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Holiday

SUNDAY
November 30, 2008

WESTLAND Observer

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City to make changes at senior high-rise

BY DARRELL CLEM
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

Taylor Towers, a high-rise senior apartment building in Westland, is expected to get a major facelift amid a restructuring of how the 30-year-old facility is owned and overseen.

Rumors have swirled about changes inside the 266-unit, subsidized-rent building, but Westland City Council President James Godbout said Taylor

Towers will be improved without residents facing any spike in living expenses.

"The residents there will see zero changes from their rent perspective," he said.

However, residents are expected to benefit from a long-term project that Godbout and Mayor William Wild said could bring a new heating system, windows, roofing, appliances, paint and carpet, among other amenities.

"The building is 30 years old. It needs updating," Godbout said.

Named after former Mayor Thomas Taylor, the building is located on Marquette east of Newburgh, just south of Central City Park. It has long been controlled by an Elderly Housing Corp. (EHC) of Westland, but improvements have been difficult because of little cash flow, city officials said.

With a 30-year mortgage

retired, Taylor Towers is reverting back to the city, but Godbout said the property will be sold to a new partnership with a controlling interest by the EHC and the Westland Housing Commission. The transaction will allow the city to generate cash from outside investors.

"We basically sell this building to the corporation," Godbout said, adding that the city "could end up with roughly \$9 million."

Godbout also sought to reas-

sure seniors who may have heard of an overhauling of the food services program inside the building. Seniors would continue to have access to on-site meals, he said, but the service would likely be contracted out while full-time employees would lose their jobs.

Although new partners will oversee Taylor Towers, local officials have said the EHC and the city will continue to have an influence on operations.

On Monday, the Westland City Council is set to vote to set up the new corporation, Godbout said.

Wild sought to quell rumors that residents would be negatively affected by the changes.

"What they would see out of it is a totally renovated apartment," he said, adding that as much as \$20,000 could potentially be spent on each unit.

dclcm@hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2110

Wanted: Agency seeks jobs for disabled

BY DARRELL CLEM
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

A sour economy has made it even more difficult for a Westland-based nonprofit agency to find jobs and provide skill-building services for its developmentally disabled clients, who have a remarkable work ethic and who take immense pride in their endeavors.

Community Choices Supported Employment already works to provide jobs at restaurants, grocery stores, fitness centers, churches and other businesses in communities like Westland, Livonia, Canton, Redford and Wayne. But, the agency needs more employers to help its clients, who currently number 107.

"These individuals will not miss a day's work," said Community Choices jobs developer Jennifer Baker, a Westland resident. "They will give more than a hundred percent."



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Erica Gray, 25, makes a little money from the pin-on buttons that she takes great pride in making.

Employers like Bob Evans, Buddy's Pizza, Greenfield Village, Powerhouse Gym, Kroger and Redford's St. John's Lutheran Church, among others, already have become involved with Community Choices, but the need for more businesses has become greater as job opportunities have dwindled.

Community Choices also helps clients at its Commerce

Drive headquarters on Westland's northwest side by providing on-site, skill-building services during daytime business hours, in an effort to boost self-esteem and instill a sense of independence.

Erica Gray, 25, smiled as she sat in a motorized wheelchair and talked about the pin-on buttons she makes and sells for \$2 each wherever she can. Community Choices social

worker Janet Threatt, a Canton resident, recently took some of Gray's buttons to a poverty summit in Detroit.

Gray uses special button-making equipment to make products to celebrate occasions like Christmas, Halloween, Election Day and new births. She estimated she has made thousands.

Please see AGENCY, A2

Value City to close department store

BY DARRELL CLEM
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

Value City Department Store in Westland is expected to close its doors by year's end, idling an undisclosed number of workers and creating another vacancy in the city's core retail shopping district.

A store manager refused to comment, even though Value City has widely publicized its going-out-of-business sale and draped a banner in front of the store on Warren Road west of Central City Parkway. One employee said the discount retail store is expected to close by Dec. 31.

Next door, Value City Furniture will not be affected by the closing, store manager Amy Staub said.

"We are not closing," she said. "We're two completely different companies."

The two stores used to be under the same parent company, Staub said, but they are now separate businesses.

Corporate officials in Columbus, Ohio, couldn't be reached for comment, but closings of stores in several states are planned.

A Louisville, Ky., newspaper, *The Courier-Journal*, had earlier reported that the chain filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. The newspaper also cited court papers indicating that the 66-store, 4,500-employee department store chain had lost \$70 million in a seven-month period ending Aug. 31 on net sales of \$288.5 million.

Value City Department Store, like many retailers, has been stung by a troubled economy that has slowed spending. *The Courier-Journal* cited court papers indicating that a slow housing market, tight credit and rising unemployment are among the factors that have combined to "decimate" the company's core market.

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Fish Dial-A-Ride is looking for more volunteer drivers

BY LEANNE ROGERS
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

Over the past year, Nancy Kukulka had been taken for a ride many times — and she's pretty happy about that.

A Westland resident, Kukulka is visually impaired and has been using the services of Fish Dial-A-Ride of Western Wayne County.

"I use Fish two or three times a week. I go to doctor appointments and dental appointments — sometimes they take me to the vet for my Leader Dog," Kukulka said. "They take me shopping, if I need to go. I work at the Library

for the Blind on Michigan Avenue each week and they take me there. It's literally been a blessing to me."

Started a year ago, the Fish Dial-A-Ride program relies on volunteers to provide transportation to clients who are generally senior citizens or disabled. The volunteer drivers use their own vehicles and pay for fuel themselves.

"It's for those with no other means of transportation, we're the means of last resort," said Gary Simon, who runs the program. "We provide 18-20 rides a week. We have 11 drivers but

could use 20 easily."

While she sometimes uses the Nankin Transit Authority for transportation, Kukulka said Fish drivers are available at different hours and go outside the immediate area.

"I have lady friends from church who take me shopping, my kids help if they are available," Kukulka said. "I try to stay independent as much as I can. Fish definitely helps me stay independent."

Since Fish Dial-A-Ride began operating last year, Garden City's Mike Jones has been a volunteer driver — he and Simon are

both members of Garden City Kiwanis, which provided some start-up funding.

"Most of the time I drive someone once a week. Gary goes out of his way not to burn out the drivers," said Jones, who works part-time as a financial adviser. "I think Gary drives 40-60 hours. Nankin Transit has limitations, we fill in the gaps. It's an important service."

Getting people to medical appointments are the bulk of rides, said Jones, noting he recently drove a man to Henry Ford Hospital for treatment and returned a few hours later for

the return trip. Earlier this year, Jones said he drove someone to a food bank.

"Some of the people are pretty interesting. I enjoy driving with them. I get to know their background and let them know about mine," he said. "It would be pretty dull, if you didn't talk on the ride."

Despite the lower gas prices, Simon said he could still use more volunteer drivers.

"I thought when gas prices dropped, we'd get more people stepping forward, but I haven't seen that," Simon said. "We had a kind of celebration lunch in October to celebrate our one-

year anniversary. We wanted to acknowledge the volunteers and show appreciation for all their help."

Some people may be reluctant to commit themselves because of time constraints, Jones said, but scheduling is flexible.

"I've had lunches with Fish people and we shared stories. Most of them enjoy giving back and helping people out with something they would not be able to do for themselves," Jones said.

For more information about the Fish Dial-A-Ride program, call (888) 660-2007.

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Coming Thursday in filter



The Beatle Maniacs, the ultimate tribute to The Beatles

VFW holding benefit to help member's family

A Westland VFW Post is coming to the aid of one of its members, holding a benefit spaghetti dinner and raffle Friday, Dec. 5.

The Bova VFW Post 9885 is sponsoring the fund-raiser to help the family of retired Marine Master Sgt. Sid Morris. The benefit will include a spaghetti dinner from 7 to 9 p.m., raffles and music by Hines Drive 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. at the post, 6440 Hix, south of Warren Road, Westland. Tickets cost \$15 per person and can be purchased in advance at the post or by calling (734) 634-4058. They also will be available at the door.

Morris and his wife Sherry have been caring for the family of their daughter Angela Birdsall who underwent back surgery on Aug. 28 to remove a rod placed in her back at age 12 to stop the progression of scoliosis related to Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, a rare genetic disorder caused by a defect in collagen synthesis.

The initial surgery was performed at Children's Hospital in 1986, and the family was told she could live as normal a life as she could with the syndrome, marry and have children. According to her father, that prognosis proved to be flawed. After having her first child in

1997, Birdsall started having back problems. After her second child, born in 2004, the back problems became unbearable.

"She was suffering from constant pain in her back and hip and she was forced to quit her job, which her family relied on to help pay bills," Morris said. "That's when their problems started. They fell behind on their bills and were unable to get help from Social Security. They needed help from their parents."

Morris said his daughter, who lives with her husband William and their children live in Livonia, went to the University of Michigan

Hospital, where it was recommended that the rod be removed and reconstructive surgery done to straighten her back. The surgery lasted 12 1/2 hours over two days. It was stopped the first day when doctors encountered problems with her bone density and blood pressure. The bones were unable to hold the screws needed to straighten her spine.

"The next day they approached the procedure with a different plan, her doctor was pleased with the results," Morris said.

Birdsall, however, suffered several setbacks, including an aneurysm of renal artery which

caused her to lose her left kidney. She also had a problem with her blood pressure and severe swelling and ended up staying in intensive care for six weeks. She was hospitalized for two months and in rehabilitation for several weeks, but is now home, dealing with yet another setback - spinal cord damage that has caused partial paralysis to her left leg and impacted bodily functions.

"Angela's long-term prognosis is that she will need wheelchair assistance, have to wear a back brace for several years and even after full recovery, she'll still need to be very conscious of everything she does," Morris

said. The money raised will help the families. The Morris family have exhausted their savings account to help their daughter and her family struggling to pay their bills, buy groceries and school clothes and make home repairs. People interested in helping the family can make donations in the name of Sid Morris and send them to his attention at 132 S. Carlsson, Westland, MI 48186.

"Sometimes life deals you a hand that you think isn't fair, but when you think about it, there seems to be others that have it as bad or worse," said Morris. "We're thankful our daughter is still with us."

AGENCY

FROM PAGE A1

"They're basically beautiful," Gray said. "It just takes a hot second to make them, and they're fun to make."

Dorothy King, 41, makes first aid kits and sells them at places like craft shows. The Livonia woman also hopes to start selling her products online, and she said she plans to try to get on Oprah Winfrey's show. Community Choices clients also enjoy outings for such activities as bowling, visiting museums, shopping, sporting events and volunteering their time for community organizations like The Salvation Army.

Founded in 1990, the agency relies on county, state and federal funding along with private employ-

ers. Some of Community Choice's clients live in group homes or with family members, while others are able to be independent or share a place with a roommate.

Job coaches help the clients prepare for jobs, find employment and arrange for transportation from home to work. They also accompany clients to the workplace until they get settled in to their new endeavors. Some clients work independently, and some in groups.

Community Choices gets its referrals from agencies like Community Living Services, which is also dedicated to helping the disabled.

With the holiday season here, Threatt also hopes that local businesses will help Community Choices with Christmas gifts that clients might otherwise not receive. The agency also

could use the expertise of someone who can help with online Web page designing.

Colleen Dahl, program director, said the agency's overriding goal is to enhance the quality of life for its clients by providing a wide array of services. The people served may range from 26 years old to retirement age, and some of them have been involved in the program for a decade.

Baker, the jobs developer, issued a plea for businesses who want reliable employees to give Community Choices clients a chance.

"They won't find a better employee," she said.

To help in any capacity, call Community Choices at (734) 467-1710, or contact Janet Threatt at (313) 333-4061.

dciem@hometownlife.com
(734) 953-2110



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Janet Threatt, a social worker for Community Choices, explains how the program offers help.

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36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150

CITY OF WESTLAND ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS PUBLIC NOTICE

The following appeals will be heard at a public hearing to be held in the Council Chambers of Westland City Hall, 36601 Ford Road, Westland, MI on Wednesday, December 17, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. at which time comments may be directed to the Board during audience participation.

If you wish to reply by mail, send your comments to the above address. All property owners whose names appear in our tax rolls located within 300' of this property are being notified pursuant to this statute.

Petition #2661 R. Falconer, 38699 Joy Rd.

Request for a 4' detached accessory structure variance from Ordinance 248 in order to construct a 28' x 36', 18' high detached accessory structure at the rear of the home; whereas Section 7-4.3(h) states that detached accessory structures shall not exceed a height of 14'. However, the height of an accessory structure may exceed 14' provided that: 1) the size of the lot exceeds 1/3 of an acre (14,520 square feet), 2) the accessory structure does not exceed the maximum height requirement for the principal structure, and 3) approval of the Zoning Board of Appeals is first obtained for any such height variance.

Petition #2662-M. Tsakoff/Westland Castle LLC, 38353 Ford Road

Request for a 10' sign setback variance and a 13.3 square foot price sign area variance from Ordinance 248 in order to replace an existing free-standing sign with 33.3 square feet of price sign, 5' from the front lot line; whereas Section 15-6.9(f) requires a minimum 15' setback and Section 15-6.9(b) allows a maximum 20 square feet of price sign for service station free-standing signs.

Petition #2663-E. Chelian (Dreamstar L.L.C.), 35000 Ford

Request for a 20' rear yard setback variance, a 7'-1/2" building height variance, and a 15' separation variance from Ordinance 248 in order to construct a 23.33' x 58', 12'-5/8" high carport at the north side of the site that would be located 5' from the rear lot line whereas Section 9-5.5(a) requires a minimum rear yard setback of 25' and Section 9-5.6(a) requires a maximum building height of the distance of the building (carport) to the nearest property line (5'); and to construct a dumpster enclosure that would be located directly adjacent to the east side of the proposed carport whereas Section 11.6.1 requires that a dumpster enclosure be located a minimum of 15' from any structure.

Petition #2664-B. Skotanis/Olympic Coney Island, 7011 N. Wayne Road

Request for a 14'9" front yard setback variance, a 21'9" street side yard setback variance, and a 9' building height variance from Ordinance 248 in order to construct a 362 square foot addition to the site that would have a front setback of 10'3", a street side yard setback of 3'3", and a building height of 12'3" whereas Section 9-6.5(a) requires a minimum front yard and street side yard setback of 25 feet and Section 9-6.6(a) allows a maximum building height equal to the distance to the nearest property line.

Publish November 30, 2008

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Christmas concert

The Westland Community Foundation will sponsor a Christmas reception featuring John Glenn High School's Glenn Singers 6-8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 11. The event will be inside the school's media center on Marquette between Wayne and Newburgh, and the public is invited.

Cost of admission is an unwrapped, new toy as a donation for the children helped this holiday season by The Salvation Army. Gifts for teenagers also are needed.

Refreshments and hors d'oeuvres will be prepared by Chef Tony Paquette and students from the culinary arts department of the William D. Ford Career Technical Center. Attire is business or "nice casual." Anyone planning to attend is asked to call (734) 595-7727.

Wrestling Club

The Westland Bottle Rockets, a wrestling club for ages 5-14, will hold registration 6-7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 2, in Gym 4 of John Glenn High School, 36105 Marquette, Westland. The club runs from December through March. The fee is \$20. For more information, call Judy (734) 634-4595 or contact her by e-mail at judylaw122@yahoo.com. Information also is available online at glennwrestling.com and selecting the Bottle Rockets Wrestling Club link.

Compost season ends

Westland will stop picking up of grass clippings and small branches as of Friday, Dec. 5. Compost will be picked up the same day as regular trash,

AROUND WESTLAND

ON THE WEB

For an expanded version of Around Westland, visit our online edition at hometownlife.com and click on the Westland home page.

but must be in cans with a yard waste sticker attached or Kraft type brown bags. Plastic bags will not be accepted. For a complete list of guidelines, call Westland's Department of Public Service at (734) 728-1770.

Safety promotion

From 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday, Dec. 5, in Westland Shopping Center's Macy's Court, Westland Mayor William Wild will join other local dignitaries to encourage residents to "Tie One on for Safety." The MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) event is part of a public awareness campaign which reminds motorists to drive responsibly during the holidays. Non-alcoholic holiday drinks will be served and the winners of the "Mocktail Mixer Recipe Contest" will be named. Westland Center is at 35000 W. Warren Road at Wayne Road.

Tree decorating

Westland Mayor William Wild invites children and their families to "bring in the holidays" with his special guest, Santa Claus, 3-4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 3, when local schools and scout troops will decorate the trees between the Bailey Recreation Center and Westland City Hall. The celebration includes a Christmas carol sing-along and refreshments. For more information,

call the Mayor's Office at (734) 467-3200.

Hello, Santa

Have a wish for Santa? Call him up during Westland's annual Santa Call-In Show Thursday, Dec. 4. Produced by WLND-TV, the city's government access channel, the show gives children the opportunity to chat with Santa and detail their holiday wishes by calling (734) 427-9003. Santa will be taking calls beginning at 6 p.m. The program will re-air throughout the holidays on WLND-TV, channel 10 for Wide Open West subscribers and on channel 12 for Comcast subscribers. For more information, call WLND-TV at (734) 467-3198.

Constituent hours

The staff of U.S. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter, R-Livonia, will hold office hours in several locations in December. The time is set aside so that the citizens served by the congressman have the opportunity to speak with a staff member one on one regarding any federal issue that they might have.

Office hours for Tuesday, Dec. 2, are 9-10 a.m. at Livonia Civic Park Senior Center, 10:30-11:30 a.m. at the Redford Community Center, 1-2 p.m. at the Maplewood Community Center in Garden City and 2:30-3:30 p.m. at the Westland senior Friendship Center. Thursday, Dec. 4, office hours are 9-10 a.m. at the Canton Summit Senior Center, 11 a.m.-noon at the Northville Senior Center, 12:30-1:30 p.m. at the Plymouth District Library and 2:30-3:30 p.m. at the Van Buren September Days Senior Center. The congressman has two

offices in Livonia and Milford the district to serve constituents. The Livonia office can be reached by calling (734) 632-0314 and the Milford office is available at (248) 685-9495.

Annual book fair

Stock up on books for gifts and your home library at third annual book fair 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 2, at Westland Convalescent and Rehab Center, 36137 West Warren Road, between Wayne and Central City Parkway Here's a chance to acquire a wide array of new editions from New York Times best sellers to children's storybooks, large-print books, recipe books. For more information, call (734) 728-6100.

WYAA meeting, party

The Westland Youth Athletic Association will have its annual general membership meeting at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 4, at the Lange Compound Building, 6050 Farmington Road, north of Ford. The purpose is to elect a general board of directors and review the past year.

The WYAA also will conclude its 50th anniversary celebration year with a Christmas party 6 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 6, at Papa Joe's, 34275 Ford at Wildwood, Saturday, Dec. 6. In addition to the party, the annual WYAA raffle draw will take place at 7:30 p.m. Ticket stubs are due by Dec. 6 at the WYAA Lange Compound Building, 6050 Farmington, north of Ford Road. Ticket stubs can be dropped off at the building 7-9 p.m. Wednesdays and 10 a.m. to noon Saturdays.

For further information, call the Westland Youth Athletic Association at (934) 421-0640.

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WINTER TAX NOTICE**

The 2008 winter taxes will be payable from December 1, 2008 through February 14, 2009 without penalty. Beginning February 15, 2009 thru February 28, 2009 a 3% penalty will be added to the unpaid taxes. Beginning March 1, 2009 all unpaid 2008 REAL property taxes must be paid to: Raymond J. Wojtowicz, Wayne County Treasurer, The International Center Building, 400 Monroe, 5th floor, Detroit, MI 48226 with an additional 4% administration fee plus 1% per month interest computed from March 1, 2009.

