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## Teens face multiple charges in robbery

BY DARRELL CLEM STAFF WRITER

Two local teenagers face multiple criminal charges for allegations they robbed an 80-year-old woman inside the garage of her Westland condominium.

The victim was robbed of her purse about 9 p.m. Sept. 14 after one of the suspects followed her into her garage and threatened her with a pellet gun, police Sgt. Steve Borisch said.

The woman lives in Colonial Estates condominiums on Newburgh south of Joy.

The other suspect waited in a getaway van that police said was earlier stolen from a residence on Hiveley Street.

Ajuan Hogan, 18, of Wayne and Cortne Diaz, 18, of Westland were arraigned Saturday on charges of armed robbery and first-degree home invasion, Borisch confirmed.

Diaz also was arraigned Saturday on charges of fleeing from police and driving with a suspended license, following accusations he led police on a chase to Westwood Apartments at Joy

PLEASE SEE ROBBERY, A6

## Firefighters, city agree to new pact

BY DARRELL CLEM STAFF WRITER

Westland firefighters have become the latest city union to receive a new contract, ending lengthy negotiations.

"I think it's a very reasonable contract," city Personnel Director Keith Madden said, adding that the latest pact culminated "months of spirited debate."

The four-year agreement is retroactive to July 1, 2003, meaning that it will expire in just 21 months.

"Like all contracts, we got and we gave," said Westland Firefighters Association President Edward Hosmer. "Did we ratify it unanimously? No. But, it was overwhelmingly

accepted." The contract for the 76-member Westland Firefighters Local 1279 did, however, garner sweeping support from city council members, who approved it Monday in a 7-0 vote.

Firefighters received the same pay raises that all other city unions received:

- They accepted a pay freeze for the year that started July 1, 2003.
- They received a retroactive, 2 percent wage increase for the following year.
- They got a 0.5 percent pay increase on July 1 of this year, and they'll get another 3 percent Jan. 1.
- They will receive their largest increase, 3.25 percent, next July 1.

The union represents city employees ranging from the rank of firefighter to assistant chief.

Annual salaries for those positions ranged from \$35,960 to \$73,846 at the beginning of the new contract, Madden said.

By the time the pact expires, those salaries will range from \$39,202 to \$80,504, he said.

Firefighters made some concessions. Their prescription co-pays will double from \$5 to \$10, and new hires will have to accept medical coverage from a health-maintenance organization.

Firefighters hardly embraced the new co-pays and health insurance changes, Hosmer said, but they viewed

the overall contract as acceptable.

"We're happy that we were able to negotiate rather than arbitrate the contract," he said.

Madden commended firefighters and other city unions for accepting a first-year pay freeze to help the city battle a budget crunch.

"It's not easy for unions to take a pay freeze, and that's what they've all done," Madden said.

"It has been a long and tedious process," he said, referring to negotiations between the firefighters union and the city's bargaining team. "But we got it done, and we got it done professionally."

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Charles Abner, commander of Bova VFW Post, salutes during the presentation of the colors.



Jeff Thomas of VFW Post 1136 in Wyandotte plays taps at the end of the ceremony.



PHOTOS BY TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## Remembering those who serve

Danny Brighton of the Bova VFW Post 9885 Men's Auxiliary lays a wreath at the veterans memorials at Westland City Hall Friday in observance of National POW/MIA Recognition Day. Veterans organizations from around the area gathered for the ceremony during which the names of all Michigan service men and women who have lost their lives in the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts were read in remembrance of their sacrifice for the country.

## Musicians finalize plans for concert

BY DARRELL CLEM STAFF WRITER

A Westland concert aimed at raising money to help with Hurricane Katrina relief efforts is stirring considerable interest, officials said.

The concert featuring several rock bands is scheduled for 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday in Central City Park, with doors opening an hour beforehand.

Dean Boucher - event manager, professional stagehand and drummer for the rock band Power Source - said Tuesday that plans, though made hastily, are falling into place.

Admission will be \$10, or \$5 for students with identification. Children 10 and under will get in free.

Organizers also plan to bring in a semi-trailer to collect toys, books, school supplies and other hurricane relief items from concert goers.

"We've put out thousands of fliers asking for donations," Boucher said.

A group calling itself Musicians for Relief organized the concert, which Boucher said will feature Rare Earth, the Howling Diablos, guitarist Joey

PLEASE SEE CONCERT, A5

### CONCERT SCHEDULE

Here's the schedule released by Musicians for Relief, with times approximate and subject to change:

- 11 a.m.: The National Anthem
- 11:15 a.m.-12:05 p.m.: Crossover.
- 12:20 p.m.-1:10 p.m.: Red Hill.
- 1:25 p.m.-2:15 p.m.: 6 Peace.
- 2:30 p.m.-3:20 p.m.: Eddie Leighton Project.
- 3:20 p.m.-3:35 p.m.: Car show awards.
- 3:40 p.m.-4:30 p.m.: The Ride.
- 4:45 p.m.-5:25 p.m.: Joey Gaydos, Jr.
- 5:40 p.m.-6:40 p.m.: Power Source.
- 6:55 p.m.-7:55 p.m.: Howling Diablos.
- 8:10 p.m.-8:20 p.m.: Patriotic songs.
- 8:30 p.m.-10:00 p.m.: Rare Earth.

## Shopper makes off with pair of diamond earrings

BY DARRELL CLEM STAFF WRITER

A lone bandit swiped a pair of diamond earrings Sunday afternoon from a jewelry store inside Westland Shopping Center.

The incident happened about 3 p.m. when a trickster went into Helzberg Diamonds, asked to see a pair of earrings and then grabbed them from an employee, police Lt. James Ridener said.

"The complainant had the jewelry in his hands. The suspect grabbed it out of his hands and ran," Ridener said.

The thief fled from the mall before he could be caught by security officers or police.

No one was injured during the inci-

dent. No weapon was used during the theft, Ridener said.

Police received a clear description of the suspect, who was described as a black male, possibly 20 years old, about 5-foot-9 and 170 pounds.

The bandit wore a black T-shirt with writing on it, long black shorts and a black hat with dog-tag art on the front. Ridener said one side of the hat had "Det" on it and the other side had "313" - an apparent reference to the Detroit area code.

Police were continuing to investigate the incident. Anyone who has information about the theft is urged to call the Westland Police Department at (734) 722-9600.

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Coming Sunday in PINK

The best tresses from the best hairstylists



# Westlander named HFCC's 'best nurse'

Henry Ford Community College Nursing program graduate Jennifer Minor-Matigian has been awarded the Eleanor A. Tourtillot Outstanding Nursing Student Award.

Minor-Matigian was voted "best nurse" by the HFCC Nursing division faculty committee with student input. She received a \$500 scholarship. Tourtillot was the first nursing director at HFCC, serving from 1953 to 1979.

According to Katherine Bradley, HFCC's associate dean of nursing, Minor-Matigian is "strong academically and clinically." The Westland resident graduated magna cum laude in May with the 50th anniversary graduating class of HFCC's Nursing program. It also was the largest class ever with 230 students.

Minor-Matigian also served as vice president of the HFCC Student Nurse Association and was a student representative on the nursing curriculum committee.

The HFCC Student Nurse Association organizes and runs fund-raisers for the community, including the "clothe a family" event in the holiday season and blood drives throughout the year.

"The Student Nurse Association tries to simulate what nurses will experience, and it provides us with a professional organization to join," said Minor-Matigian.

As a student representative on the curriculum committee, Minor-Matigian gave student input to help keep the nursing curriculum current and relevant.

She currently is working in



Katherine Bradley, Henry Ford Community College's associate dean of the Nursing Division, presents HFCC Nursing program graduate Jennifer Minor-Matigian with the Eleanor A. Tourtillot Outstanding Nursing Student Award.

the oncology and hematology unit at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, where she worked as a nurse extern before graduation.

"I was hired right after graduation," Minor-Matigian said. "HFCC is very respected in nursing and has a good reputation in the community. I've been told that HFCC nurses are the best prepared in the

community."

Minor-Matigian also holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from the University of Louisville in Kentucky. She moved to Michigan when she married her husband, Rob, a police officer. The two are expecting a baby on Nov. 1.

"I decided that I wanted a career that would be more flexible for having a family,"

Minor-Matigian said. "I like caring for and taking care of people, so nursing seemed like the best thing."

For more information about HFCC's Nursing program, call (313) 845-6305 or (313) 845-9635. For more information about HFCC, log on to www.hfcc.edu on the Internet or call HFCC's Welcome Center at (800) 585-HFCC.

## AROUND WESTLAND

### Battle of Bands

Skateland West at 37550 Cherry Hill will showcase local musical talent from around southeastern Michigan when it hosts a Battle of the Bands 7-11 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 24.

