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SUNDAY
January 1, 2006

Observer

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Super Bowl gives area chance to remake image

BY CAROL MARSHALL
STAFF WRITER

The Super Bowl is coming to town, and though most of the 1 billion worldwide viewers will have their eyes on the game on Feb. 5, there are going to be some 3,000 members of the media staying in town for the week leading up to the big day.

Actually, most won't be staying in the big city. About 80 percent of the media members will be staying in Livonia, according to Michael O'Callaghan, execu-

List of Super Bowl activities, page A4.

utive VP and COO of the Detroit Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau. Most of the remainder will stay in hotels in downtown Detroit.

How they perceive the Detroit area will go a long way toward how the rest of the nation and the world sees the region, because there is no bigger stage than the Super Bowl.

"It's simple. Everyone really needs to go out of their way to be friendly and helpful for out-of-town guests,"

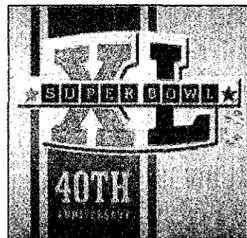
O'Callaghan said. "We owe it to ourselves to offset the unwarranted negative publicity we get in this area. And it impacts all of us because no matter where you live in this region, you are a Detroiter."

And the media can be cruel to host cities, he added. According to some reports, Jacksonville, Fla., was criticized because it lacked lodging options. The year before Houston, Texas, was called "dull" by some. There were even complaints by the media about Jacksonville's weather, which on game

day was 55 degrees. O'Callaghan says the complaints just weren't warranted.

"I was in Houston two years ago, and the people were very friendly and I had a great time. Same was true in Jacksonville last year. I didn't really understand the criticism," he said.

He admitted there are plenty of preconceived notions about Detroit, most of which are not favorable: It's cold. And the city has a reputation for having high crime and blight. But the game



Watch for Super Bowl banners that are going up around town soon.

PLEASE SEE SUPER BOWL, A4

Heart and soul

Westland woman helps 'neighbors' in Nigeria

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

A Westland woman traveled to Nigeria this holiday season, helping in her own way to better the world by delivering medical services and school supplies.

Kelley Fulkerson, who grew up in Livonia, returned Dec. 11 from a two-week trip to the Nigerian states of Abia and Kaduna, where she helped provide health care in mobile medical clinics.

Fulkerson went to Nigeria with her nurse friend Flora Smith, a California resident and former Detroiter who has traveled often to Africa through her nonprofit Silver Cross Medical Missions.

Fulkerson, a 1975 graduate of Livonia Stevenson High School, felt compelled to help when given the opportunity.

"Who am I to deny the demands of my heart and soul?" she asked during an interview about her trip. "It fulfilled a need of helping others and of seeing that there is a neighborhood outside of Livonia."

Fulkerson's background made her an asset to Silver Cross Medical Missions. She received her bachelor's degree in gerontology from Madonna University and her master's degree in public administration from Eastern Michigan University.

She works as a consultant for the greater Michigan chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, pro-



Kelley Fulkerson of Westland spent two weeks recently helping to provide medical services to villages in Nigeria. She took along a copy of her Observer newspaper.

viding dementia-care training for assisted living facilities and nursing homes.

An adjunct professor at Madonna, Fulkerson also works part time with the For the Kids Foundation in Birmingham, providing services for children who've lost their parents.

Her multi-generational experiences proved useful in Nigeria, where she and Smith shipped 11 boxes of medical and school supplies before they made their trip. They sent items such as eyeglasses, aspirin, tongue depressors,

hypodermic needles, catheters, splints, toothpaste, pencils, paper and rulers.

They set up mobile clinics in recreation halls and in buildings that served other purposes, such as housing the village courts. They worked alongside Nigerian doctors, nurses and pastors — some of whom have kept in touch with Fulkerson by phone and e-mail.

Fulkerson and Smith helped provide basic medical tests for blood pressure, pulse and respiration. They also gave aspirin

and Tylenol to people who had no pain medication — such as mothers giving birth — and they used money they raised to buy prescription drugs in Nigeria for patients who needed them. They also tested for malaria.

Fulkerson found that many Nigerian patients had high blood pressure, likely a result, she said, of using palm oil for cooking. They got those patients started on aspirin and worked with local doctors to develop long-term

PLEASE SEE NIGERIA, A6

Homeland security takes regional view

BY CAROL MARSHALL
STAFF WRITER

Four years after the Sept. 11 attacks, Americans are still unsure about how to approach homeland security. There have been some recent changes to the way homeland security is funded, with a greater emphasis on a regionalization of efforts, even though many still believe local communities are best equipped to react to disasters.

"The federal Department of Homeland Security, under the National Response Plan, had determined that in order to successfully fight terrorism, we have to approach things from a regional perspective," said Wayne County Director of Homeland Security James Buford, who was appointed to the position a little more than one year ago, after having worked for the Wayne County Sheriff's Department for 21 years. "Regionalization is a concept that we're bringing in. It's not something everyone wants, but it's something that has to happen."

In order to shift to a regional approach, federal homeland security money, beginning this year, has been distributed to the state and to counties, but no longer to individual municipalities, with the exception of Detroit, which still receives its own federal funding for homeland security. Funding to other communities, such as Canton Township, which received since 2001 some \$373,000 in federal money, will now be diverted to Wayne County.

But whether or not the shift helps the county to fight terrorism or any other threat better than it did prior to 2001 is still unknown.

At the top of the priority list for county homeland security spending are items that will enable local first responders to react to a disaster, rather than to prevent attacks. Wayne County will spend approximately \$6.5 million for homeland security this year, and Buford said communications equipment and protective gear for first responders are priorities.

