

**Inside  
FILTER**



**Rock on**  
In 2005, expect rock bands to get more emotional and to draw inspiration from fresh sources.

INSERTED SECTION

**At Home**



**Simple & stylish**  
Hand-built furniture stands up to years of use.  
SECTION B

**Memo**

**Lose extra pounds**  
Looking for a way to shed the extra pounds you may have put on during the holidays? A program run jointly by Canton's Leisure Services, St. Joseph Mercy Health Systems and the Canton Community Foundation is designed to help residents and nonresidents do just that.

Called the 100 Days of Health 2005, the program promotes healthy lifestyle changes for people of all ages.

The 100 Days program, which kicks off Jan. 22, will include many activities, events and special classes to help educate people about making positive changes related to their health.

To register for the program, visit Canton's Web site at [http://www.leisure.canton-mi.org/special\\_events/100Days.asp](http://www.leisure.canton-mi.org/special_events/100Days.asp). From there, you can download a registration form. You can also register at Summit on the Park.

For Canton residents, the program costs \$10 for adults (18 and up), and \$5 for children (ages 4-17). For nonresidents, fees are \$20 for adults and \$5 for children.

For more information, call the 100 Days of Health hotline at (734) 394-5496.

**Holiday closings**  
Canton Township offices will be closed Thursday and Friday, Dec. 30-31, except for the treasurer's office, which will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 30, to accept property tax payments.

On New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, Summit on the Park will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The Canton Public Library will be closed Friday, Dec. 31, and Saturday, Jan. 1. It will resume normal hours Sunday, Jan. 2.

**INDEX**

Apartments	F6
At Home	B1
Automotive	G5
Classified Index	F4
Crossword Puzzle	F5
For The Record	A4
Jobs	F7
Movie Guide	E10
Obituaries	C9
Real Estate	F1
Sports	C1
Taste	B4

Your hometown newspaper serving Canton for 30 years

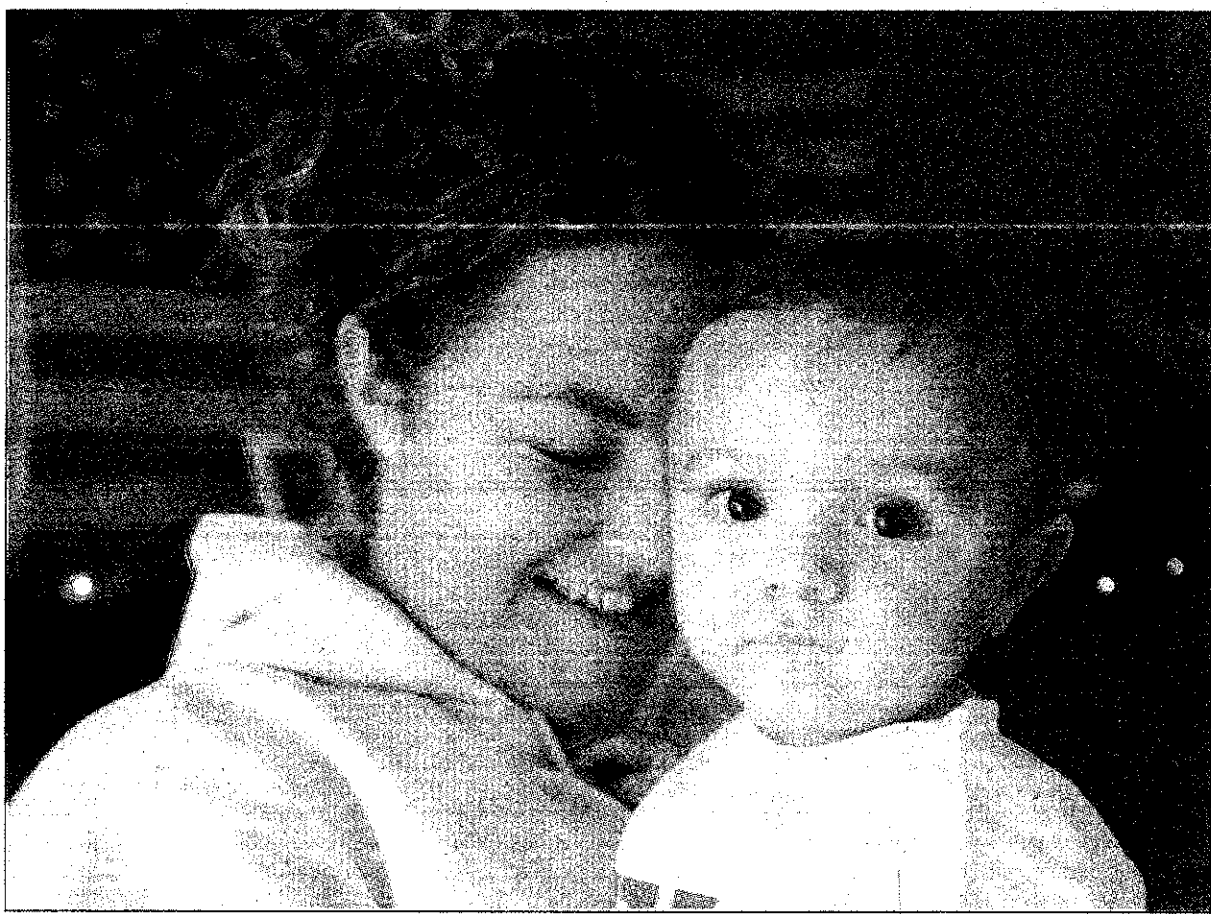
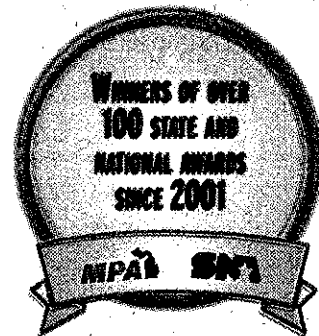
THURSDAY  
December 30, 2004  
75 cents

VOLUME 30 NUMBER 52

CANTON  
**Observer**

[www.hometownlife.com](http://www.hometownlife.com)

©2004 HOMETOWN COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Nicole Zsuzsics, here with her 8-month-old son Brady, is looking forward to the return of her husband, Allen 'Zeus' Zsuzsics, a U.S. Naval officer aboard the U.S.S. Harry Truman somewhere off the coast of Iraq.

## Waiting and wondering

Canton native helps give husband, other soldiers a morale boost

BY KURT KUBAN  
STAFF WRITER

War-time is always difficult, particularly for military wives like Nicole Zsuzsics.

The former Canton resident's husband, Allen "Zeus" Zsuzsics, is aboard the U.S.S. Harry Truman, a Navy aircraft carrier that is currently somewhere off the coast of Iraq.

Rather than pine away the days worrying about her husband's fate, Zsuzsics, 22, has started an organization called Operation Morale, which is dedicated to helping the sailors aboard the Truman fight their worst fears: loneliness and

being forgotten.

Through the organization, people can write letters to sailors and send them cards or other care packages, which Zsuzsics says go a long way to make them feel appreciated.

Many of the sailors are looking for pen pals, to help keep them connected to back home.

"Their worst fear is to be forgotten. There's so many guys that don't get any letters at all. My husband wrote me one time that I needed to do something about it, so I started Operation Morale," Zsuzsics said.

Zsuzsics, formerly

PLEASE SEE **BOOST, A5**



A yellow ribbon awaits Allen Zsuzsics's return outside his mother-in-law's home in Canton.



JIM JAGDFELD | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Sheldon Place may soon be renovated or torn down after HUD's decision last week to foreclose on the long-vacant building.

## Government forecloses on abandoned housing center

BY JACK GLADDEN  
STAFF WRITER

With Sheldon Place, the abandoned senior housing center at Ford and Sheldon roads, in the hands of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, township officials have been waiting for news as to the fate of the six-story building.

That news came last week but it still left more questions than answers.

In a letter to township Supervisor Tom Yack, a HUD official said foreclosure proceedings have been initiated against the structure, which is owned by

National Church Residences (NCR) of Ohio.

The letter also said that HUD is developing terms and conditions for the sale. As of the date of the letter, three conditions were listed:

- The purchaser will determine the future use of the property.
- The purchaser will be required to repair or demolish the property to meet all applicable state and local codes.
- The sale of the property to a unit of local government will require that 10 percent of the

PLEASE SEE **FORECLOSURE, A5**

## Quake, tsunami spawns local wave of grief

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM  
STAFF WRITER

Relief efforts are under way locally and nationally to help victims of the earthquake and tsunamis that ravaged - and continue to ravage southeast Asia, killing 44,000 and costing billions of dollars in property damage.

An earthquake Sunday off the island nation of Sumatra caused 500-mile-per hour waves in the Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal.

*U.S.A. Today* reported the tsunami is the deadliest since 1755, when Portugal lost 60,000 people in the tidal waves. The hardest hit areas were Sri Lanka, India and Thailand, but deaths also were reported in Tanzania, Seychelles, Malaysia, Myanmar, Bangladesh, the Maldives and Somalia.

**'The help will come, but by the time it gets to (the people), it will be too late - that is the tragedy of the whole thing.'**

Mukesh Patel  
Shri Swaminarayan Mandir Temple

The aftermath of the tsunamis is being felt locally, especially in Canton where there is a large Asian population.

In India, the southern coastal regions were hit the hardest, including the major port city of Madras, according to Mukesh Patel, coordinator of the Shri Swaminarayan Mandir temple, which is located on Canton Center. He said not only have people lost their homes, but they have also lost their sources of livelihood, too.

"The poor people are the ones who really get hurt," Patel said, adding that the coastal fishermen have been particularly devastated.

"None of them have insurance. People (basically) survive day to day."

The Indian government is typically slow to respond to disasters, Patel said.

"The help will come, but by the time it gets to (the people), it will be too late - that is the tragedy of the whole thing," he said.

PLEASE SEE **DISASTER, A5**

## Scope of local pastor's visit to India may change

BY TONY BRUSCATO  
STAFF WRITER

The associate pastor of the First Baptist Church of Plymouth is in India to set up a teaching mission trip to Manipur the last two weeks of January.

However, Rev. Wungreiso Valui will be spending his time in the northeast sector of the country, away from the devastation left by the tsunami that hit the southern coastal areas of India and several Indian islands.

As of Tuesday afternoon, Valui's wife was waiting for a telephone call to make certain he completed his trip safely. However, Margareth Valui said she didn't expect her husband would be in any danger

because of the distance from the area hit by the flood waters, which could result in more than 10,000 deaths.

The Valui's and their two children, along with senior pastor, Dr. Michael Bryan, will join the mission team next month.

Meanwhile, a church spokesperson said plans are being made to schedule a Sunday service to help members of the Indonesian Christian Church of Ann Arbor, which hold services in First Baptist Church of Plymouth gymnasium.

Indonesia was hit hard by the tsunami, and many from the congregation have relatives and friends who were victims of the disaster.

## Family takes 'Sysco Kid' robbery suspect off life support

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM  
STAFF WRITER

A Plymouth man suspected of nine southeast Michigan bank robberies - including Comerica Bank in Plymouth Township - died Dec. 21 after family members decided to take him off life support.

Kenneth J. Rosselot, 38, of Plymouth was hospitalized Dec. 17 in critical condition at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital following a car chase with Michigan

State Police cruisers in Canton. The chase began earlier that day at 9:45 a.m. in Chelsea, where Rosselot allegedly robbed the Flagstar Bank, and a witness watched him get into his car and called Chelsea police.

Rosselot eventually lost control of his car during the high-speed chase, which led state troopers east on I-94, and ultimately through residential areas of Canton.

At one point, the chase went right past Dodson Elementary

School. It ended when Rosselot lost control of his car, flipping it into the air.

Local FBI officials believe Rosselot was responsible for nine bank robberies since Sept. 3.

"We're fairly certain that he was the Sysco Kid," said FBI Special Agent Terry Booth, referring to the baseball cap Rosselot allegedly wore when bank surveillance cameras captured his image.

Monikers, usually pertaining

to the perpetrator's M.O., apparel or appearance, are often given to bank robbers by the FBI. Other bank robber nicknames include the "Ziploc Bandit," a wanted bank robber who distributes plastic bags to tellers to fill with cash; the "Bandanna Bandit," who killed himself after being captured; and the "White Van Bandit," caught after robbing the same bank four times.

Improved digital surveillance photography and quick police

work are just two reasons bank robbers are getting caught more and more these days, Booth said.

"Over the last six weeks, we've been very successful in holding down bank robberies," Booth said, adding that 50 bank robbery cases have been closed. Still, Michigan's year-to-date bank robbery number is the second highest in the U.S., at 449.

Only California, with 888, had a higher number of bank robberies in 2004.



**COMMISSIONER APPOINTED**

Wayne County Commissioner Vice Chair John Sullivan, who represents Canton and several other local communities, was recently appointed to the board of the Detroit-Wayne County Community Mental Health Agency.

He was appointed by County Executive Robert Ficano to a term that expires in March 2007. He fills a board slot that was vacated by Harless Scott, a UAW retiree.

"I am honored by the appointment, and I look forward to working with the county executive and his staff to help improve the quality and efficiency of service to consumers in Detroit and Wayne County," said Sullivan, who resides in Wayne.

**BUG HUNTERS SOUGHT**

Friends of the Rouge, a local organization trying to help restore the Rouge River, is looking for volunteers to participate in the group's annual

winter stonefly search. The group will be looking for stoneflies, an aquatic insect that is an indicator of good water quality, throughout the Rouge River watershed, including in Canton.

The date of the event is Jan. 8. Volunteers must pre-register by Jan. 4.

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

Those interested in volunteering are asked to call Friends of the Rouge's Public Involvement department at (313) 792-9621, or e-mail [picoordinator@therouge.org](mailto:picoordinator@therouge.org) to register for the event.

**A GREAT PLACE TO WORK**

The Dearborn-based DFCU Financial, which has a branch in Canton, was recently named one of "Metropolitan Detroit's 101 Best & Brightest Companies to Work For" by the Michigan Business & Professional Association.

DFCU was selected for the award from a group of 800 companies. According to the MBPA's Jennifer Kluge, the company was selected for "working with imagination and conviction to create organizational value and business results through their policies and best practices in human resource management."

DFCU is the largest credit union in Michigan. It currently operates seven full-service Detroit-area branch offices and two high school student-run branches. Membership is open to numerous groups, including employees and families of any Ford Motor Company or subsidiary unit in the United States, employees of Henry Ford Health System and Oakwood Healthcare, Inc., and members of The Henry Ford.

**GIFTED PROGRAM**

Van Buren Public Schools is accepting referrals for possible placement in its Gifted Program for the 2005-06 school year. Eligible students must be in grades K-7.

The program, which services



**Caroling for a cause**

More than 40 scouts from three Brownie troops based out of Tonda Elementary held a Christmas caroling party Dec. 13. The three troops, including Troop 337, went from house to house in the Sunflower Subdivision collecting donations for Mott Children's Hospital.

nity," Noel Bittinger said. "This is our way of paving the way for a stronger, happier future for the next generation."

For more information, contact the team at (734) 459-1010, or email Bittinger at [noelbittinger@remax.net](mailto:noelbittinger@remax.net).

**PLYMOUTH-CANTON CIVITAN CLUB**

The Plymouth-Canton Civitan Club is looking for energetic new members to participate in community service projects. This club meets the first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Plymouth Salvation Army Building on Main Street. The third Thursday is a dinner meeting with a speaker. Call (734) 981-7259 for further info.

**MOTHERS & MORE**

The Wayne County chapter of Mothers & More meets twice a month in Plymouth. Call (866) 841-9140, Ext. 4329, or visit Web site [motherandsandmore63@onebox.com](http://motherandsandmore63@onebox.com).

**CRAFTERS, ARTISTS WANTED**

Officials of the Plymouth-Canton Music Boosters are looking for crafters and artists for "Spring Arts and Crafts Ensemble." The event is scheduled for 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, March 19 at Canton High School. It's a juried show. For more information, e-mail Diane Van Dyke at [djvandyke@peoplepc.com](mailto:djvandyke@peoplepc.com) or call (734) 416-3354.

**SYMPHONY FUND-RAISER**

The Plymouth Symphony is selling the 2005 Entertainment Book, offering 50-percent discount coupons at hundreds of restaurants and discounts for many other services and events.

The 2005 Entertainment Book can be picked up at the Plymouth Symphony Office, next to the Cozy Cafe in downtown Plymouth, or by calling Mary Thomas, (734) 453-3016.

Cost of the book is \$20, with proceeds benefiting symphony programs.

For more information, call the symphony office, (734) 453-2112.

students in grades 1-8, is designed for academically gifted and highly motivated students. The program stresses a combination of acceleration and enrichment. There is a high level of academic work, a rapid instructional pace, and many opportunities to delve more deeply into subject matter.

Some of the characteristics to look for are:

- A long attention span
- Heightened sensitivity
- Intense curiosity
- Resistance to routine and drill
- A strong sense of fairness
- Concern with issues "too old" for his/her age

Forms are available in all Van Buren elementary and middle schools, and the administration building. All forms must be completed and returned by Jan. 18, 2005 to your school principal, or sent directly to:

Barbara Woody, G/T Coordinator, North Middle School, 47097 McBride, Belleville, MI 48111.

For more information call Barbara Woody at (734) 697-6370.

**SWIM, GYM AND FILM**

Bring out the entire family and celebrate the New Year from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 31, at Summit on the Park. The aquatic center will be open from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

for all kinds of swimming and water activities. Following the swimming, a movie will be shown, and popcorn and pop will be on sale. Feel free to bring blankets, cushions and pillows to sit on — no chairs or outside food and beverages please.

**SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

The Lee and Noel Bittinger Team at RE/MAX is offering three scholarships, each in the amount of \$1,000, for local high school seniors that are planning to attend a college or university in the fall of 2005.

To apply for the scholarship, entrants must submit a short essay (not to exceed three pages, double-spaced with a 12 pt. font) that address the following question: Describe how someone in your life has influenced you in a positive way and changed your life?

All submissions must include name, address and phone number of entrant, high school they attend, and college or university they plan to attend in the fall. All submissions must be received by Dec. 31, 2004. They should be sent to The Bittinger Team, 43435 Joy Road, Canton, MI 48187.

"The Plymouth/Canton community has supported us for over 20 years.

The Bittinger Team Scholarship is just one of the ways that we can say thank you by giving back to our commu-

**CANTON Observer**  
WHERE HOMETOWN STORIES UNFOLD  
HOMETOWNLIFE.COM

**HOW TO REACH US**

<b>Susan Rosiek</b> Executive Editor (734) 953-2100 <a href="mailto:srosiek@oe.homecomm.net">srosiek@oe.homecomm.net</a>	<b>Keely Schramm</b> Filter Editor (734) 953-2105 <a href="mailto:kschramm@oe.homecomm.net">kschramm@oe.homecomm.net</a>
<b>Hugh Gallagher</b> Managing Editor (734) 953-2149 <a href="mailto:hgallagher@oe.homecomm.net">hgallagher@oe.homecomm.net</a>	<b>Frank Cibor</b> Retail Sales Manager (734) 953-2177 <a href="mailto:fcibor@oe.homecomm.net">fcibor@oe.homecomm.net</a>
<b>Kurt Kuban</b> Community Editor (734) 459-2700 <a href="mailto:kkuban@oe.homecomm.net">kkuban@oe.homecomm.net</a>	<b>Sandy Mitchell</b> Retail Advertising Rep. (734) 953-2169 <a href="mailto:smitchell@oe.homecomm.net">smitchell@oe.homecomm.net</a>

Newsroom .....(734) 459-2700 Fax .....(734) 459-4224  
Sports Nightline .....(734) 953-2104  
Circulation/Customer Service ...1-866-88-PAPER (866-887-2737)  
Classified Advertising .....1-800-579-SELL (7355)  
Display Advertising .....(734) 953-2153

To purchase page and photo reprints go to [www.hometownlife.com/oe/reprints](http://www.hometownlife.com/oe/reprints).  
For more information contact 1-866-88-PAPER.

**Circulation Business Hours/Subscription Rates**  
Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Sunday 8 a.m. to noon

If you missed a delivery please call by 6 p.m. Thursday and 11 a.m. Sunday.

<b>Carrier Delivery</b>	<b>Mail Delivery</b>
One year .....\$51.00	One year (in county) \$72.95
For senior citizen rate, please call 1-866-887-2737	One year (out of county) \$108.95

**POSTAL PERIODICAL REQUIREMENTS**  
The Canton Observer - Publication NO. USPS 663-670 Published every Thursday and Sunday. Periodical postage is paid at Livonia, Michigan 48150.

A HomeTown Communications Network publication  
36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150

**QUALITY AUDITING**  
COC MPA SNA GDN  
MARK OF INTEGRITY MEMBER SINCE 1997 Greater Detroit Newspaper Network

**WB**

**Out with the Old  
In with the New!**

**Holiday Bonus Days:  
Save an Additional 10%**

As the new year rolls in, we're rolling out the EXTRA Savings on In Stock Home Furnishings that are already HOLIDAY SALE PRICED!

Come see the latest Bedrooms, Dining, Youth, Sofas, Recliners, Home Entertainment, Mattresses, Accents and More!

Authorized Dealer of Stanley • Bernhardt • Sealy • Hooker • LaZBoy • Barcolounger • Stearns & Foster • Nichols & Stone • Canal Dover • Saloom • Hammary and others

**No Interest Financing Available\***

**Since 1933**  
**Walker/Buzenberg**  
fine furniture

240 North Main Street • PLYMOUTH • (734) 459-1300  
Mon., Thurs., Fri. 10-9 • Tues., Wed., Sat. 10-6 • Sun. 1-5  
10% Offer valid 12/26 through 12/31/04 Only  
\*Financing Available with Approved Credit  
[www.walkerbuzenberg.com](http://www.walkerbuzenberg.com)

**HAPPY  
NEW  
YEAR!**

**United Way**

**Plymouth Community  
United Way**

**Don't forget to make your tax deductible  
donations before year end. Be sure to  
include Plymouth Community United Way  
in your donations at**

**[plymouthunitedway.org](http://plymouthunitedway.org)**  
or send to:

**960 W. Ann Arbor Trail  
Suite 2 • Plymouth  
734-453-6879**

This ad sponsored by

**COMMUNITY FINANCIAL**  
Thinking forward. Banking right.

**PLYMOUTH • CANTON • NORTHVILLE • NOVI**

# Teens explore homelessness in local church undertaking

BY JULIE BROWN  
STAFF WRITER

Patricia Lively, 17, has a good home, but she knows not everyone is so fortunate.

Lively, a Belleville High School senior and Belleville resident, was among roughly 20 teens who spent the night outdoors Dec. 26 at Geneva Presbyterian Church in Canton. The annual event collects donations for the Open Door Ministry at Fort Street Presbyterian Church in Detroit, as well as raising awareness.

"I think it's awesome," said Lively, who participated in the event two years ago. She also went on a Geneva mission trip to Atlanta, Ga., and worked with homeless people there.

"I think it's a really noble cause," she said. The homeless are easy to overlook, Lively added, and others can believe "it's not their problem because they're not homeless."

The senior high students at Geneva began their evening about 8 p.m. with discussion led by student intern Lindsey Anderson, scripture reading and prayer.

They then headed out into the single-digit cold night, warming themselves around a fire in the church parking lot

and using cardboard boxes for shelter. The church was unlocked all night for warming, and the students came back at 8 a.m.

