Juggle, Struggle, Wiggle," will look at how women can manage their lives without compromising their health.

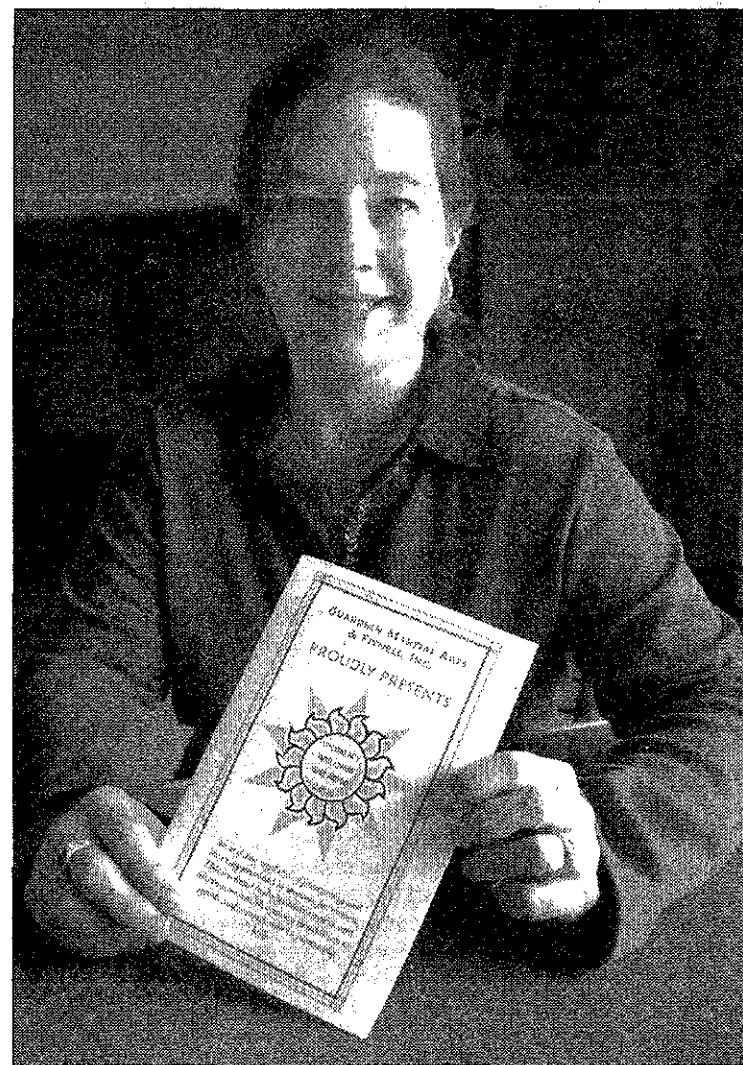
"Everyone is excited about her coming," said Perkins about Marlowe. "They say, 'If she's coming, we're all going to be happy.'"

Among the presenters are Dr. Amanda Apfelblat of Michigan Chiropractic Specialists in Garden City, dentist Dr. Kristal Greniuk of Livonia, and Sheila Ostrosky, a healing touch apprentice and certified massage therapist, and Sharon Garvin, art therapist.

The mini seminars will cover such topics as household chemicals and health, natural hormonal balancing and toxin awareness, dental health and wellness and art therapy for well-being.

There also will be vendors as well as door prizes given away every hour and classes in Pilates, Tai Chi, kickboxing and self-defense. Perkins' husband, Shelby, will fill in as the "bad guy" in the self-defense class.

"I've had vendors calling wanting to be a part of the weekend, but I couldn't accommodate them because I want to preserve the uniqueness of



FILE PHOTO

Kelly Perkins is finishing plans for her second Women's Wellness Weekend at Guardian Martial Arts and Fitness Inc. in Garden City this weekend.

the weekend and I don't have a lot of space."

Last year's event attracted 50 women, many of who are returning for this year's program. According to Perkins, they "all made friends and some became good friends."

"What's neat is that it's an opportunity to share and to make new friends," she said.

"And when you make a special friend, that can be a lifelong gift."

The weekend costs \$5 a day or \$7.50 for the entire weekend. Reservations aren't necessary. For more information about the program, call Perkins at (734) 266-0565.

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● **MAN OF THE HOUSE (PG-13)**  
(SAT/SUN 11:10) 1:10, 3:15, 5:15, 7:20, 9:25 FRV/SAT LS 11:30

● **CURSED (PG-13) 2 PRINTS/2 SCREENS**  
(SAT/SUN 11:10, 11:50) 1:10, 1:55, 3:05, 3:50, 5:05, 5:50, 7:10, 7:50, 9:10, 9:55 FRV/SAT LS 11:10, 11:50

● **DIARY OF A MAD BLACK WOMAN (PG-13)** (SAT/SUN 11:20) 1:50, 4:25, 7:00, 9:35 FRV/SAT LS 11:55

● **COACH CARTER (PG-13)**  
6:55, 9:40

● **POOH'S HEFFALUMP MOVIE (G)**  
(SAT/SUN 11:00) 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00

● **RACING STRIPES (PG)**  
(SAT/SUN 11:00) 1:00, 3:00, 5:00

● **PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (PG-13)**  
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# SPORTS

section





PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Lauren Chytry, Katie Conklin and Jordan Berry are ready for a long, cold night.

## Scouts brave cold to help homeless

They gathered around burning barrels, in the "soup kitchen" and slept in cardboard boxes, all with the intent of raising awareness about the plight of the homeless and to collect donations for the homeless.

Members of Girl Scout Troop 1752 turned the area outside of St. Matthew Church in Westland into a homeless shelter last Friday.

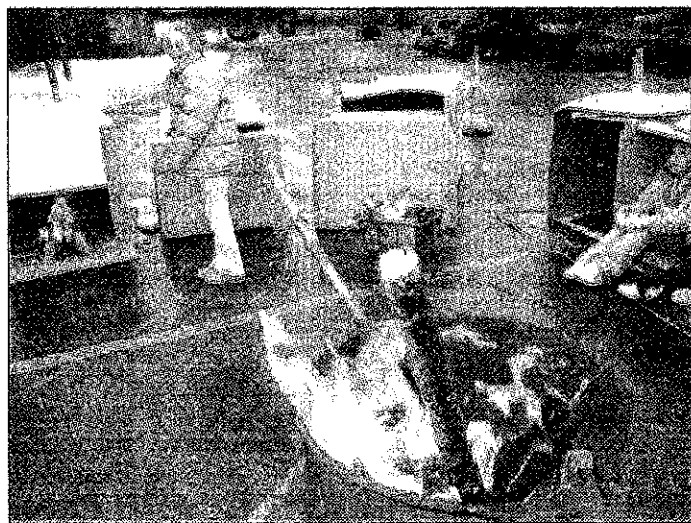
The project was organized by Jordan Berry of Westland, a seventh-grader at St. Matthew School, and Alex Shingleton of Garden City, who are using it as a project for their Silver Award, the second-highest honor a Girl Scout can earn.