"We need to be able to have every community in Wayne County be able to pick up a radio and commu-



Ficano

PLEASE SEE SECURITY, A6



Dr. Don Powell sits in his office with a certificate for a new process he started called Save A Saying, where participants can register a favorite saying on record.

BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER

"An apple a day isn't enough." That's a popular saying used by Dr. Don R. Powell, a Farmington Hills psychologist. He and about 60 other people have taken advantage of his new company which registers a favorite saying used by someone special. In addition to receiving a registration certificate

In so many words

Now you can 'register' your favorite saying

and wallet card, participants are placed on the Save-A-Saying Web site with their name, photo, favorite saying and the story displayed for all to see.

It is a personal and unusual gift.

The idea actually was generated years ago, when Powell gave his father, Bob, a builder, a certificate to acknowledge his favorite expression, "Winners never quit and quitters never win."

Sayings abound and teach others about life, love, happiness and success, Powell said.

Powell's mother would say, "That's the way the cookie crumbles" and "You have to creep before you walk."

From another person: "Notice the flowers in the vase and not the dust on the table."

Registering a saying is perfect for those who

PLEASE SEE SAYINGS, A6

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Volume 31
Number 53



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Coming Thursday in Filter

Get in the game



Test your quarterbacking skills or run routes and try to catch passes at the NFL Experience - an interactive football extravaganza to be held at Cobo Center Feb. 1-5.

NEWS BRIEFS

Education forum

State Schools Superintendent Mike Flanagan will discuss the state's new graduation requirements and other topics at an education town hall meeting, hosted by state Sen. Bruce Patterson, R-Canton, at 7 p.m. Jan. 12 at Schoolcraft College. The forum is for local school officials and parents. Discussion of assorted school issues will follow.

The event will be held in the presentation room of the VisTa Tech Center, room 550. Schoolcraft is located between Six Mile and Seven Mile roads, at 18600 Haggerty Road in Livonia. The VisTa Tech building is next to the north parking lot.

There are a limited number of seats available. Reservations are required. To obtain a ticket or for more information, please call Christopher Gillett at (517) 737-7350.

Town Hall on Iraq War

A town hall meeting on the impact of the War in Iraq and its effect on communities of southeast Michigan will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 7, at the Civic Park Senior Center in Livonia, on Farmington just south of Five Mile.

The Northville and Livonia Democratic Clubs are co-sponsoring the talk, which is aimed

at raising levels of consciousness about the impact of the war. Co-chairing the meeting are Scott Craig, a Northville resident who teaches in Oakland County, and Bill Joyner, a Livonia resident and former member of the Wayne County Board of Commissioners.

"With the war taking away from our domestic needs such as education we must become increasingly vigilant as America depletes our resources on a war half the world away. How are we going to educate our children, create jobs for our grandchildren and provide economic stability for our families?" Joyner asked.

Blood drive

Hayes Elementary School in Westland will sponsor a blood drive for the American Red Cross 1-7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 3.

The school, which is in the Livonia school district, is located at 30600 Louise, south of Ann Arbor Trail and east of Merriman.

The blood drive will be in Room 18. Walk-ins are welcome.

"This time of year is a time of desperation for those in need of blood," said Leanne Domzalski, blood drive coordinator. "We are truly thankful for all that come and give blood."

Masked robber hits Westland bank

A masked bandit with a gun robbed a Westland bank early Thursday and escaped with an undisclosed amount of money, police said.

The incident happened about 8:35 a.m. at the Flagstar Bank branch on Joy Road between Middlebelt and Inkster, Westland Sgt. Chris Benson said.

The robber wore a latex mask and a gray wig, and witnesses couldn't tell police the gender or the race of the perpetrator, Benson said.

Only bank employees - no customers - were inside the building at the time. No one was injured.

The robber fled east on Joy in what was described as a green, newer-model, four-door vehicle, Benson said.

Police are asking anyone with information about the incident to call the Westland Police Department at (734) 722-9600.

Other than the mask and wig, the robber also was wearing a ballcap, a tan-colored, goose-down jacket, dark pants and dark gloves.

"This does not appear to be a repeat of any similar robbery in the area," Benson said.

Safe stolen

A safe valued at \$1,000 was reported from the Oakwood Hospital facility at 29150 Ford Road, Garden City, on Dec. 21.

CRIME WATCH

The safe contained \$530.

There was no sign of forced entry. A hospital representative told police a recently fired maintenance supervisor had failed to turn in all his keys and was suspected in the theft.

Similar break-ins without forced entry had been reported at Oakwood facilities in Dearborn and Trenton.

Larceny

A clerk at 7-Eleven, 2250 Merriman in Garden City, told police Tuesday that a man entered the store and asked several questions before requesting a cup of water.

The clerk provided the water, she said, but after taking a sip, the man put down the cup, grabbed a charity collection container and ran out of the store. She estimated \$20 in cash and coins was in the container.

Tools stolen

A Wayne man told police that he went into Ford Road Exchange, 32555 Ford Road in Garden City, to purchase a camera on Dec. 21. The following day, he said, he realized a bag of tools had been stolen from his vehicle and contacted police.

The man remembered passing a man leaving the store as

he entered. Surveillance video of the store parking lot showed the man exiting and then removing the bag of tools from the victim's vehicle.

The suspect had sold something to the store, and the owner was able to provide his name and address.

Threats

A nurse at Garden City Hospital, 6245 N. Inkster Road, told police Dec. 19 that a patient in the unit was unhappy with the care she had given and used a racial slur. She said he also threatened to slash her tires.

The Livonia man was also reported to have threatened to kill the nurse in comments made to a co-worker. The patient didn't deny using the slur but told police he didn't threaten to harm the nurse.

Retail fraud

Two women were arrested for shoplifting a number of items from Garden City's Kmart, 29600 Ford Road, on Monday. Store security detained the women after seeing them using a box cutter to open merchandise that they put into purses.