ALLYSON M. BETTIS, Treasurer-City Clerk

Publish: November 30, 2008

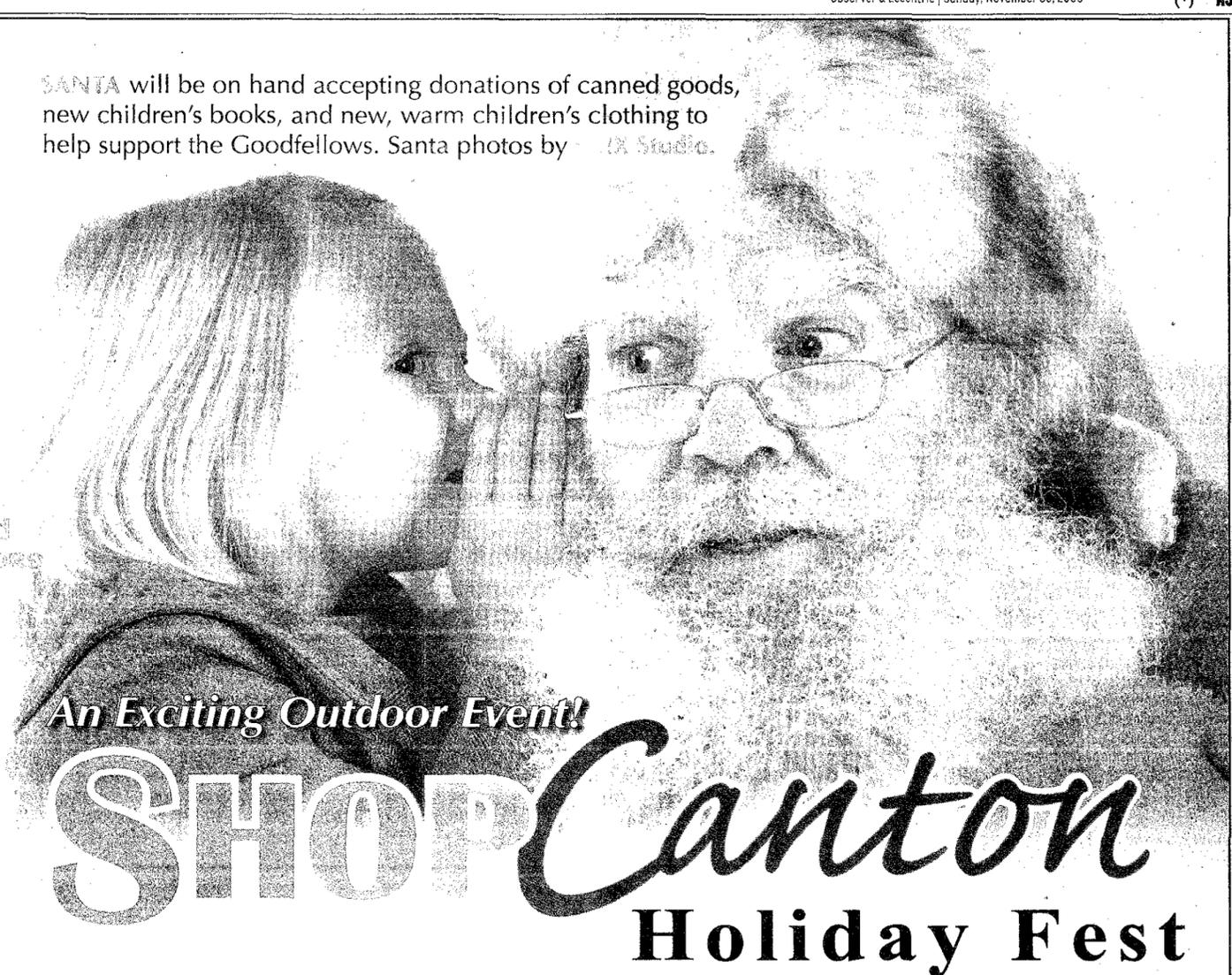
"Notice of Meeting"

The annual meeting of the stockholders of the Wayne Masonic Temple Association, a Michigan nonprofit corporation, shall be held at the office of the corporation at 37137 Palmer Rd., Westland, Michigan on the Tuesday December 9, 2008 at 8:00 PM for the election of directors and such other business as may properly come before said meeting."

Publish: November 30 & December 7, 2007
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SANTA will be on hand accepting donations of canned goods, new children's books, and new, warm children's clothing to help support the Goodfellows. Santa photos by [X] Studio.



An Exciting Outdoor Event!

SHOP Canton Holiday Fest

**When: Saturday, December 6, 2008
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Where: Willow Creek Shopping Plaza

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Canton Downtown Development Authority
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OE8633993

Garden City Hospital programs focus on health

Garden City Hospital, 6245 Inkster Road, offers a weekly schedule of health and wellness programs for residents. The lineup this week includes:

Monday, Dec. 1

Exercise Express 12:30 p.m. Thirty minutes of exercise including cardio, strength training and stretching. Exercise is at your own comfort level. Get in, get out and get on with your day. Fee is \$30 per month or a \$5 drop-in fee. Call (734) 458-3242 for more information

Childbirth Education (fifth of six classes) at 6 p.m. This six-week course prepares the expectant mother and coach for labor and delivery. Class runtime is 2½ hours and there is a \$60 fee. Medicaid is accepted. A refresher course also is available. Call (734) 458-4330 for more information or to register.

Tuesday, Dec. 2

Get Up and Move at 9 a.m., 3 and 4 p.m. This is an invigorating exercise program is designed to help you get up and get moving, and is the perfect compliment to your diet program. These classes will help you to make an easy transition back to an exercise program or help you to get started for the first time. Fee is \$30 per month. For more information,

call (734) 458-3242.

Diabetes Self-Management Education (third of four classes) at 9:30 a.m. This comprehensive series is planned to help people Live Well With Diabetes. Participants learn self-care skills of nutrition, exercise, medication management, monitoring of blood sugar levels, foot and skin care, prevention of problems and psychosocial issues. Physician referral is required. There is a fee, but reimbursement is available by Medicare, Medicaid and most commercial insurance plans. Call (734) 458-3481 for more information or to register.

Blood Pressure and Cholesterol Testing noon-2 p.m. Have your blood pressure checked (free) and your cholesterol level (\$5) or Lipid panel (\$10); tested on the first Tuesday of the month in the Garden City Hospital Lobby from noon to 2 p.m. Everyone is welcome. No registration is necessary. Call (734) 458-4330 for more information.

Strength and Stretch at 2 p.m. This is a non-aerobic exercise class designed to help you strengthen and define your muscles, as well as increase your flexibility. Each class will combine a variety of equipment, including free weights, medicine balls, balance balls, and Therabands in order to isolate and tone each of the major muscle groups. Fee is \$30

per month. For more information, call (734) 458-3242.

Yoga (fourth of four classes) at 4 p.m. Learn how to relax, stretch and breathe while creating balance, strength and flexibility for both the body and mind. This four-week session is \$32.

Wednesday, Dec. 3

Free blood pressure testing for senior citizens at 10:30 a.m. The staff of Garden City Hospital's Community Services offers blood pressure testing free of charge every other Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. at the Maplewood Community Center on Maplewood just west of Merriman. Call (734) 458-4330 for more information.

Exercise Express 12:30 p.m. Thirty minutes of exercise including cardio, strength training and stretching. Exercise at your own comfort level. Get in, get out and get on with your day. Fee is \$30 per month or a \$5 drop-in fee. Call (734) 458-3242 for more information.

Diabetes Support Group at 2:30 and 6:30 p.m. Hear guest speakers and get involved with open discussion on new diabetes information by attending this support group. Day and evening classes are available. The group meets every first Wednesday of the month. Call Community Education at (734) 458-4330 for more information.

CPAP and BIPAP Mask Fitting

Clinic at 5 p.m. CPAP and BIPAP users, did you know that most insurances cover new supplies every year? Have you been wanting to try a new style of mask, but don't know how to get one? Visit the Sleep Disorders Center of Michigan, 35600 Central City Parkway, Suite 103, Westland, 5-6 p.m. any Wednesday for a free mask fitting clinic. No appointment is needed. Call (734) 458-3330 with any questions or for more information.

CPR - Infant and Child at 6 p.m. Approved by the American Heart Association, this class is designed for those who care for children. This class teaches participants how to recognize and care for breathing and cardiac emergencies in infants and in children victims age 8 and under. There is a \$40 fee. Participants will receive certification upon successful completion. Call (734) 458-4330 for more information or to register.

Eating Disorders Support Group at 7 p.m. This support group is for those individuals with anorexia, bulimia, and compulsive and binge eating disorders. Both males and females are invited to attend. This meeting is held in the Garden City Hospital Auditorium. Call (734) 458-4330 for more information.

Thursday, Dec. 4

Get Up and Move at 9 a.m., 3 and

4 p.m. This is an invigorating exercise program is designed to help you get up and get moving, and is the perfect compliment to your diet program. These classes will help you to make an easy transition back to an exercise program or help you to get started for the first time. Fee is \$30 per month. For more information, call (734) 458-3242.

Strength and Stretch at 2 p.m. This is a non-aerobic exercise class designed to help you strengthen and define your muscles, as well as increase your flexibility. Each class will combine a variety of equipment, including free weights, medicine balls, balance balls, and Therabands in order to isolate and tone each of the major muscle groups. Fee is \$30 per month. For more information, call (734) 458-3242.

Diabetes Self-Management Education (second of four classes) at 6:30 p.m. This comprehensive series is planned to help people Live Well With Diabetes. Participants learn self-care skills of nutrition, exercise, medication management, monitoring of blood sugar levels, foot and skin care, prevention of problems and psychosocial issues. Physician referral is required. There is a fee, but reimbursement is available by Medicare, Medicaid and most commercial insurance plans. Call (734) 458-3481 for

more information or to register.

Yoga (fourth of four classes) at 6:30 p.m. Learn how to relax, stretch and breathe while creating balance, strength and flexibility for both the body and mind. This four-week session is \$32. Classes meet at Garden City Hospital's Cardiac Rehab. Call (734) 458-3242 for details and to register.

Friday, Dec. 5

Exercise Express 12:30 p.m. Thirty minutes of exercise including cardio, strength training and stretching. Exercise at your own comfort level. Get in, get out and get on with your day. Fee is \$30 per month or a \$5 drop-in fee. Call (734) 458-3242 for more information.

DAILY PROGRAMS

Garden City Hospital's Health Enhancement Center offers daily programs Monday through Friday in Phase II and III Cardiac Rehabilitation/Cardiac Wellness, a Peripheral Vascular Disease Exercise and Strength Training Program, and a Diabetes Exercise Program. These classes are presented and monitored by certified exercise physiologists. Contact the Health Enhancement Center at (734) 458-3242 to select an exercise program specifically designed for you.

Listings for the Community Calendar can be submitted by e-mail at smaison@hometownlife.com. They also can be mailed to Sue Mason at 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150, or faxed to her attention at fax at (734) 591-7279. For more information, call (734) 953-2112.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Nutcracker Ballet
More than 70 dancers from Bunny Sanford's School of Dance perform the holiday classic at 11:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 13, at Stevenson High School, 33500 Six Mile Road (just west of Farmington). Tickets are available for \$5. This special production features original choreography and costumes from the Nutcracker Ballet that formerly appeared at the Fox Theatre and Detroit Opera House. Tickets are available at the door or by calling Bunny Sanford's School of Dance at (734) 464-7440.

Craft Show
Crafters and vendors are being sought for Lathers Elementary School's second annual Holiday Craft and Vendor Show 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 13. The cost of an 8-foot space is \$20. All of the proceeds going toward new playground equipment. Contact Lisa at crafter2007@yahoo.com.

Prison Family Support Group
Do you have a family member currently serving time in prison, a subject that you can't easily discuss with just anyone? Now, there's a place for help - for conversation - for understanding

of what you are going through. Hope-4-Healing is a free on-going support group for those who have loved ones in prison, providing a safe place to talk about it, share with and learn from others. The group meets the second Monday of every month beginning in January 2009 at Kirk of Our Savior Presbyterian Church, 36660 Cherry Hill, in Westland. For additional information, contact Bonnie at (734) 646-2237 or e-mail hope4healing@rocketmail.com.

Friends of Rouge

The Friends of the Rouge are looking for people interested in helping with two programs taking place in 2009. The first is the Rouge Winter Stonefly Search 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Jan. 24. Join a team to search Rouge tributaries for the sensitive winter stonefly. The program takes place at the Environmental Interpretive Center at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. Preregistration required. Call Sally Petrella at (313) 792-9621 or by e-mail at monitoring@therouge.org. For more information and a flyer, go online to www.therouge.org/Programs/PI/Benthic_Monitoring%20events.html. Petrella also is accepting signups for the Rouge Frog and Toad Survey training workshops. Volunteer to survey wetlands for frogs and toads by listening for their calls. Surveys are done independently on warm damp evenings March through July. Workshops will be held 10 a.m. to noon Feb. 14 at Southfield Parks and Recreation, 26000 Evergreen

COMMUNITY CALENDAR



Showcasing technology

State Sen. Glenn S. Anderson (from left) greets Joe Carnell, Taun Mitchell and Pierre Cole, students at the William D. Ford Career Technical Center in Westland, at the eighth annual AT&T/MACUL Student Technology Showcase held Nov. 12 at the State Capitol Building in Lansing. The school was one of 40 elementary, middle and high schools statewide that participated in the event which shows elected members of the Michigan State Senate and House of Representatives how technology is being used in the classroom to enhance student achievement. Organized by the Michigan Association for Computer Users in Learning, the showcase was underwritten by AT&T.

Road, Southfield; 7-9 p.m. March 4 at Canton Summit on the Park, 46000 Summit Parkway, Canton; 10 a.m. to

noon March 14 in the Farmington Hills Council Chambers, 31555 W. 11 Mile, Farmington Hills, and 10 a.m. to noon

March 21 at the Plymouth Township Hall, 9955 N. Haggerty, Plymouth. Sign up to attend one workshop;

preregistration required. For more information or to obtain a flyer, go online to www.therouge.org/Programs/PI/frog_and_toad_Workshops.htm

Charity casino

If you are looking for a place to show your skills at Texas Hold 'Em, the hottest game in town, the Canton Charity Casino, Western Wayne County's only charity poker room at the Shark Club on Ford in Canton every Thursday through Sunday. The Canton Charity Casino offers nightly tournaments as well as continuous cash games and a venue for players of all skill levels. Non-profit, charitable organizations are licensed by the State of Michigan to sponsor each weekend, allowing them to raise funds for their special causes. The hours are 7 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. Thursday-Friday (tournament at 8 p.m.) and 2 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. Saturday-Sunday (tournament at 5 p.m.) The Shark Club is at 42070 Ford, just west of Haggerty in Canton. Non-profit groups interested in sponsoring a fund-raising weekend can call (734) 502-7033 or send an e-mail to scpokertb@gmail.com.

Class reunion

Garden City High School Class of 1989 will hold its 20th reunion 6 p.m. to midnight Aug. 29, 2009, at Joy Manor in Westland. Tickets are \$65 before March 1 and \$75 March 2-June 1. Tickets includes, dinner, premium open bar, DJ, door prizes, picture CD and other gifts. Tickets are available for purchase at www.gardencity89.com or by contacting Paula at gch-1989reunion@hotmail.com.



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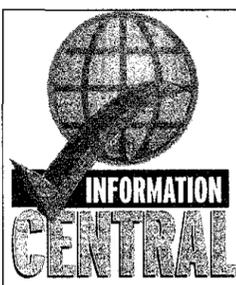
According to the most recent Center for Disease Control and Prevention statistics taken from 2006, there were approximately 40,000 AIDS diagnoses, 14,000 deaths from AIDS and more than 400,000 people living with AIDS in the United States. Worldwide, those numbers grow to 2.7 million new HIV diagnoses, 2 million deaths from AIDS, and 32.9 million people living with HIV/AIDS.

Monday, Dec. 1, marks the 20th anniversary of World AIDS Day. Started in 1988 by the World Summit of Ministers of Health on Programs for AIDS Prevention in order to bring worldwide awareness to the destructive pandemic, it is now taken up by governments and other global organizations. This year's theme is a continuation on last year's Stop AIDS: Keep the Promise-Leadership. Activities across the country and around the world will include candlelight vigils, concerts, movie screenings, and discussions.

The actual campaign on HIV and AIDS awareness extends well beyond World AIDS Day. The Public Library of Westland has many resources to educate yourself about HIV/AIDS.

Randy Shiltz' "And the Band Played On: Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic" is a well known book that inspired the movie of the same title.

For the history of AIDS, there is the comprehensive "Encyclopedia of AIDS: A Social, Political, Cultural, and Scientific Record of the HIV Epidemic." For basic health information on HIV/



AIDS, there is the "AIDS Sourcebook," which provides facts on risks, prevention, diagnosis, treatments, complications and tips on living with AIDS.

To find out more about HIV/AIDS, the Public Library of Westland is a great place to start. Stop by at the reference desk, call us at (734) 326-6123, or remotely search our catalog online 24 hours a day at www.westland.lib.mi.us. For more information on World AIDS Day, you can go to World AIDS Campaign Web site at www.worldaids-campaign.org.

Highlighted Activities

Documentary Movie Night:

"Spellbound" at 7 p.m. Dec. 1.

Who would have thought that a documentary about spelling-bee contestants could be as suspenseful as a Hitchcock thriller? "Spellbound," which follows eight kids from their early victories in regional spelling bees to

the national competition in Washington, D.C., is an out-and-out nail-biter. No sign-up required. Refreshments will be provided.

Adult Poetry Group: 3-4:15 p.m. Dec. 2. Adults only.

Interested in reading, discussing, and writing poetry? Please join us for one of our sessions, whether you're a first-time writer or a serious wordsmith. Sign up at the Reference Desk. Check out our blog at <http://westlandadultpoetry.blogspot.com>.

Jewelry Making with Gretchen Otto: 7 p.m. Dec. 3. Adults only.

Join Eastern Michigan University-jewelry professor Gretchen Otto as she leads participants through another fascinating and fun hands-on project making fibulae. Space is limited. Call the library at (734) 326-6123 to reserve a spot.

Musical Performance: 2 p.m. Dec. 7.

Relax and enjoy an afternoon of piano music performed by local talented youth. Everyone is welcome. No reservations necessary.

Drop-in Knitting Nights @ the library: 7 p.m. every Wednesday.

No matter your skill level, stop by and enjoy an evening of fun and friendship.

Information Central was compiled by reference librarian and homebound coordinator Andrea Perez. The William P. Faust Public Library is at 6123 Central City Parkway, Westland. For more information, call (734) 326-6123.

Madonna students create health Web site

Parents and children can explore a wealth of health information on a Web site developed by Madonna University nursing students in partnership with St. Mary Mercy Hospital Community Outreach Department and Livonia Public Schools.

The site - www.livonia.k12.mi.us/health/FamilyHealth.html - is an addition to the Livonia Public Schools Web address and targets Livonia-area families. Health topics addressed include asthma, diabetes, nutrition and exercise with pages designed specifically for kids and parents. Parenting tips, fitness challenges, references and resources also can be found on the site.

Madonna nursing students applied their knowledge, training and research skills to develop the site's contents, while Livonia Career Technical Center high school students designed the Web site.

Recent nursing graduate

Melissa Lutz worked on the asthma section of the site by researching asthma and its social impact on children and their families.

"This experience has helped me in my career, by building good team skills," said Lutz, a Garden City resident. "In the hospital setting, we all must work together to give the best care possible to our patients."

Ann Marie Knoerl, professor in Madonna's College of Nursing and Health, plans to have her students work with St. Mary Mercy Hospital again in the very near future.

"This type of project benefits students and community, while reflecting Madonna's core value of education for service to others," Knoerl said. "We are happy to have partnered with St. Mary Mercy and Livonia Schools to make this happen."

This week, Knoerl's students will present a proposal to St. Mary Mercy Hospital for the

creation of a support group for families dealing with asthma.

"Working with Madonna nursing students has been great," said St. Mary Mercy Director of Community Outreach Marianne Simancek. "They really took on leadership roles for this community project."

For more than 40 years, Madonna University's College of Nursing and Health has provided nurses with preparation and training, focusing on the department's core values of wellness, professionalism, caring and a focus on the future.