"We do it to raise donations and awareness within our community about homelessness," said Anderson, a recent Eastern Michigan University graduate. In her discussion with students, Anderson talked about how God is concerned with how they treat others.

"Why is what we're doing important?" she asked, and the students came up with a number of answers, including avoiding stereotyping homeless people.

The project started about 10 years ago, said the Rev. Bryan Smith, pastor at Geneva. Leaders try to teach "a key part of our faith is caring for people in need."

He hopes teens also learn how blessed they are and become more concerned about those who lack life's necessities. Often, students commit to justice ministries and the goal is to eliminate homelessness, he said.

Church members and others brought clothing donations throughout the evening. Donations will be accepted at Geneva Presbyterian, on the west side of Sheldon just north

of Ford, through Jan. 6. Winter coats, blankets, shoes in good condition, socks and toiletries are needed, Smith said, and will go to Fort Street Presbyterian Church.

The local event is related to Boxing Day in such countries as the United Kingdom and Canada, in which people box up clothing and items no longer needed for the poor.

Jamie Berlin, 15, a Canton resident and Canton High School sophomore, was a first-time participant this year. "I think it's going to be exciting," she said just before heading out for the night. "It's a new thing for me."

She agreed homeless are often stereotyped. "They're people like everybody else. They just need somebody to give them a hand up."

Jan Mathews of Belleville, a church member, had dropped off daughter Judith, a Belleville High senior, for the night. Her son, James, participated when he was younger.

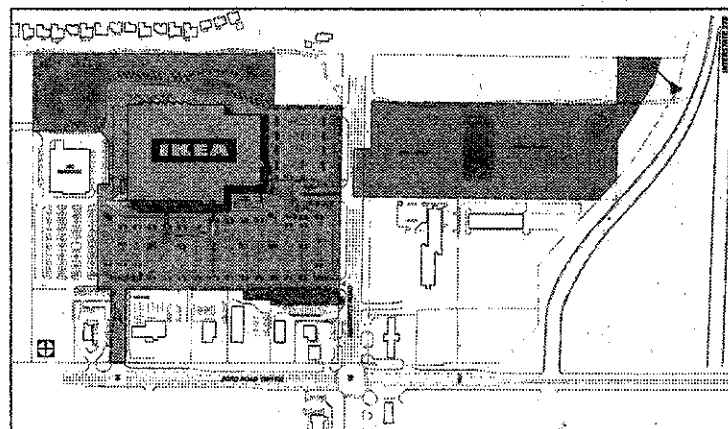
"I think it's super, I really do," Jan Mathews said. "They look forward to it every year."

The young people become closer, Mathews said, and learn about homelessness.

"They really do get in touch. It brings them closer."

# IKEA top story in eventful 2004

BY JACK GLADDEN  
STAFF WRITER



An artist's rendering of the planned IKEA store to be located at Ford and Haggerty roads. The furniture giant's decision to locate in Canton was the biggest news story of the year.

Openings and announcements of future openings were big newsmakers in Canton this year.

The biggest story for the township - which was also big news for southeast Michigan - was the announcement that IKEA, the Swedish-based furniture retailer, had chosen Canton as the location for its newest store.

IKEA officials ended two years of rumors and speculation in October when they announced they would build a 306,000-square-foot store at the site of the old Super Kmart at Ford and Haggerty roads.

"This is a very important announcement in Canton's history," Supervisor Tom Yack told a crowd of officials and journalists at a press conference where the plans were announced.

And Pat Smith, real estate director for IKEA, told the group that Canton was the place for the retailer to be.

"We have been looking in southeastern Michigan for a long time now for a store," he said. "We have found absolutely the best location. You cannot have better than the site we've picked in Canton Township."

The target date for the opening of the store is the summer of 2006.

Among other stories in the top 10 were:

- September saw a dream come true with the long, long-awaited opening of the Cherry Hill Village Theater.
- Construction had taken 15 months. The top event at the theater was the Saturday night black-tie gala attended by government officials, vendors and important contributors.
- The opening weekend events included a stage show and featured many performers from Plymouth and Canton.
- Another opening, another show. A month after the Village Theater opened in Cherry Hill Village, Emagine opened an 18-screen movie theater on Ford Road east of I-275.

While the opening was not quite as "gala" as that for the

Village Theater, about 700 people filled the lobby for a second grand opening with tickets going for \$35 each. The proceeds, several thousand dollars, went to the Canton Community Foundation.

Then, of course, there was the Big Boy, the fat little statue whose case dragged through the courts for months. Is it art or is it a sign? That became the catch-phrase for the case, which eventually was settled by a compromise: Paint over the words "Big Boy" on his bib and he can stay.

Harry Hill Jr., the president of the Canton Community Junior Baseball/Softball Association, made news when he was arrested and charged with embezzling about \$169,000 from the association. In his trial, representatives of Greentown Casino and Casino Windsor testified that Hill had lost money in their casinos in 2003.

He was sentenced to five years probation plus a one-year jail term on a work-release program.

Two Todds - Caccamo and LaJoy - were newsmakers when they won seats on the Canton Board of Trustees in the November election. They are the youngest members of the board (both are 32) and the first new faces in several years.

Sheldon Place, the abandoned senior housing center on Ford Road, made news early in the year when a dangerous building hearing officer ordered it either fixed or torn down.

Finally in December HUD announced it was beginning foreclosure proceedings against National Church Residences of Ohio, which owns the building. Its fate is still uncertain. HUD says the foreclosure sale should occur in the spring of 2005.

Jennifer Ann Avery, who was arrested in October 2003 and charged with drowning her 11-month-old son in a bathtub, finally faced trial in Circuit Court in December. She pleaded no-contest to a charge of second-degree murder. A sentencing hearing is scheduled for Jan. 25.

Just in time for the holidays, on Dec. 12, four thieves crashed through a window at the Showroom of Elegance on Canton Center road and stripped the display cases of thousands of dollars worth of gold and diamond jewelry. They were in and out in less than four minutes, according to a surveillance camera that caught the break-in on video.

Also in December Canton police discovered more than 50 venomous snakes in the home of a resident after he was bitten by his pet 9-foot-long bushmaster.

He was hospitalized and given an antidote for the venom, which the Detroit Zoo had available.

After being released from the hospital, he had the rest of the snakes moved out of town. He was fined and ordered to reimburse the township for expenses incurred in dealing with the case.

## @ THE LIBRARY

### DID YOU KNOW?

The Canton Public Library Holiday Schedule: New Year's - closed Friday, December 31 and Saturday, January 1. We will reopen Sunday, January 2 at 12 noon.

Teens, come to the first Teen Place program of 2005. On Tuesday, January 4 at 7 p.m. we'll learn about the beautiful art of calligraphy and give it a try.

### WEB WATCH

- www.fhwa.dot.gov/trafficinfo - national traffic and road reports
- www.hhs.gov/familyhistory - tips and tools to learn about and record family medical history

### NEW MATERIALS LIST

To see a complete list of new

materials added to the library's catalog this week, visit <http://catalog.cantonpl.org/ftli.st>.

**Adult Fiction**

- *The Hot Flash Club Strikes Again* - Nancy Thayer
- *The Piano Tuner [Book Discussion Kit]* - Daniel Mason
- *State Of Fear* - Michael Crichton

**Adult Non-Fiction**

- *American Country Churches* - William Morgan
- *Digital Manipulation Basics* - Les Meehan
- *Hit and Run Baseball* - Rod Delmonico
- *On Intelligence* - Jeff Hawkins

**Teen Books**

- *A Blink in Time* - Chuck Austen
- *JLA: Year One* - Mark Waid
- *Out of Time* - Judd Winick

- *Public Enemies* - Jeph Loeb
- *Children's Non-Fiction*
- *Birnbaum's Walt Disney World for Kids, By Kids! 2005: The Official Guide*
- *Connecting Dots: Poems of My Journey* - David L. Harrison

**Children's Picture Books**

- *Buzzy's Big Bedtime Book* - Harriet Ziefert
- *Does a Mouse Have a Mommy?* - Fred Ehrlich
- *Jamari's Drum* - Eboni Bynum, Roland Jackson
- *Buzzy's Birthday* - Harriet Ziefert

@ The Library is compiled by Christie Ekern, marketing and communications manager for the Canton Public Library, which is located at 1200 S. Canton Center. For more information, call (734) 397-0999 or visit [www.cantonpl.org](http://www.cantonpl.org).

**We're Pleased to Announce...**

Located next to the Westborn Market south of 5 Mile Road, our new Livonia office is now open for business. Stop by and see us soon for convenient parking, safe deposit boxes, drive-through teller and ATM service, and more!

**Our New Livonia Office Is Ready To Serve You!**

**Michigan Educational Credit Union**

**New Livonia Office\***  
14921 Middlebelt Rd.  
734-261-1050  
\*Replaces old Livonia office at 9373 Middlebelt Rd.

**www.michedcu.org**

Michigan Educational Credit Union membership is open to employees of schools located in Wayne, Washtenaw, Oakland, Macomb, Livingston and Jackson counties, and their families.

**Everyone makes resolutions. At Curves, you keep them.**

This year, find out how over 4 million women who thought they couldn't get fit have discovered they can. At Curves, you can too. Our fun, simple workouts take just 30 minutes, three times a week. Success is right around the corner.

**Curves**  
The power to amaze yourself.\*

curvesinternational.com

**734-414-0515**  
44717 Five Mile Road  
PLYMOUTH

**734-844-6741**  
44248 Cherry Hill Road  
CANTON

**FREE FRIDAY ADMISSION**  
WITH COUPON + FRI. DEC. 31ST ONLY. OE

**Over 8,000 locations worldwide.**

\*Offer based on first visit enrollment, minimum 12 mo. c.d. program. Not valid with any other offer. Valid only at participating locations from 12/27/04-3/6/05. Three referrals required for free book.

**WEEKEND PUBLIC MARKET**

**NEW YEAR'S WEEKEND HOURS**  
FRI. 12-5 • SAT. 10-6 • SUN. 10-6

**WESTERN FLAVORS**  
50% OFF RED TAG ITEMS  
Select Harley Davidson Boots, Western Boots & Clothing  
Not to be combined with other offers

**BLOWOUT!**  
Women's Harley Davidson Clog  
REG. PRICE \$64.00  
Now Only \$19.95

**LACE & MORE**  
DISCOUNTED ARTS & CRAFTS SUPPLIES  
**50% OFF ALL CHRISTMAS MERCHANDISE**  
ORNAMENTS • GARLAND • WREATHS  
DECORATIONS • CANDLE RINGS  
SWAGS • ANGELS • TREES & MORE!  
LOCATED AT YELLOW ENTRANCE

**UNDER OUR BIG TOPS**  
CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS & DECOR  
**UP TO 50% OFF**

**Gibraltar**  
TRADE CENTER, INC.  
15525 RACHO ROAD  
(1-75, EXIT 36) 734-287-2000  
GIBALTARTRADE.COM

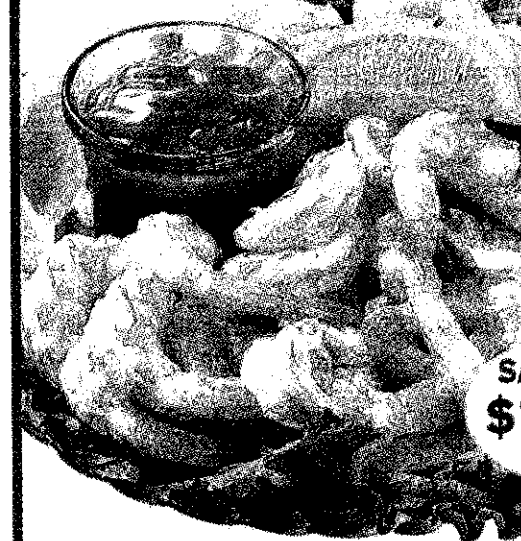
**DAN POST**  
HARLEY-DAVIDSON  
Wrangler  
Sage  
Justin

**BBY**  
HAT COMPANY  
Abilene

**laredo**

Happy New Year!

**\$5.99** lb.  
USDA Choice  
Family Pack  
Boneless  
New York  
Strip Steak



Buy One Bag  
Get One Bag  
**FREE**

Harvest of the Sea  
Large Cooked  
Shrimp  
26-30 ct.  
1.5 lb. bag, sold frozen

SAVE up to  
**\$19.99**  
on two!

**5 for \$10**  
Tony's  
Pizza  
Original or  
Thin Crust  
13.72-17.2 oz.



**69¢**  
Pepsi-Cola  
or 7-Up  
Products  
all varieties  
2 liter bottle  
(plus deposit)  
limit 6 please

**\$4.99**  
Rotisserie  
Roasted  
Miller Amish  
Chicken



**4 for \$5**  
Spartan  
Chunk Cheese  
all varieties  
8 oz.

from the Busch's Deli  
large 3 3/4 lb.\* bird  
\*pre-cooked weight

**\$10.99**  
Budweiser  
Beer  
Regular, Light, or Ice  
18 pack, 12 oz. cans  
(plus deposit)



Buy One  
Get One  
**FREE**  
Doritos  
Tortilla Chips  
13-13.5 oz.  
excludes Baked,  
Light, and Natural

SHOP ONLINE AT WWW.BUSCHS.COM  
Farmington Hills & Plymouth/Northville locations • pick-up only

**Fruit of the Vine...**

Purchase any 6 (or more)  
bottles of wine (750 ml)  
and receive a  
**10% DISCOUNT**  
on your wine  
purchase.



To enable our associates to enjoy  
the holiday with their friends and  
families, our stores will observe  
the following holiday hours:

**Friday, December 31**  
open until 9:00 p.m.

**Saturday, January 1**  
open at 7:00 a.m.

**BUSCH'S**  
Fresh. Food. Ideas.

Prices effective thru Sunday, January 2, 2005.



Artist Lucia Camilleri of Canton has made many nativity scenes, including this one in her home.

Unlikely artist pays  
homage to religious roots

BY JACK GLADDEN  
STAFF WRITER

It wasn't easy for a young girl growing up in Malta during World War II. "We had a lot of happy times, but there were a lot of sad times," said Canton resident Lucia Forte-Camilleri.

Her father, Emanuel Forte, was an artist. "And his father, and his father before him," she recalled. "He wanted a son to carry on his name and his work. God blessed him with seven daughters."

Lucia was in the middle, and the only one who had any interest in art.

"But a girl was not allowed to do anything in those days," she said. "One day, after my father got ill, he said, 'You're always hiding in the corner watching. Do you want to learn to paint? I'll teach you.'"

Teach her he did, but she wasn't allowed to sign any of his and her works. It just wasn't done. Still she became an artist and, after emigrating to the United States, she's exhibited her works in Europe and the U.S.

One of her favorites works - actually she's produced about 10 of them so far - is a nativity scene depicting the birth of Christ as she learned it as a child in Malta.

"We were taught that Jesus was born in a cave where they kept animals, not a manger," she said. "And in Malta we don't celebrate with Christmas trees. The people are so religious - 100 percent Catholic. We celebrate with the nativity scene. Every Christmas Eve the neighbors come over and we sing carols."



The nativity scene is depicted the way artist Lucia Camilleri remembers from childhood stories in her native Malta.

A few years ago Lucia set about recreating the nativity scene she remembered from her childhood. Set in the mountains, in a cave, it depicts the birth of Christ complete with cows, donkeys and, of course, shepherds.

This year she has created another one, about 4 feet by 6 inches long, complete with figures that her son bought on a trip to Malta. They were made in Italy, her father's native country.

It only took her about a month to create the scene, on a coffee table in the living room of her condo. She's not keeping it though. She's giving it away to friends who have a large basement family room in which it can be displayed properly.

In fact, she's given all of her crèche scenes away.

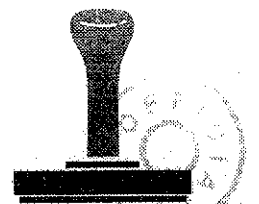
"That's what it's all about," she said. "Sharing. They'll enjoy it. I'll make a smaller one for me sometime."

FOR THE RECORD

DEATHS

**C**  
Charles F. 'Chuck' Comeau, 65, of Bloomfield Hills, died Dec. 23.  
**D**  
Charles Edward Dwyer, 78, died Dec. 17.  
**K**  
J. Richard Kroft, 94, of Oceanside, Calif., formerly of Plymouth, died

Wednesday, Dec. 8.  
**L**  
Josephine Leavenworth, 88, of Westland, died Dec. 24.  
Louise N. Lukomski, 87, of Plymouth, died Dec. 26.  
**M**  
Helen D. Morris, of Beverly Hills, died Dec. 27.  
**T**  
David J. Trainor, 67, died Dec. 24.



For the Record appears in every edition of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. Complete paid obituaries can be found inside today's Sports section in Passages on page C9.

ASSOCIATES IN  
PODIATRY  
OF MICHIGAN

Specializing in the Care of  
the Foot and Ankle  
Dr. Tammy Gephart, D.P.M.

Foot and ankle problems can literally alter, or even ruin, a person's lifestyle. Dr. Tammy Gephart is a specialist in the prevention, care and cure of foot and ankle problems, offering both conservative and surgical procedures for treatment.

As a podiatric surgeon, Dr. Gephart also has a strong interest in sports injuries, and works in general podiatry, pediatrics, orthotics, and diabetic limb salvage.

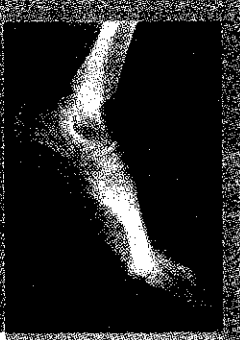
Credentials:

- Graduate of Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine
- Surgical Residency: Northport VA Medical Center
- Member American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons
- Studied with Dr. John Burzotta, Foot/Ankle Specialist, New York Jets
- Member American Podiatric Medical Association
- Member Michigan Podiatric Medical Association
- Member The American Diabetes Association
- HIPPA Compliant

For a confidential consultation, call:  
Dr. Tammy Gephart, D.P.M.

ASSOCIATES IN PODIATRY  
OF MICHIGAN, PLLC  
734-414-0874

990 W. Ann Arbor Trail, Suite 200  
Plymouth, MI 48170  
www.tammygephartdpm.com



Stop suffering from foot or ankle problems today!  
Dr. Gephart, D.P.M. can treat:  
Sports or Recreational Injuries  
Sprains  
Fractures  
Bunions  
Hammer Toe  
Plantar Fasciitis  
Ingrown Toenails/  
Nail Conditions  
Arch Pain  
Achilles Tendinitis  
Heel Pain  
Bursitis  
Arthritis  
Diabetes and Related Limb Affects  
Neuromas  
Nerve Entrapment  
Skin Conditions

**TAX PROBLEMS?**  
We settle any tax, any year  
**(248) 985-HELP (4357)**

CANTON CINEMA

Ford Rd 1 Mile W. of I-275 (734)  
**\$5.75** Kids all shows **644-FILM**  
**\$7.25** Students & Late Show Fri & Sat.  
**\$6.25** DAILY Matinees til 6pm **No Passes**  
Unlimited Free Drink & .25¢ Corn Refills  
ALL STADIUM SEATING / DIGITAL STEREO

**FREE**

one \$1.00 Concession coupon  
with every \$10 purchased in  
MOVIE GIFT CARDS

SHOWTIMES 12/30 - 1/06  
TITLES & TIMES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

**LIFE AQUATIC WITH STEVE ZISSOU**  
(R) 11:45, 2:10, 4:45, 7:10, 9:40  
FRI/SAT LS 12:00  
**LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS** (PG)  
"BUY LEMONY TICKET, GET ONE FREE" with this ad.  
2 PRINTS / 2 SCREENS  
12:00, 12:30, 2:15, 2:45, 4:30, 5:00, 6:45, 7:20, 9:00, 9:30  
FRI/SAT LS 11:15, 11:45  
**LADDER 49** (PG-13)  
12:20, 5:10, 7:30  
**FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS** (PG-13)  
2:50, 9:45 FRI/SAT LS 12:00  
**FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX** (PG-13)  
12:00, 2:20, 4:40, 7:00, 9:20  
FRI/SAT LS 11:40  
**THE INCREDIBLES** (PG)  
11:40, 2:00, 4:20, 6:50, 9:10  
FRI/SAT LS 11:30

**COUPON**  
20¢ FREE DRINK  
with \$5.00 purchase  
of movie, valid only on regular price  
BEST DEAL! No purchase at  
www.cantoncinema.com

www.cantoncinema.com

BOOST

FROM PAGE A1

Nicole Kline, graduated from Plymouth Salem in 2000 and now lives in Chesapeake, Va.

She married her husband in October 2003, after the two became acquainted through an online military pen pal service.

Currently she is in Canton visiting her mother, Denise Kline.

Nicole said she usually gets daily e-mails from her husband, who steals away every chance he gets to find out about news from home, especially about the couple's 8-month-old son, Brady.

"He works 12 to 14 hours a day, so he doesn't get much of a chance to use e-mail. I never get more than a paragraph at a time, but at least he can tell me he's OK," she said.

Every once in a while, her husband gets access to a telephone and calls home, but because of the time difference, Nicole said the calls usually come early in the morning.

"Most of the time he calls it's 2 or 3 in the morning. I wake up the next morning wondering if I really talked to him or not," she said.

Zsuzsics said communication from home is so vital for any sailor or soldier in wartime, especially because many of them don't have family to think about or with whom to keep in touch.

"Some people don't have anybody and are sitting on ships wondering if anyone even knows they are there," she said. "Our point with Operation Morale is to make them aware that everyone does know they are there and that we care about them."

Allen Zsuzsics, who is from Kansas, said it makes such a difference for the sailors when they receive letters from home, whether it is from someone they know or not.

"It's nice to know that people still think and care about us out here. Being away from your family is so hard, especially over the holidays. I miss my wife and baby so much.

When we get mail and packages from random Americans telling us how much we're appreciated, it

Happy New Year from AM2 Allen ("Zeus") Zsuzsics aboard the USS HARRY S TRUMAN!

I would like to wish my wife and son in Canton a very Happy new year, I'll blow you a kiss at midnight, I miss you guys very much.

So many troops are going to be away from their families this holiday season and it is so comforting to have such powerful support from back home. I just want everyone there supporting us to know that we see and hear your support all the time - please keep it coming!

We love the cards and letters we have received, please keep sending them!

Thank you all, you are the heroes keeping our spirits up while we are off protecting our awesome country.

Thank you again. Nicole, you are super mom, I'll be home soon to help. Brady, Daddy will be home soon, don't grow too fast! Santa came on the ship after he was done delivering presents and told me he brought you lots of toys because you have been a good boy! Have a Happy Holiday season and keep your chins up.

I will be thinking about you always. XOXO I love you.

Love Zeus/Daddy

Allen Zsuzsics wrote this letter to his wife and the Canton community.

makes being gone a little easier," he said.

Nicole said she is counting down the days when her husband returns from his six-month tour, though she understands it could end up being longer depending on what happens in the near future. War is never exact.

"I'm just like everyone else. I'll probably find out about four days before he arrives home. But we're really hoping for six months, which means he will be home in early April," she said.

Those interested in sending letters or cards through Operation Morale can send them to: Operation Morale, 813 Hughes Ave., Chesapeake, VA, 23324.

Zsuzsics said people can include a return address, because many sailors like to write return letters.

