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Smoooooth ... Boyhood dream of flying fulfilled 30 years later



PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Richard LeBlanc pilots a Cessna 172, realizing a dream he has had since he was a teenager.

LeBlanc pilots his way into wild blue yonder

BY DARRELL CLEM
 STAFF WRITER

Richard LeBlanc turns the key, and the engine of the four-seat, single-propeller Cessna 172 starts with a loud rumble. That's a good sign. Right? Never mind that the airplane sounds like little more than a noisy farm tractor. Forget that LeBlanc - yes, the Westland City Council member - became a pilot just four months ago. Ignore weather reports that winds have picked up around Oakland Southwest Airport in New Hudson. One propeller. Somehow, it seems reassuring that LeBlanc, 46, has a reputation as a city leader who pays meticulous attention to detail. Some critics say he's too meticulous. Suddenly, it's a welcome trait as he checks that cabin doors are properly closed, that flight controls are working and that fuel levels are adequate. "Ready for takeoff," LeBlanc says, speaking through headphones that allow him and his two passengers to communicate over the noise. There's no turning back as the Cessna 172 rolls down the airport runway, reaching speeds of 65 mph. One very important propeller. Then, the aircraft leaves the ground. Smoooooth.

INTO THE SKY

Houses, freeways, cars and lakes become smaller and smaller as LeBlanc pilots the airplane skyward at 500 feet per minute,



New pilot Richard LeBlanc goes through his safety checks before flying the four-seat, single-propeller plane.

before leveling off at 4,300 feet. He appears relaxed as he starts pointing out familiar sites. Interstate 696 looks like a toy race car track. Walled Lake looks like little more than a pond. So does Kent Lake. Though firmly in control of the plane, LeBlanc momentarily seems less like a skilled pilot than the teenage boy who, 30 years ago, dreamed of flying. "Isn't this cool, gosh darn it?" he asks, soaring across the sky at nearly 140 mph. LeBlanc apologizes for a sudden wind shear that didn't really seem to rattle the

plane much. Moments later, he maneuvers the Cessna sideways to get a better view of the lakes that dot the landscape below. One propeller. Working fine. LeBlanc, a Ford Motor Co. staffer and Canton reserve police officer, recalls being around 10 years old when he first climbed aboard a small plane. A neighbor who was a corporate pilot gave him a ride. "We were able to fly over our own houses," LeBlanc said, during an interview on

PLEASE SEE PILOT, A5

Restoration work puts homes on good footing

The Questers of Sandhill provided fashion for the Octagon benefit. For more on the show, see Page A3.

BY DARRELL CLEM
 STAFF WRITER

A Westland historic village is slowly continuing to emerge, amid efforts to save two of the city's oldest houses. City leaders and local historians say they are encouraged that progress is being made on the village, located on Westland Historical Museum property on Wayne Road, north of Cherry Hill. Although far from being fully restored, the so-called Octagon House and Rowe House are getting some long-needed attention. Historians expect to tally more than \$1,000 from a recent fashion show, featuring clothes from the late 1800s to the early 1940s, that will benefit the Octagon House. "We don't have a final count yet," said Georgia Becker, who, along with her late husband, Howard, has been an ardent supporter of the

PLEASE SEE RESTORATION, A3

Becher: Schools need a better funding plan

BY SUE MASON
 STAFF WRITER

Stephen Becher admits that being a Wayne-Westland school board trustee has been a lot more work than he thought it would be. The people who encouraged him to run last June for the remaining year of a term that had been held by the late Mathew McCusker stressed that it was only one meeting a month, he said.



Becher

He has discovered that it can be as many as three-five activities a week and that's not even the busiest months of the school year. But that hasn't discouraged the retired school teacher. He's ready for the opportunity "to become a better board member" during his first four-year term on the board.

"I really have enjoyed my year on the board, I think I bring stability to it," said the Wayne resident who is running unopposed in the Tuesday, May 3, school election. "It's been an exciting year, a learning year." He has learned a lot more about the district where he spent his entire teaching career which included more than 23 years at Madison Elementary and three years at Marshall Middle School. One thing is that it was easier sitting on

PLEASE SEE BECHER, A4

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FOR THE RECORD

DEATHS

C
Patricia Ann Clark, 43, of Westland.

H
Jarold Lee Heick, 70, of Westland, died April 21.
Frank T. Hornung, 93, died April 18.

W
Mabel I. Walker, 82, of Blissfield, formerly of Westland, died April 21.



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.

World hitchhiker uses trust to reach dream

BY DIANE GALE ANDREASSI
CORRESPONDENT

Ludovic Hubler recently gave Franklin High School students an amazing social studies lesson about traveling the world hitchhiking, but his biggest message was about the importance of following dreams.

He spoke to the Livonia students at the invitation of the Interact Club, the high school part of Rotary International, according to Franklin social studies teacher Molly Evans.

"My first objective of traveling the world is to be able to understand the world," says Hubler, who was raised in Strasbourg, France. "It is important to make things happen. I keep hearing people say, 'I should have. I should have.' For me, I haven't regretted being inside the realization of my dream."

His journey began Jan. 1, 2003, after earning a master of science degree in management and his goal is to hitchhike around the world without paying for transportation even when he travels from continent to continent by ship; spending \$10 or less a day for all his needs and never exceeding \$5 daily for accommodations.

Speaking in rapid English with a French accent, Hubler told the students that he likes to begin and end his hitchhiking rides at gas stations. He uses his instincts to decide which people to ask for rides.

When Amber Mathieu, a ninth-grade student, asked Hubler if that made him nervous, he says, it has become easier with time and practice, adding that the United States has been the hardest to hitchhike.

"There is more fear and people are more individualistic,"



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Different cultures have different hitchhiking signs, Ludovic Hubler explains, noting that the traditional thumb-out gesture is an insult in some countries.

says Hubler, who speaks French, Portuguese, Spanish, English and German.