Featured will be The End of Heartache, Significant Victim, All Lies Aside, Closed For Winter and Glib.

Admission will be \$6. For more information, call (734) 326-2801 or visit Skateland's Web site at www.skatelandwest.com.

New officers  
The Metro Wayne Democratic Club has a new slate of officers. Taking the oath of office Sept. 14 were Cliff Johnson, president; Charles Hendrix, vice-president; Lisa Lynde, treasurer; Ed Taylor, Steve Becher and Fred Arthur, trustees, and Rose Lemis, senior coordinator.

The organization also has made a contribution to Westland Mayor Sandra Cicirelli's Hurricane Katrina fund.

### Flea Market

Booth space is available for an outdoor flea market at the Harris-Kehrer VFW Post 3323, 1055 S. Wayne Road, Saturday, Sept. 24. The flea market will be 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The cost is \$25 per parking space. For more information, call Richard Eberhart at (734) 812-7978.

### Music program

Children in the second-sixth grades are invited to join the afterschool music and choir program at Kirk of our Savior Church on Cherry Hill in Westland.

The program meets 5-7 p.m. Thursdays, beginning Thursday, Sept. 29. It includes singing, music theory, piano keyboard skills, games, crafts and activities and a dinner.

No musical experience necessary, and all Christian faiths are welcome. There is weekly \$2.50 charge to cover the cost of the meal.

For more information, call Timothy Falk at (734) 718-8733.

### Blood drive

Hayes Elementary School will hold an American Red Cross Blood Drive 1-7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 27, at the school, 30600 Louise, Westland. Call (734) 427-2810 for an appointment. Walk-ins are always welcome.

### Basketball clinics

The Westland Parks and Recreation Department and Hoops Stars Basketball will

sponsor a six-week Hoops Stars Basketball Clinic 5:30-6:30 p.m. Nov. 8-Dec. 6 at the Bailey Recreation Center, 36651 Ford.

The clinic is for youngsters ages 7-13 and in grades 1-8. Participants will learn the fundamentals of basketball, such as dribbling, passing, shooting and defense. There also will be challenging games and drills and an opportunity to play in a 5-on-5 full court game.

Kids need to bring a water bottle and wear comfortable clothing and athletic shoes.

The clinic costs \$42 for residents and \$45 for non-residents. Register at the Bailey Center. For more information, call Ron Levin at (248) 496-3268.

### Drama and dance

The Westland Therapeutic Recreation Program and the Shoe String Theatre are offering a drama and movement program for children with special needs.

The class will be 5-6 p.m. Fridays in two sessions - Sept. 23-Oct. 28 and Nov. 4-Dec. 16. Each week there will be a different theme based on a children's story. Drama, music, movement and dance will teach youngsters gross motor, listening and focusing skills while letting children use their imaginations.

The class will be held at the Bailey Recreation Center, 36651 Ford. Cost is \$30 for residents and \$31 for non-residents. Scholarships are available for Westland residents. For more information, call (734) 722-7620.

### Las Vegas Party

St. Bernardine Church is having a Las Vegas Party 8 p.m. to midnight Friday, Oct. 21, at the church, located on the southwest corner Ann Arbor Trail and Merriman in Westland.

There will be blackjack, table games, hourly raffles and non-smoking Blackjack rooms. Admission will be \$7 and includes food (hot dogs, potato salad), pop and potato chips. Beer available at \$1 per glass.

For more information, call (734) 427-5150.

St. Bernardine Men's Club also is sponsoring a Pinochle/Euchre Card Party on Fridays, Sept. 23, Sept. 30, Oct. 14, Oct. 28, Nov. 4, Nov. 18, Dec. 2, Dec. 16, Jan. 6, Jan. 13, Jan. 27, Feb. 3, Feb. 17 and Feb. 24.

Participants don't need a partner to play. Snacks and soft drinks are included in the \$5 charge. Games start at 7:30 p.m.

# 4 area students are Merit Semifinalists

Four area students were among the approximately 16,000 Semifinalists in the 51st annual National Merit Scholarship Program were announced recently by officials of National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC).

Winners, by school, are:  
■ Westland Lutheran High - Aaron A. Zeile.

■ Churchill High - Ryan M. Bird, Elizabeth A. Dillon and Jennifer M. Martinec.

These scholastically talented

high school seniors have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 8,200 Merit Scholarship® awards, worth \$33 million, that will be offered next spring. To be considered for a Merit Scholarship award, Semifinalists must fulfill several requirements and advance to the Finalist level of the competition. About 90 percent of the Semifinalists are expected to attain Finalist standing, and approximately half of the Finalists will be

selected as Merit Scholarship winners, earning the Merit Scholar title.

NMSC, a not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance, was founded in 1955 specifically to conduct the annual National Merit Program.

Scholarships awarded through the program are underwritten by NMSC's own funds and approximately 500 business organizations and

higher education institutions which share NMSC's goals of honoring the nation's scholastic champions and encouraging the pursuit of academic excellence.

More than 1.3 million high school juniors entered the 2006 National Merit Program by taking the 2004 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), which served as an initial screen of program entrants.

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On the premises where said property has been stored and which are located at Public Storage, 20080 Allen Road, Trenton, Michigan 48183, (734) 479-5790, on 09-28-05 at 9:30 a.m. Personal property described below in the matter of:

- 1026 - Kathleen Weiss - TV, mattress, totes, boxes, recliner
- 148 - Milton Engel - bed frame, clothing, refrigerator, camping gear, guitar
- 401 - Jason Kenworthy - mattresses, dresser, lamps, microwave, TV
- 513 - Roy Poore - boxes, bags, books
- 517 - Anthony Crockett - boxes, dresser, computer, refrigerator, stereo DVD rack
- 206 - Kellie Williamson - mattress, books, computer, microwave, stereo
- 532 - Jeffrey Stafford Jr. - mattress, sofa, dresser, loveseat
- 647 - Terry Schmitz - cabinet, wood burner stove, sheet metal
- 707 - Julian Brisbois sofa, household items
- 817 - Max Axler - computer, sofa, shelving, golf clubs
- 902 - Melonie Blackburn - mattress set, boxes, dresser, microwave, vacuum
- 942 - Jennifer Stoneberg - bags, totes, luggage

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- B221 - Barbara Ayers - mattress, boxes, sofa, totes, weights
- B231 - Veronica Aquilina - bags, boxes, vacuum, ironing board, broom
- B232 - Katherine Keller - bags, boxes
- B265 - Steven Weaver - bags, boxes, totes, stereo
- B287 - Meredith Keller - boxes, suitcase
- D003 - Clement Pearson - mattress, bike, dryer, fishing equipment, refrigerator
- D020 - Ronald Bunez - mattresses, boxes, sofa, entertainment center, loveseat
- D041 - Nathan Williams - bike, boxes, lawnmower
- E003 - Ronald Mcfadden - bags, boxes, chairs, sofa, lamps, loveseat, microwave
- E007 - Shirley Smith - bags, bike, boxes, stereo, table, totes, TV
- F029 - Carla Miller - boxes, fan, shelving, TVs, grille, toilet
- F042 - Tina Holden - mattresses, bike, computer, microwave, TV, vacuum

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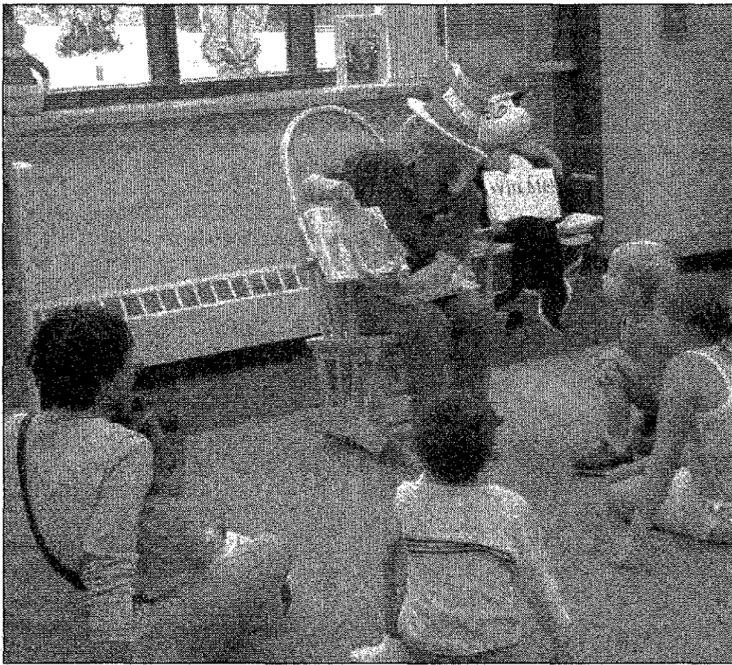
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### Seuss-A-Thon



Westland Mayor Sandra Cicirelli reads to children at the library.