Additional items were recovered from a cart the women pushed out of the store. Police said a man with the women hadn't left the store with any merchandise and was released with two young children.

Larceny

A Garden City woman told police she was at her mother's Westland home on Dec. 22 as the older woman confronted her son about items that had been stolen.

Police were called and a jewelry box was recovered from the man, who usually lives with the mother. Among the items in the jewelry box were a bracelet and a ring that the Garden City woman said belonged to her.

The woman told Garden City Police that her brother told her he'd stolen the items from her home in the 28000 block of Marquette. Also taken were a second bracelet, which was

recovered from a pawn shop, and a pool cue, which the brother indicated he'd sold to someone on the street.

The woman told police her brother is a heroin addict and sometimes stays with her when their mother puts him out of her house.

Winning ticket swiped

A Detroit woman called Canton police after her purse was stolen.

In a couldn't-be-any-worse kind of afternoon, the stolen purse contained not just her cash, car keys and wallet - it also contained a winning lottery ticket, she said.

According to a police report, the woman had stopped on Dec. 22 at the McDonald's restaurant on Michigan Avenue. She left her seat for a moment in order to refill her soft drink, and when she returned to her table, the purse was gone.

She told police she had \$120 in cash in her purse, but that she also had a lottery ticket worth \$291.

Polite thief?

A man who excused himself after bumping into a shopper at Meijer in Livonia made off with a wad of cash and bank cards from her purse recently.

A Redford woman told Livonia police that she was in the checkout aisle about 11:15 p.m. on Dec. 18, with her purse in the child seat of a grocery cart.

At the end of the aisle after her purchase, a man behind her in line bumped her shoulder with his and apologized. She told police he must have grabbed the \$220 in cash, a credit card and a debit card from her open purse.

Later, she was called by a credit card company to ask about three purchases in Detroit worth several hundred dollars, according to the police report.

The victim told police she remembered the thief had been talking earlier to another woman.

- By Observer staff

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Westland, MI - According to a recently released back pain relief report, most back pain sufferers have no idea how to eliminate their pain. Some use heat, others ice. From sleeping on the floor, to pillows underneath the legs, back pain relief techniques vary. But thanks to a free report, local back pain sufferers finally know exactly what to do. To get a copy of the free "Back Pain Relief Report", call toll-free, 1-888-744-2225. (Toll-free, 24 hour recorded message)

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McCotter, band under fire on holiday tour in Iraq

BY HUGH GALLAGHER
STAFF WRITER

The Second Amendments were on the last leg of their whirlwind holiday tour for the troops when they got to experience the dangers of war first hand. The mortar attack occurred shortly before the band took the stage to entertain troops at the Balad Air Base in Iraq.

Lead guitarist Thaddeus McCotter and his bandmates were hustled into a bunker and no one was injured.

"Five mortar rounds before a gig is like playing a biker bar on the east side," McCotter joked, in a phone conversation from Iraq Thursday afternoon (shortly after midnight in Iraq).

The hard driving, blues-based guitarist is AKA U.S. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter, R-Livonia, and the Second Amendments are a bi-partisan group of musicians who also serve in Congress. McCotter plays lead guitar with Reps. Ken Hulshof, (R-Missouri), on drums; Collin Peterson, (D-Minnesota), on guitar and lead vocals; Dave Weldon, (R-Florida), on bass; and Jon Porter, (R-Nevada), on keyboards. The country-tinged rock band began



U.S. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter with the flight crew that flew the Congressional Delegation to and from Iraq. They are part of the Michigan Air National Guard.

their trip Dec. 26 with gigs planned for Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Pakistan and Ramstein Air Base in Germany.

When not playing, the congressmen spent time fact-gathering and assessing the situation in the region.

McCotter said troop morale

seems to be "pretty high."

"When we've been playing, we talk to them before we play, and they make a conscious effort to let us know they're very committed to what they're doing and proud of what they're doing," he said. "It's not just a case of a couple of guys who have been

prepped ahead of time, it's genuine instances of them finding out who we are and making a point of telling us."

McCotter has been a supporter of the war in Iraq though critical of some political decisions by the Bush Administration. He said the

American presence in the area has been a positive influence.

"We went to a base at Anaconda (at Balad Air Base in Iraq). They have a medical facility and it's a long way from the M.A.S.H TV show, they have a 96 percent survival rate," he said. "They help not just U.S. coalition troops but Iraqis from the general population. We saw a young boy whose house had been mortared by the insurgents and he had lost his two brothers in the attack. He was an especial favorite of the nurses and doctors because he was such a tough little kid. To me that was a classic example of what the United States was doing, not just in the war against terror but in the cause of human decency over here."

He said the Dec. 15 Iraqi parliamentary elections were also a boost to troop morale, as the realization of a successfully elected democratic government was the primary goal for American forces. He said it's now up to the Iraqis to make their democracy work.

He said the government faces two major challenges, and the first is deciding on the role of the United States. He said

some groups will be urging that the United States to scale down or be deployed.

"The second pressure on the government will be to perform on the basic level of economics, especially in terms of unemployment and reconstruction of the infrastructure," he said. "We can not make the Iraqi government successful in the end, they have to do that themselves and in a relatively quick fashion."

Despite a recent increase in insurgent bombings since the election, McCotter said protests by the Sunni and secular Shi'a groups have been in support of the electoral process and not "a signal for a civil war."

McCotter said he told his three children that his post-Christmas tour was part of his job. "I can't complain given that we have a lot of people over her missing the holidays," he said. "It seems only fair that we in Congress making these decisions that we make sacrifices, too, no matter how small in comparison to what the troops are doing."

The Second Amendments are scheduled to return Jan. 2. Congress reconvenes in February for the President's State of the Union address.