The longest he's had to wait for a ride was 28 hours. Using a lot of common sense by staying away from areas that people say are dangerous, he explains, has kept him from danger.

"You have to trust the people," Hubler, 27, says. "I trust with my eyes open, actually."

FACING CHALLENGES

Hubler started out with \$10,000 and says he often bartered for places to stay, like offering to clean pools and wash dishes. He has worked at odd jobs, wrote articles about his travels for a French newspaper and gives lectures.

French companies, including one owned by his father, have sponsored him with "small amounts" of money, he says adding that he plans to write a book about the worldwide

adventure when he finishes his travels in 2005. Most of all, he says, he enjoys getting to know the local people wherever he is.

"People ask, 'Where are the best people?'" Hubler says. "I say, 'Everywhere.' They ask, 'Where are the worst people?' I say, 'Everywhere.'"

TRUST STARTS AT HOME

Denise Strauss-Collins, a Livonia resident, paid it forward herself by inviting Hubler into her home. She learned about his travels at www.hospitalityclub.org, connecting travelers with homeowners. A two-day visit was extended one week.

"If I were to go (to France), I may or may not stay with him," she says. "It's nice to hear Ludovic's dreams and goals and it's nice to help him obtain them, especially being a single parent for 18 years."

Her generosity includes giving him her house and car

keys. "Trust has to start somewhere," she says. "It's nice to know that even though countries don't get along, people can get along. He shared a lot of his culture and what he's seen. I think he made my kids stop and think."

He had that same affect on Franklin students who were captivated with animated stories, including one about Moroccans using only their right hands to eat. Their left hands, he says, are used for hygiene and they believe it would be unsanitary to use them during meals.

Hand gestures, including the thumb-up hitchhiking method used in the United States and Europe, he explains, varies from country to country. But, the trust he uses to accept kindness from strangers and the trust the strangers must have to offer help is universal.

"I think it's important to have a strong positive attitude, to be patient, persistent and resourceful," he says. "Me, I always look forward. I never look back. I know why I'm doing this." His Web site, www.ludovichubler.com, best summarizes his intentions, "From dreams to reality, that's only a step ... Some envision the way their lives to be, me, I've decided to fulfill my dreams."

WESTLAND
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Charlotte Weisserman, 2, of Farmington Hills took part with The Questers of Sandhill fashion show with her mother Barbie Weisserman.



PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Barbara Smith of Farmington Hills wears fashions from the early 1900s, when women were campaigning for the right to vote, at the Westland Historic Commission fashion show, 'A Glimpse of Yesteryear,' presented by the Questers of Sandhill.



Norma Harden of Walled Lake wearing a gown from the 1920s which weighs 3 1/2 pounds at the Westland Historic Commission fund-raiser fashion show.

RESTORATION

FROM PAGE A1

Octagon House. The eight-sided house was built around 1880 and is flanked by two additions. New roof work has been completed on the building, and a replica of the original chimney has been added.

"It's just for looks," Westland Housing Director James Gilbert said. Water had been leaking into the Octagon House, making it critical that roof work be done, he said. Now, an electrician is upgrading wiring inside the structure.

Much work remains to restore the house's exterior. However, workers have finished the foundation and basement, which will be used for storage and historic documents.

The Rowe House - an 1837 Greek revival-style house - has been placed on a foundation after being moved from its former location on Marquette, east of Newburgh.

The house is in desperate need of a new roof, and Gilbert said C&R Services of Westland made the only pitch when bids were sought for

the work. C&R has submitted an \$8,900 bid, Gilbert said, but the owner also has offered to knock off \$500 as a gesture of community support.

City council and the Westland Historical Commission will have to approve the work, which could begin as early as May, Gilbert said.

That's welcome news to Westland historian Ruth Dale, longtime Rowe House supporter.

"It's overdue," she said. "As everyone knows, the roof has been of high importance to me, and I will be happy when it's on."

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Sanitation Authority sponsors collection of hazardous waste

Recognizing the need to keep some types of household materials out of the normal garbage pickup, the Central Wayne County Sanitation Authority is holding a hazardous household waste collection.

The next Hazardous Household Waste event will be held 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, April 30, at the Garden City Park at the corner of Merriman and Cherry Hill. Participants should enter at the Merriman entrance only.

Hazardous waste materials will be accepted for free disposal only from residents of the five cities belonging to the CWCSA including Garden City, Westland, Wayne, Inkster and Dearborn Heights. Proof of residency is required. No materials from commercial or industrial sources will be accepted.

Accepted household waste includes items such as oil-base paints and varnishes, wood preservatives, cleaning solvents, pesticides and weed killers, oven cleaners, moth-

balls, oil, gas, transmission fluid/antifreeze, pressurized cans, and lead found in shot and sinkers.

Both mercury products and household batteries also will be collected.

Hazardous Household Waste events have been held since 1995 to collect common household materials which could be detrimental to the environment, if included in normal trash pickup. More than 36,000 pounds (18 tons) of hazardous household waste was collected and properly disposed of through the April 2004 from 699 vehicles that participated.

CWCSA also offers household battery collection through a program launched in September 1998.

Dropoff containers for battery collection were placed at convenient sites in the five member communities. Currently, there are 25 containers for used batteries.

Since the program started, CWCSA through its contractor Battery Solutions has collected

and safely disposed of more than 186,000 pounds (93 tons) of batteries. A list of drop off locations has been mailed to each household or residents can call the Public Services Department in their city. The dropoff containers are available 24 hours per day seven days a week.

Due to the substantial threat to the environment caused by mercury, CWCSA has a third program which allows residents of the five member communities to properly dispose of that material.

Waste materials containing mercury, such as thermometers, switches, thermostats, fluorescent and incandescent light bulbs, and high-intensity and mercury vapor lamps, can be dropped off at Battery Solutions Inc., 38680 Michigan Ave., east of I-275, Wayne, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Residents must provide proof of residency, such as a driver's license. There is no charge to the residents. The fees are covered by CWCSA.