## Kids discover magic library card can bring

BY JULIE BROWN  
STAFF WRITER

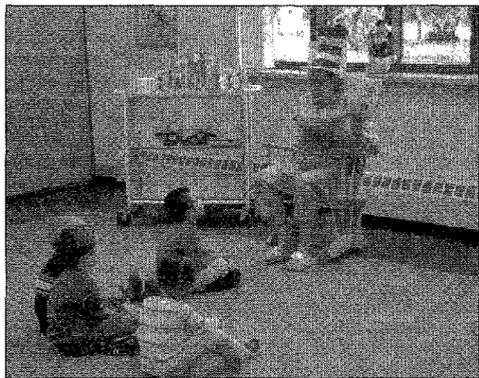
As Cheryl Graunstadt turned the pages of *The Cat in the Hat*, the children's eyes followed and they listened carefully.

The occasion was the Seuss-A-Thon at the William P. Faust Public Library of Westland, Saturday, Sept. 17. "You were good listeners," said Graunstadt, a Westland City Council member and one of 10 guest readers. "Did you like that story?" She told the youngsters at the library about reading a book as a child and enjoying it years later. The Seuss event was part of National Library Card Sign-up Month.

"The whole month we are having activities," said children's librarian Lisa Hausman. Organizers have been pleased with participation and the number of people getting library cards. "For the adults, there's Seuss trivia, something a little more challenging," Hausman said.

When Graunstadt was done with her selections, including P.D. Eastman's *Dog Go* and *Are You My Mother?*, the kids heard from Westland Mayor Sandra Cicirelli. She got things going with *I Can Read With My Eyes Shut*, and moved on.

"You want to come up here so you can see the pictures?" the mayor asked. "This is *Hop on Pop*." She kept the kids listen-



Library staffer Cheryl Chuck reads a book during the Saturday event.

ing and launched into another classic. "Oh, *Green Eggs and Ham*, my favorite," Cicirelli said.

One boy asked why the character in the Seuss book didn't want to dig into green eggs.

"I don't know," Cicirelli said. "Maybe because they're green."

The book's message soon became clear: "If you try something new, then it might be really good," Cicirelli said, as she picked up *One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish*.

Jackie Allen of Westland brought daughters Akasha, 8, and Kacey, 4, to the library Saturday.

"We were just coming to pay some fines," she said, adding that Kacey got her library card that day. "It opens up a whole world of information, it's very

important." The family visits the library regularly and she sets a good example by reading herself.

Graunstadt, who recalled reading *Go Dog Go* to her now-grown daughter, also volunteered at the school library when her kids were small, and spent hours at the Livonia library as a child.

The Westland library, on Central City Parkway between Warren and Ford, has other activities scheduled for September, including a "Design Your Own Hat" *Cat in the Hat* session 2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 24. For details, call the library at (734) 326-6123.

In addition, Wayne-Westland schools are competing for a school prize, based on which has the most students sign up for a library card.

## H.O.G. group hosts toy run

The Motor City H.O.G. (Harley Owners Group) Chapter, a nonprofit organization, will sponsor its 11th annual toy run on Sunday, Sept. 25.

Organizers have released the following information about the toy run:

A parade of motorcycles with a police escort will leave from Westland City Hall about 12:30 p.m.

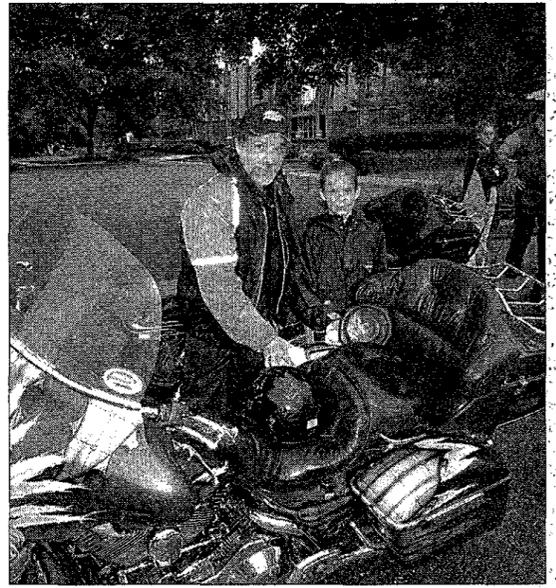
The parade will move east on Ford, south on Carlson, east on Marquette, south on Newburgh, west on Cherry Hill, north on Beck, east on Six Mile, south on Northville Road, south on Hines Drive, north on Inkster Road and west on Joy Road to Joy Manor.

In case of rain, the parade route would change once it heads south on Hines Drive.

It would go east on Ann Arbor Trail, north on Inkster and west on Joy Road.

The public is invited to watch the parade or to join in the fun for a \$10 donation and a new, unwrapped toy - or for \$20 in cash.

Participants must ride a motorcycle and will drop off their donations or money before the parade starts at



FILE PHOTO

Brad Bellew of Westland got a helping hand from his daughter Brittany drying off Harley Ultra Classic, in preparation for last year's Motor City H.O.G.'s toy run.

Westland City Hall. A spaghetti and pizza dinner will be served at Joy Manor, and there will be music.

All toys and money will go to charity. The Motor City H.O.G. group last year gave about \$40,000 to charity.

## Tickets go on sale for awards lunch

Join the YWCA of Western Wayne County in honoring outstanding women from your community at the Women of Achievement Awards Luncheon.

The YWCA is hosting its 14th Annual Women of Achievement Awards and 50th Anniversary Celebration Oct. 27 at the Dearborn Inn, 20301 Oakwood Blvd., Dearborn.

The Women of Achievement Awards honor outstanding women who either live or work in Western Wayne County.

New this year is a silent auction and a special recognition

of all past women of achievement. The silent auction begins at 11 a.m. and ends at noon.

The awards ceremony begins at 12:15 p.m. Doors open at 10:45 a.m.

Tickets are \$40, and \$400 for tables of 10. Call the YWCA Women of Achievement Department at (313) 561-4110 for reservations.

Keynote speaker is 2005 Woman of the Year, Kathleen Ligocki. Ligocki is president and CEO of Tower Automotive. She is also a founding member of the

Women's Leadership Forum, a teaching/charitable organization affiliated with the Women's Economic Club of Detroit.

Mistress of ceremonies is Eleanor M. Josaitis, CEO and co-founder of Focus:HOPE. She was the YWCA of Western Wayne County's Woman of the Year in 2004.

Past Women of Achievement winners include Gov. Jennifer Granholm, Florine Mark of Weight Watchers, and Nancy Swanborg, director of the Women's Resource Center at Schoolcraft College in Livonia.

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<p><b>Joe's White Corn Tortilla Chips</b> <b>2/\$3.00</b></p>	<p><b>Joe's Salsa All Flavors</b> <b>2/\$6.00</b> 15 oz. Jar</p>	<p><b>Joe's Organic Blue Corn Tortilla Chips</b> <b>2/\$5.00</b></p>
<p><b>Joe's Canned Tomatoes</b> <b>2/\$3.00</b> 28 oz. Can</p>	<p><b>Joe's Pickles All Varieties</b> <b>2/\$6.00</b> 25 oz. Jar</p>	<p><b>Joe's Italian Pasta Sauce</b> <b>2/\$7.00</b> 28 oz. Jar</p>
<p><b>Bareman's 1/2 % and Skim Milk Gallons</b> <b>2/\$5.00</b></p>	<p><b>Cotswold Cheddar Cheese with Chives</b> <b>\$9.99</b> lb.</p>	<p><b>For Decorating... Hay Bales, Corn Stalks, Indian Corn, Pumpkins, Hardy Mum Plants &amp; Scarecrows!</b></p>

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# New hospital provides world class pet care

BY WAYNE PEAL  
COMMUNITY EDITOR

It's a place where a penguin can receive eye surgery and a dog's broken leg can be repaired with state of the art surgery - and it's close to home.

Michigan Veterinary Specialists will hold grand opening ceremonies Saturday for its new 38,000-square-foot animal hospital on Inkster Road in Southfield.

MVS is already among less than a dozen medical centers of its kind in the U.S. The new facility could move it to the top of that list.

"Southfield city officials worked very hard to help us find a space that would enable us to stay in the city and we're really thrilled with this site," marketing manager Wendy Rose Bice said of the 5.8-acre spot directly across the street from the historic Sarah Fisher Home in Farmington Hills.

The new facility's design blends history with high tech.