The program offers bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing, nursing administration, hospice and palliative studies, health care educator, primary care nurse practitioner, and nursing and business. Madonna recently launched a Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree and is accepting applications for a cohort that begins in May 2009.



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This position will have you prepping apartments for move-in, completing service requests and maintaining the grounds. Applicants must be mechanically inclined, able to climb a ladder, self-motivated, dependable, and able to lift 50 lbs. Must be able to work overtime/on call and be available in the winter for snow removal. Please fax/send resume to the following: 248-852-5326 The Essex at Hampton 64 Village Cir. Rochester Hills, MI 48307 or contact: 248-852-7500 EOE SERVERS - Part Time Needed at senior residence in Westland. Accepting applications at 37501 Joy Rd., Westland MI 48185 Call to place your ad at 1-800-579-SELL(7355) TEACHER NEEDED For Private Day school in Oakland County. Must have Pre-School and Kindergarten experience. Call for interview: 248-357-1740 Or fax resume 248-357-6361 Help Wanted-Office Clerical 5020 RECEPTIONIST For busy medical office in Troy. Answering phones & greeting patients. P/T/FT. Benefits possible. 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McCotter hopeful government will approve support for Big 3

BY HUGH GALLAGHER
STAFF WRITER

U.S. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter, R-Livonia, is hopeful that the Big 3 auto companies will get support from the federal government.

"No one has closed the door on a bridge loan," McCotter said Tuesday. "Last week there was a lot of political posturing."

McCotter was one of the leaders among Republican House members who defeated the original \$700 billion Wall Street bailout bill.

Last week he was a strong voice in support of a \$25 billion federal "bridge loan" to the Big

3 automakers.

Congressional leaders grilled the top executives of the auto companies last week and demanded that they return to Congress with a detailed plan for how they intend to spend the \$25 billion. McCotter said members of Congress need to be disabused of the idea that the auto companies have not been restructuring.

"We've seen people suffering through the restructuring process. Right here in my (11th) district. Wixom is closed, other plants are underutilized, people are laid off," McCotter said.

He said that an earlier \$25 billion in aid to the auto com-

panies to help retool for more energy efficient cars was funding to cover an "unfunded mandate" to produce more energy efficient vehicles. McCotter and other Michigan representatives have been critical of higher corporate average fuel efficiency standards. The Bush Administration has argued that the auto companies should use some of that money to tide them over through the end of the year.

He said the auto companies did not come to the federal government to ask for money to support their restructuring. He said they only came after the banking crisis made it difficult for them to sell cars and forced

them to "burn through cash." He said they are "victims" of the crisis not the cause of the crisis.

McCotter and other Republicans favored a private investment plan to buy up so-called toxic debts from investments banks. A revised Senate version of the federal bailout was passed in the Senate and House and signed by President George W. Bush. Since the bill was passed, Secretary of the Treasury Henry Paulson has spent about half of the approved amount but has changed the original investment strategy.

McCotter said if the government is going to provide \$700 billion in an attempt to stabilize

the economy, then some of that money should be used to help get "an essential industry back on its feet."

He said helping the auto industry will help prevent more foreclosures brought on by unemployment in the auto industry.

McCotter said the recent defeat of Rep. John Dingell, D-Dearborn, as chair of the House Energy and Commerce Committee by Rep. Henry Waxman, D-Calif., is a huge problem.

"For 50 years, we've had a person protecting our jobs and prosperity. It's a huge loss," McCotter said.

He said Dingell's defeat is indicative of the infighting in the Democratic Party between environmentalists and labor unions. He said Waxman's victory is a sign of the direction that President-elect Barack Obama's administration will be taking in support of an environmentalist agenda.

McCotter said he was taking a wait and see attitude about Obama's recently named economics team, led by his nominee for Treasury secretary Timothy Geithner.

"He says he will act boldly and swiftly. His party is running the Congress," McCotter said.



You could lunch with Purtan's People

The lucky winner of this month's Dining With the Stars will be treated to lunch with Dick Purtan and Purtan's People (Big Al Muskavito, Jackie Purtan, Dana Mills, Rebekah Rhodes, John "Ankles" Stewart and Larry Lawson) of WOMC's Oldies 104.3.

Tell us in 100 words or less why you want to have lunch with Purtan and his zany morning show crew at Buddy's Pizza in Farmington Hills. E-mail your entry to BuddysDiningStars@gmail.com by 5 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 17.

In addition to lunch, the winner will be treated to a limo ride courtesy of Class Plus Limo, mini-makeover by Sebastian and Heba of I Design Salon and Spa in Dearborn, \$100 gift certificate from Reaver Diamond Co. in Southfield and dance exhibition by the Fred Astaire Dance Studio in Bloomfield Hills.

Dining With the Stars is co-sponsored by Buddy's Pizza and the Observer & Eccentric

Newspapers.

Purtan is one of Michigan's most recognized on-air personalities. As host of WOMC's Morning Show with Purtan's People, he entertains his loyal listeners with comedic commentary and topical wit.

Purtan's work also has been recognized on a national level. He has twice been named *Billboard* magazine's "Major Market Air Personality of the Year" and is the winner of radio's top prize, The National Association of Broadcasters MARCONI Award as "Major Market Air Personality of the Year." In 2006, Purtan was inducted into the National Association of Broadcasting Hall of Fame in Las Vegas. Only one person in the radio industry is inducted each year.

For 21 years, his annual Salvation Army Radiothon has raised almost \$19 million for the Salvation Army's Bed & Bread program.

Dick Purtan and Purtan's People can be heard 5-10 a.m. Monday through Friday and 6-10 a.m. Saturdays on WOMC.

Livonia-based 'elf' helps write letters from Santa

After Santa makes his list — and checks it twice — he relies on elves like Kristy Robinett of Livonia to write letters to boys and girls whose parents request it.

Robinett is a member of the Professional Association of Santa's Elves, an association of Santa-Letter writers.

Moms, dads and grandparents provide details so that each child can get a personal letter recognizing their work in school, chores at home and special accomplishments. Santa also offers encouragement in areas that need improvement, such as potty-training.

The letters are \$12, and can be ordered at www.sentbysanta.net. Requests should be made by Dec. 10 to insure delivery before

Christmas. But parents aren't the only ones who want Santa to step in.

In the 14 years she's been an "elf," Robinett has written on behalf of a girlfriend who knew that her boyfriend was cheating on her and wanted Santa to call him out on it. Another letter contained a wedding proposal.

Letters bear Santa's signature and a North Pole postmark stamp.

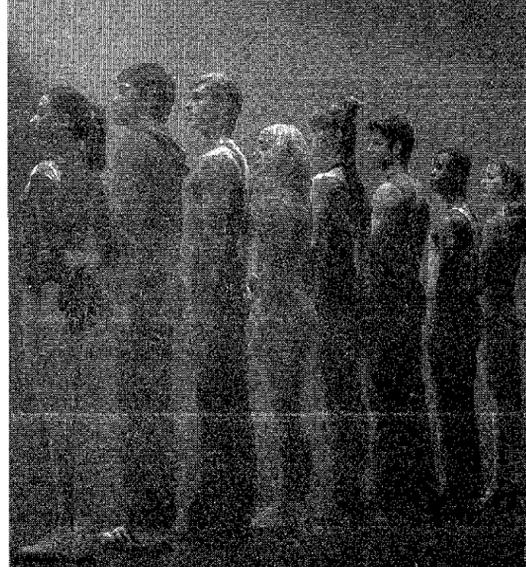
Robinett donates a portion of each letter to a different nonprofit each year. This year, the charity is Camp Casey, based in Birmingham, which provides horseback riding retreats for kids battling cancer.

— By Rebecca Jones



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Battle over Blue Cross reform continues in lame-duck session

BY HUGH GALLAGHER
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

Attorney General Mike Cox has been making the media rounds in his continuing battle against individual market health care reform bills that would benefit Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan but, he argues, would be bad for consumers.

"We are worried about them trying to push through any one of the five or six versions in lame

duck," Cox said in a meeting with *Observer & Eccentric* editors Nov. 20. "They come back the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving, schedule three days that week and three days the next week, they won't have hearings."

Blue Cross Blue Shield has been promoting the reform legislation for more than a year. Last fall, legislation was passed quickly through the Michigan House of Representatives. The Senate approved its own bill

after months of hearings and since then the legislation has been stalled. In addition to Cox, the bills have also been opposed by commercial insurers, the Consumers Union, AARP and the UAW.

"The Senate took five or six months holding hearings. They held at least nine hearings and came up with a radically different version which gave Blue Cross a lot of things, but also kept a lot of consumer protection in the role of

the insurance commissioner and my office," Cox said. "Blue Cross rejected it. In lame duck, they don't have hearings. It won't happen. It is purely backroom."

BCBS is a not-for-profit insurance company chartered by the state of Michigan since 1939 as the health care insurer of last resort. It receives special tax advantages in exchange for providing state-mandated services and state-rate regulation.

The company has been seeking relief from the growing burden of providing individual health insurance policies for those not covered by a group policy. The individual market is expected to grow in the coming years as small businesses no longer offer health coverage, more people work as independent contractors and more workers are laid off.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

BCBS has argued in favor of creating a risk pool into which it would contribute the largest share, but other health insurers in the state would be required to participate. BCBS accounts for about 70 percent of health care coverage in the state. BCBS is also asking for changes in how its rates are approved. A separate bill would allow BCBS to expand its for-profit insurance subsidiaries, the largest being the Accident Fund, which writes workmen's compensation insurance.

Cox argues that the various iterations of the bills being proposed do not address his major concerns. He said he is especially concerned that his office and the governor's office, through the insurance commissioner, would have less say over rate increases.

"Every single version allows them to charge the sick and elderly more. Right now, they are required to charge everyone in the same market the same," Cox said.

He said the original legislation took his office and the insurance commissioner completely out.

"The new mantra is that we are still in the picture, but we're really not," he said. "We couldn't ask for a hearing until they exceeded 80 percent (rate increase). Now my office is able to intervene for any rate hike."

State Rep. Marc Corriveau, D-Northville, said he has been asked by House Speaker Andy Dillon, D-Redford, to head a joint House-Senate committee to reach a compromise between the two chambers. He emphasized that the current version is not his bill, but a reworking of House and Senate bills.

"We have no final consensus. Major points have been agreed upon. Debates are going on and suggestions are being taken," Corriveau said.

He said the bills being discussed do have consumer protections for people with pre-existing conditions. He said the bills do offer rate oversight.

RATE SETTING

Currently, BCBS files for a rate increase with OFIR, the Office of Financial and Insurance Regulation, through the governor's office. The attorney general, or any resident, can object and demand a rate hearing. Corriveau said sometimes the hearings can last as long as 18 months. Commercial carriers operate under file and use. They tell OFIR their new rates and can implement them immediately.

Corriveau said under the proposed legislation, BCBS would submit a rate to the governor's office to determine if it is actuarially sound. The rates would go into effect in 30 days. The attorney general, or any resident, can object. It would then go before a special panel, which would decide quickly on the request.

Cox argues BCBS will be able to raise rates for senior Medigap insurance, which supplements Medicare, by up to 7.5 percent of current premiums without oversight.

"For the first time, Blue Cross will be able to red line, charge people in different areas differently. Same person, same house, same gender, it will matter where you live," Cox said.

Corriveau said the redlining problem was fixed.

He said the original legislation allowed Blue Cross to define areas that were geographically too small. He said the new proposal would set areas taking in four counties.

He also said that the legislation sets a 90-percent loss ratio, meaning the insurer must spend 90 cents of every dollar collected on health care.

Corriveau said that BCBS would always lose money on its Medigap insurance.

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Michigan's schools, government need to change

Pain, it is coming to a school near you.

We are watching the meltdown of our state, nation's and the world's economy, along with the implosion of the housing and domestic car industry. Michigan's unemployment rate is 9.3 percent, the highest level since July 1992. Families across Michigan are hurting.



Tom Watkins

Across the country, governors and legislatures are trimming — no, whacking — state budgets by the hundreds of millions of dollars as tax revenues shrink and shrivel up almost as fast as jobs are disappearing and consumers stop spending. Michigan will be no exception. By early December, Gov. Jennifer Granholm, only two months into the new fiscal year and faced with declining revenue and a state constitutional mandate to maintain a balanced

budget, will be executing hundreds of millions of dollars of budget cuts.

Believe it or not, Michigan is in far better shape fiscally than many other states because of last year's legislative action to raise taxes.

Knowledge and talent will drive Michigan's future. Yet we continue to dis-invest in what will make us competitive on the world stage. In spite of the political rhetoric that "education is our top priority," it is anticipated that our public schools, community colleges and universities will see once-promised revenue eliminated.

Perhaps the governor and legislature will once again perform a Houdini and find ways around cuts to education — but given the economic implosion, it seems unlikely. Further, even if they dodge the cuts, staying even is falling behind in the 21st century knowledge economy.

So, what is to become of our children's education? And what are schools going to do when, after having received less-than-inflation budget

increases for the past six years and claiming to have already "cut to the bone," the cuts come again? These budget cuts are exponentially more difficult to accomplish as they come four months into the school year when staff and programs are contractually in place.

CHANGE NOT JUST REARRANGE

In the long run, our political and education leaders are going to have to garner the courage to make tough decisions and continue to do more with less. This includes making structural changes necessary to bring educational pensions and health benefits in line with employees in the private sector, consolidating some of the 500-plus school districts, and instituting more shared administrative and educational services to reduce costs.

The current school and local unit of government structures are unsustainable and must change. Change is always avoided until it cannot be avoided any longer. We are getting

closer to that day.

In the short run, school boards and superintendents will be forced to tap into their dwindling fund balances (if available) while continuing to attempt to keep the budget cuts as far away from teaching and learning as possible. This will lead to labor disputes as staff and programs they support and want to keep, and which constitute more than 80 percent of most school budgets, are eliminated.

We are likely to see more attempts to recall school board members and fire thoughtful superintendents as is currently transpiring in the Wayne-Westland school district as the board and superintendent make sensible decisions given the fiscal realities they face. This is a travesty. We must stop this "shoot the messenger" mentality.

NO CONSTITUENCY

There is no constituency for change in the public sector. The broader community needs to remain vigilant and support sensible changes as the new

economic realities sink in. We can no longer afford to run our schools and government like nothing has changed, when everything has changed. We are witnessing what happens to an entire industry, i.e., the Domestic Three auto companies, when reality is denied for too long.

As the fiscal realities smack our schools in the coming weeks and months, let's hope the educators can model innovative problem solving that is flexible and student-focused as they find creative solutions to these difficult problems. If they can't, what hope is there for the 1.7 million students they are responsible for teaching?

The economic pain will continue, that fact cannot be denied. How our state and school leaders manage and lead the change is the unanswered question.

Tom Watkins is a business and education consultant in the U.S. and China. He served as Michigan's state superintendent of Schools, 2001-05. He can be reached at tdwatkins@aol.com.

LETTERS

Big problems brewing

The season is upon us and you can smell the unpleasant scent of the economy in the air. It's even here in Westland. As you drive around town, you can see billboards exhibiting businesses in the area are in need of a financial transfusion. I hope they get it quick!

But what's going to really go to be interesting is Jan. 20, 2009, the inauguration of our new President. With unemployment at a record high and people losing their homes, I wonder how much cash their going to spend on the Inaugural Ball and the swearing in of President Barack Obama. The elitist attending this party will no doubt be trying to out do each other, wearing dresses and other apparel costing thousands of dollars. They will spend millions of tax dollars to have a great time on our nickel.

If President-elect Obama really wanted to show he is truly an elected official by and of the people, he could order some pizzas and beer and make do with that. This would be classy on his part — leading by example that we will have to tighten our belts to cut down on wasteful spending.

Now, let's throw the Big Three problem on top of an already big pile and now you've got some big problems brewing on the horizon. I don't totally blame the union or the companies. It's both that have created this problem. I believe in a fair day's pay for a fair day's labor. In today's market that is fair. The companies blame the union because they are making too much money — bull! When Ford can charge \$50,000 for a "Lincoln Tank," no one is going to justify that price to me or blame it on the price of the insurance for employees or their wages. I realize these "Big Companies" have large overhead, but what have they been doing with their share of the pie?

I believe bailing out these companies is smart business in every sense of the word. If Congress chooses not to bail them out, we're all going to see many problems coming down the pike. I understand the trickle down effect and this would nail millions of people.

I can appreciate Congress wants an accounting of what they intend to do with this cash, a very fair question. I think the Big Three can do this without giving away any trade secrets

or game plans. The United States government bailed out Chrysler years ago and recently AIG, because these morons who held the top positions were not concerned about people or taking care of business. I think Congress should mandate that they pay this year's salary, balloon deals and any bonuses toward the money the taxpayers are giving up.

I'm not an economist, but it seems to me that there is always one person in charge of the store. How could any of these cats been watching anything when they were too busy on the golf course and having parties. They got theirs and now because the government is involved with a bailout of Freddie Mac, Fannie Mae and AIG, the ones accountable should be hung. This is criminal and has done all of us an injustice. I could never figure out what makes these CEO's think their worth such a gigantic salary and package deal. What do they do? They all have staffs, secretaries and many people doing the job below them who actually do the work. What do these guys do all day? What labor do they put forth? I would like to know.

If you have noticed the price of gas has come

down dramatically — from \$4 to \$1.65 a gallon — why. What does this tell us — more greedy suppliers and people at the top this past summer and fall, sucking the blood from the working guy. What are we doing differently now? Driving less or traveling less because your cash flow has changed. Well, you know what, keep it up and send a message that we aren't buying as much and as far as we're concerned, they can drink it. It's always price and demand. I had breakfast with a friend of mine who's in the know who states that our friends the Saudis are going to slow down production of oil which means they want to drive the price up again, just in time for Christmas which they don't celebrate.

Unfortunately, an economic slowdown means more crime in the area. Desperate people will do drastic things just to survive, eat and pay rent. So this season, watch how you shop and who's around you hoping they'll catch you off guard to make a score.

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U.S. Sen. Carl Levin

His Washington, D.C., mailing address is 269 Russell Office Building, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510-2202. Call him at (202) 224-6221. The fax number is (202) 224-1388.

He also has offices in Patrick V. McNamara Federal Building, 477 Michigan Ave., Room 1860, in Detroit. The local phone number is (313) 226-6020, TTY (800) 851-0030 and fax at (313) 226-6948. He also has a Web site, levin.senate.gov.

U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow

In Washington, D.C., the address is 133 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. Call her there at (202) 224-4822, TTY (202) 224-2066, or e-mail her at senator@stabenow.senate.gov. In Detroit, her office is at 243 W.

Congress, Suite 550. Call (313) 961-4330. She also has a Web site, stabenow.senate.gov.

U.S. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter

His Washington, D.C., mailing address is 1632 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. Call him at (202) 225-8171 or send a fax by dialing (202) 225-2667. His district office is at 17197 N. Laurel Park Drive, Suite 161, Livonia, MI 48152. Call him at (734) 632-0314 or send a fax at (734) 632-0373. He also has an Web site, mccotter.house.gov.

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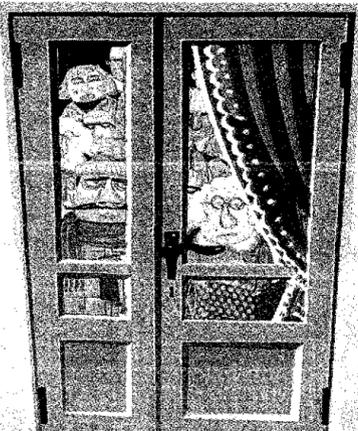
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Required IRA distribution can be invested in Roth IRA

Dear Rick: Thanks so much for your radio show and your newspaper column, I've learned a lot throughout the years. I am in my early 70s. I have not yet taken my required distribution from my IRA. I always wait until



Money Matters

Rick Bloom

take a distribution this year as all my funds are currently very low.