Lutheran High Westland holds open house

Lutheran High School Westland will host an open house for prospective students and their families 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, April 30, at the school, 33300 Cowan, just east of Wayne Road.

The open house will feature building tours, a guidance presentation, athletic, music and drama displays and refreshments. The administrative staff, teachers and student ambassadors will be on hand to answer questions about academics and extracurricular program offerings. Enrollment packets for the 2005-06 school year also will be available. A highlight of the morning is

the Lutheran Grade School Solo and Ensemble Festival being take place in classrooms throughout the high school.

Visitors are welcome to observe the competition and learn more about Lutheran elementary as well as secondary education that is offered in the Metro West area.

Lutheran High School Westland is a private Christian secondary school, which is committed to Christ-centered education and academic excellence. The school, opened in 1986 in the former Nankin Middle School building, offers a college preparatory curriculum as well as vocational education

opportunities. Enrollment for the 2004-2005 school year is approximately 235 students. Lutheran High Westland equips students spiritually through religious education as well as physically through an athletic program, which includes cross-country, football, men's and women's soccer and basketball, volleyball, wrestling, baseball, softball and track.

Students also are active in music, drama, Student Council and community service projects.

For more information about the spring open house or enrollment, call (734) 422-2090 or visit the school Web site at www.lhw1.lhsa.com.

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CASINO WINDSOR

Hot off the presses

The Westland Chamber of Commerce has started circulating its new membership directory and community profile guide. The 64-page, full-color publication is an important guide to doing business with Westland chamber members, said chamber President and CEO Lori Brist. The guide also features many city statistics, information on public safety and recreation, and important phone numbers. Copies can be picked up at the chamber office or at City Hall, both on Ford Road east of Newburgh, or at the Westland public library, on Central City Parkway north of Ford.



BECHER

FROM PAGE A1

the opposite side of the negotiating table.

"It was easier as a union president to say this is where the money should go than on the other side where you have to decide where the money goes," said Becher, who served as president of the Wayne-Westland Education Association for three years.

FINANCIAL CUSHION

Becher said Wayne-Westland is "lucky" because it has a financial cushion, money that has helped it weather the state's economic malaise. After four years of no new money for the schools, the state plans to increase the per pupil foundation grant by \$175, but school districts maintain that much of that increase will be eaten up with the increased costs of health care and retirement. "There's going to be a line drawn in the sand soon, probably with the health care,"

Becher said. "Teachers can work five years, buy five years and retire with full health care, but the trouble with health care is that it's a negotiated item. One of the bills in the legislature would have them get 3 percent of their insurance for every year they work."

Becher pointed out that the district still offers a full educational program, sports without pay-to-play and has its superintendent unlike the tiny Vanderbilt district which let its superintendent go to save \$78,500.

"Some school districts will have a problem opening the door next year," said Becher. "The state is going to have to come up with a better way to fund education. It's up to the legislature to come up with a plan. The whole thing comes down to money."

As a school board member, he said he has discovered that there are a lot of great things happening and agrees with Superintendent Greg Baracy that the district has a perception problem.

"We do so much in the of PR for people who are here in the district, but not so for the people coming in," Becher said. "We have people who live in this district who don't think we're all that good."

"When I hired in here in 1972, Wayne-Westland was known as one of the most innovative school districts in the state."

SINGLE SEX CLASSES

He would like to see that innovativeness return with the offering of single sex classes. Becher firmly believes that it would be of benefit to male and female students and would work well in high school and middle school.

"I'd love to see it implemented, even on a voluntary basis," said Becher. "More and more research is coming out that it benefits both sexes."

Becher hasn't been able to get Baracy to budge on the issue. Baracy did look into it as part of the goals set for him by the board, but the investigation didn't change his

stand that such classes don't follow federal guidelines for equity in education.

"If we offer the same class for boys and for girls and make it voluntary, I don't think you could call it discrimination," Becher said. "I think the district should give it a shot for physical education, math, science ... the four core areas."

"Just offer one class, one section for boys, one section for girls. If no one signs up, that would be the end of it."

Becher doesn't plan to give up on the idea, but the difference of opinion won't get in the way of the relationship between the two men.

"We don't always agree on stuff, you're not going to," he said. For now, he is ready for four more years. He is impressed by his colleagues and the working relationship they have.

"We don't always agree, but I think we have an excellent board," he added. "Everyone gets along professionally and personally."

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Budget talks

The Westland City Council and Mayor Sandra Cicirelli will continue discussing the mayor's newly proposed budget during two meetings this week at City Hall.

At 6:30 p.m. Monday, city leaders will discuss the budget as it pertains to Westland 18th District Court, the library, the Youth Assistance Program, the police and fire departments and the senior resources department.

At 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, they will discuss the senior department, the city's law firm, the city clerk's office, the finance department and the mayor/council budgets.

Calling Democrats

The Westland Democratic

PLACES AND FACES

Club will have its next meeting at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday at the Dorsey Center, on Dorsey south of Palmer and east of Venoy.

Officers will meet at 7 p.m. Sam Jenkins, a therapist from Veterans Haven, will address the group about the Wounded Warriors project, aimed at raising money to help wounded soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

A short film about Social Security, from U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow's office, also will be shown. St. Damian Church is inviting parishioners and their friends who have home-based businesses to participate in a vendor fair 1-4 p.m. Saturday at the church on Joy Road east of Merriman.

Vendors that will have exhibits and/or products include Arbonne International, Longaberger, Princess House Crystal, DK Books, Pampered Chef and Party Light & Creative Memories.

For more information, call Ritaanne Felczak Otto at (734) 425-8970.

Used goods

St. John's Episcopal Church

will have a garage sale today (Sunday) 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 555 S. Wayne road. Profits will fund the church ministries.

Open House

The Wayne-Westland Community Schools Family Resource Center and the Oakwood Lincoln-Jefferson Barns Clinic will host an open house 2:30-6 p.m. Monday, April 25, in celebration of 17 years of combined service to the Wayne-Westland community.