During the project, St. Matthew hosted a

soup kitchen so people who dropped off donations or gave money could stop in and eat.

The Scouts sought donations of blankets, bed sheets, travel-size toiletries, towels, washcloths, large cans of tuna, other canned food, and all sizes of underwear and socks for women and men that they gave to Our Lady of Good Counsel Church in Plymouth Township, which helps the homeless in Detroit, and to Christ Net - an area network of churches providing shelter.

In the past, the troop has helped the homeless by handing out clothing and food in Detroit.



The Scouts set up their refrigerator box shelters around a burning barrel.



Alex Shingleton serves soup in the troop's soup kitchen.

## O&E, Buddy's salute area residents

Two people were recently honored in the Buddy's Pizza/Observer & Eccentric Random Acts of Pizza Award.

Sandy Mercado Family of Rochester Hills was nominated by friend Mary Jane Pasko of Rochester Hills. Gloria Rhodes of Redford Township was nominated by friend and co-worker Heidi Dougan of Livonia.

"Sandy has been living in Rochester Hills for almost 20 years," wrote Pasko in her nominating e-mail. "Sandy raised her two kids and when it was time to enjoy near retirement Robert, her husband, was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS) amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. Her full time job now is making sure that all of his needs are met."

The family moved into a barrier free home that she designed for her husband, according to Pasko, who added that "Sandy could use a break - even a small one like dinner."

The Buddy's team delivered that break recently.

Last week's Random Act of Pizza winner was

Gloria Rhodes, described as warm and caring by her nominator.

"Gloria spends the majority of her life doing for others. Her most recent act of kindness was astounding; she championed a complete remodel of a ladies home. The woman has developmental disabilities and did not have the means or the ability to make her living situation tolerable. Gloria, using her own limited funds, compiled a team of able-bodied people and three days later the condo was gorgeous!"

"I am in awe of Gloria and I know she does not receive nearly enough praise or recognition for her altruistic endeavors. I am blessed to call her a friend," wrote Dougan.

Tell us about your great neighbor, the new family down the street or someone you think deserves a home-delivered pizza dinner courtesy of Buddy's Pizza. Send nominations by e-mail only to: Ken Abramczyk at kabramczyk@oe.homecomm.net.

Dinner includes pizza, salad, Buddy bread, soft drinks and table setting.

## ATHENA award dinner set for March 12

Eleven of Westland's most influential people will be recognized Saturday, March 12, for their excellence in business, their efforts to improve the local quality of life, and their dedication to helping women reach their leadership potential.

In the end, only one will be given the prestigious ATHENA Award. The award will be given during the Chocolate Fantasy Ball - an event that will offer many sweets for chocolate lovers, including fountains where dark and white chocolate will flow and serve as a dip for finger foods such as strawberries and pret-

zels.

The event will start with a social hour at 6 p.m. Saturday, March 12, at the Hellenic Cultural Center, on Joy Road east of Newburgh.

The program is being sponsored by Mayor Sandra Cicirelli, who is a former ATHENA Award winner, the Women of Westland, and the Westland Community Foundation. Tickets are \$100 per person.

"We've received excellent response to our solicitation for nominees," said Mary Denning, Women of Westland president. "An impartial selection committee chaired by Westland's

first ATHENA Award winner, Margaret Harlow, owner of Harlow Tire & Service, will have the challenge of reviewing this year's nominations and selecting the 2005 ATHENA Award recipient."

The winner will be honored during a night that will include dinner, big band music, a silent auction and many kinds of chocolate.

Tickets for the black-tie optional charity event are available by calling the foundation at (734) 595-7727, Mary Denning's Cake Shoppe at (734) 261-3680 or Mayor Cicirelli's office at (734) 467-3200.

## Barns is guest of honor at celebration

Westland Mayor Sandra A. Cicirelli and members of the Westland City Council will acknowledge the many contributions of Justine Barns with a birthday celebration at 6 p.m. Monday, March 7, in the Council Chambers of Westland City Hall.

Barns has been an integral part of the development of the Westland community since her career began in 1952 when she became president of the Jefferson Elementary School PTA. The school was later renamed Jefferson-Barns Elementary School in her honor.

Barns went on to serve on the Westland Planning Commission, the Westland Charter

Commission, and was the first woman to be elected to the Westland City Council. She became the first female council president in 1976 and Westland's first female acting mayor in 1974. She wrote the Westland Commission on Aging Ordinance, led the negotiations for the donation of the land used for the Westland Golf Course, and was the sponsor of the Indoor Clean Air Act while serving as Westland's representative in the state House. Barns also will be recognized at the March 7 council meeting as well, which will start at 7 p.m.

Coffee and cake will be served. Call the mayor's office at (734) 467-3200.

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# Hearing delayed in indecent exposure case

BY DARRELL CLEM  
STAFF WRITER

A Westland man will face a court hearing March 31 over allegations that he repeatedly drove by young girls and exposed himself.

Christopher Hardy, 20, had appeared Thursday in Westland 18th District Court for a preliminary hearing on four counts of indecent exposure.

However, Judge C. Charles Bokos delayed the hearing after Hardy's attorney asked for more time to review the case.

Hardy, who is jailed on a \$1 million bond, is accused of exposing himself on four occasions since Feb. 11.

His latest arrest occurred Feb. 21 outside the Mervyn's store on Warren Road in Westland, where he is accused of exposing himself to two teenage girls, police Sgt. Debra Mathews said.

Other charges stem from the following incidents:

■ On Feb. 19, Hardy is accused of exposing himself to two women in their early 20s outside of Michael's arts and crafts store near Wayne and Warren.

■ On Feb. 11 and 12, he is accused of driving by teenage girls and masturbating near the Farmer Jack store at

**Hardy is accused of exposing himself on four occasions since Feb. 11.**

Merriman and Cherry Hill in Westland.

Hardy's latest problems came after he pleaded guilty Dec. 7 for an incident that happened in September outside of Westland Shopping Center.

One day later, he was arrested for an incident outside of a Garden City 7-Eleven store at Warren and Middlebelt. That prompted Westland District Judge Gail McKnight to order Hardy jailed for 30 days for violating his probation on the September case in Westland.

Ultimately, Hardy was released from an Isabella County jail before he served his 30 days. However, McKnight increased his bond to \$1 million after the new charges surfaced against him.

A not guilty plea has been entered for Hardy. The charge of indecent exposure against him carries a one-year jail term upon conviction, but he could face a longer sentence because he also is charged as a sexual delinquent.

## DEATHS

**A**  
Edward D. Acord, 61, of Rochester Hills, died March 1.  
William Johnston Adams, 70, of Detroit, died Feb. 27.

**B**  
David R. Bobowski, 50, died March 3.

**C**  
E.C. Conwell, 89, of Waterford, died March 3.

**D**  
Pauline J. Davis, 83, died Feb. 25.  
Lucille Caiati Dobbs, 82, of Garden City, died Feb. 28.

**G**  
Viera George, 72, of Clarkston, died Feb. 27.

William B. Gilles, 84, formerly of Bloomfield Hills, died Feb. 27.