For more information about the group, call Zsuzsics at (757) 543-2808 or visit the group's Web site at www.operationmorale.homestead.com.

kkkand@oe.homecomm.net (734) 459-2700

FORECLOSURE

FROM PAGE A1

units be set aside for occupancy by chronically homeless persons.

When asked for comment about the letter, HUD issued the following statement:

"HUD is currently preparing to conduct a foreclosure sale, which we expect will occur in early spring 2005."

Yack said the letter left him with lots of questions but few answers.

"I'm assuming they have to go through some kind of formality of foreclosure," he said. "They don't give us any indication as to what the process is for the actual foreclosure. We don't know what the time frame is. It's clear that HUD has met their requirements under the law and that's about all."

He said from the letter it sounds like at some point bids would be taken on the property but beyond that he could only speculate.

"I would assume there are some options," Yack said. "Somebody like an NCR could purchase the building and

make the modifications to make it safe and secure. I suppose it could operate the way it did before."

According to Yack, another possible option would be for someone to buy the building, make the modifications and market it.

"I don't think that's going to happen," he said.

There is also the possibility someone could buy the building, tear it down and use the property for another purpose. But Yack said that didn't sound viable, either, because the cost of tearing it down would be very expensive and the property beneath is very small.

He said there are about 45 apartments in the building but, since it was senior housing, there are very few parking spaces for the property. And the apartments probably could not be converted for use as individual rentals.

"I believe there is just one centralized meter for the building as it relates to heat," he said. "Each apartment has a thermostat, but there's no independent furnace."

Another possibility, he said, is that nobody buys it and

HUD retains ownership. But that's a gray area.

"HUD doesn't run housing developments," he said.

He said there was a possibility that Canton could set up a housing authority, buy the building for something like a dollar, fix it up.

"Or maybe some other housing authority could buy it and turn it into housing," he said. "I think the community has shown it can support the need for senior subsidized housing. I hope somebody comes in and fixes it and people like those who were moved out of Sheldon Place will come in."

The building has been vacant since August 2001 when leaks and cracks appeared in the then three-year-old building. Residents were relocated. The building has been shored up but not repaired.

Its fate has been in limbo while a lawsuit filed by NCR against the contractor and various subcontractors works its way through the court system. That lawsuit was settled in September of this year.

jgladden@oe.homecomm.net (734) 459-2700

DISASTER

FROM PAGE A1

GREAT LOSS

A Canton woman, Dhammika Dewasurendra, lost her mother, who lived in Sri Lanka. Her mother was drowned by a tidal wave while on her way to visit relatives, a Detroit newspaper reported.

A family member said Dewasurendra was too upset to return calls for this story.

A local Hindu priest, Shiva Kumar, was vacationing in India - right in the path of the tsunami. He recently telephoned colleagues in Canton to assure people that he was OK.

Still, people who know him - and others living in the area - are bracing themselves for another onslaught.

"There's another attack from the ocean coming," said Shiva Kumar, another priest at the Hindu Temple, located at 44955 Cherry Hill. He added that both commercial and residential areas have been crippled.

"They just closed all the roads and shopping centers," Kumar said.

Canton native Robin Sanborn LaRoy, a 1998 graduate of Canton High School, said three of her friends are in regions devastated by the earthquake and tsunami.

Two of them are newlyweds - Mark and Elizabeth Moon of Fenton, who wed in Miami, but honeymooned in Thailand.

"They were taking an elephant ride in the mountains with a guide and someone in a Jeep stopped them," Sanborn LaRoy said. They attempted to warn them of the tsunami, but language barriers caused the words of caution to be whittled down to "Water, water."

Eventually, the newlyweds figured out what that meant.

Now, they are subsisting on bottled water and remaining food from the hotel - and try-

'There's another attack from the ocean coming.'

Shiva Kumar

Hindu priest

ing to figure out how to get back home. They have been using someone's satellite phone to periodically call their mothers to let them know they're OK.

Amazingly, their belongings made it through the devastation - thanks to mosquito netting.

"They were told to put their belongings up on their bed to keep bugs off of them," Sanborn LaRoy said. This was enough distance from the floor to keep them from getting drenched.

Since they are on a small resort island off the Thailand mainland, the infrastructure that helped get them there - such as ferries - isn't there to help them get back.

They were scheduled to fly home by Jan. 2.

"For now they're safe and dry and have food," she said.

ESCAPED

Another of Sanborn LaRoy's friends, Sonal Amin, is in India and escaped the tsunami's wrath. She was Sanborn LaRoy's maid of honor in her July wedding.

Several organizations are accepting donations to help the tsunami victims:

■ The Southeast Michigan Red Cross, call (800) HELP NOW, or visit www.semred-cross.org

■ The Canton-based Michigan Indian Community Web site, www.miindia.com; donations may be mailed to P.O. Box 871171, Canton, MI 48187. For information via e-mail, write to info@miindia.com.

THE CAMERA PHONE YOU REALLY WANTED, At Our Lowest Price Ever. Audiovox 8910 Camera Phone with Flash. Voice activated dialing. Full color screen. \$29.99. Order by January 3rd for FREE Delivery. America's Most Reliable Wireless Network.

VERIZON WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS STORES. ANN ARBOR, BRIGHTON, CANTON, DETROIT, FARMINGTON HILLS, FENTON, FT. GRATIOT, GRAND BLANC, LAKE ORION, LANSING, PONTIAC/WATERFORD, ROCHESTER HILLS, ST. CLAIR SHORES, SOUTHFIELD, STERLING HEIGHTS, TAYLOR, TROY, WESTLAND, WESTLAND, WAL-MART LOCATIONS, VERIZON WIRELESS STORE AT CIRCUIT CITY, AUTHORIZED RETAILERS.

\*Our Surcharges (incl. 2.31% Federal Universal Service (varies quarterly), 5c Regulatory/line/mo., & others by area) are not taxes (details: 1-888-684-1888); taxes apply. Activation fees: \$35/1 yr; \$15/2 yrs. IMPORTANT CONSUMER INFORMATION: Subject to Customer Agreement, Calling Plan & credit approval. \$175 termination fee, up to 45c/min after allowance, other charges & restrictions. Usage rounded to next full minute. Offers not available everywhere. Network details, coverage limitations & maps at verizonwireless.com. Nights 9:01 pm - 5:59 am M-F. Limited time offer. ©2005 Verizon Wireless.



## Sponsorships still open for ice festival

The Plymouth International Ice Sculpture Spectacular, scheduled for Jan. 17-23, still has some specific sponsorships available that are an integral part of the festival, and are not currently being funded in this year's budget, for businesses who want to help sponsor the annual event.

Sponsors will receive promotional consideration, and the festival is a nonprofit Michigan corporation so all or a portion of the donation may be tax-deductible, according to Mike Watts of Watts-Up Inc., who organizes the event.

Available sponsorships (with amounts) include:

■ The Plymouth Middle School design contest (\$2,500) - Presented in conjunction with the *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*. Sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students from the Plymouth community submit a design for a single block ice carving. One design (the one which looks the best as an ice carving design) is selected.

■ Student competitions and awards (\$5,000) - The High School and College student

competitions are one of the most important parts of the annual Plymouth International Ice Sculpture Spectacular, according to Watts. The students carve as a practical learning experience, and the judging is done as a way to evaluate the student's competency. Awards are given as a reward for the students' efforts, and the students are encouraged to speak with the judges and their instructors to obtain firsthand knowledge of how to improve their skills.

■ Caution tape sponsor (\$4,000) - Kellogg Park is secured with thousands of feet of special imprinted caution barrier tape to keep the massive crowds away from the ice sculptures.

This year for the first time organizers are offering a sponsorship for this item, which includes company logo and the words Plymouth Ice Spectacular.

Any person, business, or corporation interested in sponsoring one of these Ice Spectacular components should contact Michael Watts via e-mail at [mikew@wattsypinc.com](mailto:mikew@wattsypinc.com) or by calling (734) 459-6969.

# Canton ice sculptor has the coolest profession in town

BY LUANNE BERK  
CORRESPONDENT

Ted Wakar considers himself the local "show-off" of the Plymouth International Ice Sculpture Spectacular.

Wakar, a Canton resident and a regular carver at the annual festival, appreciates having the event near his home.

"It's my home court," Wakar said. "I find a certain comfort level as a competitor with it being close by. The other thing about Plymouth is I get to show off for family and friends. Even as much as 10 years ago, the family would stand around and listen to spectators. They are almost like 'groupies' who like to watch because we each have our own individual style."

Wakar has even talked to other sculptors (of wood or metal) who come to the festival to gain inspiration for their own work.

"That personal excitement is a big factor that motivates us as carvers," said Wakar, who pointed out carvers don't do the show for the money. "I make about three times as much doing work for a wedding reception or a hotel event as I do at these [events]."

Wakar grew up in Westland and has lived in Canton for about 15 years. When he started carving ice, he was one of just a few in the area. Like many in the profession, he studied culinary arts at Schoolcraft College, where he obtained an associates degree in culinary arts, along with the certification as an Executive Chef, which comes from a combination of training, experience, and, ultimately, specialized testing in order to be certified.

His experience includes working as a chef in the Ford Motor Company World Headquarters executive penthouse for 15 years, at a time when Ford had their own food service, and included their own staff of chefs.

When Ford decided to change their staffing, which included cutting Wakar's position, it was a difficult transition, but now he sees it was the opportunity he needed to pursue his dreams. Soon after that

career change, he began working as an ice carver in a more serious capacity, and has continued down that successful path for years.

### ICY ADDICTION

Now, Wakar considers ice carving an "addiction," as do many other carvers. The carvers talk amongst themselves — there is a great sense of camaraderie in the profession.

Originally, it was considered "carving," but in the last 10 years, after adapting and pulling in other tools that other artisans use, it's considered "sculpting," and the ice "sculptors" feel they can hold their own with other sculptors out there.

"Give us a little bit of time and a little bit of ice and we can do just about anything," said Wakar, who said he also likes to work with wood sometimes, just for fun.

He enjoys making walking sticks and staffs out of wood. However, Wakar said making a profit from wood carving would be very difficult because it takes him about 10 hours to make something significant out of wood.

So, he sticks to the ice sculpting and, with his connections as a chef, rarely has trouble finding work.

"There are more chefs in the market than ice sculptors," Wakar said.

### FESTIVAL EVOLUTION

Wakar has won the competition in Plymouth a couple of times individually, and as part of a team. This year features an amateur competition which will include a number of culinary colleges, including Schoolcraft, as well as some local high schools.

Wakar has seen the festival go through some evolutions.

"I've been doing this a long time," he said. "It's nice to see the art form fostered. I grew up as a carver there [Schoolcraft College], and it's nice to see others grow up there. (Fellow sculptor) Tajana (Raukar) was also a Schoolcraft student. Because Schoolcraft is supported by all these local communi-



Canton resident Ted Wakar loves the interaction he gets with spectators during the Plymouth International Ice Sculpture Spectacular, scheduled Jan. 17-23 in downtown Plymouth.

ties, they work together."

Ted also participates in professional competitions in Frankenmuth and Milford. He said he "likes competing in the team competitions because you get more time, more ice, and the camaraderie of working together."

Wakar also appreciates the international competitions because, "It's wonderful to take my family to international locations." For example, he competed at the Olympics in Nagano, Japan. The ice sculpting competition there was part of the arts and culture Olympic event — not an actual Olympic event — but nevertheless a real competition for ice carvers.

But for Wakar, the

interaction with the spectators is still the best part of the show. "Last year, I carved a big John Deere tractor," Wakar said. "I had lots of people who were in their 60s who told me, 'My dad used to have one of those,' and they would go on to tell their personal story. Many of the spectators have some kind of connection to the sculpture, and I get to talk about my kids, which was actually why I did the tractor in the first place, for my 6-year-old. It is the coolest job in town."

The Plymouth International Ice Sculpture Spectacular, which is held in Kellogg Park in downtown Plymouth, begins Jan. 17 and runs through Jan. 23.

Continued From Page A6

### CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF CANTON BOARD PROCEEDINGS-DECEMBER 14, 2004

**Item 13. REQUEST TO CREATE AND FILL POSITIONS IN LEISURE SERVICES. (LSD)** Motion by Bennett, supported by Zarbo to authorize Leisure Services to create and fill a Recreation and Facility Operations Supervisor and a Parks and Facility Maintenance Supervisor and eliminate the existing Park Supervisor and Facility Supervisor positions. Motion carried unanimously.

**Item 14. AWARD BID FOR PRINTING ONE EDITION OF THE LEISURE SERVICES DISCOVER BROCHURE. (LSD)** Motion by Bennett, supported by McLaughlin to award the bid for the printing of one edition of the Winter 2005 Discover program guide to S & N Graphic Solutions, P.O. Box 871296, Canton, MI 48187 in the amount of \$12,865 to be paid from account #'s 208-757-900-0000, 101-891-900-0000, 101-872-900-0000, 211-756-900-0000, 101-755-900-0000 and 101-750-900-0000. Motion carried unanimously.

**Item 15. AUTHORIZATION TO SIGN CONTRACTS WITH DETROIT EDISON FOR ELECTRICAL SERVICE TO FIRE STATION III. (PSD)** Motion by Bennett, supported by McLaughlin to approve authorization for the Township Clerk to sign the agreements with Detroit Edison Company for the Line Extension and to build new underground electric facilities and infrastructure along the north side of Cherry Hill and the West side of the Denton Road extension in Canton and issue a check for the combined cost of \$89,951.20 (Fire Budget Account No. 206-336-975-0000). Motion carried unanimously.

**Item 16. AUTHORIZATION TO CONTRACT FOR A CLEMIS STANDARDIZED GIS BASED MAP. (PSD)** Motion by Bennett, supported by Kirchgatter to authorize the Public Safety Department to contract with North Arrow Technologies to create a CLEMIS compliant road centerline file to be used for GIS mapping purposes and CLEMIS for a cost not to exceed \$6,860.00 (account no. 206-336-818-0000, Contracted Services). Motion carried unanimously.

**Item 17. PUBLIC SAFETY CONTRIBUTION TO CONSTRUCTION PROJECT. (FBD)** Motion by Bennett, supported by Kirchgatter to approve the transfer of \$777,116 from the Fire Fund and \$1,165,675 from the Police Fund to the Capital Projects Building Construction Fund for the completion of the Public Safety Building addition portion of the construction project. I further move to approve the following budget amendments for these transfers. Motion carried unanimously. Fire Fund: Increase Revenues: Appropriation from Fund Balance #206-000-699-0000 \$ 777,116 Increase Appropriations: Contribution to Capital Projects-Building #206-336-965-4020 \$777,116 This budget amendment increases the Fire Fund budget from \$11,573,077 to \$12,350,193. Police Fund: Increase Revenues: Appropriation from Fund Balance #207-000-699-0000 \$1,165,675 Increase Appropriations: Contribution to Capital Projects-Building #207-301-965-4020 \$1,165,675 This budget amendment increases the Police Fund budget from \$12,567,937 to \$13,733,612. Capital Projects Building Construction Fund: Increase Revenues: Contribution from Fire Fund #402-000-676-2060 \$777,116 Contribution from Police Fund 402-000-676-2070 \$1,165,675 Appropriation from Fund Balance 402-000-699-0000 (1,107,006) Total \$835,785 Increase Appropriations: Building Construction #402-302-975-0000 \$835,785 This budget amendment increases the Capital Project Building Construction Fund budget from \$15,248,798 to \$16,084,583.

**Item 18. REQUEST TO PURCHASE LOBBY FURNISHINGS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING. (FBD)** Motion by Bennett, supported by McLaughlin to approve a Purchase Order in the amount of \$18,199.10 (402-302-975-0000) for La-Z-Boy Furniture Galleries to purchase Lobby furnishing for the Administration Building. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Bennett, LaJoy, Kirchgatter, McLaughlin, Yack, Zarbo Nays: Caccamo Motion carried.

**Item 19. BUDGET AMENDMENT - SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS FUNDS 266, 267, AND 289. (FBD)** Motion by Bennett, supported by Kirchgatter to approve the following budget amendment for the Special Investigative Funds 266, 267 and 289. Motion carried unanimously.

**Item 20. APPROVE PURCHASE ORDER FOR ACLS RECERTIFICATION CLASSES FOR FIREFIGHTERS. (PSD)** DELETED FROM THE AGENDA **Item 21. RE-APPOINTMENT TO THE CONSTRUCTION BOARD OF APPEALS. (MSD)** Motion by Bennett, supported by LaJoy to re-appoint Edmond Robert to the Construction Board of Appeals (term expiring December 31, 2009.) Motion carried unanimously.

**Item 22. APPOINTMENT TO DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD. (SUPERVISOR)** Motion by Bennett, supported by Zarbo to appoint Dr. Tom Cassidy to serve on the Board of Directors of the Downtown Development Authority of the Charter Township of Canton for a four-year term, ending December 14, 2008. Motion carried unanimously.

**OTHER:** Supervisor Yack stated that the agenda item C-2, Second Reading to Amend Ordinance Firearms, which was deleted, will be revisited at a study session in January. The Planning Commission will give a general overview on the IREA project at the December 20, 2004 meeting. There will be a joint meeting between the Planning Commission and Board of Trustee on January 24, 2005.

**ADJOURN:** Motion by Bennett, supported by Zarbo to adjourn at 09:42 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

THOMAS J. YACK, Supervisor  
TERRY G. BENNETT, Clerk

Copies of the complete text of the Board Minutes are available at the office of the Charter Township of Canton, 1150 S. Canton Center Road, Canton, Michigan 48188, during regular business hours and can also be accessed through our web site [www.cantonmi.org](http://www.cantonmi.org) after Board.

Publish: December 30, 2004

C200284262



COMMUNITY FINANCIAL

Thinking forward. Banking right.

## FREE CHECKING AT COMMUNITY FINANCIAL

Serving your community for over 50 years, Community Financial gives you banking that's easier, friendlier and more rewarding than ever!

### Banking made easier with Free Checking

- no minimum balance requirement
- no monthly maintenance fee
- unlimited check writing
- free Visa Check Card
- free Internet Banking with Bill Pay

To open your account visit your local office, give us a call or visit us on-line at [www.cfcu.org](http://www.cfcu.org)

(734) 453-1200

(877) 937-2328 toll free

[www.cfcu.org](http://www.cfcu.org)

PLYMOUTH  
500 S. Harvey

CANTON  
6355 N. Canton Center

NORTHVILLE  
400 E. Main

NOVI  
43350 Arena Dr.

NCUA Your savings, federally insured to \$100,000 by the National Credit Union Administration, a U.S. Government Agency. Equal Opportunity Lender. © 2004 Community Financial

OUR VIEWS

## Ford Road set for big changes

The New Year's holiday always offers the opportunity to reflect on the past year, and think about what types of changes we can make during the year in front of us. That being the case, perhaps we should take a moment to think about the future of Ford Road.

There is no question that some township officials are thinking about it. It's no secret that Ford Road isn't exactly what the community wants for a main business thoroughfare. In fact, some people think it is a nightmare, especially those who have to drive it on a daily basis. Traffic congestion can be as bad as anywhere in metro Detroit. And it doesn't exactly offer the charm of, say, Main Street in downtown Plymouth.

Township officials know this as well as anyone. That is why they contracted with the Corradino Group to study Ford Road's problems last year. The consultant came up with a number of suggestions to improve the roadway, including consolidating or closing some driveways, building turn lanes to ease traffic and increasing shared access to businesses.

Officials are also pondering making Ford a boulevard. Not only is this an extremely expensive option, there are mixed opinions about what kind of impact it would have both on traffic conditions and on the businesses, which are plenty happy with the traffic the way it is.

Whatever township officials decide, there are some significant changes on the way in 2005, and in the years beyond. The coming of IKEA will make Ford Road more of a destination than it already is. While it was a coup of major proportions for the township to attract the furniture giant, there will be a price - that of added traffic and congestion. This is why officials are being very careful during the planning process with IKEA. They don't want to exacerbate the existing problems.

One positive for Ford Road is that there is finally something happening with Sheldon Place, the six-story building sitting vacant at the corner of Sheldon. Last week, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) sent a letter to Township Supervisor Tom Yack, informing him they were foreclosing on the building. Yack expects the building to soon be sold, and either rehabilitated or torn down. Either way, it will improve Ford Road's image.

Despite these changes and all the others being recommended for Ford Road, you have to wonder how much can actually be done to make the roadway what some hope for it. It's hard to imagine it becoming a pedestrian-friendly thoroughfare. It's just too spread out.

As township officials proceed with plans in the coming years they should remember the old saying about putting lipstick on a pig. Ford Road is what it is. Can it be improved? Sure. But to what degree remains to be seen.

## To improve economy, lower business taxes

As we look forward to what 2005 will bring, no doubt many of us are hoping for an improved economy.

We may be hoping in vain - unless the state Legislature takes some bold steps to make Michigan more friendly to business.

The state's economy, particularly the job market, lags significantly behind the national economy. Since November 2001, Michigan has lost 147,000 jobs - more than any other state - according to the State Fiscal Agency.

Growth in inflation-adjusted personal income has also lagged behind the national average, falling 1.6 percent in 2002 and rising only 2.1 percent in 2003.

The forecast for the new year is not very encouraging, either. The U.S. economy will grow by an estimated 3.1 percent, while Michigan's economy is projected to increase by 1.7 percent, according to the State Fiscal Agency's economic outlook report of Dec. 1.

Our heavy reliance on manufacturing jobs, which are increasingly going overseas because of lower labor costs, is part of the problem in this state.

The Single Business Tax discourages companies from adding jobs because it goes up as their payroll increases. Since the tax is also applied to benefits, it keeps businesses from offering health care to their employees.

Michigan also taxes equipment that businesses own and requires them to collect sales tax, which raises the costs of goods to consumers and of doing business.

We laud Gov. Jennifer Granholm and Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson's efforts to go abroad and attract new emerging business sectors to the Great Lakes State. But the Legislature needs to do its part, too, by making this a more business-friendly state in which to open up shop.



LETTERS

Questionable decision

This is in regards to the front page story on Dec. 23 ("Sign, art or icon?")

While certainly of unestimatable publicity value for the Big Boy restaurant chain and local owners, the Matars, it would seem there were several other items in Canton that would rate the most newsworthy.

The one chosen by the *Observer*, while receiving lots of publicity nationwide (and showing the indecisiveness of the court system), certainly doesn't rank up there locally with the advent of IKEA coming to Michigan and choosing a site in Canton. It's even surpassed by the building of the new Emagine Theater complex, which caused The Canton 7. But of even more newsworthy was the opening of Canton's Village Theater, a real plus to the art scene here in the township.

Robert W. Bulmer  
Canton

Thank you

We wanted to thank the community, as well as Kurt Kuban and the *Canton Observer* for the wonderful article about our son Sam. Our Spaghetti Dinner was a success, bringing in over \$2,500 to help with Sam's unpaid therapy expenses. This money is a huge help and will ensure Sam will continue to receive the treatment vital to his development. This would not have been possible without your help. We are deeply grateful.

Thank you to Nancy Santer of Discovery Toys and Cathy Nichol of Pampered Chef, both donated their time and products to help with our efforts. Thank you to Local 845 which donated the use of the hall for our dinner. We would also like to thank Splitz Gym, Skatin Station II, Arctic Edge, Laser Quest, Ann Arbor Therapeutic Clinic, the Movies at Briarwood, Olive Garden Restaurant, and California Pizza Kitchen for several gift certificates which were won by our attending families.