Tours of the clinic will be conducted 2:30-6 p.m. with a presentation at 5 p.m. The clinic is at Lincoln Elementary School, 33800 Grand Traverse, Westland.

Garage Sale

It's like having more than 80 garage sales all in the same place at the same time. The Westland community garage sale will take place 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, May 7, in the parking lot west of Westland City Hall, 36601 Ford Road, next to the Police Department. For further information about reserving a spot, call Margaret Martin at (734) 722-7620.

NOTICE OF ELECTION
TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2005
SCHOOLCRAFT
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
COUNTY OF WAYNE, MICHIGAN

TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF SAID COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the biennial election will be held in the Schoolcraft College District, City of Garden City, County of Wayne, Michigan on Tuesday May 3, 2005, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

The following trustee at-large positions are to be filled by the voters in the Schoolcraft College district at the May 3 Regular Biennial School Election:

TWO 6-YEAR TERMS (2005-2011)
Gregory J. Stempien
Patricia L. Watson

ONE 4-YEAR TERM (2005-2009)
Philip N. Cascade

Each person voting on the above must be:

(a) A citizen of the United States of America over eighteen (18) years of age.
(b) A registered elector of the City or Township in which he or she resides.

The places of voting for the Election to be held on May 3, 2005, will be as follows:

Precinct 1	Farmington School 33411 Marquette
Precinct 2	Memorial School 30001 Marquette
Precinct 3	Lathers School 28351 Marquette
Precinct 4	Lathers School 28351 Marquette
Precinct 5	Memorial School 30001 Marquette
Precinct 6	Garden City Middle School 1851 Radcliff
Precinct 7	Maplewood Center 31735 Maplewood
Precinct 8	Henry Ruff School 30300 Maplewood
Precinct 9	Civic Center 6000 Middlebelt
Precinct 10	Douglas School 6400 Hartel

All polling places are handicapper accessible. If you anticipate difficulties at your normal polling place please phone the City Clerk's Office to arrange an alternate location. Absentee Ballots for this Election are available at City Hall, 6000 Middlebelt, through 4:00 P.M., Monday, May 2, 2005, to anyone who meets one of the following requirements: Electors age 60 or older; Electors who expect to be absent from Garden City the entire time the polls are open on Election Day; Electors who are physically unable to attend the polls without the assistance of another; Electors who cannot attend the polls due to tenets of their religion; or Electors who are confined to jail awaiting arraignment or trial. Furthermore, any voter who requires assistance to vote by reason of blindness, disability, or inability to read or write may be given assistance by a person of the voter's choice, other than the voter's employer or agent of that employer or officer or agent of the voter's union.

In addition to our regular hours, the City Clerk's Office will be open on Saturday, April 30, 2005 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for the sole purpose of absentee voting.

Allyson Bettis
City Clerk

Publish: April 21, 2005 and April 24, 2005

NOTICE OF ANNUAL ELECTION
TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2005
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE
CITY OF GARDEN CITY
COUNTY OF WAYNE, MICHIGAN

TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF SAID SCHOOL DISTRICT:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the annual election will be held in the School District of the City of Garden City, County of Wayne, Michigan, on Tuesday, May 3, 2005, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

At the annual election there will be elected two (2) members of the Board of Education of the School District for four-year terms, beginning July 1, 2005 and expiring June 30, 2009. The candidates for said office to the Board of Education are as follows:

TWO (2) FOUR YEAR TERMS
(two shall be elected)

David Stapleton
John Thackaberry

Each person voting on the above must be:

(a) A citizen of the United States of America over eighteen (18) years of age.
(b) A registered elector of the City or Township in which he or she resides.

The places of voting for the annual School Election to be held on May 3, 2005, will be as follows:

Precinct 1	Farmington School 33411 Marquette
Precinct 2	Memorial School 30001 Marquette
Precinct 3	Lathers School 28351 Marquette
Precinct 4	Lathers School 28351 Marquette
Precinct 5	Memorial School 30001 Marquette
Precinct 6	Garden City Middle School 1851 Radcliff
Precinct 7	Maplewood Center 31735 Maplewood
Precinct 8	Henry Ruff School 30300 Maplewood
Precinct 9	Civic Center 6000 Middlebelt
Precinct 10	Douglas School 1851 Radcliff

All polling places are handicapper accessible. If you anticipate difficulties at your normal polling place please phone the City Clerk's Office to arrange an alternate location. Absentee Ballots for this Election are available at City Hall, 6000 Middlebelt, through 4:00 P.M., Monday, May 2, 2005, to anyone who meets one of the following requirements: Electors age 60 or older; Electors who expect to be absent from Garden City the entire time the polls are open on Election Day; Electors who are physically unable to attend the polls without the assistance of another; Electors who cannot attend the polls due to tenets of their religion; or Electors who are confined to jail awaiting arraignment or trial. Furthermore, any voter who requires assistance to vote by reason of blindness, disability, or inability to read or write may be given assistance by a person of the voter's choice, other than the voter's employer or agent of that employer or officer or agent of the voter's union.

In addition to our regular hours, the City Clerk's Office will be open on Saturday, April 30, 2005 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for the sole purpose of absentee voting.

Roy Watts
Secretary, Board of Education
School District of the City of Garden City

Publish: April 21, 2005 and April 24, 2005

NOTICE OF
PUBLIC ACCURACY TEST

A public accuracy test will be conducted at the time and location listed, for the purpose of testing the accuracy of the tabulating equipment and programs which will be used to tabulate voted ballots for the School and Special Local Election to be held on Tuesday, May 3, 2005 in Garden City, Wayne County, Michigan.