**H**  
Steven E. Hopper, 57, of West Bloomfield, died Feb. 28.

**J**  
Bertha L. Juhl, 70, of Rochester Hills, died Feb. 25.

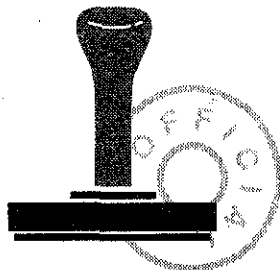
**K**  
Frederick Reid Keydel, 76, died Feb. 26.

**L**  
Aaron Thomas Levi, 27, of Birmingham, died Feb. 20.  
Richard R. Lowe, died Feb. 28.  
Robert W. Lundgren, 87, of Scottsdale, Ariz., died Feb. 23.

**M**  
Elizabeth (Bette) Moe, 80, of Leesburg, Fla., died Feb. 21.  
Regina Marie McVey, 61, of Roscommon, formerly of Wayne, died Feb. 23.

**O**  
George Schwenk Olmsted, 95, of Valparaiso, Ind., formerly of Birmingham, died Feb. 18.

**P**  
Raymond Powning, 83, of



For the Record appears in every edition of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. Complete paid obituaries can be found inside today's Community Life in Passages on page C5.

Rochester Hills, died March 1.

**S**  
Donald W. Shaver, 69, of Waterford, died March 2.

**W**  
John Charles Wright Jr., 90, of Williamsburg, Va., died Feb. 15.

**Z**  
Ralph Zimmerman Jr., of Bloomfield Hills, died Feb. 25.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### Nursery School Olympics

The Westland Parks and Recreation Department will host 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.

The cost is \$3 per athlete, parents and spectators are free. Pre-registration is encouraged, but not necessary. However, 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) 722-7620.

The event is sponsored by the Westland Parks and Recreation Department, Westland Civitan Club and Dad's Athletic Club of Westland.

### Spring Quilt Show

Grange No. 389 will have its annual spring quilt show 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, March 12, at the senior Friendship Center, 1119 S. Newburgh, Westland.

The show will feature quilt classes - a cathedral window quilted pillow and special kids classes 9 a.m. to noon, quilted book cover class 1-4 p.m. and paper piece project 1-6 p.m. - quilt displays, demonstrations, appraisals and lunch. There also will be a display of old, new, unfinished quilts, wall hangings and quilted clothing. The entry fee is \$1

per piece to be judged. Table space also is available for vendors. The cost is \$25 for a 10-by-10-foot space.

The kids class costs \$5, the pillow and book cover classes cost \$20 each, and the paper piece project \$30. Preregistration is required. Tickets are \$1 in advance and \$2 at the door. For tickets or to register, call Sharon Strebbling at (734) 722-4857. Registration also can be sent to Strebbling at 5692 N. Globe, Westland, MI 48185. Include your name address and telephone number as well as an alternate phone number.

### Brunch with the Easter Bunny

Star your Easter celebration off with brunch with the Easter Bunny 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, March 19, at the Harris-Kehrer VFW Post 3323, 1055 S. Wayne Road.

The cost is \$3 per child up to age 12 and \$4 for adults. The brunch includes homemade, hot-off-the-griddle pancakes, sausage, juice, coffee, tea and milk, a photograph with the Easter Bunny (additional photos cost \$2) and Easter bonnet parade. Children should make bonnets or hats to wear to the brunch.

Tickets are available in advance at the Bailey Recreation Center, 36651 Ford, or at the door. For more information, call Donna Jensen at (734) 728-8075.

The brunch is sponsored by the Westland Parks and Recreation Department and the Westland Civitan Club.

### Easter Egg Scramble

The Westland Parks and Recreation Department and the Westland Jaycees are sponsoring and Easter Egg Scramble 1-4 p.m. Saturday, March 19, at Jaycee Park adjacent to the Mike Modano Ice Arena at Wildwood at Hunter.

The first scramble begins at 1 p.m. Youngsters will be broken up according to ages - up to 3 years, 4-6 years, 7-10 years and 11-14 years. Youngsters should bring a basket or bag for their eggs.

There also will be inflated games, surprises and activities. Juice and cookies also will be served.

For more information, call (734) 522-8402. The event will be canceled if there is inclement weather. Call the recreation department at (734) 722-7620 after 11:30 a.m. the day of the event to verify if the event is canceled.

### Earth Day

Scout groups, classes, church groups, home school groups, civic clubs or preschools looking for an Earth Day activity can adopt a planter box outside the Bailey Recreation Center. The planting will

take place 4:30-6 p.m. Friday, April 22. For more information, call the Bailey Center at (734) 722-7620.

## THERAPEUTIC PROGRAM

### Classes/field trips

The Westland Parks and Recreation Department sponsors a variety of activities and field trips for people with special needs through its Therapeutic Recreation Program now through June.

The program includes classes in golf, cooking, exercise and arts and crafts for those 13 years and older. There also is bowling and fun nights, swimming fishing and a dance planned. There is at least one field trip each month, including seeing the Harlem Globetrotters, the Detroit Tigers, a Michigan State-University of Michigan hockey game and a mystery trip.

### Baseball

Children age 3-12 can participate in the program's T-Ball/coach-pitch baseball during the summer. Registration will be April 1-May 1, with practices and games taking place on Thursdays May 19-July 28 at Jaycee Park, Wildwood at Hunter in Westland. In case of inclement weather, games and practice will be in the gymnasium at the Bailey Recreation center, 36651 Ford.

The program is open to siblings. Cost is \$50 for residents and their siblings without fund-raiser and \$51 for non-resident and siblings without fund-raiser or \$10 for residents and \$11 for non-residents with fund-raiser (selling \$104 candy bars at \$1 each).

For more information about the T-Ball/coach-pitch program or to obtain a Therapeutic Recreation Program application, call (734) 722-7620.

### Drama class

Sign up now for drama and movement classes for children with special needs provided by the Shoe String Theatre. Classes will be 5-6 p.m. Thursdays at the Bailey Recreation Center.

Drama, music, movement and dance activities will teach participants gross motor skills, listening and focusing skills while letting children use their imaginations. Children also learn how to work as a group.

Six-week classes will be offered March 17-April 28 (no class March 31). Pre-register by March 14. Class size is limited to a minimum of six children and a maximum of 12. Cost is \$30 for Westland residents and \$31 for non-residents. For more information, call (734) 722-7620.