A special thank you to Todd Caccamo of All-Star Karate for giving our son Sam a years worth of karate lessons, a gift of socialization which is essential to his progress. Thank you to our extended family who ran the event and to the complete strangers who contributed out of the goodness of their hearts.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!  
Terri and Joe Shock  
Canton

State budget is a mess

I agree with Philip Power that the state budget is a mess. I think it got that way because our federal politicians let factories build overseas just for cheaper labor not because they more efficient.

As far as I am concerned, if you sell something here it should be made here, if practical. Because of our money-bribing type of government (PACs) you have what you see today.

You don't say what kind of solution we should have; certainly not taxing the hell out of the rest of us because I for one would just leave the state, if that happened and after a while the whole state would resemble Detroit.

One way to cut expenses is to stop subsidizing people for having kids that they can't support. I know some people make mistakes, but others have kids because they know that the state will pick up the tab.

Another pet peeve of mine is letting all these immigrants who are supposed to be sponsored and then they are on their own and the state picks up part of the bill to support them. I am tired of seeing them come over here to replace the American worker with a cheaper workforce. Again the politicians and CEOs in bed with each other.

Robert Eberts  
Westland

Problematic visit

I recently had some dental work done at a dentist in Canton. With two insurance companies, I assumed my dental work would be covered. I was surprised when the estimate for my cost was \$110-\$120.

I had lost a crown, and didn't want to waste any more time, so I agreed to pay the estimated cost. When I questioned the cost of another procedure, I was told that they have been dealing with insurance companies for 13 years, and know how insurance companies pay. I was more surprised when I received a bill for \$257, over twice the estimated cost!

I think this was very unfair. If I knew I would be charged this much, I would have gone to another dentist. If they know how insurance pays, why was I charged twice the estimate? What's the purpose of an estimate? Shouldn't the cost be within a reasonable range of the estimate instead of more than twice that amount? I would be interested in knowing if anyone else has had this problem.

Irene Thorne  
Canton

The whole picture

I am intrigued by the letter from Glenn Kremer (Nov. 18). Mr. Kremer seems to be quite upset about the current contract between the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools and the Plymouth-Canton Education Association. I am intrigued why he brings this up now seeing that the PCEA is in the third year of that four-year contract. Mr. Kremer leads me to believe he does not quite see the whole picture.

I get the feeling Mr. Kremer has not kept up with the financial situation in Lansing. Since the current contract was negotiated, the foundation grant has been frozen twice, with the third year of the freeze looming at the beginning of the new year. That will be coupled with a reduction in the foundation grant. These freezes and cuts were not present or foreseen when the PCCS and the PCEA negotiated in good faith.

It does seem Mr. Kremer misses the days of Errol Goldman and his cruel tactics. Today within the district there is less of a feeling of animosity and that the teachers and administration are all working together for the children and not battling with administration in ways that detract educators from their duties (one only needs to look to Northville in order to understand what it used to be like with

both sides fighting). The dedicated teachers of this district work hard and earn the raises (2.25 percent this year) that have been negotiated, even if the raises fall short of the current cost of living adjustment, currently at 2.7 percent and historically higher than teacher raises (we are not allowed to strike due to the beloved Gov. Engler).

The contract was accepted by the Board of Education, which is the governing body of the school district elected by the people, of which Mr. Kremer is a part. If Mr. Kremer is as well-schooled in labor relations and educational funding as his claims yearn to indicate, then I encourage him to step forward and run for a seat on the board.

I would be interested in how well he can hit the bull's eye on the ever-moving target that is educational funding in Michigan.

Bob Mackelby  
Plymouth

Observe American culture

Look what secularism has done to Canada! Will we go the same-sex marriage road, accept the idea that partial-birth abortion is certainly the proper decision after six-months of pregnancy, that businesses must be mandated to sponsor each and every liaison when "family" rights, leave, medical care, inheritance, and spousal considerations are put on the table?

Ours is a Christian nation with 90 percent or so observing some "one-God" concept as we live our lives. Secularists are among us, but should one child be able to cry foul when some Judaic-Christian observance is suggested as school fair, one child denying 99 believers their holiday preference to sing carols on school grounds?

Minority rights are protected in our country, but should one among us be able to rule the day when the rest wish to salute the Flag, pledge allegiance, sing a carol, pray, or bulletin board the ten commandments? We have readily accepted all to our shores, but our welcome must expect acceptance and respect from those new to our land for our customs, our American culture, our way of life.

Secularists abound. Respect can be theirs when our American culture is observed.

Neil Goodbred  
Livonia

SHARE YOUR OPINIONS

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

Mail:  
Letters to the editor  
Canton Observer  
794 South Main  
Plymouth, MI 48170

Fax:  
(734) 459-4224

E-mail:  
kkuban@oe.homecomm.net

QUOTABLE

"I think the community has shown it can support the need for senior subsidized housing. I hope somebody comes in and fixes it and people like those who were moved out of Sheldon Place will come in."

-Tom Yack, Supervisor of Canton Township, on HUD's decision to foreclose on Sheldon Place

**CANTON  
Observer**  
Part of HomeTown Communications Network™

Kurt Kuban Community Editor	Marty Carry Advertising Director
Hugh Gallagher Managing Editor	Peter Neill General Manager
Susan Rosiek Executive Editor	Dick Aginian President
Jack Lessenberry V.P. Editorial	Phil Power Chairman of the Board

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



# New agreement threatens safe asylum for refugees

They have come from El Salvador and Russia, Uganda and Colombia, Iraq and Cameroon. Most of them have been tortured. Most of the women have been raped along the way. Some die or are arrested on their way to the rundown streets of the southwest side of Detroit.

Yet several thousand do arrive every year, finding their way across the globe to an ancient red-brick former convent in the shadow of the Ambassador Bridge called Freedom House, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping "huddled masses yearning to breathe free" to do just that. Those who come here, and who huddle for a few weeks or months in its dormitory-style rooms, risk their lives for the promise of new ones in this nation or in Canada.

But now, thanks to a new agreement between Washington and Ottawa, Freedom House's ability to help these people may be largely cut off. On Dec. 29, something called the "Safe Third Country Agreement," took effect and severely curtailed the ability of most of the world's refugees to cross over to Canada, where asylum has been easier to win in recent years.

What it means is that refugees who land in a nation regarded by both Canada and the United States as "safe" (i.e., free and democratic) will be obliged to apply for asylum there, rather than crossing the border to do so.

"This is perfectly reasonable and meant to reduce the abuse of the asylum systems by stopping asylum shopping in both Canada and the United States," said George Costaris, who manages political and economic relations for the Canadian government's consulate in Detroit.

David Koelsch, Freedom House's staff attorney, doesn't think it is reasonable. He thinks this is an outrage. "This is an attempt by both governments to cut down on the number of refugees in the name of national security." What it will do, he fears, is doom some persecuted people.

"It will also force people to go underground, both in the United States and Canada," he fumed, since the new regulations specify that if refugees apply for asylum and are turned down, they may be detained and swiftly deported. Gloria Rivera, a Mexican-born Roman Catholic nun who has run Freedom House for the last five years, is dismayed by the ruling, especially because so many of the refugees who she has helped go to Canada.

For many years, Canada has been much more willing to grant refugees asylum than the United States has.

Members of her staff have been toiling selflessly to help them win political asylum and get a new chance since 1983, when Freedom House was founded, spurred in large part by local outrage over United States policy in El Salvador and Nicaragua.

Many of the founders were Catholic, though Freedom House's charter is scrupulously non-denominational.

Last year, the house housed more refugees from Albania than any other country, followed by the persecuted of half a dozen nations of sub-Saharan Africa.

Far more of them sought asylum in Canada than in the United States. Last year, Freedom House helped 2,481 adult men and women take the first steps to apply for asylum in Canada, and a mere 286 apply here.

Things will be different now. Not entirely; it will still be possible for people from some countries — Mexico, Cyprus and Iraq among them — to bypass the system and make a refugee claim from the United States. Those with close blood relations already in Canada will also be able to apply.

But otherwise, if a refugee lands in America first — and there are very few international flights direct to Canada — they will have no choice but to apply for asylum in the United States.

If it is denied, they won't have the option, as they have had in the past, of trying again in Canada.

They'll be sent back to wherever they escaped from. "This isn't about national security, it is economics," said Koelsch. In other words, the rich nations of the world no longer want the world's poor.

There is something sad about that, I think, especially given that this ruling comes at Christmas time, when people gather together to remember a homeless and stateless couple whose baby was born in a manger.

What is ironic too is that virtually all those making it harder for new immigrants are the direct descendants of persecuted immigrants themselves.

Detroit, where the refugees have huddled in Freedom House, is largely depopulated, with less than half as many people as it had half a century ago.

Canada is one of the most sparsely populated nations in the world.

Taking in a few more immigrants might not hurt either country. Odds are the immigrants would give back more than they receive. They usually do, you know.

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

# Term limits still a bad idea that enables lazy electorate

In the business world, people tend to trust people who have more experience compared to a green counterpart.

In the classroom, parents tend to be more comfortable with a veteran teacher than an educator who's only a year removed from college.

Experience is viewed by most people as a positive attribute, however, many turn the tables when it comes to politics.

When Michigan voters approved term limits for state offices in 1992, it was viewed as a quick-fix for the perception that all career politicians were bad. It was believed that government would become more efficient and new people would have a chance to serve.

While the latter is true, the former has not panned out. Since 1998, Michigan senators, governor, attorney general and secretary of state can be elected to no more than two, four-year terms. Members of the Michigan House of Representatives can be elected to only three, two-year terms. Those limits produced some interesting developments in the Michigan Legislature.

■ There are 25 members of the Michigan House who are under the age of 30, a few of whom still live with their parents.

■ A new speaker of the house, who's third in line to run the state, takes over next month. He is 34-year-old Craig DeRoche, a Novi Republican, who's in the midst of completing only his first two-year term in Lansing. He will appoint a number of lawmakers to committee leadership positions who have a comparable amount of legislative experience.

■ At a time state finances have been in a quandary for several years, there will be a one-third turnover in the Michigan House at month's end, a situation primarily created by term limits. This means dozens of new lawmakers need months to get acclimated to their new jobs, learn how the state spends \$39 billion a year and be prepared to make some significant votes on funding for state programs.

■ After leaving office, a number of term-limited legislators have been hired to work as lobbyists. These lawmakers-turned-lobbyists have more institutional memory and carry much influence over new lawmakers learning their duties. Also, these new lobbyists are using their lawmaking experience to pro-

mote their employer's agenda instead of promoting the public's agenda.

■ Veteran legislative staffers often have more institutional knowledge and influence on legislation instead of those elected to vote on bills.

■ In 2000, as the current economic doldrums were starting, state lawmakers collected more than a \$20,000 a year pay raise. Since a number of term-limited lawmakers would be forced out of office in 2002, there was little motivation for these lame-duck legislators to heed public cries to block these raises.

There's a common joke in Lansing: Members of the state House use one term looking for the bathroom at the Capitol, another term learning who they work with, they finally start working on some legislation in the third term, then they have to leave.

Our country's Democratic processes are cumbersome and time-consuming because of the number of checks and balances designed to protect citizens and discourage corruption. With such short opportunities available for competent individuals to serve in Lansing, the process handicuffs their ability to make a difference, especially for those serving in the minority party.

The term-limit policy is a gimmick that needs to be abolished. If not, Michigan voters need to at least extend the current periods lawmakers can serve. It is not fair to assume all politicians are corrupt. Many people who run for office have the best of intentions and deserve opportunities to be elected if they do a good job. It's not a bad idea to give some motivated, effective lawmakers a chance to serve for an extended period of time. Top-notch legislators can play a vital leadership role at times of transition.

There's another important element that makes our Democratic process work well: A participatory public who actively and fairly scrutinizes elected representatives, their activities and their votes.

There are some bad apples who get elected to office, and there is a mechanism to remove troublesome lawmakers: vote them out. In the House, the voters have a chance to grade their representative every two years.

If a more-involved electorate does its job, then there's a better chance their lawmakers will do a better job. A civic-minded public does far more for government's effectiveness than term limits.

Dan West is a staff writer for the *Livonia Observer*. He can be reached at (734) 953-2109, or at dwest@oe.homecomm.net.



Jack Lessenberry



Dan West



## WISH LIST

### YEAR-END EVENT

## HAVE YOURSELF A MERRY LITTLE PAYMENT



### 2005 LINCOLN LS V-8 SPORT\*

RED CARPET LEASE FOR RETURNING A/D/Z FORD EMPLOYEES, RETIREES AND ELIGIBLE FAMILY MEMBERS.

# \$317

A MONTH/  
36 MONTHS

# \$0

DOWN  
PAYMENT

# \$912

CASH DUE AT SIGNING  
AFTER \$7,000 CASH BACK\*\*\*  
INCLUDING \$1,000 FORD CREDIT CASH,  
\$500 FMCC A/D/X/Z BONUS CASH  
AND \$1,000 RENEWAL CASH

Security deposit waived. Includes acquisition fee. Excludes tax, title and license fees.

SEE YOUR  
METRO DETROIT  
LINCOLN MERCURY  
DEALER

ANN ARBOR  
**Sesi**  
2100 W. Stadium Blvd.  
at Liberty  
(734) 668-6100  
sesilm.com

CLINTON TOWNSHIP  
**Stu Evans Lakeside**  
17500 Hall Rd.  
at Romeo Plank  
(586) 840-2000  
stuevanslakeside.com

DEARBORN  
**Jack Demmer**  
21531 Michigan Ave.  
Between Southfield & Telegraph  
(313) 274-8800  
demmerjm.com

DETROIT  
**Bob Maxey**  
16901 Mack Ave.  
at Cadieux  
(313) 885-4000  
bobmaxeyjm.com

DETROIT  
**Park Motor**  
18100 Woodward Ave.  
Opposite Palmer Park  
(800) 585-4564  
parkmotorsjm.com

GARDEN CITY  
**Stu Evans Garden City**  
32000 Ford Rd.  
Just West of Merriman  
(734) 425-4300  
stuevansgardencity.com

NOVI  
**Varsity**  
49251 Grand River  
1-96 at Wixom Rd. (Exit 159)  
Two Exits W. of 12 Oaks Mall  
(248) 305-5300  
varsityjm.com

PLYMOUTH  
**Hines Park**  
40601 Ann Arbor Rd.  
at I-275  
(734) 453-2424  
hinesparkjm.com

ROCHESTER HILLS  
**Crissman**  
1185 South Rochester Rd.  
Between Hamlin & Avon Rd.  
(248) 652-4200  
crissmanjm.com

SOUTHFIELD  
**Star**  
24350 W. 12 Mile Rd.  
at Telegraph  
(248) 354-4900  
starjm.com

SOUTHGATE  
**Southgate**  
16800 Fort Street  
at Pennsylvania  
(734) 285-8800  
southgateincolinmercury.com

STERLING HEIGHTS  
**Crest**  
36200 Van Dyke  
at 18 1/2 Mile Rd.  
(586) 939-6000  
crestlinmerc.com

TROY  
**Bob Borst**  
1950 West Maple  
Troy Motor Mall  
(248) 643-6600  
borstjm.com

YPSILANTI  
**Sesi**  
950 East Michigan  
9 Miles West of I-275  
(734) 482-7133  
sesilm.com

\*2005 Lincoln LS V-6 Luxury model shown. \*\*40-mph frontal offset crash test. \*\*\*Call 1-888-56-LEASE for details. Payments may vary. Residency restrictions apply. Take delivery from dealer stock by 1/03/2005. See dealer for complete details.

# Area mailman delivers ad to nation

BY STACY JENKINS  
STAFF WRITER

Jim Willson is the mailman right out of the movies.

With his unassuming smile and his "at your service" attitude, he's the mailman you offer lemonade to on summer days and hot chocolate to on bitterly cold days.

And, he's quick to return small favors. Whether it's helping an elderly woman take out her trash or helping someone on his route plant a tree, Willson has made some friends along the way.

Customers on his route know all about their postal carrier and his delivery-with-a-smile attitude.

And now, the entire nation knows it, too.

The Farmington husband and father of three is one of nine U.S. Postal Service carrier ambassadors selected to represent the USPS in a national advertising campaign promoting its new services.

Willson, who returned to work at the Royal Oak post office in June, after recovering from two surgeries relating to a rare form of kidney cancer, is now featured on a 50-foot billboard at 43rd Street and Broadway in New York's Times Square.

It all happened so fast for the veteran carrier. He was asked by his supervisor to do a commercial interview, in which he read a script. He was selected from 12 interviewees to move on to Chicago for some media training, where

several more impromptu interviews took place.

"Even when we weren't being filmed, we were still being watched," he said.

After returning home to his normal delivery duties, he was notified he was selected to appear in print and television national ads.

"I almost died," he said, smiling. "I couldn't believe it."

From there, he attended a national postal forum in Washington D.C., where he met the U.S. postmaster general — a rare opportunity. He participated in a pre-game commercial for college football and he hopes to take his family to New York City to see the Times Square billboard, which will be up for about a year.

Willson is humble about

being selected from the field of 80 carrier ambassadors to do the national ad campaign.

"With the people I was competing against, I think I'm as positive about the services we offer as anybody else. Maybe they had to draw straws," he said.

His supervisor thinks otherwise.

"Jim has been with us for a long time," said Brenda Ernst, acting manager at the Royal Oak post office. "He goes above and beyond for his customers. They often call and write in about him. We're more than happy (one of the ambassadors) came out of our post office."

Willson said he's happy to be back to work and doing something interesting.



TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Jim Willson works, sorting mail before heading out to his route.

He was diagnosed with cancer in January and underwent two surgeries.

"I was thinking, 'How am I going to carry mail again? I can't even get to the end of my bed,'" he said. "Then, we went from that to this — this is where I ended up."

The advertising campaign is centered on new services offered by the U.S. Postal

Service.

"The whole emphasis is to show what a customer can do online, without having to go to the post office," Willson said.

He spent nine years on his previous 12 Mile and Campbell route.

"I went to weddings, graduations and funerals — we actually became friends," he said of his customers.

# Cold weather no pal to our furry friends

The Michigan Humane Society emphasizes that pet owners should make proper provisions for their animals now before it becomes a life or death situation — and one for which they can be charged with animal cruelty law violations. Usually, these charges are misdemeanors which can include a sentence of up to 93 days in jail, a \$1,000 fine, community service and loss of pet ownership for a specified amount of time.

The cruelty investigators see an increase in calls each winter, said spokeswoman Nancy Gunnigle. "Their call volume does go up dramatically when severe weather hits," she said. The MHS has four cruelty investigators, she added, and the society receives no government funding.

The Michigan Humane Society recommends that pets live indoors with the rest of the family. However, at a minimum, animals kept outdoors must have the necessary provisions as required by law to maintain their health. A properly-sized dog house with clean, dry straw as well as a healthy diet and additional calories can help a dog maintain enough warmth to carry him through months of cold weather.

Dr. Brad Davis, a veterinarian with VCA Animal Hospital of Garden City, doesn't see a great problem with neglected animals in his practice.

"There are outdoor breeds of dogs that do very well," Davis said. Animals do need access to water and it's important that pet owners make sure water doesn't freeze.

Veterinarian Dr. Vyvian Gorbea, owner of Plymouth Veterinary Hospital, also doesn't see much neglect in her practice. Animals are sometimes overexposed in the winter, she said, and some become overheated in the summer.

"If they're outside, they should have a shelter," Gorbea said of dogs.

Pets need food and water. She educates her clients about such needs.

Guardians who are not able to provide for their animals' basic needs of food, water and adequate shelter are encouraged to surrender the animals to an animal welfare organization such as the Michigan Humane Society.

The following tips will help owners care for their pets during cold weather:

■ When temperatures drop, pets should not be left outside

for any length of time. Even large or long-haired dog breeds cannot withstand severe or inclement weather. Bring small or short-haired dogs inside when temperatures reach 15-20 degrees Fahrenheit. Larger breeds and thick-coated dogs may remain outside, with adequate shelter, to about 0 degrees. Precipitation and severe wind chills should also be taken into account.

■ Cats should be kept permanently indoors or at least brought into a warm, animal-proofed garage during severe weather.

■ Because roaming cats often seek the warmth of car engines, knock on the car hood and honk the horn before starting your car.

■ Shelter is required by Michigan state law for dogs that must remain outdoors for any length of time. Adequate shelter means a well-built, insulated, slant-roofed dog house. The interior should be just large enough for the dog to stand and to lie down comfortably. It should be slightly elevated from the ground for air circulation. The door should face away from prevailing winds and have a protective flap to eliminate drafts. Clean, dry straw should always be provided for bedding rather than towels, rugs or blankets which may quickly freeze.

■ Several types of inadequate shelter frequently encountered by investigators include an unheated garage or shed, a dog house that is too large or that lacks straw, or dogs simply tied out to a porch, fence or deck with no shelter at all.

■ Increase food and water 10-20 percent for outdoor dogs during the winter months.

■ If an animal is cold to the touch, or his paws and ears have turned bright red, he may be suffering from frostbite. Move the animal to a warmer area and contact your veterinarian immediately.

The Humane Society's four cruelty investigators and one field agent handle approximately 4,000 cases of animal cruelty each year, in the cities of Detroit, Hamtramck and Highland Park. Suspected animal abuse or neglect in these cities should be reported by calling the MHS Cruelty Hotline at (313) 872-3400. A confidential message can be left 24 hours a day. Elsewhere, suspected animal cruelty should be reported immediately to the local animal control or police, Gunnigle said.



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Humane Society employee Christy Schmoock of Westland gets a kiss from Lana, a 3-year-old golden retriever/husky mix up for adoption.

## Holiday Bonus Cash is Back!

GET up to

# \$500

Holiday Bonus Cash

### ON SELECTED 2005 FORD CARS AND TRUCKS (1)

THE NEW FORD FIVE HUNDRED



Current Ford Employee lessees can Re-Lease a 2005 Ford Five Hundred SEL

For as low as **\$236**

A month(1) with a 24 month low mileage Red Carpet Re-lease.

With \$1,606 customer cash due at signing.

Includes security deposit and acquisition fee; excludes tax, title and license fee. Customer cash due at signing is net of all rebates. Payment includes \$1,000 renewal cash and \$500 employee bonus cash.



Current Ford Employee lessees can Re-Lease a 2005 F-150 FX4 SC

For as low as **\$171**

A month(1) with a 24 month low mileage Red Carpet Re-lease.

With \$1,266 customer cash due at signing.

Includes security deposit and acquisition fee; excludes tax, title and license fee. Customer cash due at signing is net of all rebates. Payment includes \$500 renewal cash, \$1500 RCL cash, \$500 Employee bonus cash, \$500 Holiday Bonus Cash and \$1000 VIN Specific Cash.

THE NEW FREESTYLE



Current Ford Employee lessees can Re-Lease a 2005 Freestyle Limited

For as low as **\$254**

A month(1) with a 24 month low mileage Red Carpet Re-lease.

With \$1,624 customer cash due at signing.

Includes security deposit and acquisition fee; excludes tax, title and license fee. Customer cash due at signing is net of all rebates. Payment includes \$1,000 renewal cash and \$500 employee bonus cash.



Current Ford Employee lessees can Re-Lease a 2005 Taurus SE

For as low as **\$138**

A month(1) with a 24 month low mileage Red Carpet Re-lease.

With \$1,233 customer cash due at signing.