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Red Cross Nurse Joyce McLin prepares the photographer's arm for blood donation.

Successful blood drive will help save lives

BY LEANNE ROGERS
STAFF WRITER

By Tuesday, Christmas gifts had been opened and in some cases returned, which freed up time for people to give a lifesaving donation.

At their quarterly American Red Cross Blood Drive, Garden City Hospital collected 92 productive units of blood easily exceeding the 60 pint goal. Included in that number were eight first-time blood donors.

Since each pint can save up to three lives, the donors helped give 276 hospital patients a chance to regain their health.

Holiday periods such as Christmas and New Year are traditionally low supply times for blood due to factors such as businesses and schools being closed, people having a lot of travel and

UPCOMING BLOOD DRIVES

Tuesday, Jan. 3

- 1-7 p.m. Auburn Hills City Hall, 1827 North Squirrel Road, Auburn Hills.
- 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Henry Ford Medical Center, 29200 Schoolcraft, Livonia.
- 1-7 p.m. Hayes Elementary School, 30600 Louise, Westland.
- 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Farmington Hills Hotel & Suites, 37529 Grand River, Farmington Hills.
- 7 a.m.-7 p.m. St. Joseph Hospital, 44405 Woodward Avenue, Pontiac.

social commitments, and inclement weather.

Before the Garden City Hospital blood drive, the entire southeast Michigan region had approximately a 31-hour supply of O positive, an eight-hour supply of A negative, less than a one-

hour supply of B negative and absolutely no O negative blood.

"I am very pleased with the success of our recent American Red Cross blood drive. Our dedicated coordinators have worked hard this past year to increase donor participation and many of our employees have shown their support through continual donations," said hospital president/CEO Gary Ley.

Garden City Hospital holds blood drives four times a year - one for each season - in an effort to boost blood supplies.

At their September blood drive, Garden City Hospital received the Platinum Sponsor award from the American Red Cross for outstanding commitment to the blood program.

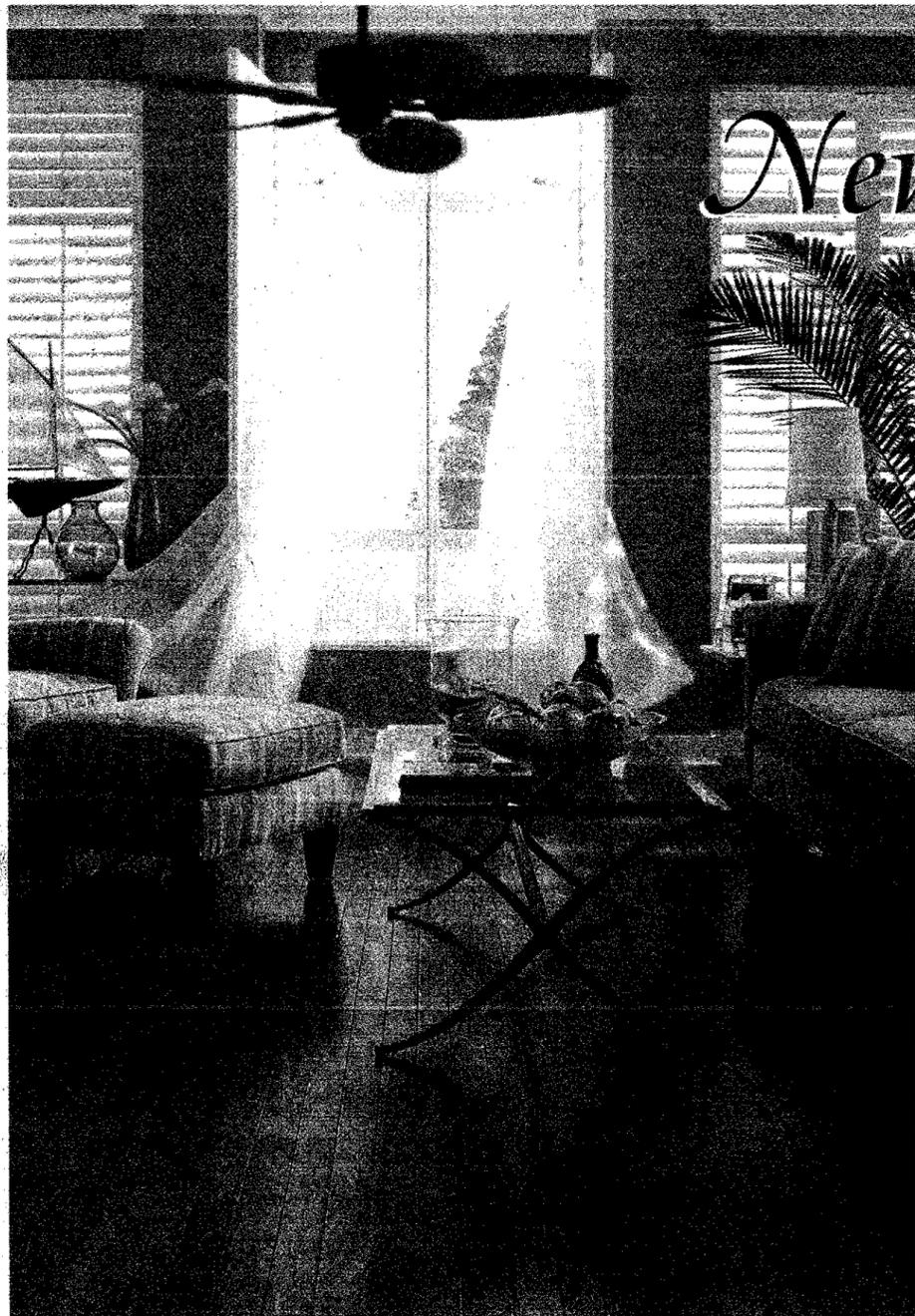
"Garden City Hospital has sponsored the Red Cross for many years through blood dona-

tions and the staff of Garden City Hospital has always showed their generosity and support," said Ley, past chair of the Southeast Michigan Blood Services Board of the American Red Cross and current board of trustees member.