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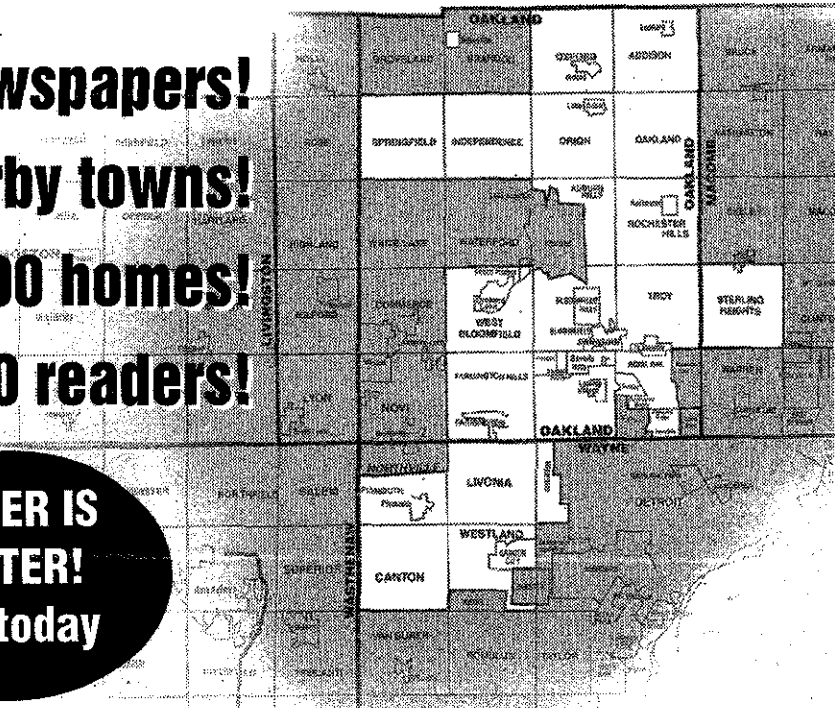
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Source: The Media Audit, November 2004

CE0890204 1P8



# Symphony, composer hit all the right notes

## New composition helps bring orchestra to youngsters

BY BRAD KADRICH  
STAFF WRITER

Virtually since Nan Washburn became the Plymouth Symphony Orchestra's music director five years ago, symphony officials have been crafting an educational program designed to bring orchestra music to young children.

They believe they have the final piece of the puzzle with a composition they've commissioned designed around a popular piece of study material.

The symphony will unveil the musical version of *Paddle to the Sea* by Holling C. Holling at a March 9 concert at Plymouth Salem High School. It's the first original work the symphony has commissioned, and it's being written by Ann Arbor composer Andre Myers.

While he was composing the piece, Myers sought input from the Plymouth-Canton school district's fourth-graders.

"It's magnificent the kids can meet a composer," said Luan Brownlee, chair of the PSO's education outreach committee. "(Myers) compares composing to something they all know intimately — the writing process. He puts it to them in a way 9-year-olds can understand."

Washburn was looking for something to replace *Island of the Blue Dolphin*, the piece performed by the symphony at its annual "Concert for Kids," part of the PSO's Music Outreach Education program. *Dolphin* is an excellent piece of music, but it's more of a West



PHOTO BY HEATHER ROUSSEAU

Andre Myers, composer for the Plymouth Symphony Orchestra, shows his feeling about finishing his composition.

Coast piece.

Washburn wanted something that related to Michigan, and *Paddle to the Sea* is the story of a toy canoe that makes its way around the state through the Great Lakes. All of the district's fourth-graders read the book, as did Myers when he was in school.

"I read it in the fourth grade and I remembered it," said Myers, who also worked with the PSO on a post-9/11 piece. "I was fascinated by how to bring the story to life with music."

The students have studied the book in the classroom and, during presentations with

Myers, gave him feedback on their favorite chapters and how best to put them to music. Myers did the rest.

Myers, a doctoral candidate at the University of Michigan School of Music, started recording musical ideas when he was 11. Unable to write music down on paper, he'd record ideas so he wouldn't forget them.

He's been writing them down since he was 15.

It took Myers about a year to compose the 12-minute piece. While the symphony has been fund-raising to pay for the commission, the final piece of

the financial picture came when the PSO sold its education program to Wayne-Westland schools, according to Brownlee.

The toughest part of composing *Paddle to the Sea* was bringing the artwork to life.

"I tried to bring the pictures to life, because that's where the book lives," Myers said. "I tried to bring the visual images to life in the music."

bkadrich@oe.hometownlife.com | (734) 459-2700

## ROTARY

FROM PAGE A1

to raise monies from the community and give it back to the community," Harlow said.

She recalled how excited the 11-year-old disabled boy was when he received a new bicycle for his birthday. He was surprised with the gift after accompanying his family and school principal to a Rotary Club meeting.

"He was so excited to be there, but he didn't know why he was there," Harlow said. "Just to see how happy he was to get his new bike, and to think that we could do that to make him happy, it means a

lot."

One of Rotary's biggest worldwide projects is raising money to fight polio, Strausbaugh said. He also praised a Rotary student-exchange program that brings youngsters to this country from places like Japan, Australia and South America.

The Westland Rotary Club was among 12 such groups that celebrated the organization's 100th birthday on Feb. 23 during a special ceremony at Summit on the Park in Canton Township.

Local club members are part of 1.2 million Rotarians in some 31,000 clubs in 166 countries.

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## SOFTWARE

FROM PAGE A1

as if they're standing inside the room itself.

"They can edit the wall material," he said. "It's a 3-D rendering from anywhere."

Hatley contacted Tequisha Ward at Chief Architect and was able to obtain a grant application. The grant has since been accepted and the school is preparing to receive 15 licenses of Chief Architect software.

The plan has all come together over the past three weeks, Hatley said. And it's bound to alter his CAD courses completely.

The cost of one such license, sold commercially, is about

\$2,000. The grant made it all possible. Hatley said the students still have access to the best technology, despite budget concerns. And he anticipates this addition to his courses will draw more student interest, beginning next year.

Drafting/CAD and Architectural Drafting/CAD are each one semester courses available to students in ninth through 12th grade.

Some of Hatley's students have tried out the program already, and he said, "it has definitely opened up a lot of doors."

"The only limit is their own creativity,"

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**FLARES**  
You may think of arthritis as a condition that stays where it is. If you have rheumatoid arthritis or osteoarthritis you can expect discomfort or pain every day in the joints attacked by arthritis.  
However, if you speak to someone with arthritis, that individual likely will tell you about "flares." Their occurrence is like an unexpected storm. That is, you can go to bed feeling comfortable and awake the next morning with an intense ache from head to toe.  
In the condition, polymyalgia rheumatica this sequence is common. In rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, and fibromyalgia, such a change occurs frequently.  
What sets off a flare is not clear. Tension may play a role, but many patients in a flare, were at ease until the flare began. Sometimes a viral infection or other illness such as gall bladder attack seems to start the flare. But in most instances, the patient is otherwise well.  
Often when you are in a flare, your physician can aspirate joint fluid from your knee, ankle or shoulder, proof that the change in your condition results from a sudden increase in inflammation.  
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**CORRECTION**  
Due to a lack of availability from our supplier, we will not receive the Mini Chopper Gas-Powered Scooters advertised on the back page of our March 6, 2005 circular. Instead, we are substituting a Mini Chopper Gas-Powered Scooter that features a 47cc engine and holds a rider up to 176 pounds. Currently selling on the internet for \$259, it will be available in our stores for \$149.99.  
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# Mental health authority may still be option

BY HUGH GALLAGHER  
STAFF WRITER

The proposal to replace the Detroit-Wayne Community County Mental Health Agency county board with an independent authority is still a possibility, according to the agency's new "transitional director."