Location: Civic Center (City Hall)
6000 Middlebelt
Garden City, Michigan 48135

Date: April 27, 2005
Wednesday

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Contact: Allyson M. Bettis
City Clerk
734-793-1820

Publish: April 21 and 24, 2005

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BID

Notice is hereby given that sealed bids will be received by Garden City Public Schools Administrative Office, 1333 Radcliff St., Garden City, MI 48135 for:

FURNISHINGS
Administrative Offices Remodeling
Garden City Jr. High School Remodeling

Proposals are to be submitted in accordance with contract documents prepared by TMP Associates, Inc., 1191 W. Square Lake Road, P.O. Box 289, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303-0289 dated May 2, 2005.

- DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY**
 - Bidding Documents will be available for examination and distribution on or after May 2, 2005. Examination may be made at the Office of the Architect, TMP ASSOCIATES, INC.
 - Qualified Bidders may obtain bidding documents from the Architect's office, consisting of one (1) set of Drawings and Specifications.
- DUE DATE**
 - Bid Proposals will be received until the time and the place, as follows, where and when they will be publicly opened and read aloud.
Date and Time: May 16, 2005 @ 2:00 p.m.
Place: Garden City Public Schools
Administrative Office
1333 Radcliff St.
Garden City, MI 48135
- GENERAL INFORMATION**
 - Bidder shall agree not to withdraw Bid Proposal for a period of ninety (90) days after date of receipt of bids. A 5% bid bond is required in accordance with the Section 00100-F. Instructions to Bidders (See Page 00100-F-1, Paragraph 2.G.).
 - Accepted Bidder shall be required to enter into a contract with Garden City Public Schools and furnish satisfactory Performance Bond in accordance with the Section 00100-F - Instructions to Bidders. (See Page 00100-F-2, Paragraph 2.L.).
 - The Owner reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Bids in whole or in part, or to waive any informalities therein. If in the Owner's opinion it is in their best interest, the contract may be awarded to other than the lowest bidder, for reasons of establishing uniformity, delivery time, etc.

Publish: April 24, 2005



PHOTOS BY TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Richard LeBlanc lifts off from the runway at Oakland Southwest Airport in New Hudson.

PILOT

FROM PAGE A1

the ground. "But, I was probably 16 when I thought it would be really cool to fly a plane by myself."

He had to put those hopes on hold for nearly 30 years. First, he married his wife, Cheryl, and he couldn't afford to spend thousands of dollars to become a pilot. They needed the money to raise their two sons.

Later, LeBlanc's political career as a city council member became a higher priority, but he found that he had more time after he lost a mayoral race in 2001.

"I mentioned it to Cheryl. She was not - and is not - enthusiastic about it," he said. "But, as she has done throughout our marriage, she acquiesced."

LeBlanc became serious about his dream in 2003, after he passed a medical exam and received his student pilot certificate. He first flew with an instructor in July of that year. "He let me assume the controls for a bit," LeBlanc recalls. "I still get goose bumps thinking about it."

He started his lessons in earnest last June, flying with an instructor three times a week.

"He really didn't falter much. It was definitely a good progression," the instructor, Erik Fisher, said. "I'd say he's a very safe pilot. It's a learning process. As long as you live through it, you learn from it."

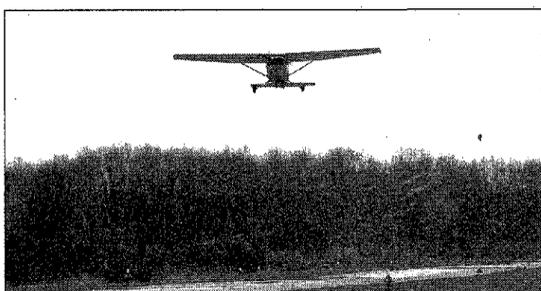
FLYING ALONE

LeBlanc made his first solo flight last July.

"I darned near wanted to cry," he said. "I worked hard for this, and I had waited a long time. It was a blast. It was euphoric."

In all, he has logged more than 80 hours in airplanes that he leases, and he officially became a pilot in December, meaning he could then bring passengers aboard. On New Year's Day, he took his wife and another couple for a flight along the Detroit skyline.

"He was very good when we went up, but I don't like the little planes. They scare me," his wife said. "We flew over Comerica Park and over the waterfront in Detroit. The water was what scared me. I always think of John F. Kennedy Jr.'s plane going



Richard LeBlanc has another smooth takeoff in the Cessna 172 he leases.

down.

"I think he's really good, though," she said of her husband's piloting skills. "Most things that he sets out to do, he does very well."

LeBlanc plans one day to fly to his family's cottage in Moorestown, Mich., near Houghton Lake - a trip that would take about 100 minutes.

"I really don't envision flying beyond a vacation destination like that," he said. "My goal is flying for pleasure."

In the air, that becomes evident as he starts returning the Cessna toward Oakland Southwest Airport. He points

to the landing strip.

"We're three miles away," he says, even though it looks closer.

LeBlanc starts descending at 1,500 feet per minute. Houses, freeways, cars and lakes look bigger and bigger.

He turns the plane and starts descending toward the runway. "We're a little off course," he said. "But it will be fine."

One propeller. Still working. Closer to the runway. Closer still.

And, finally, touchdown. Smooooooth.

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ACHIEVERS

The University of Michigan-Dearborn has recognized three graduate students from Westland as honor scholars.

The Honor Scholar Award is to one graduate student per degree major with at least a 7.0 cumulative grade point average and a minimum of three-quarters of their program completed by the end of Fall 2004.

The award winners, selected by the respective discipline faculty, also meet other criteria established by each department, school or college, includ-

ing contributions to the discipline through research and service activities like tutoring, mentoring and leadership in discipline-based student organizations.

Receiving awards were:
■ **Mukul Gadde**, who is in the Electrical Engineering graduate program.

■ **Kemal Kizilaslan**, who is in the Manufacturing Systems Engineering graduate program.

■ **Sarah Shahid** who is in the Computer and Information

Science graduate program.

Debra Faye Hayden of Westland is a January graduate of the Thomas M. Cooley Law School in Lansing. While at Cooley, Hayden earned a Certificate of Merit in family law and made the Dean's List.