Garden City Hospital's next blood drive will be on Wednesday, April 19, 2006.

The Red Cross continues an emergency appeal for blood donations. The local supply of type O-negative and B-negative are still well below the three-five day reserve level necessary for everyday medical needs and emergencies. Immediate donor support is needed. Call (800) GIVE-LIFE or visit www.givelife.org today.

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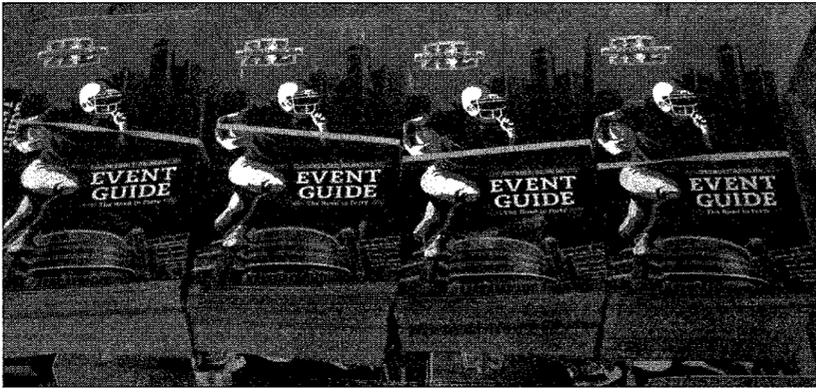
FROM PAGE A1

will provide the opportunity to change the city's image.

"Of course no one will be happy if it snows. Even though truth be told at the end of the day we have it pretty good - no floods, no earthquakes, no hurricanes. But it's another to write about unfriendly people," he said. "What we're really hoping will happen here is that people will have a great time and it will change peoples' impression of Detroit."

In order to ensure that members of the media have a good time, the host committee has arranged for transportation to take reporters downtown, and to locations such as Troy and Ferndale for shopping and entertainment.

The committee is also printing 100,000 visitor guides, 76-page pocket-sized booklets with maps and schedules of events.



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Event Guide for the Super Bowl.

It's not just an image issue, either. According to figures from the Super Bowl Host Committee, visitors are expected to spend some \$300 million during that week in local restaurants, shops and bars.

Every hotel is going to be occupied, O'Callaghan said. There are 35,000 rooms in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties, and half of them are already committed to the NFL. The other half will be filled two weeks before the game as soon as the fans know which teams are going to the game.

Super Bowl games tend to be held in warmer climates. This February will mark the third time a Super Bowl has been hosted in a northern city. First was the Pontiac Silverdome in

1982, and then Minneapolis hosted in 1992.

Though nothing can be done about the frigid temperatures, 10,000 volunteers have lined up to ensure that the city feels as warm as a friendly smile. They'll be stationed at the airport, and at places of interest throughout the city, and will be available to greet and help visitors to the region.

And for the past few months, volunteers have worked toward beautifying the city, as well, according to Deanna Buckner of Sterling Heights, who was a volunteer coordinator for one of two "Super Cleanup" projects in the city.

The first clean up day was in June, and attracted 1,000 volunteers who put on work gloves and picked up paint-

brushes to help spruce up downtown. The next, in October, drew 1,250 volunteers.

"They came from everywhere, the city, the suburbs. School groups came out to help, students from the university, parents and their kids, older people, scouts - they all came out to make a difference," she said. "They want everyone to see what we have to offer down here."

The state of Michigan has done its part, too. Some \$200 million worth of infrastructure work has been done to the freeways leading in and out of the city, and to street lighting and the sewer system, O'Callaghan said.

For more information on the Super Bowl, visit the official Web site at www.sbxl.org.

Region to play host to a number of Super Bowl-related activities

Tickets for Super Bowl XL may be impossible to get at this point. But that doesn't mean you'll be left out in the cold. There are plenty of things to do throughout the region during the weeks leading up to the big game on Feb. 5. Here are a few of the main attractions:

■ **Motown Winter Blast.** Created specifically for the Super Bowl, this second annual event will be Feb. 2-5. The free public event is centered downtown at Campus Martius park, and will feature interactive car displays, food and entertainment, ice sculptures, a vendor village full of local artists and craftsmen, ice skating, kids' arts and crafts and a snowboarding demonstration.

■ **The NFL Experience.** The NFL will produce its 15th annual event at Cobo Center in Detroit Feb. 1-5. The NFL Experience is an interactive theme park offering games, displays and entertainment. The tickets (\$15 for adults, and \$10 for children age 12 and younger) includes all games and attractions and will benefit the NFL's Youth Education Town. Tickets are on sale and are available by calling (866) TIX-4NFL (849-4635) or at www.superbowl.com.

■ **Bowling for Charity.** Super Bowl Lanes in Canton will be host to the NFL-sanctioned Super Bowl XL NFL Charities Bowling Classic. Proceeds will

be donated to the NFL Youth Education Town initiative in Detroit. As its legacy to every Super Bowl host city, the NFL builds a YET center in an at-risk neighborhood where young people are offered counseling, career training, learning opportunities, academic mentoring and recreation, according to the NFL.

Celebrities will include current and former NFL players, and members of the Pro Football Hall of Fame. The thrill of bowling with the stars won't be cheap, though. Individual spectator tickets will run \$100 each. Participants will pay \$750 per person to bowl in the tournament, and team packages are available for \$5,000 and \$12,500.