Includes acquisition fee; excludes tax, title and license fee. Security deposit is waived. Customer cash due at signing is net of all rebates. Payment includes \$4,000 RCL cash, \$1,000 Ford Credit bonus cash, \$500 employee bonus cash and \$500 renewal cash.



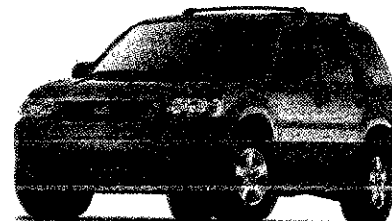
Current Ford Employee lessees can Re-Lease a 2005 Explorer XLT

For as low as **\$209**

A month(1) with a 24 month low mileage Red Carpet Re-lease.

With \$1,530 customer cash due at signing.

Includes security deposit and acquisition fee; excludes tax, title and license fee. Customer cash due at signing is net of all rebates. Payment includes \$500 renewal cash, \$1,500 RCL cash, \$1,750 Ford Credit Cash, \$500 employee bonus cash, and \$500 Holiday Bonus Cash.



Current Ford Employee lessees can Re-Lease a 2005 Escape XLS

For as low as **\$179**

A month(1) with a 24 month low mileage Red Carpet Lease.

With \$1,475 customer cash due at signing.

Includes security deposit and acquisition fee; excludes tax, title and license fee. Customer cash due at signing is net of all rebates. Payment includes \$2,000 RCL cash, \$500 Ford Credit bonus cash and \$500 employee bonus cash.

PLUS... \$500-\$1000 HOLIDAY BONUS CASH ON SELECTED 2004 MODELS TOO!  
see dealer for details

SUBURBAN FORD DEALERS  
OPEN SATURDAYS

(1) For special \$500 Holiday Bonus Cash on selected 2005 models, take new vehicle retail delivery from dealer stock by 1/3/05. Restrictions apply. See dealer for complete details. **Some payments higher, some lower. Not all Lessees will qualify for lowest payment.** For special lease terms, RCL Cash, Ford Credit Bonus Cash (\$500 Employee bonus cash on 2004 F-150FX4), take new retail delivery from dealer stock by 1/3/2005. RCL Cash may be taken in cash, but is used towards down payment in examples shown. Lease renewal cash only available to customers terminating their Ford Division Red Carpet Lease and re-lease for 24 months by 1/3/2005. Leases terminated early qualify if terminated within program dates. Supplies are limited, not all dealers will have all featured models. Residency restrictions apply. See dealer for complete details. All payment examples are for Current Ford Employee and eligible family member Lessees.

**VARSITY**  
3480 Jackson Rd. 1-800-875-FORD  
ANN ARBOR

**ATCHINSON**  
9800 Belleville Rd. 734-697-9161  
BELLEVILLE

**GENE BUTMAN**  
2105 Washtenaw 734-482-8581  
YPSILANTI

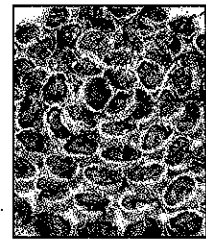
**BRIARWOOD**  
7070 Michigan Ave. 734-429-5478  
SALINE

**HINES PARK**  
I-96 at Milford Rd. 248-437-6700  
LYON TWP.

**FRIENDLY**  
2800 N. Telegraph, 734-243-6000  
MONROE



## OPEN SATURDAYS



## Simple, stylish

### HANDMADE PIECES STAND UP TO YEARS OF USE

STORY BY DIANE GALE ANDREASSI | CORRESPONDENT

**B**rian Thelen once bought an Amish-made bedroom set and he was so impressed with the workmanship that he kept buying more of the handmade furniture for the rest of his house. Since then, he's added an Amish living room set with a desk, a computer cabinet, stereo cabinets and end tables. "The quality is so much better," the Sterling Heights resident says. "You need two people to carry the headboard on our bed. It's very well-built furniture."

He likes that he can customize orders, too, something shoppers can look at if purchasing furniture is on the agenda in January.

"Essentially it's the way you want something and in the finish you like," he adds. "Probably the best thing to do is examine the quality of the Amish furniture versus other furniture."

#### AMISH SIMPLICITY

The Amish are a Mennonite group descended from the followers of Jakob Ammann, a Swiss Mennonite bishop. Since they live a simple life patterned after 17th century rural Europe, most Amish reject many modern society developments. That's why much of the Amish furniture represents the old world through historical design and tool use.

About 80 percent of the Amish in the United States are located in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana.

"Primarily what makes it Amish is that it's hand-made and basically like furniture made many, many years ago," explains Noreen Desilets, designer with Laurel Furniture in Plymouth.

"The staining and quality is unsurpassed by anything else because it is all hand-done."

People often think all Amish furniture is done in mission style, she adds.

"But the Amish have progressed, as the world has, and they realized that they couldn't continue to make it that way," Desilets says. "They make everything from Queen Anne to something traditional and things that lend themselves toward a transitional line of furniture. And of course they still make the true mission style."

Customizing is one of the Amish furniture's biggest attractions. Thelen wanted a stereo cabinet, for instance, that is 1 foot higher than he found in stores and ordered it at Amish Direct Furniture in Utica.

Most of sale associate Adam Gerber's customers are repeat buyers or are referred by others. Amish Direct works with 180 different builders often using fax services to place orders, since most Amish don't have telephones. With some Amish builders, Gerber says, he has a "middle man" who drives the orders to their homes.

There are about 8,000 different Amish-made items in oak, quarter-sawn oak, cherry, maple, hickory and walnut. It takes between eight to 12 weeks to

Photo: Amish furniture features handmade pieces following historical design. This dining set includes steam-bent chair backs and table with gear-driven table extension.

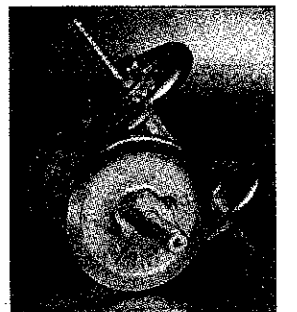
PLEASE SEE AMISH, B2

## Accents

### Wanted: home gyms

Soon every would-be dieter will be struggling with food choices and looking to knock off holiday pounds by signing up with a health club.

But you don't do that. You already own exercise



equipment and use it at least five days a week. (OK, maybe it's three days a week, or worse yet, the equipment is used for hanging clothes.)

We'd like to feature home gyms created in lower levels or basements at the homes of Observer & Eccentric readers. If you have a combination of a treadmill, stationary or recumbent bike, elliptical or free weights set up in that special room, we'd like to hear from you and include your room and you in our story.

Please contact Ken Abramczyk, At Home editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia MI 48150, call (734) 953-2107 or e-mail him at kabramczyk@oe.homecomm.net.

### Playing it safe

"Children like to run and play and sometimes things get in the way," says James and Morris Carey, writing for AP Weekly Features.

"To provide a safe environment for little ones, it's important to fully child-proof your home.

"First, cushion all sharp corners. Add special 'kid' locks on all doors, drawers and cabinets, and kid-proof latches on all kitchen appliances. And don't forget locks for bifold doors and toilet lids.

"Put slip-type loose covers on doorknobs and stove knobs, and non-slip pads and strips underfoot (to add traction for little feet).

"You'll find all these items and more at your local hardware store. An ounce of prevention is definitely worth a pound of cure, especially when it comes to little ones."

### Vix it

"If you have trouble drilling precise hinge holes to mount hinges on doors of all sizes because your drill bit wanders a tad (making doors hang kind of oddly), you need to know about Vix," says James and Morris Carey, writing for AP Weekly Features.

"It's a specialty bit made just for drilling hinge holes. It has an outer cylinder tapered at the end that fits right into the countersunk hinge holes.

"With the hinge hardware in place, all you do is fire up your drill and press down. The center bit is spring-loaded and lowers down, centered precisely in the hinge hole. It drills to a predetermined depth that you set beforehand.

"It's an invaluable specialty tool and inexpensive, to boot."

## Take steps to scale down kitchen clutter

The kitchen is one of the busiest spaces in a home.

Cooking, eating, entertaining and socializing all happen in the kitchen - it's the main gathering place in the home. As a result, it is likely the most unorganized room in the house.

If your kitchen cabinets and junk drawers are jammed and overflowing, you are running out of counter space, or you can never find what you need when you need it, it's time to take control of your kitchen clutter. Here are some tips to organize your kitchen and keep it clutter-free,



Utilizing storage solutions and tossing unused gadgets can help keep your kitchen organized and clutter-free.

courtesy of organized-mom.com.

■ Create an organizational plan. Establish work stations like a restaurant does and keep related items at each

station: prep area, cooking, baking and cleaning. ■ Purchase storage solutions. Plastic bins, baskets, containers,

PLEASE SEE CLUTTER, B2

## MARKET PLACE

### Munchkin Melodies

Give your child a personalized CD with at least seven songs repeating his or her name more than 30 times.

Munchkin Melodies & more, based in Wixom, makes the CDs as well as personalized, interactive CD storybooks.

The entertaining and educational songs teach about the alphabet, manners, friendship, sharing, love and other topics. More than 3,000 names are available.

Munchkin Melodies & more was started this year by Barbara Ephraim-Gooze and Becky Weitzman. The women were looking for intriguing and novel ways to spark educational interests in their grandchildren, and found the ideal "tool" with personalized musical CDs and CD storybooks. Ephraim-Gooze and Weitzman launched the collection with a computer system in the spring. By summer, they were giving displays at shows, fairs and exhibits throughout metro Detroit. Call (248) 788-9547 or (248) 926-1727, or e-mail Munchkinmelodies@aol.com.

### Submissions

Do you have a special item you'd like to showcase in Marketplace on the front of At Home? We'd like to feature it! Send a photo or slide of the piece, along with information, to: Ken Abramczyk, At Home editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.



# Use a silicone product to treat grout

BY JAMES AND MORRIS CAREY  
FOR AP WEEKLY FEATURES

Rosalie asks, "We recently had our countertops re-tiled, and we got two separate opinions on how to treat the grout. One was to use Old English Lemon Oil, the other to use a silicone sealer."

"I chose the oil because it was less expensive, but now I'm wondering if I did the right thing. My main concern is to avoid as much future cleaning

as possible.

"Also, is it possible to change the color of the grout at some future date?"

Since both of the products you mentioned are relatively inexpensive, the cost to seal the grout shouldn't be the issue here. You could be penny-wise and pound-foolish by not using a sealer that will offer the greatest longevity.

In our opinion, your interests would best be served by using a silicone product to seal

the grout. Not only will it last longer, but it is highly impervious to water, more so than lemon oil.

Furthermore, we believe that if you go with the lemon oil rather than the silicone, you may find yourself spending a great deal of your spare time sealing and resealing your grout.

And, where silicone generally dries to a clear finish, lemon oil tends to yellow the grout. As far as changing the color

is concerned, there are a couple of different ways that this can be accomplished.

The first method is by dyeing the grout. Obviously, any sealer that may have been previously applied to the grout will need to be removed so that the dye may be absorbed into the grout.

A trip to your local hardware store or home improvement center will get you what you need to perform this relatively simple task.

## HOME CALENDAR

### Home decor

Haberman Fabrics, 905 S. Main in Royal Oak, presents a variety of home decor classes for different skill levels. The schedule includes Lampshades, Sundays, Jan. 2-23 (fee is \$80); Beginner Pillow, Mondays, Jan. 3-17 (\$60); and Roman Shade, four sessions beginning Thursday, Jan. 6, or Friday, Jan. 7 (\$80). Call (248) 541-0010, e-mail: ContactUs@HabermanFabrics.com or visit www.HabermanFabrics.com for registration and other information.

### Make a blanket

Learn to make a fleece blanket in a class 6:30-8:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 10, at The Community House, 380 S. Bates in downtown Birmingham. The fee is \$20. To register or for more information, call The Community

House at (248) 644-5832, or visit www.communityhouse.com.

All of the pieces will be assembled in the class. You will need two pieces of fleece in your favorite colors (each measuring 1-3/4 yards); sharp scissors; long, sharp pins; needle and thread to match the fleece; and rotary cutter and board (optional for basic fleece blanket).

Instructor Kathy Hosken has been participating in craft shows for 25 years.

If you have an item for the calendar, please submit it at least two weeks in advance of the date it should be published. Send to Ken Abramczyk, At Home Editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150 or e-mail kabramczyk@oe.homecomm.net.

## GARDEN CALENDAR

### Beverly Hills Garden Club

Della Haydon of Garden City will present a program on indoor bonsai to the Beverly Hills Garden Club 1 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 4, at the Beverly Hills Village Office, 18500 W. 13 Mile. Guests are welcome.

### Livonia Garden Club

Composting will be the topic of the next meeting of the Livonia Garden Club, 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 4, at the Livonia Senior Center, Five Mile at Farmington Road.

Master composters Jane and Allan Geisler, instructors at Henry Ford Community College, will present a program outlining indoor and outdoor composting as a component of organic gardening.

Increase your knowledge of the eco-

logical and gardening benefits of the use of "black gold" - compost.

### School of Gardening

The Michigan School of Gardening offers a variety of classes for different levels. Register early. Seating is limited.

Some classes have pre-requisites. For more information, call (248) 4-GARDEN or visit www.michigangardening.com. The schedule includes Effective Hand-drawn Design, Tuesdays, Jan. 4-25, in Pontiac or Thursdays, Jan. 6-27, in Livonia (fee is \$168); Growing Vegetables, Mondays, Jan. 10-24, in Livonia (\$102); Ins and Outs of Plants, Mondays, Jan. 10-24, in Pontiac (\$102); and Shade Gardens, two Wednesdays beginning Jan. 12 in Pontiac (\$72).

The School of Gardening also offers specialty classes and classes for the certificate of landscape and garden design at The Community House, 380 S. Bates in Birmingham, west of Woodward and south of Maple (15 Mile). For information or to register, call The Community House at (248) 644-5832. This schedule includes Focus on Design, Saturdays, Jan. 8-29 (\$137).

### Tropical plants

English Gardens will present free gardening seminars on Saturdays in January at its five metro Detroit stores - in West Bloomfield (phone (248) 851-7506), Royal Oak/Troy (phone (248) 280-9500), Dearborn Heights (phone (313) 278-4433), Clinton Township (phone (586) 286-

6100) and Eastpointe (phone (586) 771-4200).

Caring for Tropical Plants will be the topic 11 a.m. Jan. 8. Learn about houseplants that will thrive indoors. The seminar will provide information on how to select a plant, tips to encourage flowering and suggestions on using plants to enhance a home's decor. For the nearest English Gardens location, call (800) 335-GROW or visit www.englishgardens.com.

If you have an item for the calendar, please submit it at least two weeks in advance of the date it should be published. Send to Ken Abramczyk, At Home Editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150 or e-mail kabramczyk@oe.homecomm.net.

## AMISH

FROM PAGE B1

get the furniture, which is delivered to Amish Direct.

"The biggest thing going now is dining rooms and entertainment centers," Gerber says.

### ALL SOLID, NO LAMINATES

It's difficult to stock the furniture, Gerber says, because oak features 15 different stains and cherry wood has eight stains.

"It's all solid wood," he adds.

"There's no particle board or plastic laminate junk. It's all English dovetail drawers with interlocking notches, which is the strongest corner possible. It's heirloom furniture that's going to outlive all of us by a couple of hundred years. The stuff you get from the big chains is made overseas and all junk pretty much."

He finds that customers, like Thelen, often outfit a room and come back a couple of years later to finish another room.

"Let's say you get a hutch from grandma and you bring in a drawer," Gerber says.

"We'll send it down and they'll do a custom-stain match for the table and chairs."

Often customers will bring

in a picture. The customer wants the style shown in the picture, but they also want it made the Amish way.

Amish furniture sold at Laurel Furniture in Plymouth ranges from bedroom and dining room sets to plant stands and other accessories. The furniture is built in Goshen, Ind., according to owner of Laurel Furniture Don Wurm.

"When they build something it's not just one family building a whole dining set," Wurm says. "One family builds chairs, another family builds tables, another builds china cabinets and another does the finishing. They specialize in their particular area."

Once customers start buying Amish furniture, they tend to keep coming back.

"The quality is lifetime furniture," Wurm adds.

"People are very impressed by the way it's made. It's like the furniture that was made many, many years ago. Inside the drawers are finished as good as the outside of the cabinet."

"It's a little more, but very reasonably priced and I think that's why we sell so much of it," he said.

Desilets adds: "People say they don't make furniture like they used to. Well, the Amish do."

Diane Gale Andreassi is a freelance writer for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers who lives in Livonia.

## CLUTTER

FROM PAGE B1

racks and freestanding units are inexpensive storage ideas. You can find deals at dollar stores, or check stores that carry overstocks, closeouts and slightly dented items.

You may even be able to reuse items you already own. For instance, a shoebox covered with the same contact paper as your shelves can store spice bottles.

If you are short on cabinet space but have plenty of wall space, try using an old bureau

to store canned goods, towels, extra dishes or cookware. Don't forget to nest items inside one another to maximize space.

■ Every item needs its own home. When items have a designated place, they tend to get put away. If they don't, they tend to get lost.

Utilize bins and baskets wherever possible to keep "like things" together and readily accessible. Go vertical to free up horizontal space. Utilize the empty vertical wall space in a nearby closet by installing shelves that can be used to store canned goods.

Install hanging broom and

mop holders. Employ hooks, pegboards and lazy Susans. If your counter space is at a premium, mount some of your small appliances under the cabinets.

■ Toss clutter. Get rid of what is old and what you don't use. Check expiration dates of herbs, yeast and baking powder. Throw out cooking gadgets that are gathering dust. Remove items on counters that don't belong in the kitchen.

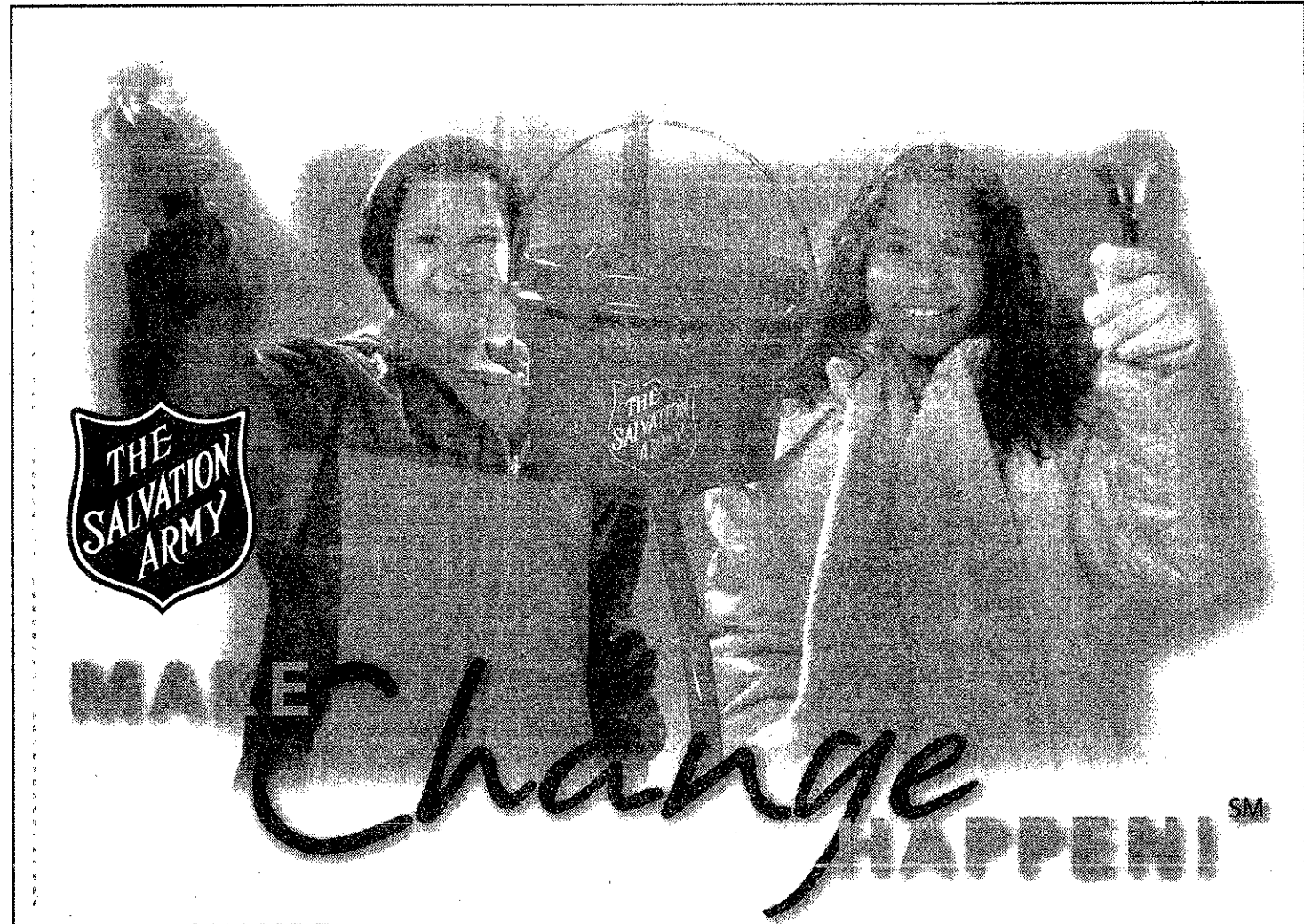
■ Organize for maximum efficiency. Place items near each other if they will be used together. If your coffee maker sits on the counter, store the

coffee cups, filters and sugar in the cabinet above it.

■ Clean everything. Tackle cabinets, drawers, shelves, countertops, refrigerator and oven. Replace tattered dish towels and torn or worn shelf paper.

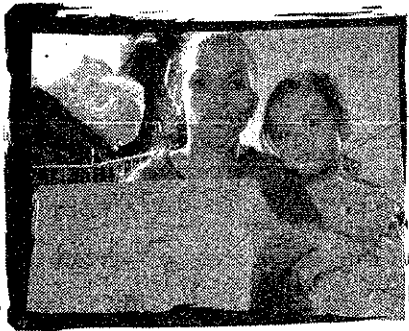
■ Keep up clutter. Since you've spent all that time organizing your kitchen, you'll want to make sure it remains clutter-free.

Set aside some time once a month to check for clutter buildup, and spend a few minutes each night putting away anything that doesn't belong in the kitchen.



## CHANGE

for the homeless and hungry



Take time to speak with a few homeless people and one thing becomes obvious: there's no single path that leads to life on the street. It could be a job loss or drug addiction, it makes no difference, to us. In the past year, The Salvation Army served 2,191,095 meals, or an average of 6,003 meals per day, and provided 595,015 nights of shelter, or an average of 1,630 beds per night. The numbers are staggering. The need is heartbreaking. And it all adds up to a huge opportunity to make a difference for the homeless and hungry in Detroit.



Did you know that the number of people in metropolitan Detroit needing help with basics like food and shelter has increased by 33 percent over the past three years?

But our ability to protect and support our vulnerable men, women and children is at risk this holiday season. With fewer public locations available for our Red Kettles, we need your help to **Make Change Happen** for people who need us most...

Your gift will help The Salvation Army bring real and lasting changes to the lives of thousands of people in need this holiday season and throughout the year. By sharing with The Salvation Army, you help **Make Change Happen**... and bring hope where once there was despair.