Its lobby is designed resemble the waiting room of an early 20th century train station and includes a separate "quiet room," complete with fireplace, for cats.

"We know cats and dogs don't always want to be together," Bice said.

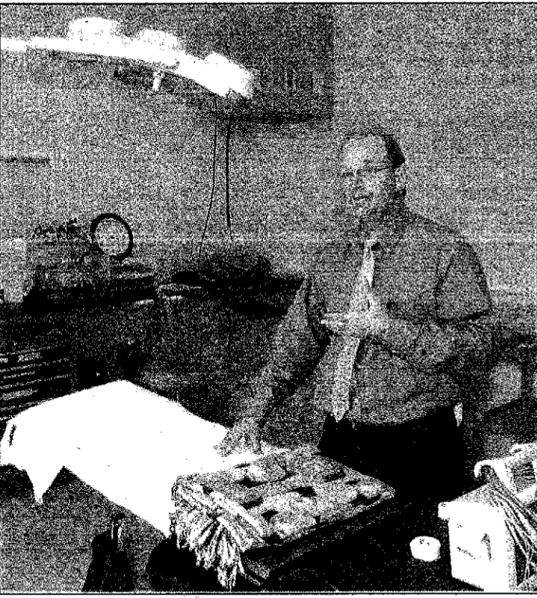
Though construction was only fully completed this week, MVS has been treating animals at the new site for about three weeks.

Early patients included a Detroit Zoo penguin who received eye surgery and a pet dog whose broken leg was repaired with surgical screws.

Founded in Bloomfield Hills in 1990, MVS operated for about 12 years at a site on 11 Mile in Southfield.

The new facility is more than 40 percent larger, with 18 examining rooms, a cancer center, eye care center and state of the art operating rooms which overlook a man-made pond and fountain. The building was custom built for MVS's operations.

"There's a great flow to this



MVS co-founder Dr. Dan Lorimer is a specialist in veterinary eye care.



Dr. Kandace Gertz examines Brandy, an early patient at the new MVS facility on Inkster Road.



Resident Jennifer Covey performs surgery in one of the new facility's operating rooms.

building," said Dr. Andrew Jackson, a veterinary surgeon who is one of 30 specialists employed by MVS.

In all, the new facility employs about 110 people in addition to those who work at MVS's other facility on Walton Boulevard in Auburn Hills.

MVS serves pet owners from throughout Michigan and from a larger area which includes Ohio and Indiana as well as Ontario.

"About 95 percent of the patients we see are referred by their veterinarians," said Dr. Dan Lorimer, a veterinary ophthalmologist who founded MVS with Dr. Laura DeLellis, a veterinary cardiologist, in 1990.

"We saw the need for a facility of this kind in the area," Lorimer said. "With the excep-

tion of university facilities, there was nothing like this."

Some 20,000 animals each year are will be treated at the Southfield and Auburn Hills facilities. The two-story building can house up to 200 animals at a time.

In addition to expanding its treatment rooms, the new facility also includes greatly expanded consultation rooms. "Often, the pet owner has some hard decisions to make regarding treatment and this affords them some privacy as well," Bice said.

Treatment can be expensive, with lens implant surgery costing as much as \$2,000.

But many families are willing to spend whatever it takes to return their pets to health.

"Pets are more and more considered a part of the family

and we serve families from across the spectrum, including many blue collar families," Lorimer said. "Plus, people in recent years have also been able to obtain pet insurance."

In addition to a full range of eye care and surgical procedures, MVS offers cancer diagnosis and chemotherapy treatment.

The facility includes ultrasound and MRI equipment and well as a pet dermatology department.

Radiation therapy is conducted behind heavy leaded doors in a room with equipment virtually identical to that used to treat human beings.

The new facility will be open 24 hours a days, seven days a week.

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# Researcher wants to know about knitters

BY ANNETTE KINGSBURY  
STAFF WRITER

Knitting: granny art or radical domestic culture? One researcher with local ties is trying to find out.

Tobi Voigt, 29, a former staff member at the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm, is now enrolled in a master's program in museum studies in Cooperstown, N.Y. An avid knitter for the last few years, she has come to learn there are divergent viewpoints on the role of knitting in women's lives.

For her master's thesis, Voigt has decided to research the role knitting played in the lives of American women in the 1960s and 1970s. She has set up a Web page and would like to hear from women born between 1930 and 1960 who learned to knit in the 1960s and 1970s.

"I knew I wanted to write my thesis on a knitting-related theme because I enjoy the subject so much," Voigt said. "I decided to focus on the 1960s and 1970s because of two sentences written by author and

self-proclaimed feminist knitter, Debbie Stoller."

Stoller earned a Ph.D. in women's psychology from Yale in the late 1980s. Her first book on knitting was *Stitch 'N Bitch Handbook*, followed by *Stitch 'N Bitch Nation*. The books have apparently kicked off a new trend for young women: stitch and bitch parties.

"In her best-selling book ... she states, 'With the resurgent women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s, knitting came to be seen, once again, as a symbol of woman's entrapment in the home. But while some women were rejecting the hobby, others got into it as part of their hippy-dippy, back-to-nature thing.'"

"I immediately questioned this," Voigt said. "Debbie Stoller seemed, in my opinion, to slightly miss the mark with her analysis. While I agreed that the feminist and counter-culture movements impacted some women's choices to knit or not to knit, I felt that, for the majority of women, these movements did not have such a drastic impact."

That led Voigt to ask the ques-

tion: What role *did* knitting play? She said she has no preconceived notions, since, after all, she was born in 1976.

"The best way for me to find the answer is to talk to women who were actually knitting during this time," she said. "I hope to use their stories to come to a more complete and more accurate conclusion about the role knitting had in the lives of women during this time."

As for the bigger picture, Voigt said she hopes to be able to preserve an accurate snapshot of women in one particular place in history.

"It should not be simplified to a few sentences that confirm what popular culture believes a certain time period to be. As a knitter, I want to help to banish the popular conception of knitting as a womanly activity, engaged in only if one is sitting in a rocking chair with her false teeth in a glass by her side."

To participate in the survey, visit <http://knittingsurvey.bravehost.com> online.

akingsbury@oe.homecomm.net  
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PHOTOS BY TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## Taking the oath

Participants are led through the Oath of Citizenship by U.S. Distct Court Judge Marianne O. Battani during new U.S. citizen swearing in ceremony held Monday morning atie Costick Center in Farmington Hills.



Doug Reynolds of Farmington receives his certificate of citizenship from June Cole of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.



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## FOR THE RECRD

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>A</b><br>Julius "Al" Alberani<br>Alberani, 80, died Sept. 19.  | <b>Robert DiGiulio</b><br>DiGiulio, 75, of Lathrup Vege, died Sept. 16.                  |
| <b>C</b><br>Alice Margaret Carnegie<br>Carnegie, 89, of Redford, died Sept. 17.<br>Linda R. Clungan<br>Clungan, 47, of Dearborn, died Sept. 16. | <b>H</b><br>William "Bill" Hempel<br>Hempel, 49, formerly of sorden City, died Sept. 18. |
| <b>D</b><br>Nino A. DellaSavia<br>DellaSavia, 78, of Livonia, died Sept. 18.  | <b>M</b><br>Peter D. Marrocco<br>Marrocco, 49, died Sept. 16.                            |
|   | <b>R</b><br>Deanna Jean Robinson<br>Robinson died Sept. 16                               |



For the Record appears in every edition of the *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*. Complete paid obituaries can be found inside today's newspaper in *Passages* on page B5.

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# Maybury miracle

## Northville farm welcomes first visitors since rebuilding from fire

*"It is something good coming out of something bad."*  
 Norma Beemer  
 Maybury Farm  
 BY MAUREEN JOHNSTON  
 NORTHVILLE RECORD STAFF WRITER

The twinkle has returned to Farmer Beemer's eye.  
 He's walking around a century-old barn, putting up hay for the animals and tending to his 28-year-old workhorse, "Sarge," more companion now than tool.  
 The sounds, smell and feel are familiar.  
 Two-and-a-half years after an unexplained fire destroyed the farm's charming simplicity, intricately orchestrated support has returned life to Maybury Farm. And starting this week, the farm again will embrace the public.

### THE WAY BACK

There's a new farm entrance on Eight Mile Road, east of Napier.  
 Entry through the welcome center will put return visitors on familiar ground. Newcomers can uncover the region's agricultural roots with Maybury Farm's turn-of-the-century methods.  
 Cows, horses, pigs, goats and sheep grunt and murmur behind pens, stan-

chions and stalls in the vintage barn. The coop, spared from the fire, is alive with clucks, squawks and crows.