I have heard talk and have seen some articles that suggest it would be a good thing to waive minimum required distributions this year.

However, it is just talk. I think that the government will run into all sorts of problems if it tries to change the minimum required distributions this year. Not only are we near the end of the year, but many seniors who are required to take distributions have already taken them and that would cause all sorts of problems. I do not believe the government will change the rules so you should plan on taking your distribution before the end of the year.

A lot of seniors are in a situation where assets in a IRA have taken a significant hit. However, when you take your minimum required distribution you don't have to spend it. I recommend taking the distribution then buy back the same investment or a similar one outside of the IRA. This way you are still staying in the market and when the market recovers, which it will, you will be in a position to recoup your losses. You should only buy back a good solid investment.

When you turn 70½ you must begin taking distributions from your retirement accounts. There are a couple of different exceptions, including deferring required minimum distributions from

an employer's retirement account if you are still working for that employer and from Roth IRAs. Roth IRAs are not subject to required minimum distributions.

There is a formula from the Internal Revenue Service to compute your required minimum distribution. It is based upon the balance of your retirement accounts at the end of the year. Therefore, your 2009 required minimum distributions will be based upon the balance of your retirement accounts on Dec. 31, 2008. Next year, required minimum distributions will be significantly lower than they are this year.

For those individuals who

have not taken the required minimum distributions and who are charitable in nature, you are allowed to transfer your required minimum distribution from an IRA directly to a charity. The advantage is you can avoid paying taxes on your distribution. However, you do not receive a deduction for your charitable contribution. If you plan to do this, you can't wait until the last second. You need to obtain transfer information from the charity and have your IRA custodian directly transfer the money to the charity. IRA custodians are extremely busy near the end of the year so if you're going to implement this transaction, do it as soon as possible.

Dear Rick: My husband and I recently moved to Michigan. In the past we have done wills and trusts along with powers of attorneys. Now that we are Michigan residents, do these documents have to be redone?

Although you've come to Michigan during a difficult time, I think you'll learn over time how great it is. That being said I do believe it is important to have your estate planning documents reviewed by a Michigan attorney. In most situations, there will not be any changes that are required, however, better safe than sorry.

One document that I would redo would be your Medical Durable Power of Attorney

because jurisdictions around the country have different rules.

The Medical Durable Power of Attorneys gives someone the right to make a medical decision for you if you are unable. In today's world you do not necessarily have to pay an attorney to draft these documents. In Michigan, we have the Michigan Patient Advocate Form which is a free fill-in-the-blank form that meets most people's needs. You can download one at www.bloomassetmanagement.com. Click on the "articles, forms" tab on the left-hand side of the home page.

Everyone should review estate planning needs every few

years. Not only do laws change but family situations change and therefore it is important to make sure your documents are up to date.

The main reason you have an estate plan is because you love your family and want to make sure things will go as easy as possible for them if you're not here.

An up-to-date estate plan will accomplish this goal.

Rick Bloom is a fee-only financial adviser. Observer & Eccentric readers can submit questions at moneymatters@hometownlife.com. For more information, visit Rick's Web site at www.bloomassetmanagement.com. You can hear Rick noon to 3 p.m. Sundays on WDTK 1400 AM.

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SPORTS

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Sunday, November 30, 2008

The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers

Brad Emons, editor (734) 953-2123 . bemons@hometownlife.com

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Rivals Churchill, Stevenson score 5-5 draw

Mishowski gets 4 for Chargers

BY BRAD EMONS
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

It was a scene right out of a Steven Segal flick with both goaltenders *Under Siege* and *On Deadly Ground*.

Action was fast and furious Wednesday night as boys hockey rivals Livonia Churchill and Livonia Stevenson battled to a 5-5 draw before a large audience at Edgar Arena.

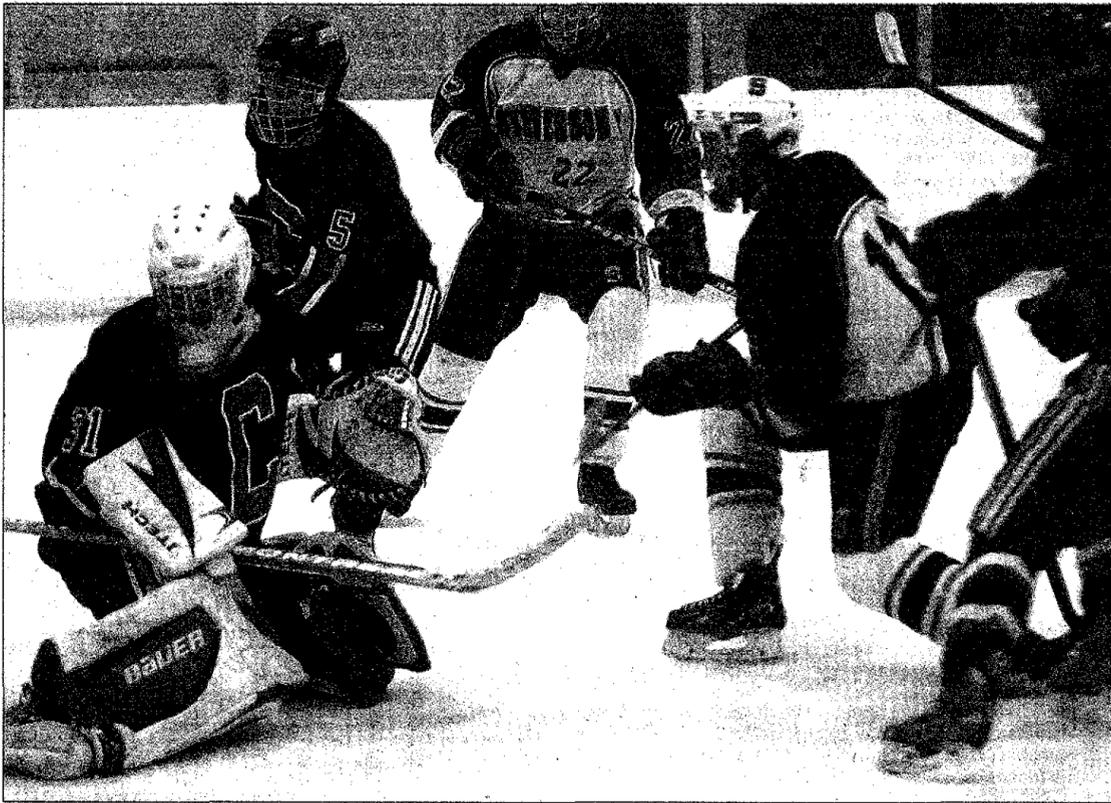
Four of Churchill's five goals came off power plays, while Stevenson scored a short-handed goal and added three power play tallies of its own.

"That's usually an area (special teams) that gets cheated early in the season," Churchill coach Pete Mazzone said. "Give our kids credit. We were able to get pucks to the net and kids to the net."

Senior Brent Mishowski made quite a debut for the Chargers with four goals. Linemate Robert Louwers assisted on three of them and had four helpers on the night.

John Vella notched a pair of goals for the Spartans, who now stand 2-0-1 overall.

Please see **HOCKEY, B4**



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Stevenson's Jacob Vert (11) shoots the puck past Churchill netminder Adrian Motta to make it 1-1 all during Wednesday's KLAAs Kensington Conference crossover at Edgar Arena.

Signlines

Jaguars sign Shaw

Former Livonia Clarenceville High and Penn State University standout Tim Shaw signed a two-year contract Wednesday with the NFL's Jacksonville Jaguars.

Shaw, a 6-foot-1, 236-pound linebacker, spent his rookie season (2007) with the Carolina Panthers where he played primarily on special teams recording 12 tackles and two assists in 14 games.

The linebacker was released by Carolina just prior to the start of the 2008 season.

Shaw will make his debut for the Jaguars Monday night at Houston. Game time is 8:30 p.m. on ESPN.

Haeger adds 4

Madonna University baseball coach Greg Haeger announced the signing of four players to letters-of-intent for the 2010 season.

All four players were members of the Michigan Muskrats summer squad that placed third in the 2008 Triple Crown World Series in Myrtle Beach, S.C.

Among those in field fold are Canton High infielder Brad Lineberry (Plymouth), outfielder Alex Charles (Birmingham Brother Rice), outfielder-infielder Steve Pelletier (Farmington Hills Harrison), both of Farmington Hills; and catcher Donny Holland (White Lake Lakeland).

"I feel this is a great base for us to start our recruiting efforts for the class of 2009," said Haeger, whose Crusaders are ranked No. 24 in the NAIA preseason coaches poll. "We have addressed our needs with players that fit into our program and are capable of making an immediate impact."

MU finished 37-14 last year and won both the WHAC regular season and playoff titles.

Patriots size up competition

BY BRAD EMONS
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

"It's not the size of the dog in the fight, it's the size of the fight in the dog."

That may be Livonia Franklin's mantra as it enters Tuesday's season girls basketball opener at home against Livonia Ladywood, which lists five players at 5 feet, 11 inches or better.

The Patriots, led by the Taylor twins, Brianna and Brittany, are coming off an 18-5 season and its first Class A district

title since 1993.

The 5-foot-9 senior bookends, headed to Grand Valley State next year, combined for 30 points and 24 rebounds per game last season en route to first- and second-team All-Observer honors, respectively.

But it's the supporting cast which could hold the key to the Patriots' success led by 5-9 junior forward Sennecca Scott, 5-4 junior guard Nicole Emery and 5-9 sophomore forward Chelsea Williams.

"Sennecca is not big, but she plays big because she can really get off the floor," Franklin second-year coach Dave McCall said. "I think we'll be a lot more balanced offensively. Chelsea Williams will surprise some people and Nicole Emery's shot is much improved. And we think Brittany Milican (a 5-8 junior forward) will do a great job for us off the bench. She fits into our offense and will score some points as well."

Ladywood, meanwhile, is in transition with former assis-



Coach Dave McCall is happy to have twins Brittany (left) and Brianna Taylor (right) back for their senior seasons at Livonia Franklin. The twins recently signed NCAA letters-of-intent with Grand Valley State University.

tant Pat Cannon taking the reins from Andrea Gorski, who guided the Blazers to 11 district titles in 12 seasons before leaving to take the Concordia University women's basketball job.

Cannon, who spent last season as the Livonia Stevenson varsity coach, returns to the Blazers' bench trying to replace three All-Observer players off a 20-4 Class A district championship team including Alex Serowoky and Jenna Anastos, both first-team selections, along with Alison Szczypka, a second-team pick.

Junior point-guard Mary Fitzgerald returns along with

5-9 sophomore guard Alyssa Anastos to lead the Blazers.

Ladywood's size is imposing to say the least with 6-1 senior Melissa Wickman, 6-4 senior Sarah Jury, 6-1 sophomore Caitlin McClorey and 6-0 sophomore Katy Rooney all listed on the roster.

And if size matters even more, the Blazers will also bring in a 5-11 freshman guard in Cara Miller.

Livonia Churchill, coming off a 7-15 season, expects to be much improved under second-year coach Chad Jenkins.

The Chargers also have size on the front line led by 6-foot seniors Kia Griffin and

Shannon Getchen, along with 6-1 junior Hannah Stahr and 5-11 junior Darcy DeRoo to provide depth.

Senior point-guard Lindsey Graciak, a key member of Churchill's state semifinal volleyball squad, just began practicing this week.

"This is a hard-working group of kids that should be very competitive in the (KLAAs South) division," Jenkins said.

Joining Franklin and Churchill in the newly formed KLAAs South is Westland John Glenn (10-12) and Wayne Memorial (4-18).

Please see **PREVIEW, B2**

MU women begin quest at nationals

Making their seventh straight NAIA Nationals appearance, the Madonna University women's volleyball squad begins pool play Tuesday night at the Tyson Events Center's Gateway Arena in Sioux City, Ia.

The 11th-seeded Crusaders, 35-4 overall, take on 29-2 Lewis-Clark State (Id.) in the first round beginning at 6 p.m. (CST).

MU earned a first-round bye into the NAIA's after beating host Indiana Tech in four games for the Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference title (Nov. 15).

Unseeded Lewis-Clark defeated Shawnee State (Ohio) as Anile Clement and Julie Maciboba each had 16 kills, while Austyn Lewis had 10 kills and 21 assists. Lisa Davis also had 22 assists.

VOLLEYBALL

At 6 p.m. Wednesday, MU faces unseeded Lubbock (Tex.) Christian (33-4) in the second round of pool play.

Lubbock defeated Wiley College (Tex.) to reach the field of 24 led by Elissa Loynes (14 kills) and Melissa Green (12 kills). Setter Rachel Stuyvesant had 40 assists, while Courtney Yonke added 20 digs.

MU's final match in pool play is 6 p.m. Thursday against No. 2 seed Biola University (Calif.), which finished second in the Golden State Athletic Conference behind No. 1 seed Fresno Pacific (Calif.).

Please see **VOLLEYBALL, B4**

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PREVIEW

FROM PAGE B1

The Rockets are led by third-team All-Area selection Brittany Holbrook, a 6-foot senior who averaged nine points, 11 rebounds and four blocks per game. She is joined by three other returnees including 5-9 senior forward Nyah McReynolds, 5-5 senior point-guard Chanel Payne and 5-9 sophomore center Andrea Gordon-McClain.

T.J. Carson-Callaway, a 5-10 junior from Detroit School of the Performing Arts, should also see plenty of action for Glenn.

Wayne second-year coach Leslie Williams will miss leading scorer Trenia Barbee (second-team All-Area), but returns 6-3 senior center Wende Foster and 5-9 senior forward Samantha Dye.

Livonia Stevenson (4-17) will also have a new coach on the bench as Paul Tripp takes over for Cannon.

The Spartans are led by 6-1 senior center Kaylee McGrath, who made fourth-team All-Area, and 5-6 sophomore guard Sarah Smith.

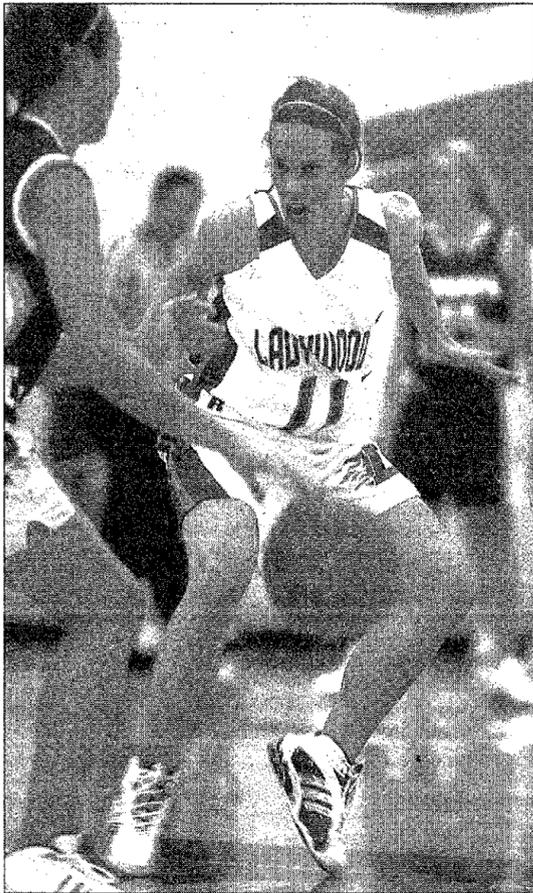
"Building the future of the program is important to these girls who have been through four coaching changes in three seasons," Tripp said. "The challenge is to maintain consistency as we grow together as a team."

In the Metro Conference, Lutheran High Westland (16-6) is coming off a Class D district crown, but nine of the 11 Warriors just began practice this week after going all the way to the state finals last weekend in volleyball.

The Warriors will be missing two key parts.

Bill Strang takes over for Kevin Wade as the Warriors' varsity coach. Center Becca Refenes also opted not to return.

"We will miss senior Becca Refenes (14.5 ppg, 10.1 rpg) who has decided to play club volleyball this winter season," Strang said of the second-team All-Area selection. "Coach



TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Ladywood's Mary Fitzgerald (11) returns as a starter for the 20-4 Blazers.

Wade (volleyball, basketball, baseball) has taken the winter season off. He's now a family man and will do his father role in raising his son, Logan. His wife, Sandi, is associate women's (basketball) coach at Madonna University."

Third-team All-Area pick Allyson Yankee, a 5-9 senior guard, the team's second-leading scorer returns, while 6-3 junior Emilie Freeman will take over for Refenes in the middle.

Livonia Clarenceville (9-12) lost four key players to graduation, but coach Julie Patterson expects improvement come January when 6-0 junior center Paige Davis becomes

eligible. Another team hit hard by graduation losses was Westland Huron Valley Lutheran (13-8), the defending Red Division champion of the Michigan Independent Athletic Conference.

Coach Kris Ruth, in her ninth year, takes over again as coach for Hawks in place of her husband Eric. It will be rebuilding year as the Hawks will rely on 5-4 senior guard Kayla Stockdale and 5-11 senior center Samantha Barber.

See capsule outlook of area teams.

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GIRLS BASKETBALL CAPSULE OUTLOOK

LIVONIA CHURCHILL

Head coach: Chad Jenkins, second year.

League affiliation: KLA A Kensington Conference (South Division).

Last year's overall record: 7-15.

Notable losses to graduation: Chelsea Manasian (fourth-team All-Area), Jessica Bostick, Brittany Catalano.

Leading returnees: Lindsey Graciak, 5-4 Sr. G; Alysa Boldizar, 5-4 Sr. G; Shannon Getchen, 6-0 Sr. C; Kia Griffin, 6-0 Sr. C; Katie Stodulski, 5-4 Sr. G; Darcy DeRoo, 5-11 Jr. F; Hannah Stahr, 6-1 Jr. C.

Promising newcomers: Taylor Kerr, 5-6 Jr. G; Meghan Catalano, 5-7 Jr. G; Jenna Szuba, 5-7 Jr. G; Taylor Byron, 5-6 Jr. F; Nikki Karnesky, 5-4 Jr. G.

Jenkins' 2008-09 outlook: "We have an experienced team with five seniors leading the way. Lindsey (Graciak) is a four-year start on varsity and I look for her to run the offense and put pressure on the ball defensively. Alysa (Boldizar) is emerging as a scorer as well as one of the top defenders. We have good size down low with Kia (Griffin) and Shannon (Getchen), both of whom have improved around the basket. Katie (Stodulski) brings a lot of energy to the floor and sparks us defensively. Darcy (DeRoo) is an excellent all-around player that can play guard and forward. She communicates well and has improved her shooting range. Hannah (Stahr) provides depth at the center position."

LIVONIA FRANKLIN

Head coach: Dave McCall, second year.

League affiliation: KLA A Kensington Conference (South Division).

Last year's overall record: 18-5.

Titles won last year: Class A district champs.

Notable losses to graduation: Ashley Priddy, Samantha Floyd.

Leading returnees: Brianna Taylor, 5-9 Sr. G-F (first-team All-Area); 18 ppg; 13 rebs.); Brittany Taylor, 5-9 Sr. G-F (second-team All-Area); 12 ppg; 11 rebs.); Seneca Scott, 5-9 Jr. F; Nicole Emery, 5-4 Jr. G; Alex Gortat, 5-7 Sr. G.

Promising newcomers: Chelsea Williams, 5-9 Soph. F; Brittany Milican, 5-8 Jr. F; Amanda Borio, 5-9 Soph. F; Kelsey Boyd, 5-10 Soph. C; Mary Gilliland, 5-8 Jr. F.

McCall's 2008-09 outlook: "We'll be looking for strong performances from our returning starters. They will be assisted well by the strength of our newcomers. We are not a big team, but we're strong defensively and have good speed."

LIVONIA STEVENSON

Head coach: Paul Tripp, first year.

League affiliation: KLA A Kensington Conference (Central Division).

Last year's overall record: 4-17.

Notable losses: Becca Bartek.

Leading returnees: Kaylee McGrath, 6-1 Sr. C (fourth-team All-Area); Sarah Smith, 5-6 Soph. G; Samantha Kliman, 5-9 Sr. F; Courtney Lewis, 5-7 Sr. G.