Don't wait to hear the bell ringing! Call or click and **Make Change Happen** today!  
1-877-SAL-MICH or RedKettleCampaign.org

1-877-SAL-MICH or RedKettleCampaign.org

**GUARANTEED LOWEST PRICE!**

**KITCHEN REFACING**

- Factory Direct
- Costs Much Less Than Replacing
- Available in Solid Oak, Maple & Cherry
- References in Your Neighborhood
- FREE ESTIMATES

**cabinet clinic**  
The Leader in Cabinet Refacing  
West 734-421-8151  
North-East 586-751-1848  
www.cabinetclinic.com

Stefanie Powers  
in  
The Rodgers & Hammerstein's  
**The King and I**

PHOTO: JAMES BATEMAN

"The most RAVISHING SPECTACLE this side of Siam! The King and I is perfect."  
-Columbian, Liz Smith

**"In a word, MAGNIFICENT!"**  
-The New Yorker

Fisher Theatre • January 11-30

Tickets on sale at the Fisher Theatre box office, all **ticketmaster** outlets inc. Marshall Field's, charge-by-phone 248-645-6666, & ticketmaster.com

Info 313-872-1000 • NederlanderDetroit.com  
Groups (12 or more) weekdays 313-871-1132

# Create a party for your kids

I was selected as room parent for my child's elementary classroom, but I am not very good at party planning. I'm just not creative. What can I do?

You do not have to be creative to plan school parties.



Diana Koenig

Use ideas and materials that other people have created. Purchase "how to" books or check them out at the library. You do not need an original idea to plan a party. Most schools allow about one hour for the party. There are usually three parties scheduled per school year. Keep the planning simple. Have a basic plan before arranging a meeting with other parent helpers. Brainstorm ideas with them. Your focus should be on entertaining children. Kids enjoy simple games and prizes. The same basic game can be changed according to the party theme. Take for example a younger child's game, "Pin the tail on the donkey." For Halloween, play pin the nose on the jack-o-lantern or for Christmas, pin the star on the tree top. Do not try to do everything yourself. Delegate work and supplies. This is a classroom of children who all have parents that can contribute in some way. Some parents may have time to help on the day of the party or perhaps they could send baked goodies. Working parents could donate paper goods. Some schools have parent boards that contribute some money to the school parties. Apply this money to game prizes or to a guest performer such as a clown, a magician or a story teller. Do a grade level party. Arrange a party with all the classes of a specific grade level. Use the combined money for a guest performer. Another option is to set up activities in each classroom and have the

different classes rotate into each of the rooms. One school year I had a party with an international theme. Each classroom chose a country and planned a craft, game, and food associated with that country. The easiest way to plan a party is to select a specific theme. Plan the decorations, food, games and prizes around the theme. The holidays celebrated may depend on whether your child attends a private or public school. Most schools would celebrate in October with a Fall or Halloween party. December would be a Winter Holiday, Hanukkah or Christmas party. February might include a Valentine's Day Party. You may decide to make invitations by hand or use the computer. Part of the enjoyment of an event is the anticipation that it is going to happen. You can give the invitations to the teacher several days ahead of time so she can pass them out to the students. Choose prizes at carnival supplies, mail order houses, dollar stores or discount stores. Prizes could include candy, pencils, book markers, erasers, crayons, markers, fast food coupons, and five-cent toys (they are abandoned quickly but enjoyed for the moment). Use paper lunch bags or zip lock bags to hold prizes. Lunch bags are available in different colors. The cheapest prize bags are brown bags decorated by you or the children. The children could start the party by decorating their bag with stickers, cut-outs and markers. If you have several parent helpers the day of the party, you could plan centers with activities. Divide the children into four groups. Assign a color for each group and give each child the appropriate colored name tag so they can rotate to each center with their group. It is easier to get the attention of a group of five children than 20. Party ideas for elementary grade children for the school year (ideas may need to be modified according to the grade level):

## WINTER PARTY

**Invitations:** Write or print the party information on a snowman or Christmas tree. **Refreshments:** Decorated cookies, trail mix (different cereal, pretzels, M & M's and raisins), soda. **Games:** Name that tune - record holiday songs and have the children guess the title. **Bean bag toss:** Cut out a tree from green poster board, attach it to a box and cut out holes for the bean bags. **Fill a jar with candy kisses.** Have each child guess how many kisses are in the jar.

## VALENTINE PARTY

**Invitations:** Write or print party information on a heart. **Refreshments:** Make red punch and create ice cream sundaes (vanilla ice cream, marshmallows, chocolate chips, sprinkled candy). **Group activities:** Decorate a box to keep valentines. Cut a hole in the top of a shoe box and decorate with stickers, doilies, and cut out hearts. Have a contest and vote for a winner on the funniest, most creative, simplest or prettiest box. Have the children play postal delivery clerk and pass out valentines to each of their classmates. Send a note home ahead of time so each child will have valentines to give. **Play valentine bingo** using heart candies for markers. **Set up the games and crafts** at centers. **To establish order and bring an end to the party** use the last 10 minutes to read a seasonal story or play bingo. Buy paper goods to coordinate with the theme. If you do not want to follow the traditional parties, choose themes such as a carnival, a beach party, a 1950s party, a pizza and movie video, or a party to play favorite board games.

**Today's Refrigerator Bulletin:** "Simple party planning results in a smashing success!"

Send your questions and success stories to: Diana Koenig, E-mail: dianakoenig@hometownlife.com or www.domesticplanner.com.

# Distemper vaccine doesn't control poor behavior

Years ago, a young actor on the David Letterman Show talked about how much he learned from working with Michael Caine. Waiting between shots annoyed him, but Caine told him that he was being paid for the waiting, not the acting, as the acting is the fun part. All professions have to deal with problems like this. Police deal with endless paperwork. Firefighters have long periods of tedium between runs. Fast food workers have to deal with drive-thru speakers that sound like 1970s NASA transmissions. Medical professionals in all fields have to deal with answering the same questions over and over. No one minds answering the questions. Client/patient education should be a cornerstone of medicine at every level, as client understanding makes the treatment go more smoothly.

**FLEA TALK**

Years ago, before Advantage and Frontline, flea control was a huge hassle, and my days filled with flea appointments. I had a speech about fleas, telling one person after another how to be rid of these unpleasant invaders. I recited it so often that the speech basically recorded itself in my head. I would replay it without having to think, like a child who memorizes a speech for a Christmas play. One afternoon, I heard a low annoying hum in the room. I then realized it was me talking. The two better products I mentioned have retired my flea speech, but many questions I hear commonly still require repetitive answers. Let's try to make this a group session, answering a few common questions for everyone at one time. Fleas demand concern from owners whose pets are afflicted,



Dr. Brad Davis

especially when a human family member gets lesions on their leg. Why do fleas like some people and not others? They don't. The fleas we see around here don't like the taste of people. To find human fleas, travel to the Appalachias, where pockets of human fleas still persist. Fleas are very species specific, meaning there are dog fleas and cat fleas, etc. Dogs and cats will share fleas, but they don't like the taste of other species. (By the way, cat fleas are bigger than dog fleas. If you ever win Trivial Pursuit with that answer, you owe me!) Fleas will taste people, but will say "yuck" and move on, which is why people don't end up with hair full of fleas. Why do some people get lesions? Because they're allergic to the flea bites. Everyone gets bitten, they just show the signs. (People who have a bad infestation and lose their pet can be pretty badly eaten by the environmental fleas, but mild reactions are different.)

**DISTEMPER VACCINE**

Frequently a person will come in with the yard dog they touch once a year, to come in to get the vaccines. They try, but are too afraid to place a muzzle on the dog. I don't understand owning a pet you're afraid of, but some people seem to like it. Anyway, many will ask me for the Distemper shot, because they want to remove or decrease the dog's temper. Distemper does not refer to removal of a personality trait. It is a virus with intestinal and

neurologic signs, and can be deadly. The vaccine prevents disease, but it does not control poor behavior. Explaining chronic ear infections can be confusing. Unfortunately, chronic ear problems occur far too often, and can be very frustrating, for owner and for the vet. Most chronic ear infections initiate and recur thanks to allergies. To understand how allergies cause ear infections, remember ear infections are kind of like graffiti. A building in one neighborhood might get covered in graffiti, but that same building would be left alone in a different neighborhood. The culture within the neighborhood tends to be the deciding factor as to whether or not there'll be graffiti. Allergies tend to set up the environment for ear infections to occur. (Lifestyle also has an effect. The Labrador who swims 25 hours a day can create chronic problems without allergies.) Routine ear cleanings can help to control the problem. There are many other issues that could use a group session. Are over-the-counter flea controls as effective and safe as prescription? No. Is parvo always lethal? No. Should a pregnant woman get rid of her cat? No, no, no! (If your OB-Gyn says to get rid of your cat when you're pregnant, get a new OB-Gyn.) Getting information to lots of people at once really is much more efficient. I wonder if Letterman would have me on his show. Dr. Brad Davis is medical director for the VCA of Garden City, 2085 Inkster Road, Garden City, MI 48135. Mail questions and comments there. He is also one of the hosts of the nationally syndicated radio show Animal Talk. Visit the web site www.animaltalkradio.com. E-mail questions or comments to Questions@animaltalkradio.com.

## Laurel STOREWIDE!

FURNITURE, INC.

# INVENTORY CLEARANCE SALE

**EVERYDAY LOW PRICES PLUS ADDITIONAL BONUS**

**10% OFF EVERYTHING**  
In Stock & Special Orders

PLUS...

**0% Financing Available**  
With Approved Credit. See Store for Details

- Genuine Amish Furniture
- Free delivery!

**Laurel FURNITURE, INC.**

584 W. Ann Arbor Trail • Plymouth • (734) 453-4700  
Open Daily 9:30-6; Thurs. & Fri. 'til 9; Sat. 'til 5:30

The Cultural Council of Birmingham / Bloomfield presents

# First Night Birmingham

**NEW YEARS' EVE CELEBRATION**  
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2004 4 pm - Midnight

## FIRST NIGHT EVENTS

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
"SNOW WHITE" - 4:30, 6:00 & 7:30 pm

Beverly Meyer is the "MUSIC LADY", specializing in Children and Family Audience participation, plenty of movement and entertaining music leave audiences singing and smiling. 6:00 & 7:15 pm

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Hugh Borde's "TRINIDAD TRIPOLI STEEL BAND" This amazing group of performers, that once toured for two years with Liberace, plays a repertoire of music that ranges from classical to rock and roll... on oil drums. 9:45 pm - Midnight

**ADDITIONAL FIRST NIGHT LOCATIONS**  
St. James Episcopal Church, First Christ Scientist Church and Birmingham Historical Museum

**OTHER PERFORMANCES & ACTIVITIES**  
DAVID SYME, *Platist* - 7:00, 8:15, 9:30 pm  
Bernie Stevens Magic - 7:00, 8:30 pm  
Taddy Bear Puppet Show - 7:15, 8:30 pm  
Adam Mellema Storyteller - 6:00, 7:15, 8:30, 9:45 pm

**FIRST NIGHT TICKET**  
\$10.00 per person; 8 yrs - Adult.  
Includes ALL performances and activities.

**SPECIAL FAMILY TICKET**  
\$7.00 per person; 8 yrs - Adult.  
Includes all performances and activities EXCEPT David Syme and Hugh Borde Steel Band.

Full schedule and tickets available at TechnoMasters, 725 S. Adams, Birmingham, between Lincoln and Maple. Tickets available December 31st at TechnoMasters and at the door of each performance venue. **Cash or check only. No credit cards accepted.** Tickets are non-refundable. For more information, call 248-258-9075 or [www.technomasters.com/firstnight](http://www.technomasters.com/firstnight)

A Hearty THANK YOU to First Night Sponsors!

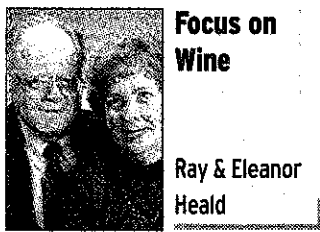
THE **Observer & Eccentric** NEWSPAPERS

WHERE HOMETOWN STORIES UNFOLD

CULTURAL COUNCIL OF BIRMINGHAM / BLOOMFIELD

Ken Abramczyk, editor  
(734) 953-2107  
Fax: (734) 591-7279  
kabramczyk@oe.homecomm.net

www.hometownlife.com



Focus on Wine

Ray & Eleanor Heald

## Wine is fashion

At age 45 in 1988, vintner Roberto Guldener sold his fashion business on Zurich's prestigious Bahnhofstrasse to begin making wine in Italy's Tuscany region.

"Both businesses are very connected," said Guldener's daughter Maja Guldener Marino. "Both wine and fashion are creative products and are an interpretation of our time. Both are continually evolving. Today's wine is not like yesterday's and neither is fashion."

Marino indicated that her father is fascinated by wine-making as a profession because it begins with grapes in a vineyard and finishes with a product in the glass that gives pleasure to people who love life.

### A LITTLE LUCK

A little luck benefits any business and Guldener's luck was finding Terrabianca in the Comune of Radda in Chianti, near Siena. How did he find it? Guldener's maternal grandparents were Venetians who moved to Zurich and opened a trattoria.

They purchased wines for their restaurant from the Chianti region. Guldener came to know the area well and learned that Terrabianca estate dated back to 1085. Chalky composition gives the appearance of white soils and thus is the origin of the name.

Initially, Guldener began

PLEASE SEE WINE, B5

### WINE PICKS

Several readers questioned why we have not recommended merlot lately. Reason: many over \$20 are overoaked and those at \$10 and under are often weak and underflavored.

The following are the **BEST MERLOTS** we've tasted recently.

**Pick of the pack:** 2000 Sebastiani Sonoma County, \$17.

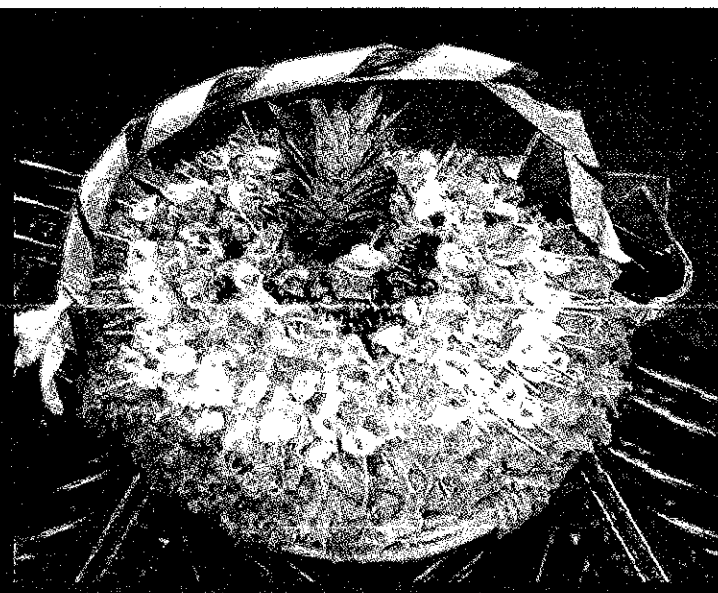
**Outstanding:** 2001 Chateau St. Jean, \$50.

**Excellent:** 2001 Rutherford Hill, \$25; 2001 Pine Ridge Crimson Creek, \$27; and 2001 Grigich Hills, \$46.

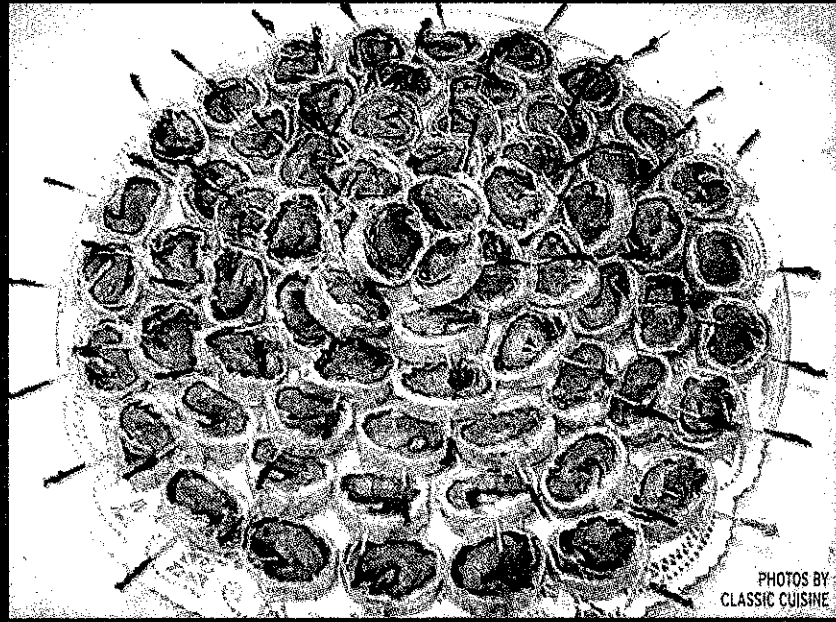
**Very good:** 2001 Genesis, \$17; 2001 Mason, \$20; 2000 Geysers Peak Shorestein Vineyard, \$26; 2000 Rodney Strong, \$26; and 2001 Stag's Leap Wine Cellars, \$40.

**Wallet pleasers:** 2001 Camelot, \$7; 2002 Bogle, \$9; 2002 Reynolds (Australia), \$9; 2003 McManis, \$10; and 2002 Trincherro Family Selection, \$10.

All wines mentioned are available in the metro-Detroit area. If a retailer does not stock a specific wine, ask that it be ordered from the distributor.



# Amazing



PHOTOS BY CLASSIC CUISINE



# appetizers

## Step up the party with zesty hors d'oeuvres

BY ELAINE PERLIN CROSSLE | CORRESPONDENT

**A**ppetizers are more popular than ever. Great for home entertaining, they not only create a comfortable, light atmosphere, but also offer variety.

There's something about a table brimming with an array of tempting hors d'oeuvres - the nibbling begins, the conversation stirs and the party is under way.

The formal sit-down meal has its place for some holidays and occasions, but an hors d'oeuvre party lends itself to a casual ambiance and allows guests to consume at their own pace - and as much or as little as they choose.

As the trend turns toward home conversation and entertainment areas, gatherings are taking on the informal pleasures of "digging in" to celebrate the New Year, watch one of the bowl games or simply kick back and chat.

With cookbooks and culinary magazines filling bookstore stands

and cable cooking shows all over the airwaves, finger food recipes are at our fingertips. Local retailers and many area grocers are good bets for finding fabulous ingredients and ready-made items.

Although some tried and true classics may still be on our list of favorites, they can take on updated twists with the exciting selections in today's marketplace.

When asked about such old standbys as pigs-in-a-blanket, caterer Janis Levin-Gorelick quipped, "I call them Frankies Wellington! But there are so many more wonderful choices these days. American food now includes many diverse styles from Hispanic to Asian to European to Mediterranean."

Chris Shelters, a chef at Edwards Cafe and Catering, has re-invented another basic. "With the use of a papaya, you can put a new, upbeat spin on meatballs by serving them in a Polynesian

sauce," Shelters said.

A popular Northville mainstay since 1986, Edwards specializes in off-premises custom catering and carry-out cuisine. Owner Mary Pearce said Shelters and co-chef Becky Morelli prepare house recipes with fresh shipments of meat, produce and dairy from Detroit's Eastern Market.

### TANTALIZING TASTES

There is no greater testament to the American "melting pot" than how our culinary tastes have evolved over the past several years. Mexican food is now an American staple. The piquant kick of taquitos, chunky red and green salsas, hearty bean dips, rich guacamole and nacho chips have wide appeal.

Layered dips make for a palate-pleasing appetizer starting with a layer of refried beans, then sour

PLEASE SEE APPETIZERS, B5



EDWARDS CAFE AND CATERING

Appetizers bring variety to parties with a little something for everyone.

Among these appetizers are asparagus wraps, endive cups, boursin cheese puffs, bacon-wrapped water chestnuts, prosciutto and gorgonzola redskin potato halves, and mini quiche lorraine.

### RECIPES

#### EDWARDS' BACON-WRAPPED WATER CHESTNUTS

Sauce:  
1/2 cup brown sugar  
1/4 cup Dijon mustard  
1/8 cup cider vinegar

One 15-ounce can whole water chestnuts, drained  
8 ounces bacon slices

Preheat oven to 350°F. Mix all sauce ingredients together in a small bowl and set aside.

Wrap each water chestnut in half slice bacon and secure with a wooden toothpick.

Dip into sauce to coat, and place on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake for 15 minutes until bacon is crisp.

PLEASE SEE RECIPES, B5

Photos clockwise from top: Pasta primavera kabobs are an easy appetizer to prepare to help ring in 2005. Smoked salmon roulades are just one of many catered selections for parties. Shrimp cocktail is a popular New Year's Eve or New Year's Day appetizer.

# Side dish

### Feed guests

The entertaining season is here, time to plan spreads full of holiday cheer. Here are some suggestions for feeding a crowd. Make it easy with a potluck party or simple finger foods.

■ **Potluck party:** Invite a group of friends to celebrate at your place and ask each to bring their favorite dish. A simple and easy option is a tasty tart. Line a tart tin with pastry shell and bake for 10 minutes. Peel and slice 6 tomatoes and 3 onions very finely. Fry onions in a saucepan until transparent. Spread a thin layer of Dijon mustard over the base of tart. Cover with a layer of tomatoes, then a layer of onion and sprinkle with 1 1/2 cups of grated Swiss cheese. Season with salt and pepper, bake for an additional 30 minutes and serve warm.

■ **Warm welcome:** Greet guests with a finger food to start. Prepare succulent jumbo shrimp with a delicious honey-mustard dip. Combine 3 cups of water, 3 peppercorns, 1 lemon slice and 1 bay leaf; bring to boil. Add shrimp; boil until they turn pink. Drain shrimp; add ice to stop the cooking process. In a small saucepan, combine 2 teaspoons scallions, 1 teaspoon lemon juice, 2 teaspoons honey Dijon mustard; stir with fork until warm. Transfer to a bowl; arrange shrimp over the edge of bowl and serve.

■ **Dazzling dip:** Impress the company with a creamy, delectable dip for crackers or chips. Mix a 6 1/2-ounce jar of liquid from marinated artichoke hearts, 8-ounce package of cream cheese and 1/4 cup of Dijon mustard. Add sliced artichokes from jar. Blend until smooth and chill.

■ **Seasonal gravy:** Spice up traditional gravy by adding a seasonal fruit flavor. Combine 1/2 cup fresh cranberry sauce, 2 tablespoons whole-grain mustard, and 1 tablespoon orange rind with gravy powder. Blend with water; simmer over low-heat until thickened. Serve over turkey, mash potatoes or fresh vegetables. (Also bring fruit into the festivity by using it as decorations around the mantel and the dinner table.)

■ **Holiday ham:** A fine asset at the holiday feast is a honey-baked ham. One version calls for 1 egg yolk mixed with 3 tablespoons honey Dijon mustard. Spread mixture over ham and sprinkle with 2 or 3 tablespoons of bread crumbs. Bake until it turns a golden brown color. Slice and serve.

Recipes courtesy of Maille Fine French Condiments.