A graduate of John Glenn High School, she received her bachelor of arts degree in 2001 from Madonna University. Hayden is the daughter of Jerald and Wilma Hayden of Westland.

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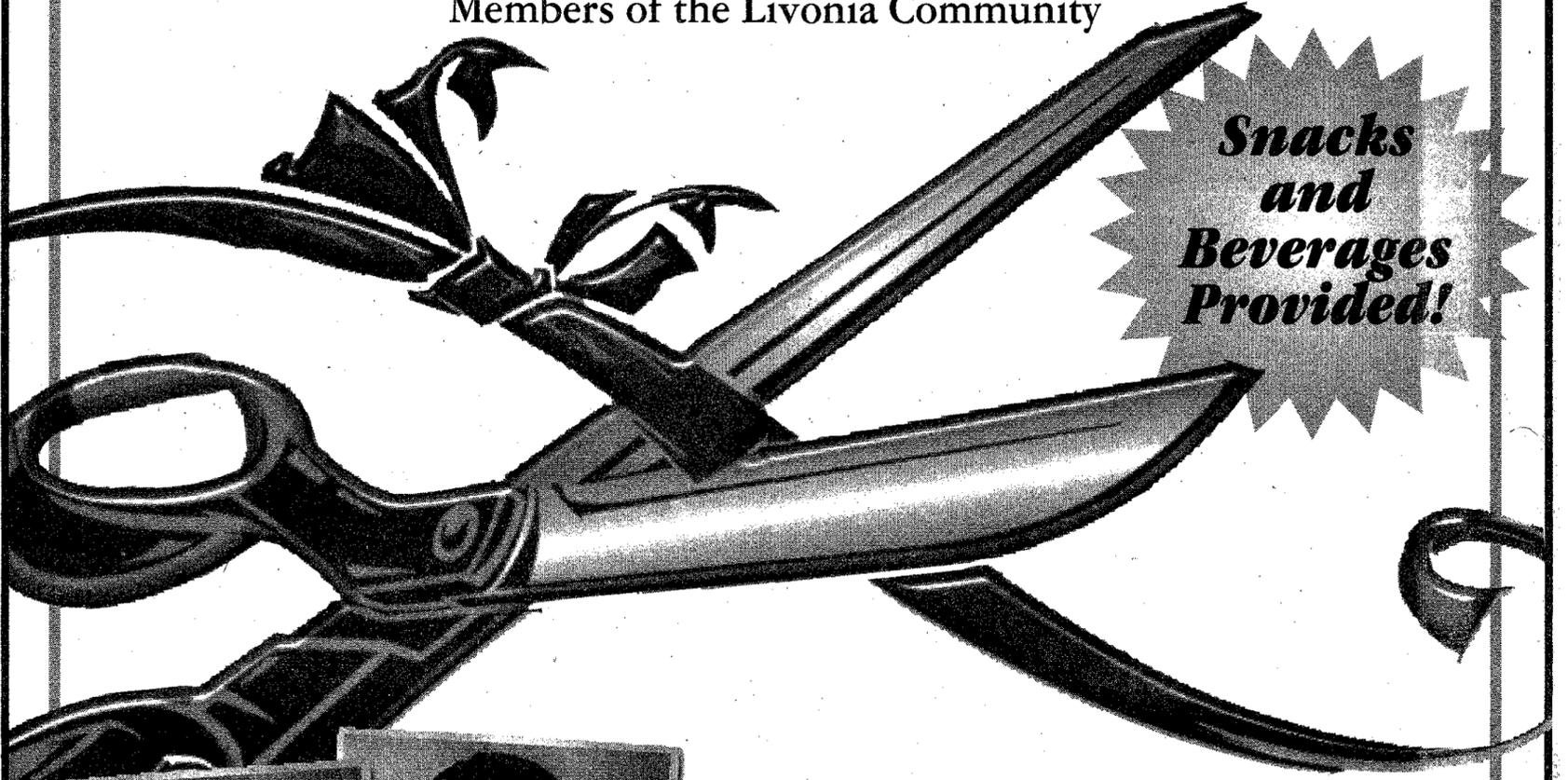
Official Ribbon Cutting by City Council President, Joe Taylor Friday, April 29, 2005 at 2:30 p.m.

Open House-Sat., April 30th Noon - 4 p.m.

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Michigan's population decline has benefits

Is growth always a good thing?

This past week, the U.S. Census Bureau released information on Michigan's projected growth that seemed to spread a shroud over the peninsula. According to bureau projections, by 2030 Michigan will have slipped from the Top 10.

For a pop group, a television show or a sports team, that's certainly bad news. But is it always bad news for a state?

The bureau says Michigan will "only" grow 7.6 percent between 2000 and 2030 while the country as a whole will grow by 29 percent. As has been happening over the last 30 years, the population is shifting south and west.

The Great Lakes State is expected to drop from its current 8th spot to 9th on the Hot 50, with Georgia overtaking us in 2019. In 2020, North Carolina moves into 9th and by 2030 Arizona will boot us into the 11th spot.

Nobody ever shouts "We're No. 11."

And looking at things from the perspective of today, those "bleak" projections don't seem at all unrealistic. The state's major city is in steep decline, it's metro area racially and economically cleaved and it's major economic engine, the auto industry, struggling to stay competitive. The state government's finances are in disarray, for all of the above reasons and more. The state is strangled by a government that needs to spend but is unwilling to tax and unable to compromise.

Other parts of the state, particularly Grand Rapids, seem to be prospering a little better, but even there, the once vital furniture industry has been hobbled.

One person offered the opinion that Michigan might be in retreat toward becoming a backwater, agricultural state, sort of a very large Vermont.

Horrors!

And according to Michigan's state demographer Kenneth Darga, not necessarily true. In a press release from the Library of Michigan, Darga says Michigan's population decline may be overstated. He argues that the bureau's projections are based on out-migration from the state equaling the out-migration over the last 30 years. Darga says those figures are skewed because of the high number of residents who left the state in the 1970s and '80s (remember when the joke was "The last person in Michigan, please turn out the lights" and everybody was moving to Houston?).