Promising newcomers: Kristen Balhorn, 6-0 Soph. F-C; Jordan York, 5-7 Fr. G.

Tripp's 2008-09 outlook: "With only three seniors, we're a fairly young team looking to improve every day. We'll look to our seniors for leadership because they will need to be our hardest workers. So far, they've been up to the task. The new KLA A marks a new beginning for all of us and gives us a chance to create a new tradition. The girls have been committed to improving their skills and trying to move the program in a positive direction. We're optimistic that the future looks bright north of Five Mile."

WESTLAND JOHN GLENN

Head coach: Mike Schuette, seventh year.

League affiliation: KLA A Kensington Conference (South Division).

Last year's overall record: 10-12.

Notable losses to graduation: Brittany Brown, Shantique Baker.

Leading returnees: Brittany Holbrook, 6-0 Sr. C (third-team All-Area); 9 ppg, 11 rebs., 4 bks.; Nyah McReynolds, 5-9 Sr. F; Chanel Payne, 5-5 Sr. PG (6 ppg; 3 steals); Andrea Gordon-McClain, 5-9 Soph. C.

Promising newcomers: T.J. Carson-Callaway, 5-10 Jr. F (transfer from Detroit School of the Performing Arts); Samantha Fox, 5-6 Fr. G-F; Stephanie Brown, 5-6 Fr. G; Justine Woodard, 5-7 Jr. G-F; Brandi Holbrook, 5-8 Soph. F.

Schuette's 2008-09 outlook: "We have a good mix of inside and outside players. We have four players back with a lot of experience. In our first scrimmage against (Dearborn) Edsel Ford and (Bloomfield Hills) Cranbrook, we did well in the transition game. It's much improved over a year ago. Defensively we need to be better on the help-side and not get beat one-on-one under the basket. All of our depth is young, so we'll find out."

WAYNE MEMORIAL

Head coach: Leslie Williams, second year.

League affiliation: KLA A Kensington Conference (South Division).

Last year's overall record: 4-18.

Notable losses to graduation: Trenia Barbee (second-team All-Area); Nastassia Goines.

Leading returnees: Wende Foster, 6-3 Sr. C; Samantha Dye, 5-9 Sr. F.

Promising newcomer: Holland Boertje, 5-7 Fr. G.

Williams' 2008-09 outlook: "We have a team that represents primarily upperclassmen (seniors) that have played for the same coach. The stability will result in increased depth. Additionally, we have improved fundamentally and we expect to be more competitive and balanced offensive and defensively. We should be an exciting team to watch."

LIVONIA LADYWOOD

Head coach: Pat Cannon, first year.

League affiliation: Catholic League (Central Division).

Last year's overall record: 20-4.

Titles won last year: Class A district champs.

Notable losses to graduation: Alex Serowoky (first-team All-Area); Jenna Anastos (first-team All-Area); Alison Szczyzka (second-team All-Area); Kaitlyn Vitale.

Leading returnees: Caitlin Szczyzka, 5-9 Sr. G-F; Courtney LaValley, 5-7 Sr. G; Mary Fitzgerald, 5-8 Jr. G; Molly Gacioc, 5-9 Jr. F; Alyssa Anastos, 5-9 Soph. G; Haley Ross, 5-7 Sr. G; Melissa Wickman, 6-1 Sr. C; Sarah Jury, 6-4 Sr. C.

Promising newcomers: Jenny Kelly, 5-6 Jr. G; Caitlin McClorey, 6-1 Soph. C; Katy Rooney, 6-0 Soph. F; Cara Miller, 5-11 Fr. G.

Cannon's 2008-09 outlook: "Led by returning starters Caitlin Szczyzka and Mary Fitzgerald, this year's team will have to out-work and out-hustle their opponents. With the added support of returning varsity players - seniors Courtney LaValley, Haley Ross, Melissa Wickman, Sarah Jury, Molly Gacioc and Alyssa Anastos - the newcomers on the team can grow and develop. Having this youth and inexperience only means we can get better as the season progresses. The Blazers will be an athletic team who works hard in practice and will enable the team to improve on a weekly basis, while gaining much needed experience

as they go."

LIVONIA CLARENCEVILLE

Head coach: Julie Patterson, sixth year.

League affiliation: Metro Conference.

Last year's record: 9-12.

Notable losses graduation: Amanda Moody (fourth-team All-Area), Ashley Hall, Amber O'Halloran, Cheney Kemp.

Leading returnees: Jenna Burgess, 5-9 Soph. C; Miaelene Azar, 5-8 Sr. PF; Kristen Jolly, 5-6 Jr. PG; Ashley Devon, 5-6 Jr. SG.

Promising newcomers: Paige Davis, 6-0 Jr. C. (eligible in January); Brittany Tallman, 5-7 Soph. G; Charmaine McQueen, 5-4 Sr. G; Olivia Barlet, 5-3 Jr. G.

Patterson's 2008-09 outlook: "We are pretty inexperienced. We lost four seniors off of last year's team who played most of our minutes. Our only returning starting spot was split between Jenna Burgess and Marlene Azar. I expect us to improve a lot as the season goes on. We have a good combination of hard-working senior leaders and a talented crop of sophomores and juniors."

LUTHERAN WESTLAND

Head coach: Bill Strang, first year.

League affiliation: Metro Conference.

Last year's record: 16-6.

Titles won last year: Class D district champs.

Notable losses graduation: Myrian Storck, Samantha Terranelia.

Leading returnees: Allyson Yankee, 5-9 Sr. F-G (third-team All-Area); Katey Ramthun, 5-8 Sr. F; Abi Gieschen, 5-5 Sr. G; Lauren Gieschen, 5-6 Sr. G; Hannah Mielke, 5-3 Sr. G; Rachel Storck, 5-9 Jr. F.

Promising newcomers: Nicole Zehel, 5-5 Jr. G; Emilie Freeman, 6-3 Jr. C; Emily Wilson, 5-9 Jr. F; Emily Whitaker, 5-9 Sr. C; Lauren Switzer, 5-5 Jr. G.

Strang's 2008-09 outlook: "The first month of the season will be rugged. I have the athletes. However, nine of the eleven just completed an impressive volleyball season finishing runners-up in the MHSAA Class D tournament. With more practice time, we should be playing well by January."

HURON VALLEY LUTHERAN

Head coach: Kris Ruth, ninth year.

League affiliation: Michigan Independent Athletic Conference (Red Division).

Last year's overall record: 13-8.

Titles won last year: MIAC Red Division champs.

Notable losses to graduation: Lauren Adlof, Katie Kipfmiller, Nicole Schaffer, Nicole Smith, Autumn Beach, Emily Helwig, Brittany Snerman, Catherine St. John.

Leading returnees: Kavia Stockdale, 5-4 Sr. G; Samantha Barber, 5-11 Sr. C; Abby Hoff, 5-5 Sr. G; Lindsay Bushong, 5-5 Sr. G-F.

Promising newcomers: Anna Schaffer, 5-4 Jr. G; Devon Linderman, 5-6 Jr. G; Claire Wood, 5-8 Jr. F; Olivia Bogenbusch, 5-6 Jr. G.

Ruth's 2008-09 outlook: "Losing a large core of seniors from last year, we'll battle inexperience on the court at the beginning of the year. Offensively, our goal is to control the tempo of the game, as well as keep turnovers to a minimum. Defensively, the girls really work hard and hopefully will force turnovers on that end as well as rebound our opponent. We will need some girls to step up and lead us in scoring. I'm hoping for a balanced scoring attack. We'll learn a lot at the beginning of the season."

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Wayne State trips MU women, 61-36

The Madonna University women's basketball team continued to run through the gauntlet of tough non-conference foes, falling Tuesday at home to NCAA Division II foe Wayne State, 61-35.

The Crusaders, who slipped to 2-8 overall, shot only 19 percent from the field (8-of-42), committed 25 turnovers and were outrebounded 49-39. Chastidy Miller led the vic-

torious Warriors (1-1) with 14 points, while Jasmine McCall and Joy Nash added 12 each. Brooke Bowers chipped in with 11. WSU shot only 32.9 percent from the field (23-of-70).

McCall also grabbed a game-high 14 rebounds.

Katie Mount was MU's top scorer with 12 points, while Kim Olech (Plymouth) chipped in with 10 points and six rebounds.

Lady Ocelots edged

The Schoolcraft College women's basketball fell Friday afternoon to Owens Technical Community College (Ohio), 73-73, in the opening day of the Kalamazoo Valley CC Turkey Trot Shootout.

The Lady Ocelots, ranked No. 3 in the NJCAA Division II poll, fell to 3-1 overall.

Unranked Owens improved to 3-3.

Rochester routs MU men's cagers

DeWayne Watkins scored 15 points, while Adrian Schaffer, Steve McCune and John Djurovski added 14 apiece Tuesday night to lead host Rochester College to a 78-49 men's basketball victory over Madonna University in a game

played at Rochester High School.

The Crusaders, who trailed 33-25 at halftime, fell to 0-7 on the season, while Rochester is 5-3.

Drew Coker and Leroy Allen were the only scorers in double

figures for MU with 12 and 10, respectively. Leading scorer Cedric Sims (Wayne Memorial) finished with just five.

The Crusaders shot only 17-of-45 from the field (37.8 percent) and were outrebounded 37-25.

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FIRST TEAM

SASA MISKOVIC, JR. GK, Salem: The junior recorded a 17-1-2 record and registered 11 shutouts for the Rocks, who were the No. 1-ranked team in Division 1 for most of the season. Miskovic earned first team All-State honors despite missing two weeks with an injury.

"Sasa was a critical component in what was perhaps the best overall defensive unit in the state this year," said Salem coach Ed McCarthy. "He has great range as a goal-keeper. He's very quick, which allows him to go out in traffic and dominate the 18-yard box. He'll be a major Division 1 college recruit."

GREG SHRADER, SR. GK, Garden City: Daring and acrobatic, Shrader's brilliant goalkeeping was a key reason the Cougars enjoyed a winning season. The third-year varsity player competed much bigger than his 5-9 height, racking up a team record 10 shutouts, stopping nearly 90 percent of shots sent his way and allowing just 14 regular season goals. Honors included team MVP and Mega White first team.

"His tremendous horizontal dives were surpassed only by his spectacular one-handed punches and two-handed grabs off high kicks," said Garden City head coach Bill Torni. "... He is going to be the benchmark for goalies from this point forward."

KEVIN COPE, SR. DEF., Salem: Cope wrapped up a stellar four-year varsity career by being named "Mr. Soccer" by the Michigan High School Soccer Coaches Association, a rarity for a defender. He netted four goals and three assists, but really made his mark on the defensive end of the pitch as he led a Rocks' defensive unit that allowed just a handful of goals all season.

"Kevin is not only one of the most complete defenders in the state, but he's one of the most complete all-around players," said McCarthy. "He simply has no weaknesses. He's a leader on the field and he has the ability to run the entire back line. Kevin does a great job of making everybody else around him better."

ADAM BEDELL, JR., DEF., LIV. CHURCHILL: The junior defender, who scored six goals and added 13 assists, earned second-team Division 1 All-State honors and was also named to the All-KLAA, All-District and All-Region teams.

"Adam was our mainstay in the back and really gets involved offensive for a defender," Churchill coach Reid Friedrichs said. "He was on of the most talented players and leaders, and the reason we had a successful season."

CHRIS LONG, SR. DEF., LIV. STEVENSON: The senior center back had four goals and three assists in his second year as a starter and third season on the varsity.

Long made All-Conference, All-District, All-Region and Division 1 All-State honorable mention.

"Chris was fifth for us in scoring last year, but in order to help the team, he moved into a central back position, bringing composure, speed and stability," Stevenson coach Lars Richters said.

2008 ALL-OBSERVER BOYS SOCCER

FIRST TEAM

Sasa Miskovic, Jr. GK, Salem
Greg Shrader, Sr. GK, Garden City
Kevin Cope, Sr. Def., Salem
Adam Bedell, Sr. Def., Liv. Churchill
Chris Long, Sr. Def., Liv. Stevenson
Brian Klemczak, Sr. MF, Liv. Stevenson
Joey D'Agostino, Sr. MF, Liv. Stevenson
Jeremy Stoychoff, Sr. MF, Salem
Etienne Lussiez, Sr. MF, Liv. Churchill
Nate Sergison, Sr. MF, Liv. Stevenson
Scott Zech, Sr. F, Canton
Josh Kruger, Sr. F, Luth. Westland

SECOND TEAM

Brent Zinn, Sr. GK, Ply. Christian
Kendal Snow, Sr. Def., Liv. Stevenson
Phil Strachan, Jr. MF, Liv. Clarenceville
Gage Flanery, Jr. MF, Luth. Westland
Nelson Kenne, Sr. MF, Westland Glenn
Josh Pascarella, Sr. MF, Salem
John Selinski, Jr. MF, Garden City
Francis Mensah, Soph. F, Redford Union
Max Washko, Jr. F, Liv. Churchill
Danny Jasewicz, Sr. F, Plymouth
Kyle Breitmeyer, Sr. F, Canton
Khalid Suleiman, Sr. F, Westland Glenn

COACH OF THE YEAR

Lars Richters, Liv. Stevenson

HONORABLE MENTION

Churchill: Erik Bld, Matt Regan, Ian Guerin, Drew Sieber, Ben Zukowski, Chris DeNapoli, Jakub Herout, Franklin: Steve Traop, Zain Qureshi, Travis Matthey: Stevenson: Alec Iwasco, Conner Burton, John Glenn: Sergio Pavan, Jacob Gates, Wayne Memorial: Zach Girouard, Garden City: Tyler Arban, Justin Vincent, Vaughn Frederick: Redford Union: Chris Gibbs, Greg Baile-Jann, Redford Thurston: Chris Clay, Luke Toppa, Mike Riffenburg, Dakotah Mullett, Clarenceville: Garrett Gregg, Matt Garant, Dustin Csokasy, Garek Hintzman, Jake Bibik, Lutheran Westland: Micah Hausch, Chris Barnaby, Austin Baglow, Laith Francis: Huron Valley Lutheran: Aaron Howell, Canton: Eric Caron, Joey Krizanek, Sheriff Hassanien, Joel Langdon, Salem: Dan Radoszewski, Lachlan Savage, Plymouth: Austin Kaczanowski, Vinh Nguyen, Plymouth Christian: Jordan Machonga, Spencer Ward.

Richters said. "He created instant offense when asked to move forward in games. His selfishness and willingness to help the team at a new position were integral to the team's success. He demonstrated great heart and reliability."

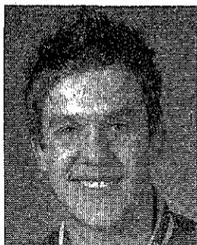
Long also garnered Stevenson's Unsung Hero award. "Most people never knew, but he played the last two weeks of the season with mononucleosis."

BRIAN KLEMCAK, SR. MF, LIV. STEVENSON: The senior captain and four-year varsity starter garnered a slew of honors this fall including Michigan High School Soccer Coaches Association Dream Team, Division 1 first-team All-State, All-Region, All-District, All-Conference and All-Midwest.

Klemczak, led the state runner-up Spartans with 18 goals, including eight game-winners, along with 13 assists as a senior.

"He did all this despite not being a numbers guy," Richters said. "Brian is a tremendous soccer player, student and young man. He will go down as one of the all-time greats in Stevenson soccer."

A 4.0 student, Klemczak will play next year for the University of Michigan. Klemczak is also captain of his



Sasa Miskovic, Jr. GK, Salem



Greg Shrader, Sr. GK, Garden City



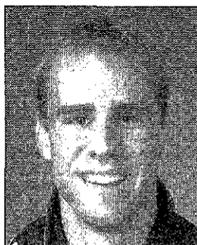
Kevin Cope, Sr. Def., Salem



Adam Bedell, Sr. Def., Liv. Churchill



Chris Long, Sr. Def., Liv. Stevenson



Brian Klemczak, Sr. MF, Liv. Stevenson



Joey D'Agostino, Sr. MF, Liv. Stevenson



Etienne Lussiez, Sr. MF, Liv. Churchill



Nate Sergison, Sr. MF, Liv. Stevenson



Josh Kruger, Sr. F, Luth. Westland

Michigan Wolves club team which finished second in the Under-16 U.S. Youth Soccer Association 2007 Nationals.

JOEY D'AGOSTINO, SR. MF, LIV. STEVENSON: The senior captain, who had five goals and seven assists, teamed up Klemczak to form one of the state's best central midfield combinations playing nearly every key minute of every game for the second year in a row.

D'Agostino made All-Conference, All-District, All-Region and first-team All-State. He was also captain of his Michigan Wolves Under-15 National championship team in 2007.

"Joey became a very leader this year," Richters said. "He's a 'big-game player' of the highest order. This was most visible in the state final, as he combined pinpoint passes with tenacious slide tackles and non-stop inspiration to his teammates."

"People don't realize how great Joey is until he isn't there. He will play at a Division 1 university next year; they will be fortunate to have him and we'll certainly miss him."

JEREMY STOYCHOFF, SR. MF, SALEM: Stoychoff anchored the Rocks' solid mid-field unit this season. He notched three goals and two assists while providing a leadership spark that often lifted the Rocks during their one-loss season.

"Jeremy was the key to our mid-field this season," said McCarthy. "He tackles as hard as any player in the state. He has the ability to receive the ball in the mid-field and finish the play to the front."

ETIENNE LUSSIEZ, SR. MF, LIV. CHURCHILL: The senior midfielder earned All-State honorable mention and All-KLAA honors after scoring 17 goals and adding seven assists.

"Etienne was our most talented offensive player, our playmaker, our quarterback on the field,"

Friedrichs said. "He really found his game this year by helping our team attack and score in way we have not been able to in the past."

NATE SERGISON, SR., MF, LIV. STEVENSON: The third-year varsity starter and senior captain, who scored 12 goals and added six assists, was the Spartans emotional and inspirational leader.

Sergison scored twice in a win over Northville and had the game-winning goal against Grand Blanc in the state semifinal. He was also within inches of a state champions goal when his shot from distance rang off the bar.

"Nate's a great athlete, a varsity track athlete who has a future in college soccer if he would like to pursue it," Richters said of the All-Conference and All-District pick. "He is one of the most athletic and likeable players to cross my path."

SCOTT ZECH, SR. F, CANTON: Zech has made a mark on the Canton program for the past three seasons, the first two as a defender. His motor is always running and he controls the ball as well as anyone around. He earned second-team Division 1 All-State honors for the second consecutive season and was named All-Kensington Lakes Activities Association.

JOSH KRUGER, SR. F, LUTH. WESTLAND: The senior co-captain led the area with a total of 31 goals and 11 assists for the state-ranked Warriors.

Kruger, who figured in 42 of the Warriors' 60 goals this season, also made first-team All-State in Division 4 and also earned All-Metro Conference honors.

"His real asset to the team was his leadership," Lutheran Westland coach Rich Block said. "Anytime we needed someone to take control and settle things down, it was Josh. Our practices are pretty intense and often times would run over. As I would walk to my car to leave, I would see Josh taking penalty kicks

on Micah Hausch.

"I'd sum up the character of Josh by saying that in our last game and down by two goals to the number one team in the state, Josh stepped up with the help of his teammates and scored two goals to tie the game with 15 minutes left. Never quitting, always working - that's Josh Kruger."

LARS RICHTERS, COACH OF THE YEAR

STEVENSON: The 11th-year coach guided the Spartans to a 20-2-3 overall record and a berth in the Division 1 state finals before losing in overtime to defending state East Kentwood. Stevenson captured the KLLA's tough Central Division with an 8-0-2 record en route to beating



Richters

Churchill (6-1) for the Kensington Conference title and Brighton (4-0) for the overall KLLA crown. Richters, a graduate of Yale University and nine-year member of the pro indoor soccer team the Detroit Rockers, played on three state championship teams as a Spartans and has guided Stevenson to two state finals and one Final Four. His overall head coaching record is 199-27-14.