### 'HEALING'

John and Norma Beemer hustled the final days before the farm's grand re-opening. Earth movers early this week flattened the dirt paths leading to the milkhouse, corn crib, equipment shed.  
 The excitement is a welcome contrast to the flat patch the Beemers returned to last summer. The void where the barn had stood for a century was a reminder of life lost there during a 2003 fire.  
 For 25 years, the couple lived at the farm, raising their children there, running the farm and sharing the concept of living from the land with a stream of visitors from throughout southeastern Michigan.  
 "It is something good coming out of something bad," Norma Beemer said. "It's a way for us to work through the devastation of the fire. It's healing."  
 Norma still chokes up at the memory of the barns returning to the site last August. When luxury home builder Toll Brother donated two barns from a Novi development site, the project turned a corner.

"This has been our goal to see it happening, to have it open," she said. "When you think of only a year, a lot has been done in a year's time. It wouldn't have happened if everyone hadn't pulled together."

### IN DUE TIME

Returning the old barn's framework to usable condition didn't allow Beemer to fully till the farm's 50 acres this season. But farm operations are grinding ahead.  
 Hundred-year-old, hand-hewn beams shelter dozens of Maybury farm animals. The memorial rubble of the fire's devastation is nearly cleared.  
 "We'll get the fields back to where they were before," he said. "It takes time."  
 Beemer proudly handles the plow his granddaddy bought in 1900, as he works the soil true to traditional methods.  
 "I do as much work with the horses as I can," Beemer said. Depending on the chores of the day, visitors might see the farmer binding corn, baling hay or collecting eggs.

### MANY LESSONS

Rebuilding the farm allowed time to rethink the hands-on programs initiated in 1975. Prior to the fire, farm hands led

visitors through the purpose of each animal, crop and product.

Topics covered with visiting classrooms — tapping maple trees and historical farming to sheep shearing and plants and food — now will consider curriculum requirements, said Shari Peters, president of the Northville Community Foundation, the non-profit agency supervising the farm's operation.  
 Representatives from Northville, Novi, South Lyon, and Plymouth school districts helped develop educational programming, Peters said. Retired teacher Norma Beemer will lead the visitors.  
 The foundation invited more than 20 school districts from throughout southeastern Michigan to bring students to the farm, Peters said. Teachers have responded, scheduling visits.  
 "We'll let them know what's going on and they can make a decision what they want to come out for," she said. Also planned in the coming months: programming designed with senior input, including crafts, short garden walks, square dancing and healthy eating.  
 "We're really going to have something going on about every weekend," Peters said. "There will be so much going on for families."

### AT MAYBURY FARM

- Where: 50165 Eight Mile Road
- Entrance fee: \$5 for adults; \$3 children (without memberships)
- Family memberships: \$35 per year, including unlimited visits
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- For information about group tours, call (248) 374-0200.

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- When: Through Oct. 30
- Hours: 5-9 p.m., Fridays; 1-9 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays
- Entrance fee: \$8 for adults, \$4 for children and under age 3, free.

### TO DONATE

Northville Community Foundation still is seeking donations to fund Maybury Farm operations.  
 Other needs include heat, plumbing, restroom facilities, grass seeding, a manure spreader, wood chips for all the farm trails, roofing for the welcome center, garage and equipment building.  
 For more information, call (248) 374-0200.

# Corporate, individual donations fund farm

BY MAUREEN JOHNSTON  
 RECORD STAFF WRITER

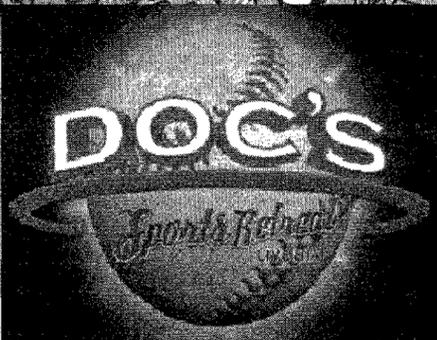
Every two weeks since Maybury Farm burned, a \$2 money order arrived from Mount Clemens.  
 That woman's contribution and every other has counted toward the re-opening of the vintage farm this week, said Shari Peters, Northville Community Foundation president. The non-profit agency that rebuilt Maybury Farm

officially invited the public back Tuesday.  
 "This has been no easy job," Peters said. "This has been one horrendous job for a woman who is not a builder. It's been an incredible journey to see how many people will reach out to you."  
 Corporations contributed more than \$1 million in products and services, Peters said. Cash contributions have helped get the operation up and running.

"I look over there and it's just a small miracle," Peters said. "It's a huge day and my hat is off to all 24 communities that donated. We'd never be opening without them."  
 From the moment the smoke cleared following a February 2003 fire, the community rallied around the effort. School coin collections, spaghetti fund-raisers and larger donations pooled funds toward the goal to rebuild.  
 Likewise, the sweat and

effort came from all corners of the community.  
 Farmer John and Norma Beemer watched countless volunteers work toward returning the popular community attraction.  
 "Everybody with different skills has come together," Norma said. "People have always really taken ownership of the farm."  
 "That's what we always tried to stress — this is their farm." When the foundation and

the Department of Natural Resources announced a 15-year lease of the farm land in 2003, state officials cited the local organization's ability to tap into community support, volunteers and business connections.  
 The state maintains ownership of the park land, while putting control of the farm in local hands.  
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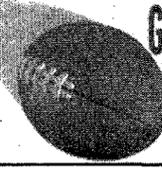
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# We're there!



# Conservative group attacks McCotter vote to protect gays

BY HUGH GALLAGHER  
STAFF WRITER

U.S. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter, R-Livonia, is being attacked by a conservative group for voting to



McCotter

approve an amendment that will protect gays under the federal hate crimes act.

The American Family Association of Michigan sent out an e-mail Monday saying that McCotter's vote "threatens the religious free speech rights of Americans who believe such behavior is morally wrong."

creates a national Web site for sex offenders and mandatory penalties for failing to comply. The Conyers amendment expands protection for gays under the federal hate crimes law.

McCotter was one of 30 Republicans who joined 194 Democrats in approving the amendment, which passed 224 to 197.

"I think in the end we have to be honest with ourselves and admit that gays are especially vulnerable and targeted," McCotter said Tuesday.

He said the hate crimes laws, which he supported as a state legislator, protect police officers, African-Americans and others who are specifically targeted for abuse.

"As an outspoken opponent of gay marriage, I have to recognize the concerns of gays," he said. "I hate the sin. I oppose gay mar-

riage, but I also oppose anyone who would harm them."

The AFA argues that the amendment violates the equal protection clause of the Constitution. The organization also argues that it is a violation of free speech.

"Rep. McCotter's vote also puts at risk the religious free speech rights of Christians and others who believe homosexual behavior is destructive and morally wrong," said Gary Glenn, president of the AFA in a statement.

McCotter said he disagreed with that interpretation and he added that the American Civil Liberties Union wouldn't accept that definition either.

"The argument that this would be a violation of free speech would mean that it would apply to me, because of my opposition to gay marriage, and it doesn't," McCotter said.

# Groups will offer low-cost health care

The Wayne County HealthChoice(tm) program and Blue Care Network of Michigan are partnering to provide low-cost health care coverage to up to 1,000 young adults and to up to 500 part-time and temporary workers living in Wayne County. Enrollment begins Oct. 1.

The county program will offer health care coverage to persons 18 to 30 years old who live in Wayne County. The young adult can be a full or part-time worker, and/or a full or part-time student at a college, university or other institution. Program members will have a \$250 deductible.

The Wayne County HealthChoice Temporo program will offer coverage to part-time and temporary workers who live in Wayne County. Program members will have a \$500 deductible.

To qualify for either of the programs, a person must earn \$30,000 or less a year, and be ineligible for other health care coverage. There are additional requirements as well.

Under both the Young Adult and Temporo programs, a person will pay a monthly premium of \$85 which will be matched by Wayne County HealthChoice.

Additional co-payments and deductibles will apply for certain services.

Both programs feature a \$15 co-payment for office visits, \$100 copay for emergency room visits, 50 percent co-pay for prescription drugs, and a maximum of \$1,500 in out of pocket costs.

"Wayne County has made a special commitment to protecting the health care safety net," said Robert A. Ficano, Wayne County executive. "We're fortunate to have the public and pri-

ivate sectors working together to provide solutions for small businesses and our residents who need affordable, quality health care."

Kevin Seitz, Blue Care Network president and CEO, said he was pleased to partner with Wayne County HealthCare to provide coverage for the uninsured.

More information on the Temporo and Young Adult programs can be obtained by calling (800) WELL-NOW (935-5669).

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OUR VIEWS

## We must respond to call for help

While the various levels of government have drawn some well-deserved criticism for the handling of the emergency response to Hurricane Katrina, there's been no failing at the local levels, especially in our neighborhoods.