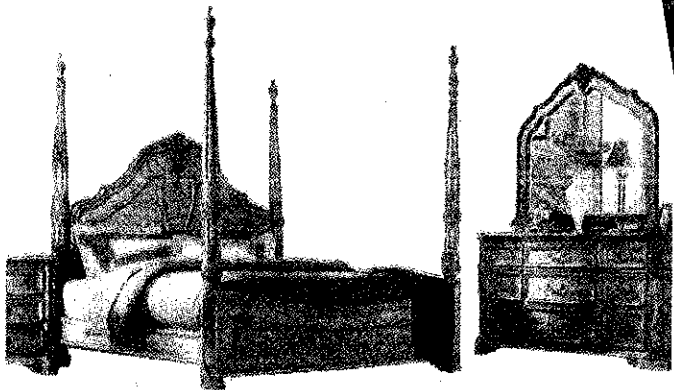
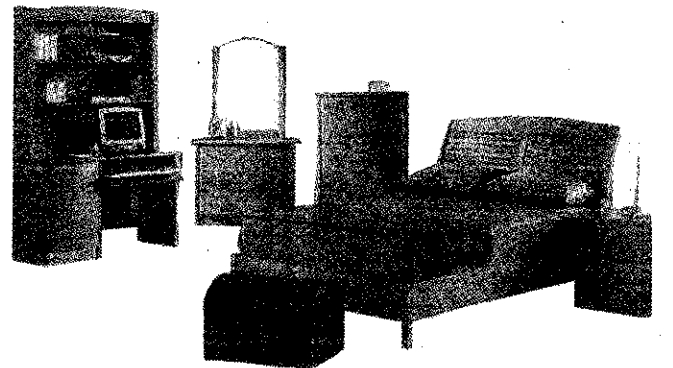
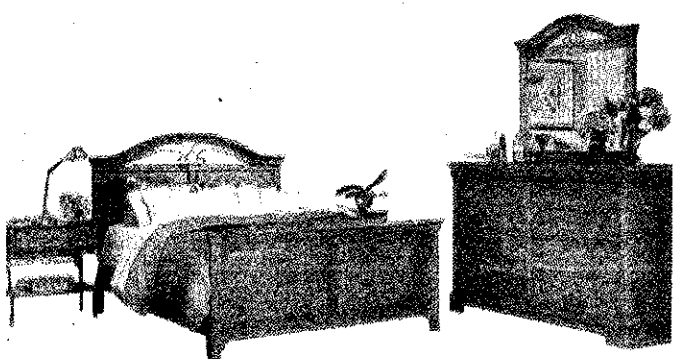
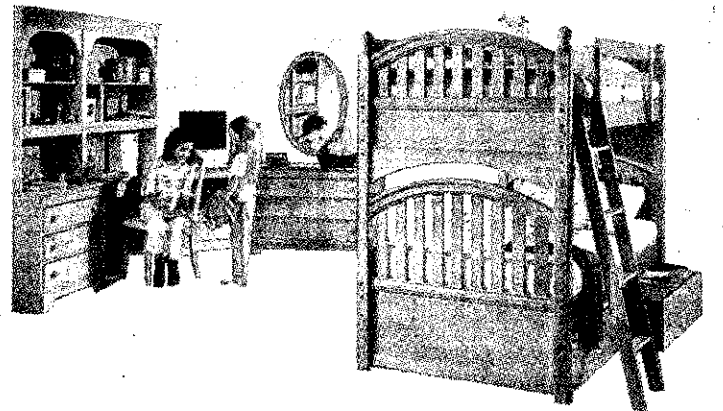
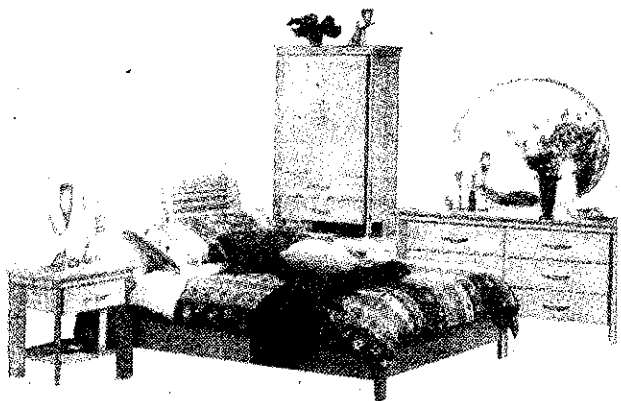
Founders Legacy, Sumter, Vaughan-Bassett, Jessica McClintock

# FINAL DAYS MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR YEAR-END INVENTORY CLEARANCE SALE

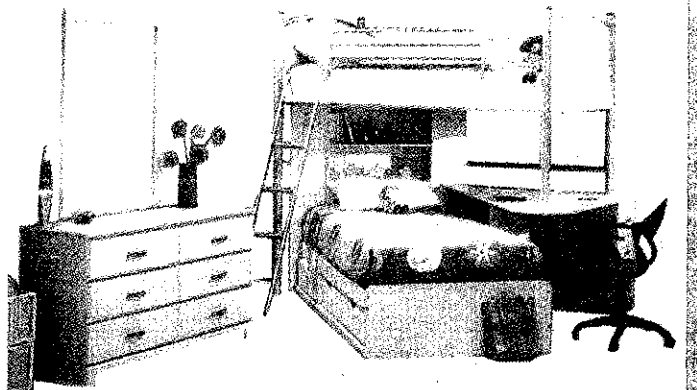
Now Thru January 3rd

Choose Any Item Storewide And Take Your Choice of

**NO PAYMENTS AND NO INTEREST 'TIL 2006\***



**WE'LL PAY YOUR SALES TAX\* - PLUS - 90 DAYS TO PAY INTEREST FREE\***



**1/2 OFF KIDS ACCESSORIES\* NO LAYAWAYS NO RAINCHECKS 1/2 OFF ALL CLEARANCE\* house of bedrooms**

**Awarded Michigan's #1 Specialty Store Retailer of the Year!**



**248-334-4593**

**Master Bedrooms  
1700 S. Telegraph Rd.  
Bloomfield Hills**

\* Master Bedroom Store: O.A.C. with 6% Down Required. Clearance Items Excluded from 0% Financing and Sales Tax Offers. 1/2 off savings taken from "Compare At" price, not the sale price.



**248-745-0012**

**Kids Bedrooms  
1716 S. Telegraph Rd.  
Bloomfield Hills**

\* Kids Bedroom Store: O.A.C. with 25% Down Required. Clearance Items and 1/2 Off Kids Accessories Excluded from 0% Financing Offer. Clearance Items, Accessories and Serta Bedding Excluded from 0% Sales Tax Offer. 1/2 off savings taken from the "Compare At" price, not the sale price.

**-OVER 160 BEDROOMS ON DISPLAY  
-SERTA MATTRESS HEADQUARTERS  
-VISA, DISCOVER, MASTERCARD WELCOME**

**REGULAR HOURS:  
Daily 9-9, Saturday 9-6  
Sunday 11-5**

**GUARANTEED LOWEST PRICES!**

**Special Holiday Hours**

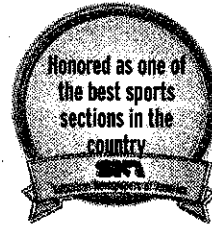
**New Year's Eve 9-5  
New Year's Day Closed**

**Or Visit Michigan's Largest Stocking Dealer at [www.houseofbedrooms.com](http://www.houseofbedrooms.com)**

Samuel Lawrence, Barn Door, Moon Valley, Wynwood, A America, Broyhill

Huppe, Sherman, Wesley Allen, Universal, My Room, Laurier, A...  
an Drew, Bob Mackie, Bob Timberlake, Webb, Kincaid, Lea





## Fast pace

### Active Aquinto stars in three sports, classroom

BY ED WRIGHT  
STAFF WRITER

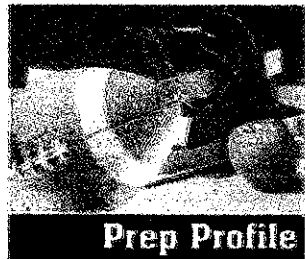
There are hundreds of high school coaches around who would clone Salem three-sport/academic standout Ashley Aquinto if given the chance.

The only problem would be finding a few free minutes in her activity-filled schedule to perform the cloning.

Aquinto possesses a boundless energy level that is matched only by her talent, which has earned the senior trips to the state meet in two sports and a close-call in a third.

The one thing she doesn't have an overabundance of is time, which flies by quickly when you're involved in athletics year-round like Aquinto, who has earned accolades and applause for her swimming-and-diving exploits in the fall, gymnastics maneuvers in the winter and pole-vaulting skills in the spring for the past three-plus years.

Aquinto doesn't slow down in the summer as she swims



Prep Profile

for a club team, plays tennis and works on her impressive gymnastics skills in June, July and August.

"I always have to be doing something," admitted the energetic Aquinto, who is currently serving as a captain for the Rocks' state-ranked gymnastics squad. "I'd go crazy if I had to sit around and do nothing."

There's rarely a dull moment in the life of Aquinto, whose efforts have allowed her to compete in Division 1 state meets in gymnastics, and swimming and diving during her career at Salem. Aquinto hasn't qualified yet for the state meet in pole-vaulting, but she's come close, having missed by just a few inches the past two years.

"Gymnastics is probably the



HEATHER ROUSSEAU

Salem senior Ashley Aquinto has excelled for the Rocks' gymnastics, swimming-and-diving and track-and-field teams during her three-plus years at the school. She also shines academically, having earned a 3.5 grade-point average.

most fun for me, but I enjoy the other sports a lot, too," she said. "I've been participating in gymnastics since I was 3-years-old, so that is the sport I would miss the most if I had to give it up. I like it, too, because it's the one sport I can beat most of the boys in."

The most glaring highlight of Aquinto's illustrious high

school gymnastics career came two years ago when – as a sophomore – she finished first in the state on the balance beam and second in the all-around competition.

"The key to doing well in gymnastics is flexibility and strength," Aquinto said. "Those are things that are necessary in diving and pole-vaulting, too,

which helps me."

Aquinto, who earned a 12th-place showing in diving at the Division 1 state meet two years ago, finished 25th at this year's competition, which was held in November. She also captured top honors at the Western Lakes Activities Association

PLEASE SEE AQUINTO, C2

## Plymouth spikers earn silver title at tourney

BY TIM SMITH  
STAFF WRITER

It was, by most accounts, an up-and-down day for Observerland teams at Monday's annual University of Michigan-Dearborn girls volleyball tournament.

Only Livonia Churchill advanced to the Gold Playoffs (for the top eight teams in earlier pool play), with the Chargers losing two-of-three to Royal Oak Shrine.

Trenton defeated Dearborn 25-17, 25-18 to take the overall 20-team tournament.

Plymouth and Redford Thurston met in a semifinal in the Silver Playoffs (teams nine through 16), with the Wildcats knocking out the Eagles – and subsequently claiming the Silver championship trophy with a 25-10, 25-21 win over Lincoln Park.

In the lowest grouping, the Bronze Playoffs (teams 17 through 20), Wayne Memorial needed just one point to defeat Mount Clemens Clintondale for the Bronze trophy, but the Dragons rallied for a 19-17 triumph in the deciding game.

Plymouth's day began with a two-game loss, in pool play, to Monroe-Jefferson. But the Wildcats came back to defeat Dearborn Heights Annapolis and Woodhaven (both in two games).

Wildcats' head coach Kelly McCausland said inconsistent play on offense and defense cost her team a chance to compete in the Gold bracket. But 10th-seeded Plymouth excelled in serving to eliminate Detroit Renaissance (25-6, 25-9), Thurston (25-17, 25-23) and Lincoln Park.

McCausland said winning the Silver trophy was an accomplishment, but not the team's goal heading into the tournament.

"Serving was our only saving grace," she said. "I didn't see my team performing to full potential today."

She credited junior middle blocker Jeanine Moise, junior outside hitter Jackie Dorre and sophomore outside hitter Kim Klonowski for sparking the Wildcats with their play. Dorre, in particular, "stepped up and really helped us" with 10 service aces against Thurston, McCausland said.

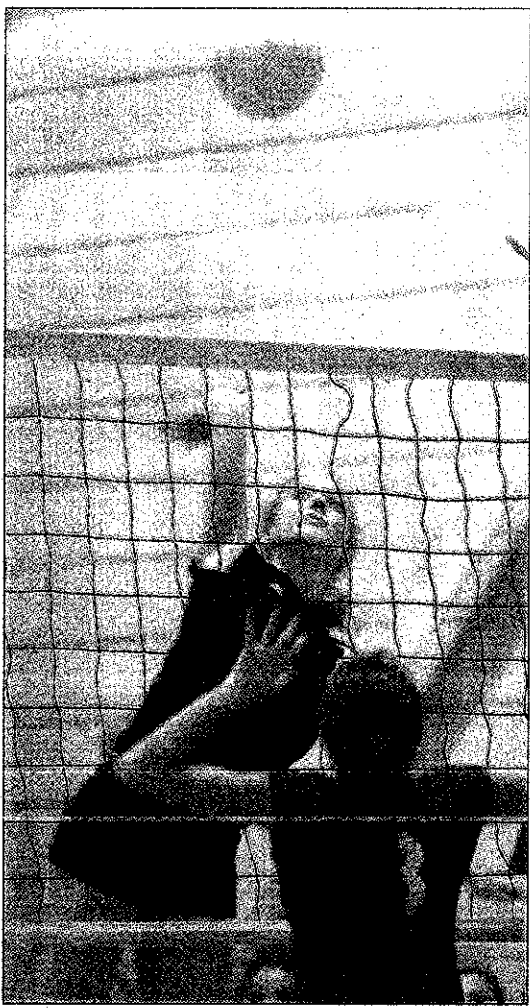
Churchill coach Mark Grenier's pre-tournament goals were not met Monday.

"I think, overall, it was a little disappointing for us," said Grenier. "We had higher expectations coming in. We had our opportunities, but we didn't play exceptionally well all day. We just made a ton of unforced errors."

The Chargers, who went 5-1 in pool play to qualify for the Gold Playoffs, lost 25-22 to Royal Oak Shrine in the Gold quarterfinals before rebounding with a 25-7 victory in the second game. The Knights clinched the match with a 15-13 win.

On the plus side, Grenier liked how many players contributed during the day, gaining experience that should help the Chargers, now 11-4 overall, in upcoming Western Lakes Activities Association play.

Senior outside hitter Kelsey Mack led the way



JIM JAGDFELD | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Plymouth's Janet Hanchett winds up for a spike during Monday's match against Woodhaven in the University of Michigan-Dearborn volleyball tournament. Woodhaven's Stephanie Wolf is preparing to defend the attempted kill.

with 36 kills and 11 aces; senior setter Kristyna Archer collected 41 assists, four kills and three aces; junior outside hitter Shea Truxell had seven kills, 10 digs and five aces; junior defensive specialist Brynn Kerr went 15-for-16 in serve-receive along with four aces and seven digs; senior defensive specialist Mia Maceratini picked up 15 digs and was 16-for-19 in serve-receive.

Although 20th seeded Wayne Memorial competed in the lowest rung of playoffs after going 0-6 in pool play, the Zebras still were fighting and clawing to the end – just missing out on taking home the Bronze hardware.

Wayne needed three games to get past Edsel Ford in the Bronze semifinal and won the first game in the final against Clintondale, 25-17. But the Dragons evened the match with a 25-21 triumph and then came from behind for the 19-17 clincher.

"The girls really came together at the end," said Zebras coach Jessica Shoemaker, adding that competing in the tournament should be beneficial to her squad for the rest of the season. tsmith@oe.homecomm.net | (734) 953-2106

## Let it snow

### Wintry weather can't stop golf-instruction program

BY ED WRIGHT  
STAFF WRITER

Once the Fox Hills Golf and Banquet Center's new covered, heated instructional facility is officially opened in the next couple of weeks, avid golfers in southeastern Michigan will have another opportunity to thaw out their clubs and swings during the frigid months of January, February and March.

The new facility, which will become the year-round "office" of Crystal Mountain Golf School PGA professionals Scott Wilson and Brad Dean, will feature two enclosed, heated studios for teaching, and four partially enclosed bays for driving-range practice.

Fox Hills, a 63-hole public golf complex, is located on North Territorial Rd. in Plymouth Township, approximately seven miles west of downtown Plymouth.

"One of the nice things about the video studios is that they are open at one end so that the golfers can see the full flight of the ball once they hit it," said Wilson, a Crystal Mountain instructor since 1994. "They won't be hitting the ball into a screen or net."

"Even though it will be cold outside, the tubular heating we

are having installed will make it nice and warm in the studios and the driving-range bays.

There will also be an artificial putting surface available. The entire structure will be lit at night, too, so the golfers can see where the ball is going."

Wilson said golfers who receive the video swing analysis that the facility offers will get instant feedback from the technology that was designed by V-One, a Livonia-based company.

"Before this latest technology came along, we used to videotape the golfer's swing, then take it inside and plug it into a computer to analyze it," Wilson said. "Now, a few seconds after the golfer is videotaped, we can play it back for them right in the studio. It's a very advanced system that allows us to use a number of tools."

One unique tool the professionals can utilize is a feature that splits the computer screen in half with the golfer's swing on one side and a PGA tour pro's swing on the other.

"It lets the golfer compare his swing to, let's say, Vijay Singh's," Wilson said. "We can also use stop-action and slow-motion, which allows us to analyze the golfers' swings thor-

PLEASE SEE GOLF, C2



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Crystal Mountain Golf School PGA professional Scott Wilson is pictured outside the Fox Hills Golf Complex's newly completed heated video studio/driving range. The facility, which is located on North Territorial Rd. in Plymouth Township, should be ready for business within the next two weeks.

## Sidelines

### Gymnasts excel

Four local gymnasts who train at Gym America of Ann Arbor turned in outstanding performances at the club's season-opening gymnastics competition Dec. 17-19 in Covington, Ky. The meet attracted clubs from throughout Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Ohio and Kentucky.

Level 7 gymnast Kayla Weber, a fifth-grade student at Eriksson Elementary School, placed first on vault (9.20), first all-around (36.22). She also finished sixth on bars (8.70) and fourth on floor (8.90). Kayla's sister, Haylee, a Level 5 gymnast and a third-grader at Eriksson, took home top honors on vault (8.40). She also placed fifth on bars (7.25), third on beam (7.80), fourth on floor (8.30) and third all-around (31.75). Paige Wright, a Level 5 gymnast and fifth grader at Eriksson, placed eighth on vault with an 8.475.

### Nation's best

Five Wayne State University men's hockey players – including a Canton native – are listed among the nation's best in this week's NCAA statistical report. In addition, the Warriors are ranked in three team categories.

Sophomore left wing Jason Bloomingburg (Canton/Texas Tornado) is tied for 17th nationally in goals per game at .65 (11 goals in 17 contests).

Freshmen forwards Tyler Michel (Sudbury, Ont./Owen Sound Greys) and Stavros Paskaris (Dearborn/Kewadin Indians) are tied for third in the country with 20 other skaters with two short-handed goals.

Sophomore right wing Nate Higgins (Calgary, Alb./Green Bay Gamblers), who has scored the game-winner each of the last two Saturday contests for WSU, is tied-for-fourth in the nation with three game-winning goals.

Junior defenseman Steve Kovalchik (Riverview/Omaha Lancers) and Bloomingburg are tied-for-19th in the NCAA with five power-play goals each.

Wayne State is 14th in scoring offense at 3.33 (60 goals in 18 games), 18th in winning percentage at .583 (10-7-1) and 16th in power play percentage at .203 (24 for 118). The Warriors return to competition with a two-game College Hockey America league series at Alabama-Huntsville on Jan. 7-8.

### Sarnia on deck

The Plymouth Whalers will host the Sarnia Sting tonight at 7:30 p.m. at the Compuware Sports Arena. The Sting, who are rebuilding under first-year general manager Alan Millar and first-year coach Shawn Camp, currently sit in ninth place in the Ontario Hockey League's Western Conference.

Sarnia goalie Ryan Munce (2.65 goals against average) and leading scorer Brad Efhimov (30 points) have been soild for the Sting this season.



# Joe & the Mechanics

## Garden City's Burton revels in minor-league hockey comeback

BY TIM SMITH  
STAFF WRITER

Scoring a big-time furniture sale might get an employee's name on a bulletin board somewhere for an "atta-boy." As nice as that might be, it wasn't enough to keep long-time minor-league hockey star Joe Burton - Garden City's answer to Wayne Gretzky with 573 goals, 1,000 points and counting - on board at Art Van Furniture in Westland.



Burton

Burton, 37, a diminutive, soft-spoken forward for the expansion Motor City Mechanics United Hockey League franchise, ditched the life of pushing tables and chairs for a rare opportunity. He was wooed from Art Van to the Fraser team this summer by Mechanics head coach and former Detroit Red Wings star Garry Unger.

"I heard he was selling furniture and I know what it's like," added Unger, "the difference between playing hockey and selling furniture." Nobody had to make a huge pitch on Burton, a 1985 graduate of Garden City High School, for him to rejoin the minors. The reason he retired after 2002-03 in the first place was to return to Detroit-area roots, where he and wife Linda (originally from Redford Township) still have their families.

"That was the main reason (for his retirement), we just wanted to settle down," said Burton, who nonetheless looks more like a salesman than hockey player. "I started working with Art Van. (But) I figured if I could come home and play it would be a good oppor-

tunity for us.

"At Art Van, I was making enough money to survive. But for me, with the hours I was putting in, and working every weekend and the holidays, it wasn't worth it for me."

That's not to say he didn't do a good job with the furniture company over the seven or eight months he was employed there.

"He was a real nice guy, cordial and polite," said store sales manager Mike Wiseman. "He did a nice job for us, we're sorry he left."

But Wiseman said he wasn't surprised Burton opted to return to hockey. "He definitely still had it in his blood."

Even though Burton only makes about \$900 a week with the Mechanics (that being the salary earned by veterans), he is finding other ways to cash in.

Joe and Linda purchased his parents' Garden City home, the very one he grew up in.

And now, they'd like it if sons Joe, 4, and Luke, 2, grew up in the small city. One day they might become Cougars, too, although the elder Joe only played freshman football at Garden City High School.

"I liked growing up in Garden City," said Burton, who played hockey and other sports for the Garden City Youth Association. "It's a good town. Hopefully when I'm done here I can coach some of the younger kids and try to help out with some of the hockey programs in the area."

### COMING AROUND

On the ice, things are slowly progressing, both for Burton and the Mechanics.

Although the team is struggling this season, with a 3-17-2 mark to date, Burton's stat sheet isn't terrible.

He has seven goals and six assists in those 22 games,



PHOTO BY DAVID BIRDSONG

Motor City Mechanics forward Joe Burton (left) looks for an opening in front of the Quad City goal during a game last month. Burton, of Garden City, came out of retirement to join the first-year United Hockey League team.

including a three-goal hat trick on Nov. 26 against Quad City. The goals give him a career total of 572, mostly tallied during a stellar 11-season run with the Central Hockey League's Oklahoma City Blazers.

"I'm still working on my timing and some of my puck-handling skills are just starting to come back," said Burton, following a recent practice at Great Lakes Sports City in Fraser.

For his hat trick against Quad City, Burton showed fans at The Garage (named for the venue's nondescript exterior) that he still has the touch.

One goal came on a deflection in front of the goalie; another on an opportunistic rebound. The third? His shot from between the circles ricocheted off two defenders and settled over the goal line.