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Notice is hereby given that on December 15, 2008 on or after 9:30 a.m. that Simply Self Storage will be offering for sale under the Judicial Lien Process by Public Auction the following units. The goods to be sold are generally described as household goods. Terms of the sale are cash only. Simply Self Storage reserves the right to refuse any and all bids. The sale will be at the following location: 34333 E Michigan Ave. Wayne MI. 48184. 734-728-8204.

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- A175- Gina Solomon- TV, Stereo, Safe
- A332- David Moraniec- 2 Speakers, Computers, Stereo
- A353- John Johnson- Computer, 20 Bags
- B133- Randall Frye- Fax Machine, Shop Vac, 20 boxes
- B142- Jerisha Hawkins- Bike, Table, 30 Boxes
- C123- Andrew Weaver- Tools, Hutch, Microwave
- C191- Latesha Davis- Stereo, Dresser, 3 Totes
- C194- Mark Hughey- Tool chest, Computer, Exercise Equipment
- D166- Kenneth Siebert- Display Racks, Display Case, Tote
- E150- Marita MacNall- Volvo, Generator, Tools
- E155- David Quarles- 2 Dressers, Mattress, Record Player
- RV10-Randolph Valentino- 1960 Grey Cadillac
- RV11-Randolph Valentino-Ford F-7
- RV50-Beverly Brown- 1984 Ford Bronco
- RV53- Beverly Brown- 1955 Mercury Villager

Publish: November 30 & December 7, 2008

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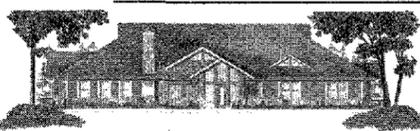
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Reid Conlon dances the role of the Nutcracker Prince, Erica Martin, the Rat King, when the Plymouth-Canton Ballet Company joins the Plymouth Symphony Orchestra for performances of Tchaikovsky's holiday classic. Both dancers live in Canton.

Holiday tradition dances into town

It's been a few years since I've seen *The Nutcracker* ballet but the storybook characters are still dancing in my head. It's hard to forget the tale of a girl who dreams her doll has come to life especially when set to live music.

Local productions are especially fun to watch year after year even though the story remains the same more than a century after Tchaikovsky wrote the beloved music. Many of the dancers start as little mice only to go on to play the role of Clara.

Beck Greene has watched them all grow up. For many years he played the sinister Uncle Drosselmeyer who gives the doll to Clara. This holiday season Greene works backstage for the Plymouth-Canton Ballet Company performances with the Plymouth Symphony Orchestra. The curtain rises 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 6, and 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 7, at Salem High School Auditorium in Canton. Tickets are \$18 for adults and teens, \$10 for children. Call (734) 676-7233 or visit www.GrosseilleDance.com.

Dawn Greene directs the ballet company, Nan Washburn the PSO.

"Expect a magical, fantasy type of experience," said Beck Greene. "The children who sit in the audience almost think of it as watching a movie or cartoon rather than a ballet. It's very entertaining for the children."

The children in the audience are the reason the ballet company and symphony are keeping prices the same this year in spite of the downturn in the economy. *Nutcracker* productions can be quite costly so instead of raising ticket prices, the number of performances has been cut from three to two. The Plymouth-Canton Ballet always spotlights professional dancers. This year, Jay Goodlet performs as the Snow King and Cavalier, Tricia Sundberg as the Sugar Plum Fairy and Snow Queen. Both are soloists with the Cincinnati Ballet.

"We're trying to make it so everybody gets an opportunity to enjoy this holiday tradition," said Greene.

For the first time in several years, the Livonia Symphony Orchestra brings back the story by opening the concert with several movements that feature nearly 40 dance students from Bunny Sanford's school in Livonia. Although only a few selections will be performed at the Christmas Festival, it's a step in the right direction. The symphony used to put on the entire ballet, but budget concerns eliminated the annual production. The program takes place 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 6, at Clarenceville High School, 20155 Middlebelt, south of Eight Mile, Livonia. Tickets are \$17 adults, \$5 for children and students. Call (734) 421-1111.

For the second half of the program 18 musicians from the Livonia Youth Philharmonic sit side-by-side with orchestra members for classics such as *Sleigh Ride* and *White Christmas*. The fifth- and sixth-grade choir from Johnson Upper Elementary School, under the direction of LSO musician Karen Danke, will sing two selections from the movie *How The Grinch Stole Christmas*. The Clarenceville High School Choraliers, under the direction of Jason Debandt, close the program with *Silent Night*.

"It's going to be great family fare," said Rose Kachnowski, president of the Livonia Symphony Society. "It's always a fun thing for youngsters to see the *Waltz of the Flowers*. It moves quickly and kids love it. The second half is a fun one with several student groups joining the orchestra."

Linda Ann Chomin is the health and community life reporter for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. She can be reached at (734) 953-2145 or lchomin@hometownlife.com.

Experts give tips for the holidays

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
O&E STAFF WRITER

John Del Signore moves from food station to dessert table checking last-minute details for a tasting of holiday dishes at Laurel Manor in Livonia. Preparing for a party takes time. For the last few days the kitchen staffers, including executive chef Greg Vitale, have been busy making asparagus wraps and apricot chicken to give businesses, corporations and nonprofit organizations ideas, but anyone can use these tips to create a memorable event.

"We display not just food but decorations to get ideas to do these different types of events," said Del Signore, who has been in the restaurant business 50 years. "We do a different table in December, different settings, from a seven-course meal to a simple dinner. I love the holidays. You always have people coming from out of town and having a party year after year."

SCALING BACK

While people are still planning to entertain this holiday season, gone are the days when corporations like Roush Industries treated 2,500 to 3,000 employees and clients to a buffet from 4 p.m. to midnight every year. Events are being scaled back although Del Signore is especially excited about Laurel Manor's New Year's Eve Gala with an elaborate display of hors d'oeuvres, plated dinner, specialty dessert table, and afterglow with pizza and Danish.

"Because of the economy people are doing parties but not as elaborate," said general manager Linda Baffy. "For holiday parties, we do market place stations with hot food, pasta, carving stations, a sweet table and coffee station. Our deli has hot food and sandwiches and we have desserts from Sweet Dreams in Farmington Hills and our own."

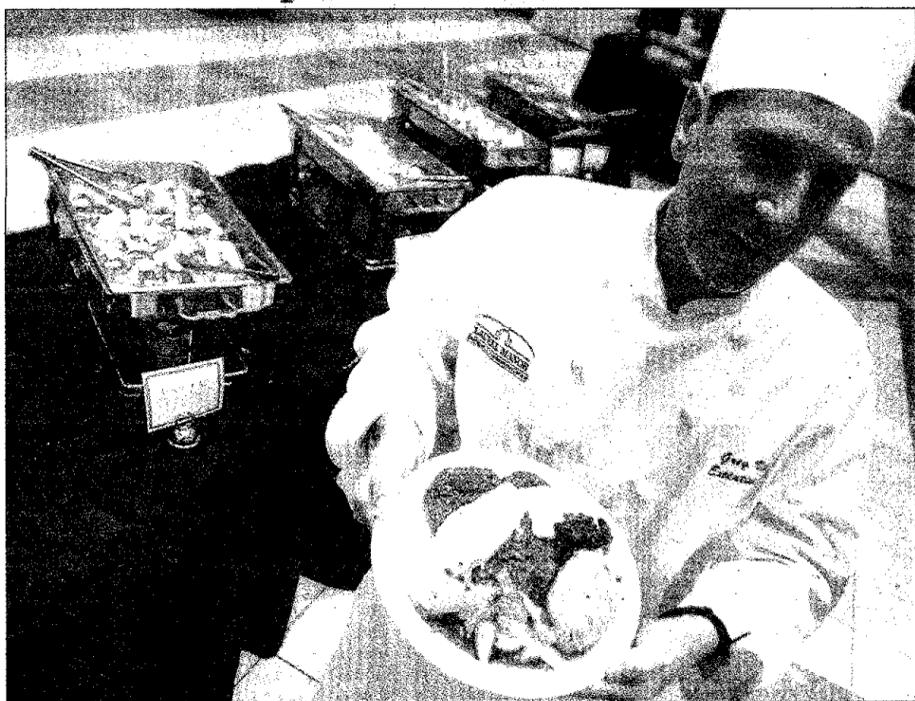
COST-CUTTERS

Vitale proudly displays one of the ways to dress up chicken for the holidays. Chicken seems to be a popular choice as a way of cutting costs.

"There's chicken breaded with pecan, apricot chicken, Anchorage chicken stuffed with crab meat," said Vitale. "We have new and old favorites like chicken piccata. Pasta is popular, homemade rolled pasta with ricotta, Parmesan and spinach."

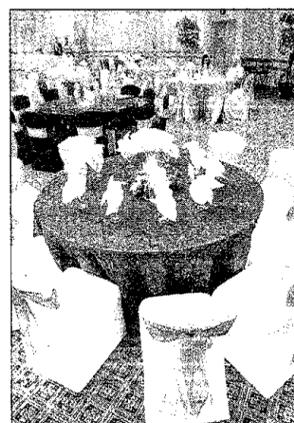
"Shrimp is always big at the holidays" added Deirdre Stemmelen, general sales manager. "It's a celebratory time. For

Party time

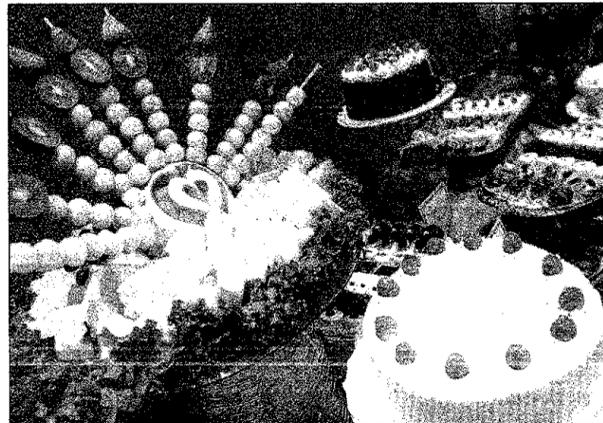


PHOTOS BY TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Greg Vitale, executive chef at Laurel Manor, describes a holiday dish of Chicken Pecan with Twice Baked Potatoes and Squash Medley.



Holiday table settings fill the room at Laurel Manor in Livonia.



Holiday desserts lay on the table for sampling at the Afternoon of Taste at Laurel Manor in Livonia.

decor, bright colors are in this year, lime green and black, chocolate brown, jewel tones."

Just about anything goes as far as decorations, but again the downturn in the economy is affecting spending not innovation. Lori Morrison offers plenty of inspiration for that table centerpiece.

"We have orders for four parties already for this year which is early," said Morrison, co-owner of Ribar Floral Co. in Plymouth with her mother, Marcia Sayles. "The dollar amount of what people are spending is down. They're doing primarily centerpieces with candles. Turquoise and silver is popular. Traditional red is always a favorite."

OFFERING SUGGESTIONS

Morrison was designing a red rose centerpiece for the Plymouth Symphony League Holiday Home Tour, planned for today, Sunday, Nov. 30. She's always willing to share ideas with customers from setting a table to creating a focal point.

"Roses don't last as long with Christmas greens which drink far more water," said Morrison. "If they're trying to cut costs, they certainly can do arrangements with assorted pines, cones and ribbons which would go from now 'till end of year if watered every day. They might get it earlier and try to keep it going."

"People are still spending, but not high ticket. You certainly can

still have a nice party. One woman, her daughter is getting married in December. They were looking for creative ideas for a centerpiece. You can just gather pine cones up in your yard, or branches off your tree.

"A lot of people have things in their own house they don't even think of. A red tablecloth with a tea light candle in a glass mayonnaise jar. Tie a holiday ribbon around the neck and you have a beautiful candle with Christmas charm. You could nestle the candle in peppermints, nuts or even sand if you wish. Try grouping several together for a dramatic evening effect."

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TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Mary Cambridge sits among the decorations in the laundry room of her Livonia home which is featured on the Greenmead Christmas Walk.

Walk brings Christmas home for yule revelers

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
O&E STAFF WRITER

Don't expect a McMansion, but cozy rooms filled with memories, Kathie Sterbling tells a visitor to her Livonia home. At least two of the stops on the Greenmead Christmas Walk spotlight keepsakes that revisit holidays past. Six private homes as well as the Hill House at the historical village offer dozens of ideas for reusing old treasures that have been in the family for years.

The Sterblings still cherish a music box with Santa skating on top from their first Christmas as a married couple 49 years ago. Handmade ornaments decorate a ceiling-to-floor tree in the living room. On Christmas day, the couple's three daughters and their eight children take turns opening presents nearby.

"It's very homey and very old-fashioned. The grandkids made things, kids made things. It's things like that you can't leave in a closet," said Kathie Sterbling.

The family tree is the most important in

Please see **GREENMEAD, C2**



Kathie and John Sterbling sit in the living room of their Livonia home which will be featured.

GREENMEAD CHRISTMAS WALK

What: Friends for the Development of Greenmead present six homes and the Hill House at the historical village
When: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 6
Tickets: \$9 in advance, \$10 day of the walk, and available at Livonia libraries, Greemead (Newburgh, south of Eight Mile), and Community Resources Department at Livonia City Hall. For information, call (734) 466-3540 or (734) 425-4855.



Good dog

Barney is an adorable, lovable and friendly black male greyhound, according to his foster mom. He is 2.5 years old and looking for his 'Forever Home.' He lives with two other greyhounds and two cats. Barney loves his squeaky toys and his peanut butter-filled Kong. He is a very friendly and happy boy. He has been in his foster home for one year only because his family does not live near an area that Greyheart Greyhound Rescue and Adoption hosts Meet & Greets and therefore does not get any exposure. To find out more, visit www.greyheart.org.



Bambi

Bambi is an 11-year-old greyhound looking for a permanent home. This black beauty with a graying face is a very sweet lady that loves walks and is wonderful with other dogs and cats. She is a cuddlebug that loves to sleep with her family. For information, call (866) 438-4739 or visit www.greyheart.org. Greyheart Greyhound Rescue and Adoption is holding Meet & Greets with other homeless greyhounds noon to 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 7, at Petco, 43435 Ford Road, Canton, and Sunday, Nov. 30, at PetSmart, 385 Haggerty, Commerce Twp.

Cyclist to speak at Italian American Club on Dec. 4

The Dante Alighieri Society of Michigan presents a program on one of the world's premier cycling events that will mark its 100th anniversary in 2009. Guest speaker Christian Vande Velde, holder of the coveted Pink Jersey from the 2008 Giro d'Italia, reveals the inside stories and exciting action from the front lines of the race 6:30-10 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 4, at the Italian American Club & Banquet Center, 39200 W. Five Mile. Tickets are available in advance for \$20 adults, \$15 children and students, \$25 and \$20 at the door (all tickets include dinner and entertainment). For reservations, visit www.dantemichigan.org/events.htm or call Diana Manzo at (586) 264-3579.

Madonna University to present Christmas opera

The Madonna University Lyric Theatre Performers, faculty and guest artists present Amahl and the Night Visitors 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 6, at the Millennium Centre Theatre, 15600 J.L. Hudson Drive, Southfield. Tickets are \$15 adults, \$10 seniors and students, and available at the box office, www.millenniumboxoffice.com, or by calling (248) 796-5199. This Christmas opera, first televised in the 1950s, tells the story of the young, crippled Amahl and his mother who are visited by the Three Wise Men on their way to bring gifts to the Christ Child. The second half of the program is a potpourri of Christmas songs performed by various artists and a sing-along with the audience.



Tristan Lopus (left), a seventh-grader at St. Fabian's in Farmington, plays Amahl, and Wayman Ezell King Balthazar in the Christmas opera presented by Madonna University at the Millennium Centre Theatre in Southfield. Ezell, a Detroit native, is an actor and conductor living in New York.



Holiday figures rest on a bench in the Cambridge home.

PHOTOS BY TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

GREENMEAD

FROM PAGE C1

the house with photographs of the grandchildren instead of ornaments. Everywhere the eye looks are vignettes with snowmen, bird houses and Santas John made in his woodworking shop. A sewing tree with scissors and a tape measure garland spotlight one of Kathie's hobbies. Gardening gloves form a skirt beneath the dead tree branches stuck in a dirt-filled watering can. John and Kathie share a love of making things grow in their back yard which has been on the Greenmead Garden Walk. The two events raise money for the restoration of the historical park in Livonia.

"I don't take anything down until the third week in January," said Kathie, who spends a couple of weeks putting out the village of bird houses by John and another village ordered from the Sears Catalog 49 years ago. "January is so dull. It makes it colorful. They all have a story. I hope they spend time looking at things and enjoy it."

DESIGNER'S TOUCH

Visitors definitely will delight in the decorations and furnishings in the home of Mary and Jim Cambridge. Mary was trained as an interior designer and used her talents in every room over the last 22 years. Since their home was on the walk four years



The garden tree in the Sterling home.

ago, she's redone the upstairs. The master bedroom features a black, white and red theme with framed antique kerchiefs, a tabletop red aluminum tree and her mother's bassinet from childhood.

In the living room is a large snowman tree where the couple and their three grown children gather on Christmas Eve. Mary collects snowmen and Santas, but also glass shoes, plates, and cloth country dolls. Her collections, including the Santa eggs she painted, can be seen in groupings in many rooms. The Santa in the living room belonged to her mother so it holds special memories.

"Every room is decorated to the color of the room," said Mary Cambridge. "The tree in the sun room has handmade

storybook ornaments I made in college 30 years ago, felt ornaments with sequins on them, and also Greenmead ornaments. I'm a historical commissioner so doing the walk is always fun and for a good cause. Greenmead is Livonia's history. Those are the founding families of Livonia, the Kingsley House, Meeting House where Quakers gathered, the Hill House where we're getting the inside and redoing everything."

RETRO LOOK

Janet Bennett is especially excited about the theme of the Hill House this year. Bennett is president of Friends for the Development of Greenmead and organizes the walks.

"They're doing the theme 1950s and using an artificial tree the Hills used in 1950 in an 1850 farm house which also has hot chocolate and homemade cookies in the kitchen for visitors," said Bennett. "A couple of the homes are quite different. One modest home has interesting mouldings, classical pillars on the inside of the house. Another man has a pipe organ in his home and is going to play all day long. Another house reminds me of a little cottage in a nursery story. Another is a big home with its own little theater room. One just built a home over a smaller home. The living room has the old fireplace and will be a fascinating place."

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WINTER CHECK UP FOR JOINTS

Living in Michigan requires preparing for winter. Now is the time you rake leaves, put up storm doors, flush out and refill the car engine's antifreeze, and bring out warm clothes and boots.

But you can do more: take time to put yourself in the best condition possible. If you are experiencing a nagging pain in your shoulder or knee, or you find yourself too stiff for too long a time in the morning, you should see your doctor about the problem.

Almost every joint or muscle problem is easier to care for if identified by your doctor early rather than late. In particular, if you are subject to sudden give-way weakness of your legs and nearly fall, you should see a doctor. Winter time with black ice on sidewalks and porch steps could turn a near fall into a serious injury. Seeing your doctor now about such a problem, gives him the time he needs to evaluate the cause and give you preventive treatment or advice on how you should deal with winter weather and the risk of a fall.

You should take shoulder pain seriously. Winter brings unexpected slips and a sudden need to right yourself; you need to have a shoulder able to brace on a railing, person or side of a car. If you have a painful shoulder, you can't depend on such an assist.

Attending to our home and your car is fine, but don't overlook also preparing your body for winter.

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REUNION CALENDAR

The Reunion Calendar runs Sundays in the newspaper as space allows, and online in its entirety at www.hometownlife.com. Submit your reunion announcement at least two weeks in advance to Linda Chomin, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia, Mich., 48150, or e-mail lchomin@hometownlife.com.