It is with determination and conviction that local residents have pulled together in response to the catastrophe resulting from Hurricane Katrina. The response is an admirable display of the our historical ability to respond to a crisis. It demonstrates that, although we live thousands of miles from the devastation, we have the power to do more than sit back and say "too bad."

But what is touching is to see the response of our children. They, too, are doing what they can to help, from donating the proceeds of a week-end Kool-Aid stand to collecting cash and supplies in their schools.

**The response is an admirable display of the our historical ability to respond to a crisis.**

At Stevenson Middle School, one student's request to collect pop cans during lunch and send the proceeds to hurricane victims was the catalyst for an even bigger effort. The Student Council donated \$200 from its funds, the Spirit Club offered to help, and soon there was a Jar Wars competition between the grades.

And another example comes from Wayne Memorial High School, where the Student Senate asked all students to give up buying one pop or water for a week and donate the money to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. Its goal was to raise \$2,500.

Money is an important commodity to kids and to see them give it up to help those in need lets adults know unequivocally they want to be a part of the solution, that there's more to the Golden Rule than just saying it.

We all have been affected by the horrifying stories and pictures we've seen and heard over the past few weeks. We have to move on, but not before making a donation through your child's school, the mayor's Hurricane Katrina Fund or by calling the American Red Cross (800-HELP-NOW), Salvation Army (800-SAL-ARMY) or another agency of choice.

It's the right thing to do.

## Budget agreement won't solve problem

After many weeks of the usual wrangling, Gov. Jennifer Granholm and the state Legislature have reached general agreement on a \$40 billion budget for fiscal year 2006.

Details are still being worked out, but Republicans are crowing that the budget includes no new taxes or fees and Democrats are noting that the new budget includes increases for K-12 schools and public universities and will not include GOP proposed cuts in Medicaid and welfare.

It's the annual compromise that avoids the central issue.

While technically a "balanced budget," the state will continue to have a structural deficit (in which the state collects less revenue than it spends) with shortfalls being covered by "increased tax enforcement" and interest on the tobacco settlement.

A Granholm proposal for closing tax loopholes was rejected. The new budget also will not include Granholm's proposal to overhaul the Michigan Merit Award by increasing the amount from \$2,500 to \$4,000 but awarded after two years of college.

The per pupil grant will be increased by \$175, raising the school budget to \$12.8 billion, an increase of 2.7 percent. The general fund budget will increase to \$8.97 billion, an increase of 4.3 percent.

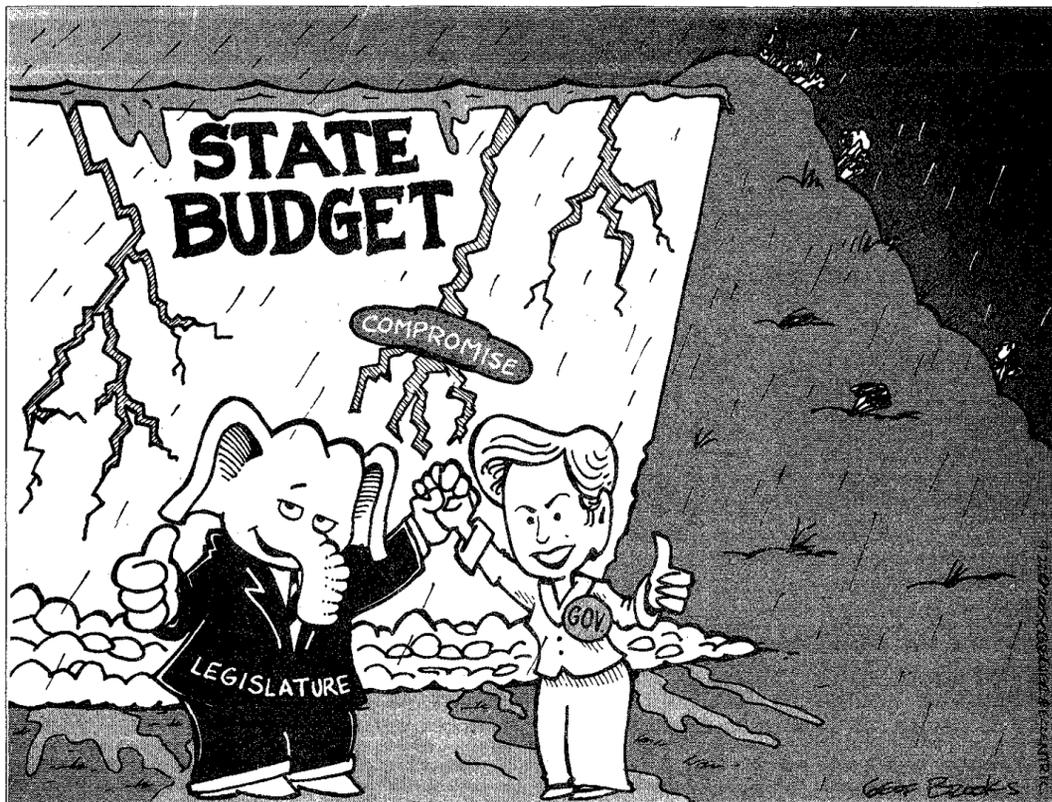
The budget includes \$14 million in additional state aid for state universities.

The Department of Labor and Economic Growth took a major \$7 million reduction. The department includes the Michigan Economic Development Corp., which is supposed to create more jobs in the state, at a time when the state's unemployment rate continues to be among the highest in the country.

While the Democratic governor and the Republican-dominated Legislature pat themselves on the back, no real substantive changes have been made.

Hard decisions need to be made about cutting state spending and finding new revenue sources (one idea is to extend the sales tax to services).

Once again, no one was willing to make those decisions.



LETTERS

### Westland deserves better

Having served as the embattled president of the Wayne Ford Civic League for the past year, I have learned much. I have to admit that I was a bit naive about the long and tumultuous relationship that the organization had within the political circles of Westland.

I quickly learned that like-minded individuals (Jim Davis, Eleanor Swistak and Judy McKinney, to mention a few), are using our league as their "bully pulpit" to legitimize their opposition to the current city administration and elected officials they disagree with.

Having been subjected to their wrath myself, it's understandable why the community and some elected leaders have been slow in accepting the league back into the fold. I continue to hold out hope for this to change, we need this community's help.

In my mind, politics was not what the league should be about. We (the new executive board) made every attempt to remain politically neutral in the hopes that support for the league would be forthcoming under new leadership.

We believed as a board that it was paramount that the newly elected leadership focus on the enormous task of trying to build a positive relationship with the city, suppliers and community by focusing the organization on its core purpose and community service, and to get the league out of local politics.

Although we feel we have made some progress and have been, until now, holding our own, the political opportunists continue to try to drag us into the gutter with them. I am no longer going to sit by silently and watch them destroy this league because they are no longer welcome, it's time for them to move on or small the stuff they are shoveling.

Unfortunately, the people who were ousted under court order and some of the losers of the court-supervised membership elections refused to let go, despite the fact that the league was left saddled deeply in debt without the means to recover without the charitable gaming bingo licenses that were revoked as a result of the Greenfield administration's actions by the state of Michigan.

They gave little regard for the fact that the legitimate membership overwhelmingly rejected their leadership by more than 85 percent of the votes cast and quickly began a systematic campaign to discredit the newly elected leadership of our executive board with their well-rehearsed version of "gutter politics" and "political opportunism."

I, for example, have been subjected to numerous verbal threats and insults, distorted half-truths, speculative, slanderous and malicious statements from this group of so called "independents" through one of their chief cronies, Jim Davis (a city council wanna-be), both in the printed press as well as at multiple Westland city council meetings.

Mr. Davis fantasizes a relationship between the league and individuals from his past named Tom and Glenn. I don't even know a Tom and Glenn engaged with the civic league. It seems there is no end to

his conspiracy theories, exaggerated ramblings and character assassinations.

Eleanor Swistak (mayor wanna-be) attempted to join in on the onslaught by questioning the election processes and finances at the league, demanded before city council that the city investigate the league to find out what was going on down there! The fact is that she has never been a member of the league, made no attempt to contact me to get her questions answered before blasting away at the league before the city council.

It was not long ago that Mrs. Swistak stood before council complaining about the city's so-called intrusion onto her property, demanding she tear down a dilapidated garage, and chastised the recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling giving the municipalities the right to seize property for economic development. The sheer hypocrisy of her various statements has to make you wonder, is she playing the public as a political opportunist, seizing the headlines and the thunder of others, or does she truly believe she can have it both ways?

Westland deserves better!

Vic Barra

### Reject John Roberts

I demand rejection of John Roberts, by filibuster, if necessary.