Hugh Gallagher

Darga argues that like the Ghost of Christmas Future, the bureau's projections are about what "might" be, not what will be. He says things might be different if we make our cities more attractive and improve our economic climate; if water constraints keep population down in the west and southwest (assuming they don't drain the Great Lakes); more former Michiganders come back home; and immigration to the country decreases because of security concerns.

Of course, losing population does have consequences. We would lose representation in Congress (as we have over the last two censuses) and federal funds and programs. A decline in population and housing will affect jobs (which will further drive people from the state). The reasons for Michigan's decline are troubling, especially for a state that was once a beacon to the unemployed, a powerhouse for the nation.

But a slower growth has its benefits. Once lush Florida is becoming a worked-over, paved-over urban tangle. The southwest is producing cities where no cities were ever meant to be, and creating a false demand for water and a serious intrusion on nature's landscape.

Here we might be able to restore and, certainly, preserve some of Michigan's wonderful environment. Here we might discover ways to make smaller cities and towns inviting, without encouraging the high-rise, superhighway mania of big cities. Here we might build on a different economic model that is still successful in maintaining a level of good employment, while understanding that the days of being a jobs magnet are over.

It is unlikely, with all the resources of nature and people that Michigan possesses, that we will ever become an agricultural backwater. But there is much to be said for the ways of small towns, farms and forests and Michigan has a rich history in those areas as well.

I shudder at every ugly development along Lake Michigan as a step backward even as it's promoted as "progress" by the chambers of commerce. Not all building, not all population growth, not all shopping malls, not all industrial development is a good thing for all places.

A little slow down in population, a little less paving over paradise might be just what Michigan needs.

Hugh Gallagher is the managing editor of The Observer Newspapers. He can be reached by phone at (734)953-2149, by e-mail at hgallagher@oe.homecomm.net or by fax at (734)591-7279.

Now is time to prepare for the tornado season

It's tornado time

Tornadoes are nature's most violent storms. These rotating funnel-shaped clouds can create winds that reach 300 miles per hour and can devastate a neighborhood in seconds. Each year, about a thousand tornadoes touch down in the United States,

leaving behind them a mass of destruction. With tornado season upon us, it may be wise to review some tornado facts.

A tornado occurs when warm, moist air comes into contact with a cold front. Tornadoes generally occur near the trailing edge of a thunderstorm. Even if you cannot see the characteristic funnel-shaped cloud, swirling debris can sometimes be spotted from a good distance away. This violently rotating

column of air extends down from a thunderstorm to the ground.

Tornadoes can strike quickly, with little or no warning, and move an average of 30 miles per hour. An average tornado is on the ground fewer than 10 minutes and travels a distance of about five miles. This is an average, and they can last longer and travel farther. Tornadoes are most likely to occur between 3 p.m. and 9 p.m., but can occur at any time. While most tornadoes move from southwest to northeast, they can move in any direction. Tornadoes tend to strike during the spring or summer months.

A "Tornado Watch" means tornadoes are possible. Keep alert by watching the sky for approaching storms, a dark greenish sky,

loud hail and a loud roar. Keep track of the television/radio reports of any tornadoes and where they are.

A "Tornado Warning" means a tornado has been sighted and you are advised to take shelter immediately. Tornado Warnings will trigger the city's emergency warning sirens that you hear on the first Saturday of each month, at 1 p.m.

The best shelter most homes have is in the basement, under the stairs or under a large, heavy work bench. If your home has no basement, get as many walls between you and the outside as possible. A closet or hallway would be a good choice. Stay away from windows if at all possible.

A "Disaster Supplies Kit" would be good to keep in your designated shelter. This kit should contain a first aid kit, battery-powered radio and flashlights, bottled water, non-perishable food and a manual can opener.

There is a myth that you should try to "equalize pressure" in the home by opening windows. Do not open windows, as this can increase damage in the home and waste precious time during an emergency.

Take a few minutes and discuss with your family what to do during a tornado emergency. Older children may be home alone when the siren sounds, and will need to know what to do. Younger children will need the reassurance and guidance of trained adults. As in most emergency situations, you don't use the information a lot, but when you need it, it's nice to have practiced what to do before the situation arises.

Lt. Tom Kiurski serves with the Livonia Fire & Rescue.



Tom Kiurski

LETTERS

Let customers vote on ban

In the article printed in the *Observer and Eccentric* about the Wayne County smoking ban ("Smoking ban doesn't generate much fire" April 21, 2005) Heather Needham quotes the American Cancer Society's bogus claim that second-hand smoke kills 35,000 to 40,000 Americans a year. The problem with that figure is no one can identify ONE such death. There is no emergency room record, death certificate nor medical record of ANY-ONE dying of exposure to second-hand smoke.

As the busybodies finish their assault on the property rights of restaurant and bar owners to ban smoking there, the second stage of their program has been announced. On March 8, 2005, a major Detroit newspaper printed

the proposal of the Michigan Council on Alcohol Problems that defines "problem drinking" as more than two drinks PER DAY for a man and one drink PER DAY for a woman. There it is. The next step in protecting us from ourselves will be no bottles of wine sold with dinner. No after dinner drink allowed if the lady has had a beer with her meal. That is exactly what neo-prohibition is. They start with smoking and go on to other things.

The choice to allow or to ban smoking in a restaurant should be left to the owner of the establishment. The customers will vote with their attendance or non-attendance.