Brighton High School
Class of 1989

Planning a 20th reunion and searching for classmates. Sign up at "yahoo groups-brighton high school class of 1989" for more information.

Class of 1959

50th reunion with activities June 5-7, 2009. Events will include a Saturday evening dinner party at Plum Hollow Country Club in Southfield. For information, visit www.casstech59.com or contact Marge Teramino Knable, reunion@casstech59.com; Debbie Friedman, (248) 626-3729; or Steve Sperling, (248) 360-9658.

Dearborn Fordson
Class of 1969

Planning a reunion. Contact Kathy Nisun at (248) 363-5679 or e-mail: Kayniniilu@aol.com or Kathy Shoebridge @ klivingston@nu-core.com.

Detroit St. Brigid
Class of 1959

Planning a reunion and looking for classmates. Contact szonyek@att.net with any information about classmates.

Detroit Winship School
Class of 1956

Members of the eighth-grade graduating class of 1956 who are interested in planning a reunion, should call Beth Weingarden at (810) 695-7882.

Garden City High School
Class of 1960

Mini-reunion luncheons held the second Saturday of every month at 1 p.m. in the banquet room in the Plymouth Denny's on Ann Arbor Road, east of I-275. Call Gary Simon at (734) 751-4101 or send e-mail to GCHS.MCMLX@yahoo.com.

Class of 1989

20th reunion Aug. 29, 2009, at Joy Manor (6 p.m. to midnight). Ticket \$65 before March 1, 2009, \$75 from March 2 to June 1, 2009. No tickets will be sold at the door. Tickets include dinner, premium open bar, dj, door prizes, picture cd and other gifts, and available for purchase at www.gardencity89.com or contact Paula at gchs1989reunion@hotmail.com.

Grosse Pointe North
Class of 1991

Call (800) 677-7800, visit www.taylorreunions.com or e-mail: info@taylorreunions.com.

Lincoln Park High School

Looking for members of Lincoln Park High School class of 1958 for 50-year reunion. Contact Nancy, (313) 535-8777 or nc6897@sbcglobal.net.

Livonia Franklin
Class of 1969

A reunion is in the pre-planning stages. For more information, contact Kathy Nisun at (248) 363-5679 or e-mail: Kayniniilu@aol.com.

Milford High School
Class of 1978

Planning a 30th reunion. Class members should contact the reunion committee as soon as possible. E-mail ford78@gmail.com.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bennett-LeBlanc

John and Sandy Bennett of Livonia announce the marriage of their daughter, Jennifer Leigh, to Darryl Joseph LeBlanc, son of Carol LeBlanc of Livonia and the late James V. LeBlanc.

The bride is a 2007 graduate of Eastern Michigan University, where she earned her master's degree in education. She works at Plymouth High School.

The groom is a 1995 graduate of Churchill High School and works for H.D. Supply in Livonia.

The couple wed Sept. 26, 2008, before the Rev. Phillip Rogers at Connection Church in Canton.

The bride was attended by maids of honor Terri Sabala and Kimberly Harris, and bridesmaids Meghin Gani, Rebecca Guibord, Nicole Frizzell, Erin Slater, Amanda Dimmer and Sarah Walsh.

The groom was attended by best men Kevin Swider and Brian LeBlanc, and groomsmen Eric LeBlanc, John Bennett, Patrick Will, Michael Minghine, Michael Stanbury and Joseph Harris.

Following the ceremony, the couple received guests at St. Mary's Cultural Center in Livonia.

They plan a two-week honeymoon in Hawaii and have made their home in Livonia.



Young-Young

Kenneth and Priscilla Young of Livonia announce the engagement of their daughter, Megan, to Joshua Young, son of James and Kathleen Young of Waterford.

The bride-to-be is a graduate of Franklin High School in Livonia. She completed her master gardener's course and works at Glen Oaks Country Club and at Capital Grille in Troy.

Her fiancé is a graduate of Waterford High School. He works as a master electrician at Anstang Electric.

A June 20, 2009, wedding is planned.



RELIGION CALENDAR

To submit an item for the religion calendar, fax it to (734) 591-7279 or write: Religion Calendar, Observer Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150. Deadline for an announcement to appear in the Thursday edition is noon Monday.

UPCOMING

Caregiver's support group

St. John's Support Group for the Caregiver's of Alzheimer's patients or patients with other forms of dementia meets at 10 a.m., the first and third Friday of each month at St. John's Episcopal Church, 574 South Sheldon, Plymouth. Respite care for your loved one will be provided. Call Connie McNutt at (734) 895-1426 for more information. This group is authorized by the Alzheimer's Association.

The Nativity movie

7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 2, at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church on Five Mile, one

block west of Inkster Rd., Livonia. Desserts will be served. All are welcome to attend this free event. For more information or to sign-up call (734) 422-1470.

Kids Christmas craft days

Deadline is Dec. 4 to register for Kids Christmas Craft Day 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Dec. 6, for ages 5 years through 5th grade, at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church on Five Mile, one block west of Inkster Rd., Livonia. Kids will enjoy creating Christmas crafts to be used as gifts or decorations. All are welcome to attend. Suggested donation of \$3 per child. For more information or to sign-up, call (734) 422-1470.

Advent presentation

Through Scripture, food and drink, reflect on and delight in preparing for Christ's arrival 7-8:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 4, in Bixman Hall at St. Aidan Catholic Church,

17500 Farmington Rd., Livonia. No charge, but RSVP by calling (734) 425-5950. Presenter is David Conrad, M.A. Theology.

Glory of Christmas

The theatrical production opens Thursday, Dec. 4, and runs week-ends through Sunday, Dec. 14, at NorthRidge Church, 49555 N. Territorial at Ridge, Plymouth. Tickets \$16 and \$18. Call (734) 414-7777 or visit www.northridgechurch.com. Curtain times are 7:30 p.m. Thursday-Friday; 1 p.m. Saturday, and 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Sunday.

Holiday concert

Madrigal-Chorale of Southfield performs 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 6, at the historic Old St. Mary's Church in Detroit's Greektown, 646 Monroe at St. Antoine. Tickets \$18 and available by calling (248) 229-7147 or \$20 at the door. Information is also available at www.mcs-notes.org.

Nolan-Tulgetske

Dick and Betty Nolan of Canton announce the engagement of their daughter, Heather, to Terry Tulgetske, son of Connie Szocinski and Lloyd Tulgetske of Johannesburg.

The bride-to-be is a graduate of Washtenaw Community College where she earned a degree in photography. She works for Fox Portrait Studios. The groom served in the U.S. Navy, and is now working for Hayball Transport.

A September 2009 wedding is planned.



Elsner-Nahavandi

Robert and Marcia Elsner of Plymouth announce the marriage of their daughter, Elizabeth Marie Marzonie Elsner, to Kurosh Nahavandi of Portage. He is the son of Amir Nahavandi of Marabella, Spain and Amy and Paul Van Laak of Long Lake, New York, but currently residing in Kowloon Bay, Hong Kong.

The bride is a graduate of Plymouth Canton High School and the University of Michigan, where she earned her bachelor's degree in chemical engineering, her master's degree in biomedical engineering and competed in softball as a Big Ten scholar athlete. She works as a senior analyst for Whirlpool Corporation in St. Joseph.

The groom is a graduate of Shenendehowa High School in Clifton Park, New York, and

of Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, where he earned his bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and his master's degree in material science. He works as a senior designer for Stryker Corporation in Portage.

The couple wed at sunset on Sept. 13, 2008 on the beach at the Dreams Resort in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic. The bride was attended by maid of honor Kathy Mokienko Borsos of Plymouth and bridesmaids Marissa Young and Katie Shea. The groom was attended by best man Sujal Patel of Belmont, Calif., and groomsmen Bijan Nahavandi and Michael Elsner.

A candle-lit evening reception followed the service. Seventy guests, hailing from Spain, New York, California, Michigan, Florida, Ohio, Georgia, Texas, Minnesota,



Massachusetts and the Dominican Republic, enjoyed an elegant evening of dinner and dancing.

GARDEN CALENDAR

63rd Annual Greens Market

The Ann Arbor Branch of Woman's Farm & Garden Association plans its annual sale of fresh-cut Oregon greens, holiday wreaths, swags, forced bulbs and other arrangements from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 4, at Matthea Botanical Gardens, 1800 N. Dixboro Road, Ann Arbor. The market also will include custom-made accessories, jewelry, clothing, toys and gifts; homemade baked goods; antiques and collectibles and decorative craft demonstrations at 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. The market is open only to members of Woman's Farm & Garden Association and Matthea Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum from 10 a.m.-noon. Doors open to the public at noon. No admission fee. Free valet parking will be available. Lunches from Afternoon Delight will be available for purchase. (734) 647-7600 or www.annarborfarmandgarden.org.

Winter Stonely Search

Join a team to search the Rouge tributaries for the sensitive winter stonely, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Jan. 24, 2009. Search starts from the University of Michigan-Dearborn Environmental Interpretive Center. Sign up available now through monitoring@therouge.org. Or call Sally Petrella at (313) 792-9621. For a flier, visit www.therouge.org.

Trinity House Theatre updates 'A Christmas Carol' for local fans

Clowns, magic, puppetry, improv, mime, funny accents and hat swapping all take place in a new production of "A Christmas Carol" Dec. 5-21, at Trinity House Theatre, 38840 Six Mile, west of I-275, Livonia. Curtain times are 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, and 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$15, \$12 members, and available at (734) 464-6302. Sunday matinees are \$12 for seniors and students.

This adaptation by Doris Baizley has actors rush about, sing, tumble, show puppets, and

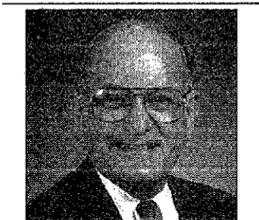
take on the roles of numerous characters. The Older Clown presents the young Scrooge's monstrous schoolmaster and then jolly Fezziwig, both played by Jonathan Stanley, a hip-hop dancer from Canton. He also plays Jake the Fence.

Laura Gumina of Southfield is padding-up to play the hefty Character Woman who then becomes the dancing Mrs. Fezziwig and others.

For more information, visit www.trinity-house.org.



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WALTER R. NAAS

Of East Grand Rapids, passed away on November 24, 2008. Walter served in the Army Air Corps as a Bomber Pilot in WWII. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Suzanne, and his children, Connie and Richard Todd of DE, Jim Naas of N.C., and Nancy and Jeff Wickman of East Grand Rapids, MI, four grandchildren, Lindsey and Chris Jacona, Allison, Amanda, and Molly Wickman, one great granddaughter, Sienna Jacona. A private family service was held November 26th. In lieu of flowers, send contributions to the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans, 3000 Monroe N.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49505.

BARBARA P. RANSFORD

Age 63 of Magnolia, AR. Died Monday, November 24, 2008 at the John R. Williamson Hospice House in El Dorado, AR. Memorial services were held Tuesday, Nov 25th in AR.

E. HELEN (Tiri) SNABB

Age 84, Farmington Hills, MI, passed away November 26, 2008. Thayer-Rock Funeral Home, Farmington, MI

In Memory Of



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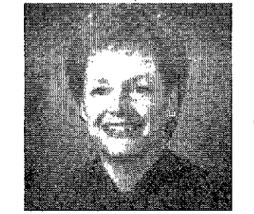
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The first five "billed" lines of an obituary are published at no cost. All additional lines will be charged at \$4 per line. You may place a picture of your loved one for an additional cost of only \$6. Symbolic emblems may be included at no cost (example: American Flags, religious symbols, etc.)

Deadlines:
Friday 4:15 PM for Sunday
Wednesday 9:45 AM for Thursday

Obituaries received after these deadlines will be placed in the next available issue.

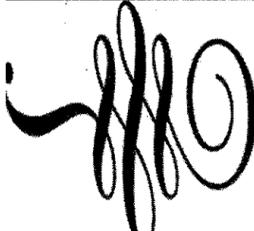
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GRETCHEN BIGNOR COLE

Born November 12, 1927 to loving parents Dora and Frank Bignor, passed in peace on November 24, 2008 at age 81, with her daughters Cynthia and Sally by her side. She is also survived by Sally's husband Ron, grandchildren Eric, Nicole (Josh), Misha, Libby (Terry), and Emerson, and great-grandson Jayce. Gretchen's life is a testament to her loving, intelligent and independent spirit. She was born in Detroit and lived in several states during her childhood, as her father designed the nation's new highways. Her family later settled in Royal Oak, where she graduated from Royal Oak High School. She earned a bachelor's degree in 1949 in sociology and music from DePauw University in Indiana, where she created many lifelong friendships as a member of the Alpha Chi Omega sorority. Gretchen devoted countless volunteer hours as a Braille typist and with numerous other organizations while she was a wife and mother, and raised her two daughters with devotion, love and great fun. When she was in her 50s, she earned a master's degree in social work from Wayne State University, and then worked as a medical social worker at St. Joseph's Hospital in Pontiac, Michigan. In 1983 she became CEO of Detroit Air Compressor Company, which her parents had founded and run together for more than 40 years, and in the 1990s Gretchen received the Woman of the Year award from the National Association of Women Business Owners. Gretchen continually gave her love, thoughtfulness, keen intellect, grand humor and radiant smile to her family and many friends. She enjoyed traveling, and made everyone around her feel special. Gretchen marveled others with the power of her beautiful singing voice despite her 4'10" frame, reveled in the quiet of a glass of wine and a good book, and the beauty of Lake Michigan from her vacation home in northern Michigan. She leaves a lasting legacy of deep love for family, and a special style that will remain in the hearts of all who knew her forever. While the family will celebrate Gretchen's life privately, friends are welcome to share memories and extend condolences at DesmondFuneralHome.com. Memorial tributes in her name to Alzheimer's Disease Research, 22512 Gateway Center Drive, Clarksburg, Maryland 20871.



Paying Tribute to the Life of Your Loved One

Critical need Blood donations slow down during holidays

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
 O&E STAFF WRITER

Catherine Withrow couldn't believe her daughter's physician was refusing to order a blood transfusion. The 3-year-old Canton girl was going through a fourth round of chemotherapy and her blood count was dropping. After Amanda was diagnosed with leukemia in November 2005, Withrow slept at C.S. Mott Children's Hospital for the next seven months so she knew from the first three treatments it was just a matter of time before her daughter's life was in danger.

"She had a 106 degree temperature for three weeks. Every day her numbers would drop. He said there's a shortage of blood and others need it more. By midnight her count was at a critical period and they ordered blood."

Withrow decided right there she was going to do something to make sure there was always enough blood available through the Southeast Michigan American Red Cross which supplies 57 hospitals in Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw and St. Clair counties. She not only took over the blood drives at Trinity Presbyterian Church near Plymouth, but videotaped a commercial to tell Amanda's story.

GRANT NEED

Withrow estimates her daughter had somewhere between 50 and 60 transfusions during five rounds of chemotherapy before going into remission. On Tuesday, Amanda, now 6, colored quietly as her mother spoke about the need for blood donations.

The church drive drew about 35 to 40 donors. The goal for the American Red Cross is to collect 900 pints a day at donor sites and mobile units sent to businesses, churches, schools, fire and police departments, post offices, hospitals, city halls, funeral homes, and airports. The blood is then tested for Hepatitis A, B and C; AIDS/HIV, West Nile Virus, type, and RH factor before being given to patients undergoing surgery, kidney and heart transplants, cancer treatment, and those suffering trauma from burns and auto accidents.

Volunteer Linda Erickson came straight from tutoring English as a second language in Livonia Public Schools to the collection site where she was placing UPC codes on tubes and bags to ensure the results match once blood is tested.

"We want to give back to the system," said Withrow. "Even if they can't donate because of health reasons, they could bake a plate of cookies or hold a drive even just a one-time drive."

Withrow donated five times last year, but since then was denied because of an iron deficiency. To qualify, donors must be age 18 or older, in good health and weigh at least 110 pounds. Specific eligibility requirements can be found at www.givelife.org. The entire process takes about an hour including 10 to 12 minutes to give blood. It's estimated the act of kindness can save up to three lives.

"Today we're collecting whole blood which is separated into red blood cells, platelets and plasma so the chances of going to the same person are slim," said Tina Stille, donor recruitment regional representative for the American Red Cross. "They sign in, take their temperature, blood pressure and pulse, prick their finger for a blood test. They're asked about travel and anything that would make you ineligible. If you have diabetes and blood pressure under control then it's probably OK, but no blood thinners or no travel to a malaria area in the last 12 months."

NO EXCUSES

Nicky Bonnett thinks many people want to but don't donate because of a busy lifestyle. Bonnett, an R.N. who lives in Canton, was one of five nurses staffing the collection site at the church.

"Stopping on the way home from work isn't convenient," said Bonnett. "Churches a lot of people

gather. Schools and universities usually keep us busy. It's amazing what elementary kids can talk their parents and grandparents into."

John Rinke usually gives blood at the Livonia Ford plant where he works but wanted to donate at church. He and wife Carey have three children of their own.

"I want to help people especially because of Amanda," said John Rinke, a church member. "I'm a universal blood type and know you give to a lot of people. There's quite a few kids out there with the need for blood."

Carey was amazed by the number of transfusions Amanda needed while going through chemotherapy.

"She was able to participate in my vacation Bible school two years ago. As a 3-year-old she was bald, but now to see her with long hair is wonderful."

On the same day, donors were giving Martha Roemer Kurtz was worrying about a shortage of inventory during the holidays. Twenty-percent of

blood collected in southeastern Michigan comes from school drives. To encourage donation, the American Red Cross is holding a drawing for anyone who donates Dec. 21, to Jan. 4, for a \$500 hotel voucher and round trip tickets for two anywhere in the continental U.S.

"Very often during the holidays it goes down to zero, what we have after we supply the hospitals," said Kurtz. "People go away, they're busy with holiday preparations. Even regular blood donors forget to make that appointment. Hospitals need more blood. With more people on the road, there are more accidents, slip and falls on the ice and snow. Economics are hitting us too because a lot of companies cutting costs, not allowing employees away from their desks, companies going out of business."

For more information or to set up an appointment, call (800) GIVELIFE or visit www.givelife.org.

lchomin@hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2145



American Red Cross The need is constant. The gratification is instant. Give blood.

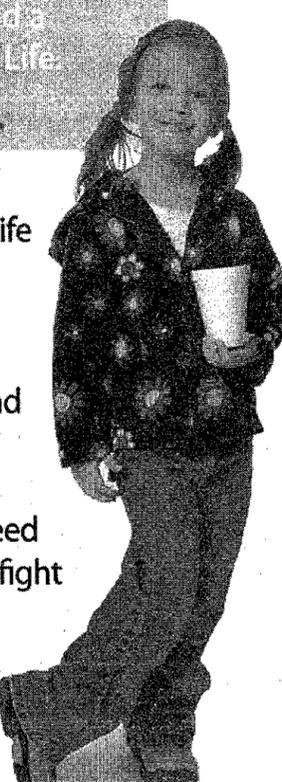
Without you, children like Amanda might not stand a chance. Give the Gift of Life.

GIVE BLOOD

At age three, Amanda fought the battle of her life against Leukemia – and won. Blood transfusions helped save her life. Today she is a healthy and happy five-year-old.

Children like Amanda need blood every day in their fight to beat serious diseases. They can do it with the support of blood donors like you.

Call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE log on to givelife.org to schedule an appointment to donate blood



Amanda Withrow is 6 years old today and still in remission thanks to blood donors. The American Red Cross has featured the Canton girl on two of its posters.

Documentary to educate viewers about fibromyalgia

More than 100 guests will attend the premiere showing of *Fibromyalgia: Fitting the Pieces Together* 5:45 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 14, at the Townsend Hotel, 100 Townsend, Birmingham. The event also honors professionals committed to helping patients manage the pain of fibromyalgia. The event is presented by Helping our Pain and Exhaustion, Inc. (H.O.P.E.), a nonprofit support group for those suffering with fibromyalgia.