Judge Roberts' time before the Judiciary Committee has not been honest in my opinion. He has decided not to answer key questions about his past.

After reading some of the things he worked on during the Reagan administration, I believe he will be as bad as the recently deceased chief justice. Chief Justice William Rehnquist was a racist before and during his time on the Supreme Court.

We don't need another Rehnquist. Reject Mr. Roberts.

Darryl Johnson  
Westland

### ERA column appreciated

Thank you for printing the excellent article by Julie Brown about the Women's Equality Day Celebration, featuring an update on the ongoing struggle for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.

In 1992, Congress jump-started the movement when it accepted ratification of the 203-year-old Madison Amendment. The Madison Amendment concerns congressional pay raises and is named after President James Madison who first proposed it in 1789.

With legal justification, ERA supporters have concluded that ratification of only three more states are necessary to make the ERA part of our Constitution. The proposed ERA simply states: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied by the United States or any state on account of sex."

An ERA was included in the Japanese constitution following World War II. More recently ERAs are now included in the constitutions of Afghanistan and Iraq. If our government believes that the women of these countries are deserving of an ERA, then it should do no less for the women of this country. In fact, ratification of the ERA is a matter of justice

that is long overdue.

There is growing momentum to finish this unfinished business for the Constitution. Much of the activity flies beneath the radar of the mainstream media. Therefore, the article is greatly appreciated.

Laura Callow  
Livonia

### No shame in being 'refugee'

In the wake of the destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina, which displaced more Americans than any other natural disaster in the nation's history, some people, including storm victims and politicians, have chafed at being referred to as "refugees" by news commentators.

One survivor who was featured on NPR's *All Things Considered* said, "I'm not a refugee. I wasn't shipped here. That's what they called people in the boats who ... were sneaking over here ... I'm a Katrina survivor." Democratic National Committee Chairman Howard Dean said that those who survived Katrina were not refugees, but "Americans."

For the record: "Refugee" is derived from the French *refugier*, which means to take refuge. According to Roget's *New Millennium Thesaurus*, the word has many synonyms, including, "displaced person," "escapee" and "evacuee."

Also, as the father of children whose grandparents were expelled from their homes in 1948 by the Zionist founders of Israel, causing them and more than 750,000 Palestinian Christians and Muslims to become homeless refugees, I can assure those that are offended by use of the word "refugee" that there is NOTHING to be ashamed of.

The only shame is that after more than 57 years, the Palestinian refugees are still languishing in impoverished refugee camps even though they have internationally recognized laws, conventions, and UN Resolution 194 (the right of return) on their side. Yet they are not allowed to go back to the homes and lands they were forced to leave.

Our arrogance is surpassed only by our ignorance.

Mike Odettalia  
Canton

### SHARE YOUR OPINIONS

We welcome your letters to the editor. Please include your name, address and phone number for verification. We ask that your letters be 400 words or less. We may edit for clarity, space and content.

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QUOTABLE

**"She probably would have been dead the next day. She was really dehydrated. She was wandering aimlessly alongside the road, teetering on her feet."**

— MHS employee David Williams, about a Rottweiler now in Michigan for care after being rescued just outside of New Orleans' historic French Quarter

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**Observer**

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Our fundamental purposes are to enhance the lives of our readers, nurture the hometowns we serve and contribute to the business success of our customers.

# Our state is in shambles; does anybody really care?

Michigan is in a time of crisis. Our political system is broken. And nobody seems to care. Want proof? I spent last Thursday afternoon at the Lansing Center attending meetings of the Michigan Economic Development Corp. (Full disclosure: I'm the vice chair of the MEDC.) Just a couple of blocks down Michigan Avenue in the state Capitol, legislative leaders and representatives of the Granholm administration were engaged in last-minute haggling over the state's budget for fiscal 2006.

Talk about two different worlds! The MEDC meeting featured respected auto industry researcher Sean McAlinden. Titled "An End to Business as Usual," McAlinden's talk detailed the apocalypse that is about to land on Michigan's economy. If you think things are bad now, you haven't seen anything yet.

Over the next three years, Michigan is likely to lose 46,000 primary jobs in auto assembly and parts plants. That's about one out of every five auto-related jobs and a

marked acceleration of the hemorrhage now taking place in our manufacturing base.

Virtually all of these jobs will come from Michigan-based companies: General Motors, Ford, Visteon and Delphi, all firms that have taken big hits to their market share from foreign-owned car companies.

Worse, there's a big "multiplier effect" as well. Primary manufacturing jobs sustain jobs in lots of other businesses — restaurants, retailers, various services. McAlinden forecasts that 250,000 of these additional Michigan jobs lost will be lost by the end of 2008.

McAlinden's conclusions are stark. "Our old business model is broken," he says. "As a result, it's time to panic — in an orderly way!"

There are some bright spots. Michigan is home to one out of every four automotive workers in the U.S., and especially 186,000 skilled trades workers. McAlinden says that foreign-owned transplant plants in the South literally cannot find electricians or tool and die makers of the sort we have here. Not only that, but Michigan is still the home for high value-added automotive research, development and engineering. The Detroit chapter of the Society of Automotive Engineers, for example, has 14,000 members, 16 percent of the group's entire membership worldwide.

McAlinden argues the old system of every company competing with every other company and every community competing with every other community will have to be replaced by a series of collaborations. He points to the wildly successful effort pioneered by

David Hollister, formerly the mayor of Lansing and now the director of the Department of Labor and Economic Growth in the Granholm administration. By getting the city, the schools and community colleges, the UAW and General Motors all in the same room to see how each of them could help the other, he set the wheels in motion to build two entirely new GM assembly plants in the Lansing area.

Yet none — absolutely none! — of this cut any ice down the street, where legislative leaders were squabbling with the Granholm administration over the budget.

A primary focus was the continuing attempt to gut the nonprofit, nonpartisan MEDC, the state's only economic development outfit. Between 2000 and 2004, state funding for the MEDC has been cut by 41 percent, from \$65 million to \$38 million. In last Thursday's negotiations, the only question being argued was how much additional to slash: \$9 million or \$3 million.

There is something very puzzling going on here. Northwest Airlines, our largest air carrier and employer of 9,000 people in Michigan, went into Chapter 11 bankruptcy last week. The auto industry is set to lose 46,000 jobs over the next three years, with an additional 250,000 coming from other sectors of our economy. And Michigan already has the highest unemployment rate in the country.

If this state needs anything, it is an outfit whose job is to figure out how to produce new jobs.

So for what possible reason could legislators want to gut the MEDC? Some ultra-libertarian ideologues, led by Speaker of the House Craig DeRoche, R-Novi, and Rep. Jack Brandenburg, R-Harrison Township, believe that no government money should be spent on economic development. "Let the free market have its way," they say. For partisan reasons, other Republicans are perfectly happy to see the economic development operation in Michigan be crippled. If the state's economy continues to slide, they reason, it's going to be easier to blame Granholm come election time next year.

I came away from Lansing with a headache. In one room, business leaders were talking about how important it is for everybody — Republicans and Democrats, management and labor, communities and schools — to collaborate to help our economy. At the same time in another room, our political masters — who are supposed to be our servants — were squabbling over how to stymie exactly the collaboration we so desperately need.

And these are the people we elect to do the best possible job for us.

It can't be said often enough. Michigan is in a time of crisis. Our political system is broken. And nobody seems to care.

Phil Power is a longtime observer of politics, economics and education issues in Michigan. He is vice chair of the Michigan Economic and Development Corp. He would be pleased to hear from readers at ppower@hcnnet.com.



Phil Power

# Keeping students supplied can ruin a favorite season

Now that hot days and humid nights are finally giving way to cooler temperatures and shorter daylight hours, it's time to greet what for many people — including myself — is their favorite time of year.

Autumn brings with it gorgeous colors, delicious produce, exciting sports and crisp, bug-free evenings. It's a special season, sandwiched between the leisure of summer and the rigors of winter.

It also represents a new beginning of sorts, what with millions of children starting the annual ritual of school.



Bill Emerick

There's one thing, though, that aggravates me to no end this month, which prompts me to call it "Christmas in September." Why, you ask? Because I have to buy things for my kids almost every day, for no real reason.

If you have children of school age, you'll know exactly what I'm talking about. The waning days of summer are synonymous with that great consumer spending binge known as "back to school" sales. I fondly refer to the period as "my back's against the wall."

The giant flood of purchasing actually starts in my household as a trickle during the summer, as soon as the swimsuits and flip-flops are replaced in store aisles with backpacks and lunch boxes — right around June. My ever-so-thrifty wife scans the Sunday inserts for the week's best bargains and begins to assemble the new wardrobe that's become a necessity for today's students.