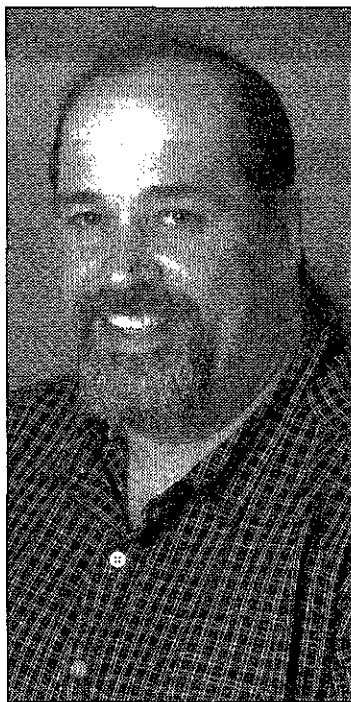
Gov. Jennifer Granholm vetoed legislation in December to replace Wayne County oversight and the agency's 12-member board with an independent authority. Under the legislation, the county executive and the mayor of Detroit would still appoint six members each to an authority board, but funding would go directly through the authority rather than through Wayne County.

Richard Visingardi, 49, the new transitional director, said last week examining the pros and cons of the two management models is one of six goals that the board has set for his limited 18-month appointment.

Visingardi began his new position in January. He was director of North Carolina's Department of Health and Human Services Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse. He is originally from Michigan and has a doctorate from Michigan State University and two master's degrees from MSU and Wayne State.

"There is an ongoing issue about whether the agency should be under the auspices of the county or a free-standing authority," Visingardi said. "I have a couple of experts coming in who have no stakes or interest but are experts in county models and authority models."

Proponents of the independent



Visingardi

ent authority, led by state Sen. Beverly Hammerstrom, R-Temperance, argued that continued management by the county might jeopardize federal Medicaid funding for Detroit-Wayne and the rest of the state. County Executive Robert Ficano argued that he has made progress in correcting reporting problems within the agency and that control should remain with the county. He proposed that the board be increased to 13 members to give the county executive an extra appointee.

"I've spoken with Mr. Ficano, I've spoken with Mayor (Kwame) Kilpatrick and also Sen. Hammerstrom and with the department. There's been no objection to what I'm laying out of basically having two external people who understand this stuff lay out these options. I've never heard anyone say that anything is absolutely off the table,"

**Richard Visingardi, 49, the new transitional director, said last week examining the pros and cons of the two management models is one of six goals that the board has set for his limited 18-month appointment.**

Visingardi said. "What we need to do is pull back from the politics and let that go for a minute and examine the practical realities of what would an authority look like and, if you keep the current board arrangement, what would that look like."

Visingardi said he understands the concern about Medicaid funding, but that he believes that careful attention to the "sophistication" of Medicaid funding rules will keep the county out of trouble. He praised Hammerstrom as a "longtime supporter" of community mental health.

"Her main concern is to make sure that Detroit-Wayne and every other county in the state are able to do what they have to do to meet state and federal requirements," he said.

He said the danger with the federal government is that they might want the county to move to private managed care.

"You have to walk them through the value of the public system," he said.

Visingardi is also charged with evaluating current practices in providing services for nearly 75,000 county residents

with mental and developmental disabilities. The county currently works with six provider networks which in turn contract with other agencies to provide services.

"We need to evolve the community base," he said.

He is developing "evidence-based" practices. A new contract has been signed with Wayne State University to study the county's mental health programs.

"They're focused on helping us develop more evidence-based practice so we can shift from things that don't work all that well to things that work a lot better," Visingardi said.

He said the county is trying to make its access system more understandable so that people in need aren't falling through the cracks. He said the system has evolved to service the most severe cases of mental illness and developmental disability.

"The problem comes in with folks with mental health problems that might not qualify for Medicaid," he said.

Visingardi is also studying mental health programs in other communities.

"A model program in Memphis focused on police officers," he said. "In the past, police officers were trained to deal with domestic calls. They come into a lot of contact with people with disabilities, with people on the street, people in neighborhoods with mental illness. The thought is providing them with a little better training so they have a better understanding of how to intervene with people."

Visingardi's other charges include helping the board develop a strategic plan, seek accreditation and help in the search for a permanent director, a position he doesn't want. hgallagher@oe.homecomm.net (734) 953-2149

## STEVENSON MIDDLE SCHOOL HONOR ROLL

Named to the second honor roll for 2004-2005 school year at Stevenson Middle School were:

Susan Abbott, Ahmed Abuzoor, Melanie Aldrich, Dekrayat Aljuma, Omar Alkatie, Amirul Amirudin, Zaid Ammari, Shane Anderson, Brittney Andrews, Joshua Austin, Mary Bache, Haile Baker, Katelyn Baker, Kirstin Baker, Martha Barajas, Kyle Barrett, Jazmyne Bartee, Reginald Bebbi, Jack Begley, Brianna Bennett, Matthew Benyo, Andrea Bessinger, Caylyn Best, Madelynn Bevil, Cory Bildeau, Hailey Blevins, Kelsey Blevins, Chekottah Bobee, Daniel Bombach, Gregory Bosell, Leslie Botts, Ariel Bowman, Christina Bowman, Joshua Bradford, Eric Briggs, Jessica Brown, Natalie Brown, Codie Buege, Chenise Burchart, Courtney Burns, Norman Butler, Demarion Campbell, Alexander Carey, Ashley Carey, Amy Carter.

Ashley Cimino, Jared Coleman, Kevin Combs, Shelbi Coniam, Nicholas Cornell, Robert Costello, Chelsea Craig, Amanda Mominnee-Crumi, Kevin Curylo, Mona Darwish, Jeffrey Dean, Brittney Dejack, Hayden Derr, Bethany Dickerson, Charity Dillard, Marques Dismuke, Eda Djelli, Zachary Donbrock, Carolyn Doyle, James Dutchak, Samantha Dye, Jessica Eaves.

Michael England, Angela Ennis, Zachary Ernat, Alysia Escobar, Janette Evans, Brianna Everett, Brandon Farrugia, Tyler Fernat, Shayne Fitzgerald, Audra Flores, David Ford, Zachary Ford, Ardale Foster, Dominique France, Cody Fredericks, Austin Fucik, Jennifer Galunas, Hina Gandher, Allyson Gibbs, Joseph Gierak, Kevin Glass, Magen Glass, Brooke Graham.