■ **Also sanctioned by the NFL** will be Troy's Super Bowl event at the Somerset Collection. Cost will be \$75 per person, and the cost includes admission of one child younger than 17. Additional children will be admitted at a reduced cost. The Troy Chamber of Commerce is hosting the event - a gourmet food, auction and social extravaganza scheduled at the Somerset Collection Jan. 29.

For more information on these events and the complete list of the hundreds of events in Detroit and the metropolitan area, visit online at www.sbxl.org.

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 FRI-MON 11:15, 1:00, 1:30, 3:30, 4:15, 6:00, 6:45, 8:30, 9:15

THE PRODUCERS (PG-13)
 FRI-MON 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00
 TUE-TH 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00

CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 (PG)
 FRI-MON 11:30, 12:00, 2:00, 2:30, 4:30, 5:00, 7:00, 7:30, 9:30, 10:00
 FRI/SAT LS 12:00
 TUE-TH 12:00, 2:00, 2:30, 4:30, 5:00, 7:00, 7:30, 9:30, 10:00

YOURS, MINE AND OURS (PG)
 FRI-MON 11:25, 1:25, 3:25, 5:25, 7:25
 TUE-TH 1:25, 3:25, 5:25, 7:25

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE (PG)
 DAILY 7:05, 9:45

CHICKEN LITTLE (G)
 FRI-MON 11:15, 1:15, 3:15, 5:15
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However, all the above conditions combined do not equal the most common reason why you would have swollen ankles. Dependency is the main cause. Dependency is the medical name for keeping your legs down for prolonged periods of time. In daily life, if you sit excessively you will experience swollen ankles. Even completely healthy individuals, if they take a plane ride of 3 or more hours and do not stand up during the flight, will usually find that their shoes feel tight.

Arteries take the blood down to the feet and ankles, veins are the conduits that return that blood. For the return trip to occur without difficulty, you must move your legs. In turn, the muscles that surround the veins contract and pump the blood back to your heart. As you age, you need more muscular effort to achieve the pumping force required. Furthermore, with age comes dilated veins that more easily pool the blood in them, to overcome that effect take even more leg muscle work.

The first line treatment for ankle-swelling resulting from dependency is not "water pills," but exercise.

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SECURITY

FROM PAGE A1

nicate with any other community in Wayne County. That's difficult because we have maybe 10 different communications systems," he said. "Radios can run into the millions. They cost approximately \$3,000 each and we're looking at how many we need. To upgrade every system it would cost \$15 to \$20 million."

During the August 2003 blackout, the need for better communications was clear, and because communities couldn't communicate effectively with the county and state agencies, some had slower response than others, Buford said.

As for the protective gear, each protective suit costs some \$300, and the department has ordered 400 so far, but needs another 2,000, according to Buford.

One area where the county has taken steps to be proactive is with its water supply, according to Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano.

"I can't be specific for security reasons, but I can tell you there has been stepped up monitoring of (the water supply). There's more security put in place around the water systems," Ficano said.

Also, thanks to what Ficano called "dry runs," or disasters such as the blackout, the communications systems have been improved, as have regional emergency preparedness plans.

"It used to be locally we would find out information quicker from CNN than we would from the federal government," he said.

During the blackout of 2003, the county had to make a decision regarding the sewer system. Emergency generators

had been dedicated to the hospitals and some essential services, which left the water and sewer system underpowered.

"We had to make the coordinated team decision to either shut down the system of Downriver wastewater treatment and allow for a major discharge into the Detroit River, or allow flooding in people's basements," he said. "We decided on discharging into the river, but just like in the movies, literally minutes before we were going to flip the switch, the power came back on."

Though Ficano said the county is "absolutely safer" than it was prior to 2001, he said there are still measures that need to be taken to improve regional response and threat prevention.

"I think there needs to be more money for more consistent training. We're going to emerge with new technologies in the next couple of months," Ficano said, referring to the communications technology.

Another area in which the community is safer is due to a better understanding by the public regarding homeland security and emergency response. This year's hurricanes and the widely publicized results of the disasters have illustrated that individuals need to be prepared to get by on their own for as long as possible before local and federal government programs are ready to help.

"I would say community outreach has been a focus of my job. We've been trying to get information out to the public. The more people who can take care of themselves, the fewer people there are who need our help so we can offer help to the elderly and children and the like," Buford said.

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SAYINGS

FROM PAGE A1

view life as the glass is half full, Powell said.

"There is something very soothing about things from the past," Powell said. "It takes us away from the turbulent uncertainty of the present."

It is a great diversion for Powell, who is the president and CEO of the American Institute for Preventive Medicine. He and his staff of 16 produce preventive health books on topics like smoking cessation and weight loss. These are self-care guides which help people to make better health care decisions and lifestyle changes.

Powell does a fair amount of traveling, too, and gives speeches at conferences which promote good health practices, he said.

"Let's just say that I am not ready to give up my day job, but I'm having fun with it," Powell said. "It is a gift for someone who has everything."

It can be a favorite expression or something that describes someone's personality.

The sayings can also be placed on mugs and sweat-shirts.

Some registered local sayings are:

- "Grammie never runs out of hugs or cookies." (Max and Emily Roth, Farmington Hills)
- "If tears could build a staircase, and memories a lane,

I'd walk right up to heaven and bring you back again." (Mark Nicholson, Westland)

■ "It is much easier to become a father than to be one." (Michael Osman, Dearborn)

■ "It is not so much for our friends' help that helps us, as the confident knowledge that they will help us." (Gwen Campbell, Berkley)

■ "People sleep peacefully in their beds at night because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf." 3rd Precinct, Special Operations Unit, dedicated by Michael Osman, Detroit)

■ "Some people skate to the puck. I skate to where the puck is going to be." Wayne Gretzky (Dominic Osman, Sault Ste. Marie)

■ "We are for each other: then laugh, lean back in my arms for life's not a paragraph. And death I think is no parenthesis." (Drew Schmale, Big Rapids)

The Powell family resides in West Bloomfield.