Then comes the letter from school, announcing the kids' classroom assignments and containing the first list of "suggested" supplies. It's typical — backpack, binder, notebooks, etc. But, alas, it's also only the tip of the iceberg.

The first day of school culminates in the barrage of paperwork that accompanies each child's return home — emergency medical forms, contact information, family background. Buried deep in the mound of paper is the one I dread — THE LIST.

There can be no doubt that funding of education is perhaps the biggest crisis facing our state and its leaders right now. School districts throughout Michigan are having to make difficult choices as revenues are reduced and budgets trimmed. Every penny possible is supposed to be directed to the classroom, and rightly so.

Having said all that, I have one question: Just what the heck does all my tax money go to, anyway? I don't think it's hyperbole to say

that the schools provide virtually nothing in the way of supplies.

Of course, supplying students has been a big business for some time now. According to a recent article in the *New York Daily News*, Americans spent \$2.47 billion on school supplies this year, or an average of \$77.85 per family. According to a group called School, Inc., that figure rises to \$443.76 per family when things like clothes, shoes and electronics are included.

For those of you who don't currently have children in schools, here is a partial list of the supplies my daughter will need for her year in fifth grade: colored pencils, fine-tip markers, bold-tip markers, crayons, scissors, two highlighters, glue stick, eight pens (two green, two blue, two black, two red), pencils (two boxes of 12), wide-ruled loose leaf paper, a package of 3-by-5 sticky notes; a package of 3-by-3 sticky notes; three spiral index card notebooks.

Keep in mind this is only part of the list — for one kid!

The real treat in this exercise came on the weekend, when we went in search of the six Duotang folders required, a different color for each subject. Trips to Meijer, Target and Wal-Mart quickly revealed that green, yellow, red, blue and purple were no problem, but the requested black for social studies proved to be an elusive hunt. After finding no black folders in the fourth store, I came to the conclusion that Duotangs aren't made in black and my daughter would just have to pick a different color (she chose pink). So imagine the horror of discovering on Monday morning that almost all the other kids managed to find a black folder.

The requirements for middle school are no less daunting. In addition to the usual pens, pencils, paper, etc., my seventh-grade son was also expected to provide himself with binders, Dry-Erase markers, book covers and spiral notebooks.

As if all that wasn't enough, school officials also had the audacity to ask that two boxes of tissues and a roll of paper towels be donated for classroom use. What's next — toilet paper?

Yeah, I know. The fine print says these are all "suggested" supplies and no student will be denied equal opportunity. But, as any kid can tell you, there's nothing worse than having the wrong clothes, the wrong hairstyle or — heaven forbid — the wrong color Duotang folder for social studies. So we grit our teeth, get out the checkbook and do our part of keep the economy humming.

Remember, though, as I tell my kids — Christmas only comes once a year.

Bill Emerick is a copy editor for the *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*. You can contact him at bemerick@oe.homecomm.net.

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# UFO expert builds case at OCC lecture

BY ALEX LUNDBERG  
STAFF WRITER

Aliens and unexplained flying objects were the focus of a presentation by UFO researcher Nick Redfern Friday night hosted by Oakland Community College and the Michigan Mutual UFO Network.

Redfern, a British native living in Dallas, was there to talk about the UFO phenomenon and to promote his book, *Body Snatchers in the Desert: The Horrible Truth at the Heart of the Roswell Story*.

OCC paraprofessional and MUFON member Bill Konkolesky said in his introduction whether you're talking about little green men, stealth aircraft or errant weather balloons, there's something going on in the sky.

"It's not our opinion, people see things they cannot explain," he said. "We just think people should find out about them."

Neither should people feel marginalized if they report seeing something in the skies. One Michigan report was filed about strange lights over Hillsdale - by then-Congressman Gerald Ford.

Skip Bushart of Waterford attended the talk. He said he's always been interested in unexplained phenomena.

"I do believe (that UFOs are alien craft)," he said. "It's egotistical to believe we're the only intelligent beings in the universe."

## HARD TO IGNORE

John Waskiewicz of Livonia, a research specialist with MUFON, said there's just too much information out there to ignore.

"It's difficult to get closure without direct evidence," he said. "There's been a host of evidence over the last 60 years, events that can't be explained easily."

Redfern opened the conversation by saying everyone's heard stories about strange lights in the sky, but a lot depends on the storyteller.

"If you see it in a magazine or on TV you move on," he said. "But it's different when you see something yourself or hear the story from someone you trust."

His father, a former Royal Air Force radar operator, was monitoring the English Channel in 1952 when, for three nights, pilots reported a cat and mouse game with "silver balls of light." Whatever they were, they were highly mobile and able to slide around the RAF planes with ease. The incident was hushed up by the British government, Redfern said.

Of course, that made the

## Kids asked to design floats

The Parade Company and Skillman Foundation are giving kids an opportunity to be a part of America's Thanksgiving Parade through the 14th Annual Skillman Foundation Float and Balloon Design Contest. The annual contest, made possible by a grant from the Skillman Foundation, invites students in the fifth grade and lower to submit a colorful and creative drawing of their favorite children's story legend, song or classic fairy tale to The Parade Company. Two students will be selected to have their art magically transformed into a giant float or balloon and escort their creation down Woodward on Thanksgiving Day.

The two winners, along with their creation, will be announced in November. Twenty additional students will be awarded with Honorable Mention Certificates.

Submissions are due by Sept. 26, 2005 and finalists will be selected by Sept. 30. For an application or to learn more about the contest, visit [www.theparade.org](http://www.theparade.org) or call (313) 923-7400.

Established in 1984, The Parade Company is a Detroit-based not-for-profit organization responsible for production of America's Thanksgiving Parade® and the International Freedom Festival, including the Target Fireworks.

story all the more tantalizing.

"If there's something the government doesn't want you to know about, it's probably something worth knowing about," Redfern said. "It's not impossible that (the lights) were some kind of specialized aircraft, but why aren't we using that technology now if it were a secret in the '50s?"

## MILITARY REPORTS

Many reports of UFOs, he said, come from military personnel who are trained specifically to watch the sky. He said that Freedom of Information Act request responses from all sorts of government agencies have revealed thousands of pages of documented sightings, many of them explainable by completely mundane circumstances. Others, he said, aren't so explainable.

"I've got no doubt there is a

real UFO phenomenon."

Redfern said. "But if they're here, where did they come from? Outer space? Are they interdimensional? It's not a theory I believe, but could they be time travelers?"

He said things like tales of abductions, cattle mutilations and UFO's propensity for appearing near military installations are hard to fathom. Maybe their presence isn't a good thing - there's going to be no knowing until real contact is made.

"We're not going to know for sure until, or if they decide to land," he said. "Whatever they want, they don't desire or need contact with us."

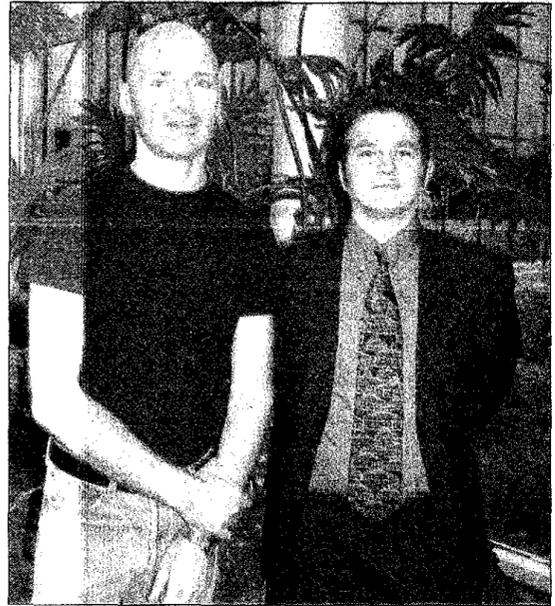
The incident everyone knows about, he said, is the supposed crash landing of an alien craft in Roswell, N.M. What isn't so well-known, he said, is that the original story came from military officials at

Roswell Air Force Base.

"A rancher found a crash site on his property and that was hushed up," Redfern said. "But the official story has changed over time, sometimes without prompting from anyone."

Roswell also gave birth to one of the most enduring images in the UFO parlance. "Eyewitnesses say a fleet of delta or half-moon shapes moving 'as a saucer would skip across water' and a reporter shortened that to the flying saucer," Redfern said.

The reasons for a cover-up, he said, are myriad. He said he's had interviews with government officials who said the Air Force disseminated some of the stories about alien corpses in cold storage to frighten the Soviet Union - stories that said the U.S. had access to a technology they couldn't possibly match.



UFO researcher and author Nick Redfern (left) was introduced by Oakland Community College paraprofessional Bill Konkolesky, a member of the Michigan branch of the Mutual UFO Network.

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