Lauren Green, Jessica Gregg, Cameron Greig, Alissa Groth, Ashley Guldner, Eric Haase, Emily Hall, Joseph Hall, Maria Hall, Christopher Hammel, Kaitlyn Hanlon, Matthew Hansen, Cherilyn Hagrove, Meghan Hartman, Joi Hearn, Shannon Hesch, Bailey Hessler, Joey Hickman, Brandon Hicks, Jamie Higgs, Joshua Higgs, Brandi Holbrook, Leya Holloway.

Bryan Hubbs, Alicia Hudgins, Kelly Hudson, Jennifer Humbach, Ashley Hunt, David Hunter, Robert Hurst, Cody Iannetta, Kristina Iannicello, Christie Iler, Jacquelyn Isenhardt, Inas Ismail, Aaron Jackson, Shelby Jackson, Kyle Jones, Chelsea Jenkins, Elise Johnson, Kierra Johnson, Paris Jones, Cassandra Jordan, Jennifer Jordan, Terri Kadlec, Kory Kalnasy.

Chelsea Kangas, Amber Karr, Adam Karson, David Kautz, Victoria Keelean, Alexander Kelly, Patrick Kemp, Nolan Kennedy, Catherine Khan, Chapin Kibitlewski, Jessica Kidd, Corissa Kijek, Aubrey King, Tyler Kinloch, Richard Kleitch, Jenna Kollar, Nicholas Kostora, Christopher Kovacs, Nicholas Koveleski, Joseph Kreger, Stephen

Kulikowski.

Nathaniel Kunze, Jessica Lakatos, Amber Lasalle, Timothy Lawler, Tara Leleniewski, Marissa Letellier, Michelle Levy, Colton Lipinski, Kara Lipinski, Zachary Lloyd, Jay Locust, Cody Longuski, Krystal Lowrey, Monika Lubas, Areanna Luckett, Megan Luke, Alicia Lustig, Jessica Lyp, Richard MacDonald, Robert Madden, Kyle Maier, Kathryn Martin, Zachary Martin.

Misha Martinez, Deanna May, Joseph May, Michael Mayes, September McCoy, Megan McGrew, Brendan McIntyre, Courtney McKinney, James McMaster, Rebecca Meister, Rachel Michelsen, Nikole Milewsky, Leanna Miller, Leslie Mills, Megan Mizzi, Eric Mlynar, Conner Monroe, Brian Monty, Jennifer Moody, Jonathan Mullinix, Tyler Murch, Allison Murphy.

Steven Murphy, Andrew Mustunis, Andrew Myers, Paris Myrtolli, Asra Najam, Sidra Najam, Ashley Noeyack, Stephen Novak, Katherine Null, Caitlin Orsette, Jennifer Ostrowski, Kristina Ostrowski, Sean Parker, Sapan Patel, Marissa Pawlowski, Danielle Peel, Rachel Peel, Michael Penhollow, Erin Perry, Casey Peterson, Montae Peterson, Brittany Pingle.

Gerald Powell, Justin Price, Addison Queen, Rio Rajacic, Jessica Raymor, Ryan Raymor, Danielle Redden, Illissa Reddy, Amanda Richards, Clint Robbins, Corey Robbins, Molly Robinett, Ryan Robinson, Kallie Roby, Emily Rockafellow, Michael Rogers, Jordan Rohraff, Rachel Romanek, Anthony Rudd, Kyle Rudnicki, Kristoffer Rufino, Emily Saavedra.

Gerald Salter, Andee Samborski, Matthew Sampson, Cassie Sanders, Nicholas Schirmer, Allyson Schneider, Robert Schurig, Tyler Seymour, Andrew Shaddawine, Asif Sheikh, Joshua Shewmaker, Ryan Shields, Cara Sieczkowski, Edwin Silva, Monica Smarsh, Steven Smith, Tiffany Smith, Joseph Smyser, Steven Snyder, Briana Southard, Cecily Sparks, Kellie Spehar, Ashley Sportsman, Shelley Sportsman, Danile Stamper, Kyle Stamper, Bryan Staples, Khari Stargell, Chelsea Stoliker, Austin Storm, Quentin Swasey, Ashlee Szabo, Kharia Pear Tanap, Amanda Tate, Jordan Taylor, Melanie Teschke, Krunal Thakkar, Katelyn Thebeau, Dylan Thomas, Jacob Toarmina, Amanda Toney, John Tufnell, Sommer Tuttle, Taylor Tuttle.

Malcom Tyms, Jeremy Vandegrift, Louissa Villaroman, Miles Watson, Caleb Weaver, Thomas White, Brittny Whited, Chelsey Whitt, Kristina Wiitanen, Tiffany Williams, Samatha Wilson, Anthony Wilton, Kayla Wiltshire, Tyress Wimberly, Alexander Wojnar, Kelsey Woodhall, Scott Woodruff, Evan Woody, Margaret Wright, Keila Wynn, Kelsie Yax, Melanie Yokley, Roxanne Young, Alejandra Zarate and Jillian Zemla.

## PRESCHOOLS

Preschool listings 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.

### Willow Creek

Willow Creek Cooperative Preschool, on Cherry Hill between Newburgh and Wayne Road in Westland, will hold an open house 6-8 p.m. Tuesday March 8. Meet teachers and other co-op parents, and register for 2005-2006 school year. Willow Creek is a non-profit co-op preschool for tots, 3 and 4

years old. It serves Westland, Canton and surrounding communities. The Moms and Tots program meets Friday mornings. Three-year-olds meet Tuesday and Thursday and four-year-olds meet Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Morning and afternoon sessions available. For more information, call Lucy Arunachalam at (734) 453-5959.

### YWCA Readiness

The YWCA of Western Wayne County Early Childhood School Readiness Program is available to 4- and 5-year-old children. The YWCA is at 26279 Michigan in Inkster. Call (313) 561-4110.

## CITY OF GARDEN CITY (AMENDED) FINAL STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES CDBG ALLOCATION PROGRAM YEAR 2004

Garden City resolved to amend the adopted Final Statement of Objectives by reprogramming the following projects (underlined) which are funded the Community Development Block Grant Program (Program Year 2004) in its application for funding.


### OBJECTIVES:

- To provide the benefits of using CDBG funding directly to persons of low and moderate income and/or areas where 51 percent of the residents are of low and moderate income.
- To facilitate and/or support private re-investment and development within the City of Garden City.
- To reduce negative environmental impacts.
- To conserve and improve older housing.
- To maintain a high level of performance in the management of CDBG and non-federally funded programs, while offsetting administrative costs to the General Fund.
- To improve park facilities.