Powell's wife, Nancy, is a teacher at Hillel Day School in Farmington Hills. Their son, Jordan, is a second-year law school student in Chicago, and son, Brett, is a junior at the University of Michigan.

To register a saying, contact, Megan Osman, director of public relations at (800) 686-7555, (248) 737-6881 or (800) 345-2476, ext. 239.

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NIGERIA

FROM PAGE A1

treatment options.

"The people also had a lot of eyesight problems, probably due to vitamin A deficiencies in their diet," Fulkerson said, adding that she and Smith helped combat vision problems by giving out prescription and drugstore "reading" glasses.

She and Smith helped more than 400 patients while in Nigeria, and they also provided school supplies to youngsters

ranging from toddlers to teens. "They loved that, because education is very important in Nigeria," Fulkerson said.

Although she has returned home to her husband, Doug, and their 16-year-old son, Troy, Fulkerson said she won't soon forget her trip to Nigeria.

"The people were incredibly warm," she said. "Even in the marketplaces, they would call us 'madame' or 'mommy.' That's how they refer to females."

Fulkerson and Smith stayed in church compounds and in government buildings, and

they found time to enjoy themselves even though they worked hard and endured humid conditions and temperatures that topped 90 degrees.

Pointing to one of many pictures she took, Fulkerson explained a visit to a fish market. "It had the freshest fish," she said. "On the other side of the wall of the market was a lake."

Most Nigerians that Fulkerson encountered spoke English. She and Smith also attended a state dinner for the American general consulate and his team in Nigeria.

The two women plan to

return to the African country in October. Fulkerson said the governor of Abia has promised land for them to build a house and a clinic, which ultimately will be staffed by locals.

Fulkerson had previously traveled to places such as Israel and Jordan, but her reason for traveling to Nigeria made that trip particularly special.

"I don't know that it was life-changing, but certainly it was soul-stirring, soul-changing," she said. "It was incredibly satisfying on a personal level."

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Volunteers needed for annual stonefly search

Friends of the Rouge is seeking volunteers on Saturday, Jan. 21, to search tributaries of the Rouge River for stoneflies. Stoneflies are sensitive aquatic insects that indicate clean water.

Volunteers interested in joining a stonefly search team are asked to call Friends of the Rouge's Public Involvement department at (313) 792-9621 or e-mail picoordinator@therouge.org to register for the event.

Pre-registration is required by Jan. 12.

The annual Winter Stonefly Search is part of a long-term monitoring program begun by Friends of the Rouge in May 2001. The goal of the program is to track changes in water quality over time by utilizing volunteers to sample many sites. Sampling results

are used as a screening tool and are provided to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the 48 communities of the Rouge.

No prior experience is necessary and volunteers will not be entering the water. Children are welcome when accompanied by one adult per child and everyone must dress for the weather. Each team will be supervised by a trained and

experienced leader.

Friends of the Rouge is a non-profit group of citizens established in 1986 and is dedicated to promoting restoration and stewardship of the Rouge River ecosystem through education, citizen involvement and other collaborative efforts, for the purpose of improving the quality of life for the people, plants, and animals of the watershed.



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Some directions for weaving through prescription program

The Medicare program was signed into law July 30, 1965, by President Lyndon B. Johnson. Today, Medicare has grown to cover more than 40 million eligible Americans with its Part A and B coverages.

Since its establishment, drug therapies have played an increasing role in patient care and significantly reduced hospital stays. Outpatient prescription drugs, however, were not covered under the program. The signing of President Bush's new Medicare Modernization Act (MMA 2003) has initiated the most sweeping change in the program's history since inception. Under the new changes, recipients will now have access to optional Part D drug benefits covering outpatient drug therapies previously non-available under the program.



Greg Jamian

This is where the much talked about confusion begins. A plethora of private Prescription Drug Plans (PDPs) now offer proprietary pharmacy plans with a varied assortment of drug formularies (approved drug lists), making it difficult for seniors to choose the best plan for them. Plans may also restrict access to neighborhood pharmacies, requiring enrollees to ask, "Can I still go to my local drug store?"

To add to the complexity of the decision-making process, the government is encouraging enrollment into a new product called Medicare Advantage, offered to seniors wishing to turn over their Medicare benefit administration to a private health insurance company. In return, seniors or eligible enrollees may receive additional benefits not typically covered by Medicare such as free health screenings and/or medical, oral or eye exams.

As a health care professional for 25 years, I too, am dismayed by the infinite amount of variables to consider prior to making a decision. Most eligible seniors have three basic decisions to make: 1) Do nothing and go without drug coverage. This option also applies if covered under a qualified employer sponsored plan; 2) Enroll in a prescription drug plan only, and add it to your existing Medicare coverage; 3) Exchange your Medicare benefits for enrollment into a Medicare Advantage Plan (commercial insurance company) with prescription drug coverage.

Although prescription drug coverage may begin as soon as Jan. 1, 2006, I encourage seniors to talk with others and become educated on the subject prior to making their decision no later than May 15, 2006, without a penalty. Talking with seniors, I find that many more have questions than have completed enrollment forms.

I will predict that as this new program evolves, the government will require standardized tools for grading coverages such as with Medigap insurance now, where the law requires

a grading system of A, B and C for the easy comparison of plans.

For information, Medicare offers its www.medicare.com Web site and/or www.medicare.gov/MPDPF. I also recommend contacting one of two resources if you don't have access to the Internet: Area Agency on Aging at (248) 357-2255 or Medicare directly at (800) MEDICARE. At both phone numbers, trained individuals will help guide you. Many of the plans also offer informational resources, but ultimately they direct the reader to their own plan's enrollment forms, enforcing the old adage "buyer beware."