Bert G. Osterberg
Livonia

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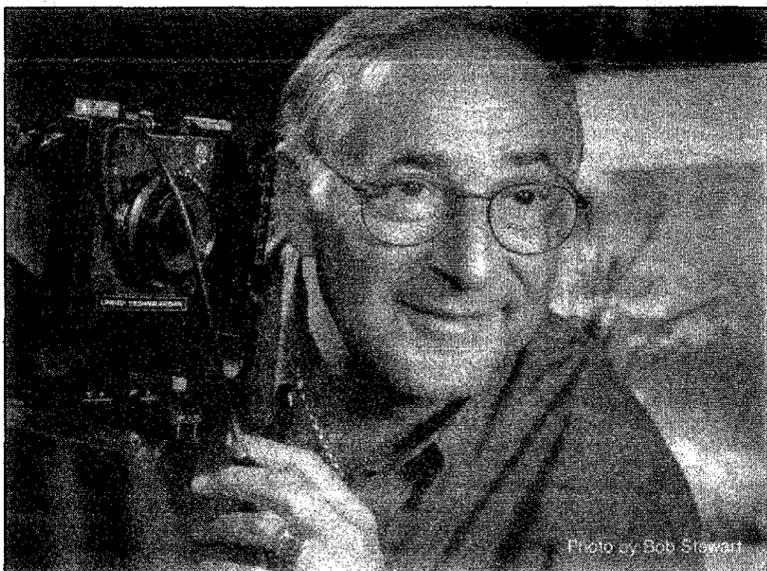


Photo by Bob Stewart

'The Eyes of a Child'

Photographs by students from Buchanan and Cooper Elementary Schools will also be on display. 'The Eyes of a Child' is a joint effort between Livonia Public Schools, Laurel Park Place, and Monte Nagler.

Laurel Park Place

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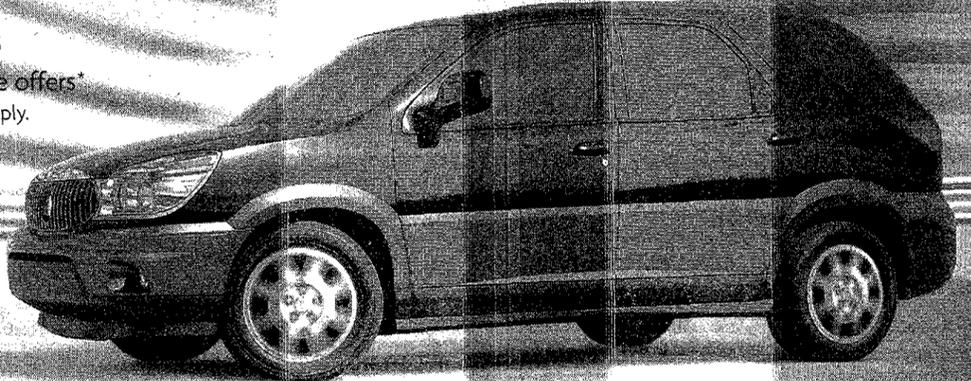
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- The serenity of QuietTuning
- EPA est. 29 mpg hwy

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\$1,929 Due at lease signing after Bonus Cash
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ALL NEW BUICK TERRAZA™ CX

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- Seating for seven
- The serenity of QuietTuning™

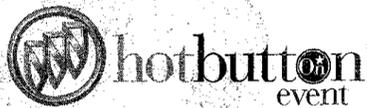
Qualified GM employees and eligible family members:

\$299/month 36 months

\$1,759 Due at lease signing after Bonus Cash†
Includes security deposit. Tax, title, license extra.



Just announced! If your GMAC lease expires between May 1 and November 30, you can get out of it now and get into a new 2005 Buick. Hurry, offer ends May 2!



VISIT: METRODETROITBUICKDEALERS.COM

Jim Bradley Buick
Ann Arbor
734-769-1200

Faist-Diesing Buick
Chelsea
734-475-8663

James-Martin Buick
Detroit
313-875-0500

Roberts Buick
Lapeer
810-667-2102

Feigley Buick
Milford
248-684-1414

Shelton Buick
Rochester Hills
248-651-5500

Vyletel Buick
Sterling Heights
586-977-2800

Waldecker Buick
Brighton
810-227-1761

Randy Hosler Buick
Clarkston
248-625-5500

Ray Laethem Buick
Detroit
313-886-1700

John Rogin Buick
Livonia
734-525-0900

Bob Jeannotte Buick
Plymouth
734-453-2500

Jeffrey Buick
Roseville
586-296-1300

Zubor Buick
Taylor
734-946-8112

Ed Rinke Buick
Center Line
586-757-2100

Jim Riehl's Friendly Buick
Clinton Township
586-412-9600

Bob Saks Buick
Farmington Hills
248-478-0500

Terhune Sales & Service
Marine City
810-765-8866

Cawood Auto Company
Port Huron
810-987-3030

Jim Fresard Buick
Royal Oak
248-547-6100

Suburban Buick
Troy
248-519-9748

Superior Buick
Dearborn
313-846-1122

Wally Edgar Buick
Lake Orion
248-391-9900

Victory Buick
Milan
734-439-3500

Larry Koss Buick
Richmond
586-727-3115

Tamaroff Buick
Southfield
248-353-1300

*Payments are for a 2005 Buick Rendezvous CX with an MSRP of \$27,270 (24 monthly payments total \$4,536), a 2005 Buick LaCrosse CX with 16" aluminum wheels and an MSRP of \$23,845 (24 monthly payments total \$4,776) and a 2005 Buick Terraza CX with an MSRP of \$28,825 (36 monthly payments total \$10,764). Option to purchase at lease end for an amount to be determined at lease signing. GMAC must approve lease. Take delivery by 5/31/05. Mileage charge of \$.20/mile over 24,000 miles for Rendezvous and LaCrosse, 36,000 miles for Terraza. Lessee pays for excess wear. Payments may be higher in some states. Not available with other offers.

**Call 1-888-4ONSTAR (1-888-466-7827) or visit onstar.com for system limitations and details.

†Must return vehicle and take delivery of an eligible new GM vehicle by 5/2/05. Excess mileage and wear charges apply. See dealer for details.

‡Hot Button ends 5/31/05. For details, see gm.com/hotbutton.

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