ESTIMATED ALLOCATION	POTENTIAL PROJECTS
\$120,000	<u>Maplewood Senior Center Roof Replacement</u>
\$40,800	Public Service Activity (Funding for Senior Center Coordinator)
\$19,200	Administration (10% of Total Allocation)
\$12,000	<u>Maplewood Senior Center Roof Replacement</u>
\$192,000	<b>Total Allocation (Estimate)</b>

Publish: March 6, 2005

OE0801066



### CITY OF GARDEN CITY


To all residents and interested parties, The Council minutes will be available for review on the internet at [www.gardencitymi.org](http://www.gardencitymi.org)

You can access this information at the Garden City Library or City Hall during regular Business hours or in the Police Station Lobby 24 hours a day.

ALLYSON M. BETTIS, Treasurer/City Clerk

Publish: January 18, 30, February 13, 20, March 6, 13, 20, 27 and April 10, 2005

OE08284152



### OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE

#### ATTENTION RESIDENTS

#### SEWER CLEANING

Beginning the week of March 7th the City will be in Section 5, South of Ford, North of Cherry Hill, West of Middlebelt, East of Merriman to clean the sanitary main sewer lines. This will continue through April.

You may experience gurgling noise in pipes and faint odor. To avoid any problems here are some tips:


- Keep the toilet lids down when not in use
- Keep traps filled with water
- Cover floor drains with a disposable rag.

In order to avoid any additional inconvenience please keep this in mind as you are scheduling your weekly activities.

Sorry for the inconvenience.

Publish: March 6, 2005

OE08302234



### CITY OF GARDEN CITY

#### FINAL STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES CDBG ALLOCATION PROGRAM YEAR 2005

Pursuant to federal guidelines, the City of Garden City has resolved to fund the following projects which will be funded by the Community Development Block Grant Program (Program Year 2005).


**OBJECTIVES:**

- To provide the benefits of using CDBG funding directly to persons of low and moderate income and/or areas where 51 percent of the residents are of low and moderate income.
- To facilitate and/or support private re-investment and development within the City of Garden City.
- To reduce negative environmental impacts.
- To conserve and improve housing.
- To maintain a high level of performance in the management of CDBG and non-federally funded programs, while offsetting administrative costs to the General Fund.
- To improve public facilities.

ESTIMATED ALLOCATION	PROJECTS
\$109,850	Public Facilities Improvements (to include the removal of architectural barriers to public accessibility; ADA improvements)
\$25,350	Public Service Activity (Funding for Senior Center Coordinator; 15% of Total Allocation)
\$16,900	CDBG Administration (10% of Total Allocation)
\$16,900	Planning (10% of Total Allocation)
<b>\$169,000 Total Proposed Allocation (Estimate)</b>	
<i>10% of all Lien Repayments go toward administration costs of the housing rehab program, and overall cost of administration of the CDBG program.</i>	
<i>The Following Items are contingent upon the availability of funds and may vary depending upon:</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>The availability of County-wide funds.</li><li>The re-payment of previous housing rehabilitation loans through lien captures.</li></ol>	
\$50,000	Estimated Additional Housing Rehabilitation Funds from Wayne County.
\$5,000	Program Income/Revolving Fund (Lien Payoffs to be re-programmed into the City's Housing Rehabilitation Program)
\$224,000	<b>Possible Total Allocation (Estimate)</b>

Publish: March 6, 2005

OE08301988



### CITY OF GARDEN CITY

#### 2005 BOARD OF REVIEW DATES

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

	Tuesday	March 8, 2005	9:00 a.m.
The Board of Review will meet in session on the following days and times to hear appeals on the 2005 assessment roll:			
<b>NOTE: Meetings located in THE GARDEN CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT CONFERENCE ROOM with late night appointments on Tuesday &amp; Wednesday</b>			
Monday	March 14, 2005	9:00am -5:00pm	
Tuesday	March 15, 2005	1:00pm - 9:00pm	
Wednesday	March 16, 2005	1:00pm- 9:00pm	
Thursday	March 17, 2005	9:00am -5:00pm	
Friday	March 18, 2005	9:00am -5:00pm	

**APPEALS BY APPOINTMENT or WRITE-IN.** Write-ins must be received by Monday, March 14, 2005.

Tentative ratios and factors for the 2005 tax year are:

CLASS	PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT RATIO	PROJECTED EQUALIZATION FACTOR
Commercial	48.15 %	1.0384
Industrial	45.34 %	1.1028
Residential	49.08 %	1.0000
Personal Property	50.00%	1.0000

Taxes are paid on **TAXABLE** value, which is the lower assessed value or capped value, unless there is a property transfer. The capped value is based on the CPI (Consumer Price Index), which will increase only 2.3% for 2005. As a result, all Taxable Values will increase only 2.3% unless there has been a transfer of ownership or an addition to the property.

The 2005 Assessment Roll will be open for inspection from March 8, 2005 through March 11, 2005 in the assessment office from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

ALLYSON BETTIS  
TREASURER-CLERK

Publish: February 27, March 3, and 6, 2005

OE08296355



PURE ENTERTAINMENT!

Every Thursday!

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# Belle Isle Aquarium another sad chapter in city's history

They've been coming to this elegant little building for a century now, bringing their children to stare with wonder at the giant electric eel and the tiny, glowing virtually eyeless fish from the far depths of the seas.

The Belle Isle Aquarium was one of the first in the nation when it opened in 1904, the year Teddy Roosevelt was elected president in a landslide. Detroit was doubling its population every decade then, and thousands flocked to this island park to visit the splendid Albert Kahn building, with its faintly art nouveau entrance and sea-green Pewabic tiles.

Yet for many years now, fewer and fewer have come. Whites deserted the city, and the black middle class followed. People became increasingly afraid to visit Belle Isle (though it is perfectly safe in daylight) after a woman was thrown off the bridge to her death a few years ago.

The city's budget is now in free-fall. The zoo has had its funding cut by millions, and the aquarium is an enormous money loser. A month from now, barring a miracle, the Belle Isle Aquarium will shut its doors forever.

"This is entirely due to city budget issues," said a regretful Ron Kagan, the director of the Detroit Zoo, which runs the aquarium. "That, and a failure to generate regional cooperation and funding."

What has happened to the aquarium, which once attracted visitors from around the world, is nearly a perfect metaphor for what has happened to Detroit. When it opened, it was a state-of-the-art facility in the heart of the area's top recreation destination.

Today, it is tiny (10,000 square feet) by industry standards, less than a tenth the size of most of the nation's most successful aquariums. It is off the beaten path, and not near nice restaurant facilities. Worse, though the floors are new and the tanks well-maintained, it doesn't even have a bathroom.

That's a deal-breaker for families with small children, the aquarium's biggest potential customers. The facility desperately needs modernizing. There is plenty of money in the suburbs, where surveys show most of those who still visit the aquarium live. But too many want to share the city's benefits, but not the wealth. "Two attempts to get regional funding for our cultural institutions have been turned down by Oakland County voters," Kagan said.