The elegant gathering provides the opportunity to educate and create much needed awareness about fibromyalgia, a chronic pain disorder characterized by widespread pain and a variety of other symptoms including fatigue, sleep disorders, problems with cognitive functioning, irritable bowel syndrome, and anxiety. This condition affects an estimated 10 million people in the U.S. Severe cases can be extremely debilitating and interfere with basic daily activities. Frequently, access to treatments can be an additional challenge for those suffering with Fibromyalgia because it is often not properly diagnosed as a legitimate medical condition.

"We're ready to showcase the premiere of *Fibromyalgia: Fitting the Pieces Together*," said Sharon Ostalecki, Ph.D., Executive Director of H.O.P.E. and author of two books on Fibromyalgia. "Patients suffering from Fibromyalgia deserve to be better educated regarding the disease itself and effective self-management techniques. They have the right to access all available treatment options. My sincere hope is that this event will help dispel the myths, inspire guests and create a more compassionate society equipped with a better understanding of this debilitating condition. This event will also honor those who have made a vital difference."

Honorees at the event committed to helping patients manage the pain of Fibromyalgia include Ananias Diokno, M.D., executive vice president and chief medical officer, William Beaumont Hospital; Martin Tamler, M.D., program director Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Residency, William Beaumont Hospital and Daniel Clauw, M.D., director, Chronic Pain and Fatigue Research Center, University of Michigan Hospital. Lila Lazarus of FOX 2 Detroit will receive a Media Advocacy Award. Linda Ann Chomin, health reporter of the *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*, receives an Excellence in Community Awareness Award.

Tickets still available for \$125 each. Dinner and drinks included. Black tie optional. For more information, call Sharon Ostalecki at (248) 344-0896 or e-mail smo23915@aol.com. Copies of the documentary will be available following the event or by going to hffcf.org.

MEDICAL DATEBOOK

DECEMBER

Gala evening at the movies

A benefit for the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America, Michigan Chapter 6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 1, at The Uptown Palladium Theater, 250 North Old Woodward, Birmingham. Evening includes the premiere of a new feature film and an hors d'oeuvres and dessert pre-glow reception. The honoree for the 31st annual Gala Evening at the Movies is The Michael Yendick Foundation for Children. To attend the event, purchase a listing in the Movie Gala Souvenir Journal from \$75-\$5,000 and receive complimentary tickets. Call (248) 737-0900, or e-mail michigan@ccfa.org for more information.

Bone marrow drive

An opportunity to join the National Marrow Donor Program registry by completing a brief health questionnaire and having the inside of their cheek swabbed 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 2, at Madonna University, Take 5 Lounge, 36600 Schoolcraft at Levan off I-96, Livonia. Doctors search this registry to find a donor whose tissue type matches that of a patient. Potential donors must be between the ages of 18-60 and in good general health. For more information contact Edna Rankine at (734) 432-5425 or erankine@madonna.edu.

Overeaters Anonymous

Meet 7 p.m. Thursdays in the Courtyard Room at Unity of Livonia Church, 28660 Five Mile, between Middlebelt and Inkster roads, Livonia. And 7 p.m. Sundays at the Marion Professional Building at St. Mary's Hospital, 14555 Levan at Five Mile, Livonia, in Classroom

1. Call Wendy first at (313) 387-9797. Anyone who wants to stop eating compulsively is welcome. For more Greater Detroit Overeaters Anonymous information visit www.oa.org or call (248) 559-7722.

Qigong workshop

With Daisy Lee Sunday, Dec. 7, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Winter Health for all, and 1-4 p.m. (women only), sponsored by Michigan Tai Chi Association, 38121 Ann Arbor Rd. at Ann Arbor Trail, Livonia. Call (734) 591-3530 for information and form.

Jingle Bell run/walk

For The Arthritis Foundation Sunday, Dec. 7, at Northville Downs Race Track, and Saturday, Dec. 13, at Covington School in Bloomfield Village. Both festive events offer competitively timed 5K routes, 4-mile children's Snowman Shuffles and post-race chili parties. Call 1-800-968-3030 or visit www.arthritis.org.

Gluten-free food fair

11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, Dec. 13-14, at Hiller's, 39950 W. 14 Mile (at Haggerty Road). Call (248) 960-1990.

Get ready to have a baby

Learn what to expect during pregnancy, labor and delivery and make the entire experience more rewarding. Childbirth Education Weekday programs held 7-9 p.m. Mondays to Dec. 15, and Wednesdays, Dec. 3 to Jan. 14. Childbirth Education workshops 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 6. There is a fee. Registration required. Call (734) 655-1162.

Breast cancer support group

Meets 6:30-8 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month in the Atrium of Our Lady of Hope

Cancer Center, at St. Mary Mercy Hospital, 36475 Five Mile (use south entrance off Levan Rd.), Livonia. Call (734) 655-1100 for more information, or visit www.stmarymercy.org.

Parkinson Support

Western Oakland Parkinson Support Group meets 7:09 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month except January, July and August, at Farmington Hills Baptist Church, 28301 Middlebelt, between 12 Mile and 13 Mile. Enter at rear of church. For more information, call (248) 433-1011.

UPCOMING

Butterfly ball

The American Lung Association of Michigan has rescheduled its black tie fund-raiser to 6-11 p.m. Saturday, May 9, at the Ritz-Carlton in Dearborn. Proceeds go to lung health research, education and advocacy. Tickets \$250 per person and include The Butterfly Ball will be highlighted by music and will include a cocktail reception, dinner, dancing, and a live auction featuring trips, dinners and a variety of experiences. Sponsorships available. Call Jessica Jimenez, Development Specialist, (248) 784-2018 or jjimenez@alam.org.

ONGOING

Caregiver's support group

St. John's Support Group for the Caregiver's of Alzheimer's patients or patients with other forms of dementia meet the first and third Friday of each month at 10 a.m. at St. John's Episcopal Church, 574 South Sheldon, Plymouth. Respite care for your loved one

will be provided. Call Connie McNutt at (734) 895-1426 for more information. This group is authorized by the Alzheimer's Association.

Wayne metro caregiver support

Are you a caregiver of an aging parent, spouse or relative? Do you ever wish you had an understanding person to talk to? Wayne Metro's Caregiver Support Groups offer support and assistance to those struggling to find or give quality care to their loved ones and offers valuable information at meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of the month 10 a.m. to noon at the Kay Beard Building on Michigan Avenue in Westland. Meetings are also held at the Village of Redford on Six Mile Road in Redford. Morning and evening options available. The morning group meets 10 a.m. to noon on the 2nd Thursday of the month, the evening group meets the fourth Thursday of the month from 6-8 p.m. Adult care may also be available. For information or if attending for the first time, call Nancy Coman at (313) 843-2550, Ext. 233.

Physical performance classes

Incorporates jump-rope training, core work, and functional strength training using dumbbells and body weight for resistance 5:30 p.m. Mondays and Thursdays. An Exercise Therapy class for a mid to lower intensity workout that stress functional fitness, core, balance, strength and flexibility 8:45 a.m. Mondays and Thursdays. One hour sessions run through November at Metropolitan Adventist Jr. Academy Gym, 15585 Haggerty, north of Five Mile. Drop in sessions \$6 each, 10 sessions \$48. These classes are both lead by Jeanie

Weaver with the concept of training to spare the joints and improve back mobility and strength. She is a certified personal fitness trainer with 30 years of teaching/training experience. Call (248) 446-9176 or (313) 300-0957 to register. For information send e-mail to jeanieweaver@charter.net.

Flu shots

Wayne County Department of Public Health offers flu shots for residents at its clinic in Wayne 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday and Thursday (walk-ins), Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday (by appointment only), at 33030 Van Born at Venoy. The cost of the flu vaccine is \$15. \$35 for pneumonia vaccine is also offered for \$35. Medicare (Part B) and Medicaid are accepted. Vaccines are offered for adults and children. For information about family flu vaccinations at Wayne County's public health clinic locations, call (734) 727-7000. For additional influenza and flu prevention facts, visit www.waynecounty.com/hhsvcs/public/pamphlet.htm.

Flu shots

For adults and children over 6 months of age available at Oakland County Health Division locations at 1200 N. Telegraph in Oakland County Complex Bldg. 36 East in Pontiac; 27725 Greenfield, north of 11 Mile at Catalpa Road in Southfield, and 1010 E. West Maple at Pontiac Trail, Walled Lake. Hours are noon to 8 p.m. Monday, and 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday-Friday. Cost is \$11 (cash only). Medicare and Medicaid accepted. Bring photo identification and insurance cards. For information, call (800) 434-3358 or visit www.oakgov.com/health.

Sunday PUZZLE CORNER

Challenging fun for ALL ages

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

- 1 Skip stones
- 4 Madama Bovary's name
- 8 "Waterloo" pop group
- 12 A Miss America host
- 13 Water pipe
- 14 Scoop water
- 15 Rattle
- 16 Set on fire
- 17 Roman goddess
- 18 Windflower
- 20 Line of bushes
- 21 Potato st.
- 22 Fond du —, Wis.
- 23 Vacant
- 26 Breathless
- 30 Two, in Tijuana
- 31 Beads on grass
- 32 Meadow
- 33 Of earthquakes
- 36 Peeved
- 38 Trophy, often
- 39 Ski instructor
- 40 Toted up

DOWN

- 1 — vu
- 2 Ladd of films
- 3 Ceremonial fire
- 4 Personify
- 5 Hawaii's — Loa
- 6 Quicksand
- 7 Miller or Sheridan
- 8 Utterly miserable
- 9 Modern-speed unit
- 10 Bob's road

Answer to Previous Puzzle

BUNG MEAD SRI
ORAL ALPO HOT
KEPI RITZ ALE
BBC EAGER
CHALK LIOS
LILY BET PLAN
OLD RAE EVE
GLAD ISM DIET
EACH FEARS
AMEND BAM
BAR MAKE AHAB
LUG IDOL NORA
ELS NAIL DEFT

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- 22 Axiom
- 23 Mag. staffers
- 24 Stooze with bangs
- 25 Tire pressure meas.
- 26 Chest muscle, for short
- 27 Type
- 28 Bridal notice word
- 29 Run around a lot
- 31 Guacamole, e.g.
- 34 Vistas
- 35 Beauty pack
- 36 Put a crease in
- 37 Ticket info
- 38 Hold dear
- 40 In a tizzy
- 41 Old ruler of Venice
- 42 Student quarters
- 43 Lout
- 44 Like plow horses
- 45 Gael republic
- 46 Cotillion honorees
- 48 Kernel holder

SUDOKU

7				9				
	3			8	5			4
2	5	4			3	9	7	8
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6	1			2				
5				6	8			
8	4	3		9		2	5	

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

SEEK AND FIND

FIND THESE WORDS IN THE PUZZLE BELOW.

- | | | |
|---------|------------|-----------|
| CORSICA | MADAGASCAR | SARDINIA |
| CRETE | MAUI | SICILY |
| CYPRUS | NASSAU | SRI LANKA |
| FIJI | OKINAWA | TASMANIA |

THE WORDS READ UP, DOWN AND ACROSS.

N	A	S	S	A	U	T	A	S	M
Z	T	S	I	C	I	L	Y	S	M
N	A	C	C	V	O	W	N	A	A
F	S	D	O	S	K	A	X	R	K
G	M	H	R	J	I	K	E	D	N
I	A	L	S	P	N	O	T	I	A
U	N	T	I	Y	A	I	E	N	L
A	I	R	C	E	W	Q	R	I	I
M	A	D	A	G	A	S	C	A	R
F	I	J	I	C	Y	P	R	U	S

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE

9	5	2	1	6	7	8	3	4
1	8	9	5	7	2	3	9	6
7	4	8	2	8	8	1	9	5
6	2	7	2	8	8	9	1	4
8	9	1	7	9	6	8	2	6
9	8	7	9	1	2	7	4	8
8	7	6	8	1	9	7	5	2
7	1	9	8	7	2	9	8	6
2	8	9	6	7	5	1	8	7

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE

S	R	I	L	A	N	K	A	S	S	M
M	A	D	A	G	A	S	C	A	R	
F	I	J	I	C	Y	P	R	U	S	
I	R	O	M	A	C	R	I	V		
T	N	I	V	A	L	I	N	L		
V	I	L	O	N	A	S	T	U		
N	N	D	E	K	I	F	I	H	W	O
K	V	X	V	A	O	K	A	C	J	F
N	S	A	T	I	C	I	S	L	Z	
M	S	A	T	I	C	I	S	S	V	N

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Help Wanted-General 5000

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Plymouth
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MEMBER RELATIONS REPS

Teller Duties
Cash handling & product sales. Goal oriented sales exp. required. Intense six week paid training mandatory. Classes scheduled for January and February. Must be available to work Mon-Fri. 9:15am-6:30pm. Saturday 9:15am-2:30pm. Accepting applications through Dec. 12, 2008.

MEMBER SERVICE AGENTS

Call Center Duties
Customer Service and goal oriented sales experience required. Intense six week paid training mandatory. Next class scheduled for January. Must be available to work Mon-Fri. 9:15am-6:30pm. Saturday 9:15am-2:30pm. Accepting applications through Dec. 19, 2008.

Both positions require financial or retail sales experience.

Complete job descriptions available at: dfcufinancial.com

Apply in person at any DFCU Financial Branch Office. Credit record in good standing required. E.O.E.

Help Wanted-General 5000

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National City

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BILLING & DATABASE COORDINATOR

Tech. society in Farmington Hills seeks highly organized and detail-oriented individual to perform a wide variety of duties that requires database management, administrative and order fulfillment skills. Position available end of January. Must be adept at multitasking; proficient in MS Office, including Word, Excel, Access. Database exp. a plus.

Resume and salary req: HR Director - Cert. Farmington Hills, MI 48333-9094

P.O. Box 9094
FAX: 248-848-3771
Barb.cheyne@concrete.org

Bookkeeper

must know Quickbooks, P/T, flexible hrs, non-smoking office, Excel/Word, bank reconciliations. gdastaff@gmail.com

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Morning hours/ Part time. Basic cleaning skills and transportation a must. Background check required. Please call 248-722-1462 E.O.E.

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For general practice. Full or part time. Experience required. Call 248-347-4250

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Full or part time at your convenience. Hand on only. Must have own tools, working with metal, work with owner. Fax: 248-474-5199

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Join the team. Assist persons we serve in residential settings. \$7.65 total plus good benefits. Livonia: 734-469-4523 734-469-4519, 248-474-0283

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\$8.20 wages & benefits. Must be trained/valid license. 313-255-6295

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Help Wanted-General 5000

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Apply online at: <http://www.cd.net> or come to Human Resources to use the online application system

WAYNE WESTLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOLS 36745 Marquette Westland, MI 48185 EOE

Posting closes: December 11, 2008

EMBROIDERY OPERATOR

Full-Time. Prior experience but willing to train. Canton, MI. For appt: (734) 416-9941

GENERAL OFFICE/ACCOUNTING - PT

Tech. society in Farmington Hills seeks detail-oriented individual to perform a wide variety of general office administration and accounting duties, such as accounts payable/receivable, correspondence, reports. Must be adept at multitasking; proficient in MS Office, including Word, Excel, Access. Position starts end of January. Database exp. a plus.

Resume and salary req: HR Director - Act. Farmington Hills, MI 48333-9094

P.O. Box 9094
FAX: 248-848-3771
Barb.cheyne@concrete.org

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Looking for someone to assist with snow removal. Creekside of Farmington. Call 248-474-4400

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\$17.25 base-appt. PT/FT, flex schedules great for students/others. Call Today (248) 426-4405

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AT 734-591-5940, EXT. 107

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10 Minute Oil Change experience or will train. FT &/or PT. Apply at: 34680 W. 8 Mile Rd., Farmington Hills. 1/2 mile W. of Farmington Rd. 248-476-1313

SERVERS - Part Time

Needed at senior residence in Westland. Accepting applications at 37501 Joy Rd., Westland MI 48185

Help Wanted-General 5000

TAILOR - FULL/PART TIME

Experience Necessary Fax resume to John/Bob at 248-477-1416

TEACHER NEEDED

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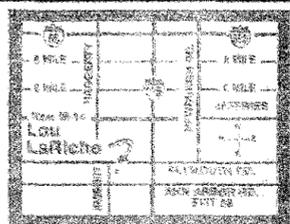
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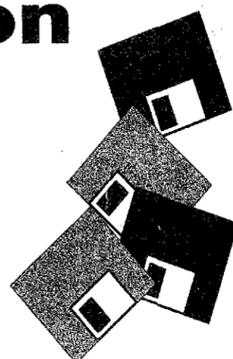


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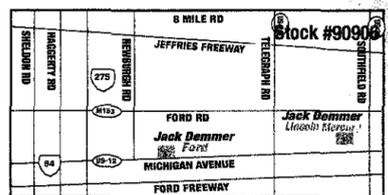
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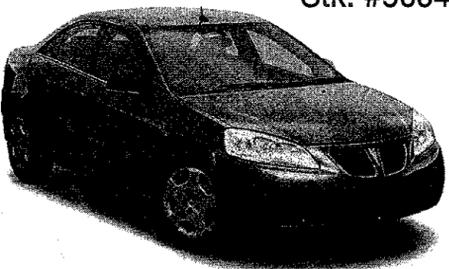


ATTENTION
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PRIVATE OFFER PROGRAM GM
WILL PAY UP TO \$1000 TOWARD
REMAINING LEASE
PAYMENTS

Check Out The Great Lease-to-Lease and Lease-to-Buy Deals

2009 PONTIAC G6

Stk. #90044



Was \$22,810 **OR- LEASE FOR**
NOW

\$12,799* | **\$175**** PER MO.
\$0 Down Payment

2008 PONTIAC TORRENT

Stk. #6662



Was \$28,210 **OR- LEASE FOR**
NOW

\$18,995* | **\$289**** PER MO.
\$0 Down Payment

2009 PONTIAC VIBE

Stock #0145



Was \$19,480 **OR- LEASE FOR**
NOW

\$15,357* | **\$191**** PER MO.
\$0 Down Payment

2009 PONTIAC G5

Stock #90146



Was \$17,725 **OR- LEASE FOR**
NOW

\$12,937* | **\$187**** PER MO.
\$0 Down Payment

2009 PONTIAC G8

Stock #078



Was \$28,875 **OR- LEASE FOR**
NOW

\$22,795* | **\$298**** PER MO.
\$0 Down Payment

2009 BUICK LACROSSE CX

Stock #93035



Was \$26,390 **OR- LEASE FOR**
NOW

\$18,889* | **\$279**** PER MO.
\$0 Down Payment

2009 BUICK ENCLAVE CX FWD

Stk. #93048



Was \$35,385 **OR- LEASE FOR**
NOW

\$26,557* | **\$349**** PER MO.
\$0 Down Payment

2009 BUICK LUCERNE CXL SPECIAL EDITION

Stk. #93026



Was \$34,125 **OR- LEASE FOR**
NOW

\$22,899* | **\$333**** PER MO.
\$0 Down Payment

2008 GMC ENVOY

Stk. #95013



Was \$30,965 **OR- LEASE FOR**
NOW

\$20,995* | **\$309**** PER MO.
\$0 Down Payment

2009 GMC ACADIA

Stock #95005



Was \$32,675 **OR- LEASE FOR**
NOW

\$24,953* | **\$335**** PER MO.
\$0 Down Payment

2008 GMC YUKON

Stock #4276



Was \$42,645 **OR- LEASE FOR**
NOW

\$27,995* | **\$399**** PER MO.
\$0 Down Payment

2008 SIERRA

Stock #4431



Was \$20,010 **OR- LEASE FOR**
NOW

\$11,995* | **\$198**** PER MO.
\$0 Down Payment

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(between M-14 & 5 Mile Road)



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734-453-2500

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Must have any comparable lease ending before 6/30/09 or any GM lease ending before 11/30/08. Lease payments based on financial institutions approval of best Max 60 months/24,000 mile per year. Plus each payment, tax, title, license, and dealer fees. See dealer for details. Pricing for Employees & Family members. See dealer for details. *Must take delivery by 12-1-08.