I would like to offer some helpful tips before enrolling:

If you elect to enroll in a Prescription Drug Plan (PDP) only:

- First, make a list of current drugs you are taking
- Check with your pharmacist to see if a generic is offered
- Review formularies to make sure your specific drugs are covered under the plan
- Review offered plans to make sure your pharmacy is a listed provider
- Compare monthly premiums, deductibles and co-pays between plans.

If you elect to enroll in a Medicare Advantage Plan with Prescription Drug (MA-PD):

- Ask questions about provider network, are there restrictions?
- Premiums vary — you must compare
- Compare co-pays when using out-of-network providers
- Verify coverage rules when traveling out of state
- Make sure that your current medications are covered in the formulary
- Compare the value of included benefits not currently available under existing Medicare program, A) dental exams B) hearing C) vision D) health screening

As 77 million baby boomers approach retirement age, voter starved policy makers will begin to cater to this powerful voting block, and what is it that these new seniors will want? Good affordable health care. The new prescription drug coverage is a step in the right direction, however, it is still only a mediocre attempt to give seniors what they really need from a government-sponsored health plan. Instead, large corporate companies along with special-interest groups have been handed another big win. Certain features of the MMA are clearly designed to get the government out of the business of "gatekeeper" to the quality of health care Americans are used to receiving and resting the responsibility with commercial overseers. Good or bad? Too early to say, but rest assure, quality health care will continue its climb as our nation's most coveted protected treasure.

Greg Jamian is an Oakland County commissioner.

Despite reputation, journalists play a vital role in freedom

I knew going in that my interview with Janet and Terry Blumberg, whose son, U.S. Army Sgt. Trevor Blumberg, was killed in Iraq by a roadside bomb two years ago, was going to be difficult.

Questioning someone about a loved one who has died, particularly one in their prime like Trevor, is never an easy task. But I also had a feeling that my viewpoints concerning the war, which has forever taken away their only son, would probably differ from the way they feel about it.

The interview ultimately went fine. It was a great privilege for me to be in their Canton home discussing Trevor, who I believe is a true American patriot deserving admiration from us all. We should never forget him.



Kurt Kuban

However, I did walk away disheartened at one of the things the Blumbergs had to say. They believe the reason much of the American public has turned against the war is the way journalists have portrayed it in the media. They say the media's fixation on dead soldiers and the suicide bombs that seem to occur daily has soured the public on this war.

Terry Blumberg reasons that if reporters focused more on the positives of the war, the way the Iraqis are inching their way toward democracy, then people would be supportive and America would not lose this war or walk away from it before the goal is achieved.

Having someone tell me he believes people in my profession are the reason that we might lose this war was a hard pill to swallow. I understand the family's general distrust of the media, especially because of the way they were accosted by members of the media in the days after Trevor's death. And I would by lying if I said I don't agree there are some issues with the media in this country.

I just clicked onto the Web site of a local television news station, and the top five stories were about: a 4-year-old girl and her 84-year-old great grandmother killed in a Detroit house fire; an Oklahoma/Texas grass fire that killed four and destroyed 200 homes; state Rep. John Garfield of Rochester Hills sentenced for drinking and driving; Detroit police searching for the identity of murdered woman; and a Southfield man found murdered in Iowa.

Not exactly sunny or uplifting. And then there are all the antagonistic talk shows that spew out biased, one-sided views. I won't even go into the whole paparazzi element of the media and the explosion of *National Enquirer*-type reporting that seems so pervasive in journalism today.

But the fact is journalists play a much greater role in American society than providing us with fodder for water cooler chit chat or salacious details about our favorite celebs. An

independent media is a vital part of a working democracy. Without it, we would be at the mercy of what our leaders tell us.

If you ever wanted to know how important the media is, you need look no further than this war. Without the media, we wouldn't know there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Without the media, we wouldn't know most of the civilized world was against our invasion into Iraq, including many countries that showered empathy on us after Sept. 11. Without the media, we wouldn't know our soldiers were torturing people in the hell of Abu Ghraib.

Without the media, we wouldn't know that contractors like Haliburton have been ripping off the American people with false billing, and we wouldn't know that the Bush administration hired a public relations firm to feed positive stories to the Iraqi press. Without the media, we wouldn't know the president gave the green light to spying on the American public without so much as going through a court of law. Sadly, the list goes on.

Maybe I'm naive, but I believe America is better off knowing this stuff, whether the president and his administration wants us to or not. In fact, I think the media should continue to press our leaders to fully explain major national policy decisions, especially why we're at war — something I don't feel has ever been sufficiently done.

So perhaps Mr. Blumberg is correct. Maybe the media is the reason the American people now feel like it was a mistake to invade Iraq. Many of the reasons given as justification have failed the test of truth. And maybe it is hard for us to swallow the news stories coming out of Iraq that detail the death of yet another American soldier. But they are stories we must hear and not ignore.

I think it's great that we are rebuilding schools and restoring electricity and drinking water in Iraq. I think it's encouraging that the Iraqis just held elections. But I'd rather hear about the story of how a brave young American soldier made the ultimate sacrifice for me, my family and every other American. They shouldn't be reduced to a statistic in a history book.

Just like I think it's important that we tell the stories about people like the Blumbergs, people in our community who have lost the most in this war. As we go about our daily lives, they must deal with the pain and loss most of us can't begin to understand.

I realize the freedoms we enjoy in this country would not be possible if it weren't for the sacrifices that countless soldiers like Trevor Blumberg have made. But I promise you, freedom would also not be possible if journalists weren't allowed to uncover the truths behind the stories of their time.

Kurt Kuban is community editor of the *Canton Observer*. He welcomes your comments at (734) 459-2700 or kkuban@hometownlife.com.

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