Ten years ago, the aquarium had 113,000 visitors. The zoo launched an aggressive marketing campaign, including a major promotion last year in which ticket discounts were printed on two million cans of Coca-Cola.

It had no effect. Attendance has declined

steadily. Last year, the aquarium attracted only 56,000 visitors. They provided \$104,000 in revenue. Meanwhile, running the place, the zoo director said, costs "about \$700,000 without factoring in the support staff or some other expenses."

Additionally, the aquarium badly needs a new roof. So last month, the zoo announced that the aquarium would close. There has been an outpouring of protest, mainly from suburbanites, many of whom have fond memories of coming to the aquarium as children.

City council voted to keep it open three more months. But the mayor's office said the resolution would have no impact. Last week, Kagan's staff was already working on finding new zoos for the 1,500 fish, many from endangered species.

Since the closing was announced, the place has been packed on weekends. Last Saturday, Nora Rhein, not quite 4, pressed her face up against the glass, fascinated by her first and perhaps last look at the seahorses.

But at noon one day last week, there were only a dozen or so inside. Outside, a woman in a full-length fur coat urged patrons to fight to save the aquarium, and to make a donation at [www.belleisleaquarium.com](http://www.belleisleaquarium.com). She was getting sympathy, but not much money.

After several weeks, they had raised only \$14,213. There seems to be little hope, though the zoo director believes Detroit could easily support a modern aquarium.

"What you need is something right on the water (the Detroit River) not near the water, and at least 10 times the old aquarium's size," said Kagan, who has had a distinguished career in zoos from Dallas to Israel. "That would cost \$100 million. But studies have shown there is no doubt that it would generate \$100 million in income for the local economy every year."

That may well be the case. Certainly aquariums in Monterey and Baltimore and Chicago have proven immensely valuable to their cities. But to build such a facility in Detroit would take cooperation, and shared resources.

And for half a century, local politicians have resisted cooperating on major projects that could benefit the region. So Detroit's aquarium will close, probably after the first weekend in April, and three years after an auxiliary zoo on the island also closed, for similar reasons.

Ironically, the Detroit Zoo's main campus is doing far better, perhaps because it is not in the city at all, but in relatively affluent Royal Oak and Huntington Woods, and only a tiny fraction of its patrons are from the impoverished central city, which pays many of the bills. We live in odd times.

Jack Lessenberry is editorial vice president of HomeTown Communications. He can be reached by phone at (248) 901-2561 or by e-mail at [jlessenberry@homecomm.net](mailto:jlessenberry@homecomm.net).

# New projects put spotlight on oasis on the Rouge River

The Edward Hines Parkway wends its way along the Middle Rouge River from Dearborn to Northville. It's an oasis in western Wayne County, a place to reconnect with nature and history.

The parkway serves as flood plain, bikeway, a site for several ballparks, a nature center, a sledding hill, various kinds of wildlife. It is an inspiration for many who come out each year to participate in clean up efforts on the Rouge. It is also an inspiration for those who love history and nature.

Former Wayne County Commissioner Lyn Bankes is throwing her considerable energy into a project to restore and transform the Phoenix Mill in Plymouth Township into a women's museum, with a special emphasis on honoring women in industry. The mill, one of many built along the river by Henry Ford in the 1920s, was a women-only factory for making auto parts.

Bankes has been a cheerleader for the parkway, sponsoring bus tours to highlight its many historical and natural features. One of those features is the Bennett Arboretum, which after a long period of neglect is being given a new lease on life, in part from Bankes' efforts as a commissioner.

The Bennett Arboretum stretches through Hines Park from just north of Five Mile to Seven Mile in Northville Township. It was originally the creation of J. Merle Bennett, first superintendent of Parks and Forestry for the Wayne County Road Commission who served from 1922 to 1943. In 1942, Bennett supervised the development of 1500 acres of park land along Hines Drive with the planting of 26,000 trees and 101,000 shrubs along the whole length of the parkway, including the Arboretum.

"His plan was consistent with arboreta of that time frame - an exhibit of trees from around the world to get folks out and about in the trees of the world," said Noel Mullett, Wayne County Department of Environment technical projects coordinator.

Despite efforts to plant trees that would survive in Michigan's environment, many species were inappropriate for the region.

About 500 trees of 50 varieties from all parts of the world were planted 63 years ago and only about 100-130 remain, according to Mullett.

A cooperative effort between Wayne County, the state of Michigan, Northville Township and the University of Michigan is seeking to restore the arboretum. Mullett

A new Arboretum Master Plan, developed by students from the University of Michigan's School of Natural Resources and Environment, will be presented at a public meeting 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at Northville Township Hall, 44405 Six Mile. Participants will learn about the existing condition of the Arboretum and the new master plan

said it was Bankes who originally got the University of Michigan involved in the project.

The new arboretum will have a different focus.

"The idea is to identify what remains from the original planting, put forward a vision of how to build on what's left, what trail system to put in place, how to enhance what is existing and establish the Arboretum as a distinct feature in the park system," Mullett said.

A new Arboretum Master Plan, developed by students from the University of Michigan's School of Natural Resources and Environment, will be presented at a public meeting 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at Northville Township Hall, 44405 Six Mile. Participants will learn about the existing condition of the Arboretum and the new master plan. The plan and initial restoration are being funded by grants from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Rouge River National Wet Weather Demonstration Project with local match from Wayne County Parks, Department of Environment and volunteer efforts.

"The plan is re-establishment of use as an arboretum that focuses on what's supposed to be here, which is a new trend in arboreta," Mullett said. "It's too expensive to maintain a tree freak show."

All this activity is a good reminder of just how special this park along the river is for our recreation, our environment and our history.

Hugh Gallagher is the managing editor of the *Observer-News*. He can be reached at [hgallagher@oe.homecomm.net](mailto:hgallagher@oe.homecomm.net), by phone at (734) 953-2149 or by fax at (734) 591-7279.



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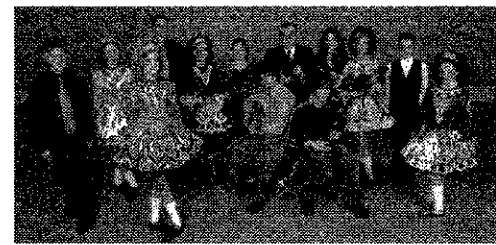
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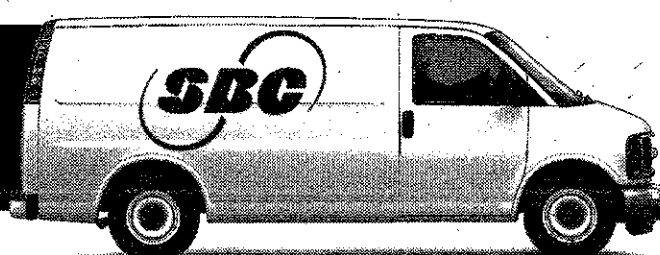
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