"I scored a lot of goals in my career, but I'm not flashy, beating guys 1-on-1 or anything like that," said Burton, who makes the hour commute from Garden City. "My biggest asset is my brain. I'm smart. I know when to go in front of the net and anticipate plays."

"... At this level, the only way you're going to score a lot of goals is you have to pay the price in front of the net."

Unger didn't have to be reminded about how Burton knows his way around an enemy goal. When the ex-Wing coached Tulsa during the 1990s, he had to watch Burton wreak havoc with his own goaltenders.

"He's not a pretty goal scorer," Unger said. "He's got a good shot, and when he shoots the puck he shoots it at places where he has a chance to score. It's not just a shot on net."

### THE RIGHT SPOT

Had the top goal-scorer in CHL history been blessed with

more physical tools, there is no telling how his career might have evolved.

"Obviously, I knew I wouldn't make it (to the National Hockey League) because I didn't have the talent or size," said Burton with a shrug.

Apparently, that Burton did not fit the brawny hockey prototype came up at Art Van during banter between Burton and co-workers.

"People used to kid him," Wiseman said. "How can a guy like you score so many goals?"

Unger pondered the question why players with natural scoring ability sometimes hit the proverbial brick wall between the so-called AA minors and higher levels, right on up to the NHL.

"I think maybe his (lack of) size, and even though he is a fairly good skater, as you go up in levels guys get to be great skaters," Unger said.

"So if you can't keep up skating-wise, you don't have a chance to get the puck. Now, there's a lot of guys down here, that maybe in the right circumstance, maybe could play on a (NHL) team."

"But they have to be in the right spot at the right time. And sometimes they're not. There are a lot of skilled players in this league."

"So if you are going to play in this league, why not be the best possible player you can at this level?"

For now, at least, the right spot for Burton is Fraser. It's a chance to keep playing the game he loves while scoring goals ... rather than sales.

"I love playing," he said. "And as long as I can pay the bills and support my family I will."

That kind of thinking is an on-target as many of Joe Burton's shots.

tsmith@oe.homecomm.net | (734) 953-2106

Win an Authentic Detroit **RED WINGS JERSEY!**  
Look in Our Classified Section  
Every Thursday & Sunday to see how you can enter!  
THE **Observer & Eccentric**  
NEWSPAPERS  
WHERE HOMETOWN STORIES UNFOLD

**Who Will be Crowned the 40th Annual Great Lakes Invitational Champion?**

**AOL FOR BROADBAND**  
Presents  
**COLLEGE HOCKEY AT "THE JOE"**

**40th Annual Great Lakes Invitational**

**FAMILY FOUR PACK**  
4 tickets, 4 slices of Little Caesars Pizza, 4 Cokes for \$45. A savings of over 25%!  
Call 313-396-7575

**Thu., Dec. 30**  
Third Place Game • 4:30 PM  
Championship Game • 8:00 PM

**Joe Louis Arena**  
A Division of **Chrysler**

Tickets are available at the Joe Louis Arena box office or call **313-396-7575**

**CHRYSLER Jeep** **MBNA** **Marriott**  
AT THE RENAISSANCE CENTER  
0608283501

**TREAT YOUR VEHICLE TO OUR HOLIDAY SERVICE SPECIALS**

**CHRYSLER Jeep SERVICE**  
Stick with the Specialists®

You're invited to our Holiday Service Salebration!

<p><b>Oil/Filter Change and 16-Point Vehicle Checkup</b> <b>\$19.95</b> or less</p> <p>INCLUDES: • Engine oil replacement up to 5 qt. • New Mopar oil filter • Additional charges may be applied for diesel, V-10's, HEMI® V-8's, fluid disposal, semi-synthetic and synthetic oils • Plus, inspection of these and additional items not listed: • Tires/line pressure • Fluid levels • Windshield wipers • Belts/Hoses Price does not include repairs which may be required after inspection. Ask your Service Advisor for additional details. EXPIRES 2/27/05</p>	<p><b>Winter Maintenance Checkup</b> <b>\$29.95</b> or less</p> <p>INCLUDES: • Engine oil replacement up to 5 qt. • New Mopar oil filter • Battery test • Fluid level inspection • Inspect callipers, rotors and/or drums • Inspect belts and hoses Special wheels, specialty vehicles slightly higher. Additional charges may be applied for diesel, V-10's, fluid disposal, semi-synthetic and synthetic oils. EXPIRES 2/27/05</p>	<p><b>Mopar Battery</b> <b>\$10.00</b> Mail-In Rebate</p> <p>on the purchase of a Mopar Power Pro 5-6, 7 or Jeep Extreme Battery</p> <p>Limited warranty at DaimlerChrysler Motors Corporation dealerships nationwide. See dealer for details and a copy of the warranty. Price for each battery only. Electrical and old battery inspection/testing if required and installation extra. Please see our Service Advisor for details. Diesel and oversized batteries extra. Warranty and prorated adjustments not included. Mail-in rebates valid on purchases from December 1, 2004 through February 27, 2005. All rebate requests must be postmarked by March 15, 2005 and received by March 31, 2005. See Service Advisor for details. EXPIRES 2/27/05</p>
---	--	--

**Expert Technicians • Specialized Technology**  
**Authentic Mopar Parts • Competitive Prices**

**Visit these participating dealers:**

<p>Al Deebly Dodge 11500 Joseph Campau Hamtramck, MI 313-893-8300</p> <p>Al Deebly Dodge Clarkston, Inc. 8700 Dixie Highway Clarkston, MI 248-620-0800</p> <p>Bill Sneathkamp, Inc. 16420 Woodward Highland Park, MI 313-869-3300</p> <p>Birmingham C-P-J 2100 W. Maple Troy, MI 248-643-7000</p> <p>Bob Saks Dodge, Inc. 35200 Grand River Farmington Hills, MI 248-899-7000</p> <p>Bruce Campbell Dodge, Inc. 14875 Telegraph Redford, MI 313-538-1500</p> <p>Century Dodge, Inc. 13500 Telegraph Taylor, MI 734-946-9430</p>	<p>Clarkston Chrysler Jeep 8105 Big Lake Rd Clarkston, MI 248-625-2635</p> <p>Colonial Dodge, Inc. 24211 Gratiot Avenue Eastpointe, MI 586-778-1800</p> <p>Crestwood Dodge, Inc. 32850 Ford Road Garden City, MI 734-421-5700</p> <p>Dick Scott Dodge, Inc. 684 Ann Arbor Road Troy, MI 734-451-2110</p> <p>Golling C-J-D, Inc. 2125 South Telegraph Bloomfield Hills, MI 248-334-3600</p> <p>Jim Riehl's Friendly C-D-J, Inc. 1515 S. Lapeer Road Lapeer, MI 810-664-2809</p> <p>Jim Riehl's Friendly Chrysler Jeep 32899 Van Dyke Avenue Warren, MI 586-979-8700</p>	<p>Joe Ricci Dodge of Dearborn, LLC 14765 Michigan Avenue Dearborn, MI 313-946-2488</p> <p>Livonia C-J, Inc. 30777 Plymouth Livonia, MI 734-525-3000</p> <p>Lochmoor Chrysler-Plymouth Jeep, Inc. 18165 Mack Avenue Detroit, MI 313-886-3000</p> <p>Meade Dodge, Inc. 18001 Mack Avenue Detroit, MI 313-884-7210</p> <p>Mt. Clemens Dodge, Inc. 43774 N. Gratiot Ave. Clinton Township, MI 586-463-1521</p> <p>Milosch Dodge, Inc. 677 S. Lapeer Road Lake Orion, MI 248-693-8341</p> <p>Monicatti Chrysler Plymouth Jeep Sales 40755 Van Dyke Avenue Sterling Heights, MI 586-977-1700</p>	<p>M-59 Dodge 2566 Highland Road Highland, MI 248-887-3222</p> <p>Northwestern Dodge, Inc. 10500 W. Eight Mile Farmdale, MI 248-399-6700</p> <p>Oakland Dodge, Inc. 101 W. Fourteen Mile Madison Heights, MI 248-585-8800</p> <p>Orchard Chrysler Dodge Jeep, Inc. 64600 Van Dyke Washington Twp., MI 586-336-0200</p> <p>Palace C-J, Inc. 3800 South Lapeer Road Lake Orion, MI 248-393-2222</p> <p>Parkway C-J, Inc. 1625 S. Gratiot Avenue Mt. Clemens, MI 586-465-7210</p> <p>Rochester Hills C-J 1301 Rochester Road Rochester Hills, MI 248-652-8650</p>	<p>Roseville C-J, Inc. 25800 Gratiot Roseville, MI 586-659-2500</p> <p>Shuman Motor Sales, Inc. 1111 S. Commerce Walled Lake, MI 248-669-2010</p> <p>Sneathkamp Chrysler Jeep, Inc. 23951 Plymouth Road Redford, MI 313-255-2700</p> <p>Sterling Heights Dodge, Inc. 40111 Van Dyke Avenue Sterling Heights, MI 586-939-3900</p> <p>Scott M-59 C-J 6700 Highland Rd. P.O. 1984 White Lake, MI 248-889-8989</p> <p>Winners Dodge, Inc. 25151 Allen Road Woodhaven, MI 734-675-4700</p>
---	--	---	--	---

Present this coupon when the order is written. Cannot be used with any other specials or like service. Customer is responsible for local tax. Service and offer good at specified DaimlerChrysler dealer only. ©2004 DaimlerChrysler Motors Company, LLC. Mopar, Dodge, Chrysler and Jeep are registered trademarks of DaimlerChrysler.

# Lions season finales create memories for fans

Alto Reed, the famed local saxophone player, gave a rousing rendition of the National Anthem at the Lions final home game of 2004. For years Reed was a part of Bob Seger's Silver Bullet Band. There he was, however, blowing his horn by himself making the hairs on your neck stand on end.

Football is the ultimate team game yet there stood Reed, solo, bringing the Ford Field house down. It was a moment 61,000 will not soon forget.

The Lions finish another season this Sunday in Tennessee. Something will happen to make that game memorable. Seems to always happen. Just look at the last decade-plus.

In 1991, the Lions went to Buffalo and won on an Eddie Murray overtime field goal. It finished off the Lions first 12-win campaign.



Mark Wilson

the difference between a home or road playoff game.

In 1995, the Lions had to win at Tampa to make the playoffs again. They blew out the Bucs that day to finish with seven wins in a row. Then came Lomas Brown and his famous guarantee against Philadelphia in the post-season.

"You can print it, or say it, or whatever.

We are going to beat the Eagles... we are that confident," said Brown who had never guaranteed anything before.

Before you could blink, the Eagles had a record 58-37 win in Philadelphia.

"I will never forget it," Brown said.

In 1996, it was another season-ending loss at San Francisco. That was the finale for both head coaches. Fontes would be fired for 5-and-11 and show up at his own firing press conference. George Seifert would leave the Niners only to be replaced by Steve Mariucci. We call that, foreshadowing.

Bobby Ross replaced Captain Wayne O and ended 1997 by beating Bill Parcells' New York Jets when Parcells called some silly halfback option play. Sanders went over the 2,000-yard mark in the game marred by the career-ending injury to linebacker Reggie

Brown.

The Lions made the playoffs only to lose at Tampa 20-10. By the end of 1998, the Lions would lose at Baltimore in what would be Sanders' final game as a Lion.

In 1999, with no running game to speak of, the Lions made the playoffs despite a loss at Minnesota and a four game losing streak. The 8-and-8 got them in the playoffs.

The following season ended with that loss to the Bears I wrote about last week, which changed the franchise.

2001 ended with a win over the Dallas Cowboys. It was the make-up date from the postponement of 9/11. It also happened to be just the second Lions' win of the season.

In 2002, they lost by two to the Vikings to finish 3-and-13 and end the

Marty Mornhinweg era before it really began. Two years, five wins, 27 losses. Yeck!

Last year, the Lions finished Mariucci's first year as head coach with a victory over the St. Louis Rams. It was supposed to be a springboard to 2004.

That brings us to Tennessee this Sunday. After a 4-and-2 start, the Lions were officially eliminated from the playoffs last week. Something memorable will happen against the Titans. It's the season finale. Bank on it.

Even Lomas Brown can guarantee that.

Mark Wilson is host of the Steve Mariucci Show Mondays on WKRK-FM (97.1). He's a former Associated Press and Michigan Association of Broadcasters Michigan Sportscaster of the Year. He lives in West Bloomfield.

## End Your Lease 1 Year Early!

### NEW 2005 DURANGO LIMITED 4X4 LOADED

DCX Sale Price **\$24,020**

Leather seats, Hemi Engine, heated seats, running boards, power windows, power locks, CD radio, security system remote keyless entry.

**Chrysler Employee** 27 Month C/E Special **\$179\*** \$1999 Total Due

**Chrysler Employee** 24 Month C/E Sign & Drive Special **\$274\*** ZERO DOWN

### NEW 2005 DODGE GRAND CARAVAN

Chrysler Employee 24 MONTH PRE-PAY LEASE **\$3881**

DCX Sale Price **\$19,187**

3.8L engine, 7 pass., seating, pwr. drivers seat, dual pwr. sliding doors, remote keyless entry, 4 whl. anti lock brakes, pwr. windows, pwr. locks, tilt wheel, fog lamps, CD player, Stk. #523280

**Chrysler Employee** 24 Month Employee Special **\$71\*** \$1999 Total Due

**Chrysler Employee** Sign & Drive Employee Special **\$159\*** ZERO DUE

**BRUCE CAMPBELL DODGE**  
14875 TELEGRAPH • REDFORD • www.brucecampbelldodge.com 313-538-1500

\*Purchase price plus tax, title, plates. Must add destination, doc. fee. Rebates to dealer. \*\*Lease payments based on 12,000 miles per year. Amount due at delivery shown above. Security deposit waived pending credit approval. Must finance with Chrysler Financial, must qualify for employee purchase program. Payments subject to change due to credit approval. Must qualify for lease loyalty, prior sales excluded. Sale ends 1/3/05.

## KING BROS. COLLISION

YOU'RE THE MVP AT KING BROS. COLLISION. Dedicated to Exceed Your Expectations!

- Direct Repair for Several Insurance Companies
- Complete Bumping and Painting
- Free Estimates
- Pick-up and Delivery
- Lifetime Warranty

**FREE DETAILING**  
\$150.00 Value  
With Every Collision Repair Order  
(Expires Jan. 31, 2005)

27115 W. 7 MILE RD. REDFORD  
**313-534-8090**

## LIVONIA CHRYSLER-JEEP

"Home of the Straight-Up Deal!"

### ALL NEW 2005 GRAND CHEROKEE LAREDO 4x4

26E Package. CHRYSLER EMPLOYEE SPECIAL

39 MONTHS MSRP \$29,095 No Security Deposit **\$248** per mo.

### 2005 LIBERTY SPORT 4x4

Loaded with equipment! CHRYSLER EMPLOYEE SPECIAL

24 MONTHS MSRP \$23,180 No Security Deposit **\$149** per mo.

**734-525-5000** Visit our website: htag.com  
30777 PLYMOUTH RD. LIVONIA between Merriman & Middlebelt

All leases are employee pricing plus tax, title, plates, 12,000 miles per year. All dealers in dealer. Subject to the approval by Honda. Grand Cherokee and the \$3,500. Must qualify for military rebate. Liberty total due \$1,650. Must qualify for military rebates and lease loyalty. Must lease through Chrysler Financial. See dealer for details. Prior sales excluded. Expires 12/31/04.

## THE Observer & Eccentric NEWSPAPERS PICK THE

# CONTEST

See our website for further details. **A Weekly** chance to win weekly prizes.

See details on www.oenline.com

## GreenView Condominium

From the low \$70's

**Why Rent When You Can Own?**

WAYNE RD.	PALMER	WILLOW
STERLING	GREENVIEW	WILLOW
AKALEY	GREENVIEW	WILLOW
	GREENWOOD	
	MICHIGAN AVE.	

Features Include:  
• 2 Bedrooms  
• Full Basement  
• New Carpeting  
• Fresh Paint  
• New fixtures  
• And more!

**CALL NOW! (734) 326-2000**

## Advertisers Pick

Steve Johnson Malarkey's Irish Pub	Jerry Lee A-1 Transmission	Mike Schriber Bill Brown Ford	Brian Campbell Bruce Campbell Dodge	Bill Albrecht Bruce Campbell Dodge	Jason Scott Dick Scott Dodge	Jeff Scott Dick Scott Nissan	Nichole Scott Dick Scott Kia	Tony Camilli Real Estate One
8-4 134-76	5-7 127-83	9-3 147-63	11-1 129-81	10-2 132-78	9-3 140-70	10-2 132-78	9-3 141-69	8-4 138-62
Tennessee Philadelphia Baltimore Pittsburgh Atlanta Indianapolis San Diego Houston Chicago Minnesota N.Y. Jets New England N.Y. Giants	Tennessee Philadelphia Baltimore Pittsburgh Seattle Denver Kansas City Cleveland Green Bay St. Louis New England N.Y. Giants	Detroit Philadelphia Baltimore Buffalo Seattle Indianapolis San Diego Houston Green Bay Minnesota N.Y. Jets New England N.Y. Giants	Tennessee Philadelphia Baltimore Pittsburgh Atlanta Indianapolis San Diego Houston Green Bay Minnesota N.Y. Jets New England N.Y. Giants	Tennessee Philadelphia Baltimore Buffalo Pittsburgh Atlanta Indianapolis San Diego Houston Green Bay Minnesota N.Y. Jets New England Dallas	Tennessee Philadelphia Baltimore Buffalo Pittsburgh Seattle Denver Kansas City Houston Green Bay Minnesota N.Y. Jets New England N.Y. Giants	Detroit Philadelphia Baltimore Buffalo Atlanta Indianapolis San Diego Houston Green Bay Minnesota N.Y. Jets New England Dallas	Tennessee Philadelphia Baltimore Pittsburgh Seattle Indianapolis San Diego Houston Green Bay Washington N.Y. Jets New England N.Y. Giants	Detroit Philadelphia Baltimore Pittsburgh Atlanta Indianapolis San Diego Houston Green Bay Washington N.Y. Jets New England Dallas

**WEEKLY PRIZES!** (To be used at any Unique Restaurant with the exception of Coach Innsignia.)

**Chiquita** PLUS **Chiquita** restaurant corporation. For more details, go to www.oenline.com.

## Red TAG SALE

Switch to LaRiche

**GMAC LEASE PULL AHEAD END YOUR LEASE TODAY!**

Payments not yet due are waived when you purchase or lease a new Chevrolet at Lou LaRiche Chevrolet. Act by January 3, 2005 for leases through July 31, 2005.

**2005 MALIBU MAXX**  
Power seats & windows & trunk tilt, cruise, remote, leather, keyless entry, stereo, CD, Stock #5C2131. MSRP \$23,245.

**GM EMPLOYEE** Lease for \$99/mo. Buy for \$16,199.  
**NON-EMPLOYEE** Lease for \$139/mo. Buy for \$17,131.

40675 PLYMOUTH RD. 1-888-369-3313

**Lou LaRiche CHEVROLET**

## FANATIC U

Huge Inventory of Officially Licensed Sports Products & Apparel • Flags • Custom Jerseys & More!

**U-M Michigan State**

**After Christmas Apparel Sale!**

**Storewide Savings of 20-75% OFF**

**ROYAL OAK** 29956 Woodward S. of 12 1/2 Mile (Webster) 248-543-0893

**GARDEN CITY** 30409 Ford Rd. Between Merriman & Middlebelt 734-762-0893

## Detroit LIVE 97.1 FM

TURBOCHARGED TALK

**The Flagship Station for Detroit Lions Football!**

# Watson plays a big role in Wolverines defense

BY MIKE ROSENBAUM  
STAFF WRITER

Big things were expected for Gabe Watson when he entered the University of Michigan. Unfortunately, the biggest thing about Watson early in his college football career was his weight, which was closer to 400 than 300. Nevertheless, the Southfield High graduate made steady progress his first two years, seeing limited playing time at defensive tackle as a true freshman, then joining Michigan's regular defensive line rotation last season.

This season Watson, now listed at 333 pounds, earned a starting position. Additionally, Michigan re-designed its

defense, in large part, because of Watson's ability to play nose guard. U-M switched from a 4-3 defense to a 3-4 set this season. Watson's spot in the middle of the line is vital to the Wolverines' ability to play the 3-4.

"That defense begins with a nose guard," said Wolverines coach Lloyd Carr earlier this season. "If you've got a nose guard in that defense, you've got a guy that can go quickly to the side the ball is run to. A lot of times it forces the guard and the center to what we call scoop or double team him. Gabe is so big and strong that eventually one of those guys has got to come off and block the linebacker. If they stay on

him, the linebacker's free. If they come off too soon, he's free. That's the beauty of that defense. I think Gabe has made a real difference in there."

Watson responded with a strong season, earning first team All-Big 10 honors. He made 36 tackles, including 24 solo stops and seven tackles for loss. But the numbers don't tell the story of his success. His dominance on the line often forced ballcarriers to avoid Watson's territory, permitting other defenders to claim the tackle. Watson also forced most teams to double-team him which, again, gave other Wolverines a better opportunity to make the stop.

Watson admitted that being double-teamed "gets frustrating" at times. "It's a tough position. You want to go against one guy, you focus on one guy in film (sessions)...Sometimes you get mad about it, but I notice on film that some guys make plays because I am double-teamed. It's all a part of the job."

Which doesn't mean that Watson gives up on making plays when he's double-teamed.

"It is kind of hard at times to split the double team, but you just have to keep rushing," he says.

Watson and the Wolverines wrap up their season Jan. 1 in the Rose Bowl against Texas.



Contact your professional travel agent, visit us online at [www.worryfreevacations.com](http://www.worryfreevacations.com) or call us at 1-888-225-5658.

LAS VEGAS

Air & 4 nights hotel from \$239.99

at the Four Queens Casino and Hotel

Prices are per person, based on double occupancy between Detroit and Las Vegas, 12/21/04-12/23/04. Via Champion Air charter service. Prices include Federal Excise Tax and \$35 domestic or \$45 roundtrip international taxes. Fees include: Passenger Facility Charge, segment tax, international taxes, and September 11th Security Fee of up to \$20.20. Other travel days and dates are available at other prices. Prices are for reservations only and subject to change and availability. Payment and cancellation penalties apply and are outlined in Worry-Free Vacations brochure. Passengers will receive Our Contract With You containing complete charter program information. A signed contract must accompany the first payment to MLT Vacations Inc.

**Red TAG SALE**  
See Some Red... Save Some Green!  
Tennyson CHEVROLET  
32570 PLYMOUTH RD. LIVONIA, MI 734.425.6508  
www.tennysonchevy.com

**High Quality, AFFORDABLE Repairs on:**

**A-1 TRANSMISSIONS**

TRANSMISSIONS • 4X4 CLUTCHES  
AXLES • REAR ENDS • U-JOINTS  
FOREIGN & DOMESTIC AUTOS,  
TRUCKS & RV'S

**Customer Assurance Programs:**  
A-1 Transmissions' Policies have been, and always will be, to allow our customers:

- To be present while transmission or other component is removed from the vehicle.
- Watch while transmission or other components are disassembled for inspection of internal parts.
- If you are not knowledgeable, you may bring someone who is.
- You may watch while your transmission or other component is being custom rebuilt.

**\$200 OFF**  
Any Major Internal Automatic Transmission Repair

5939 Middlebelt  
Garden City, MI 48135  
734-261-4520  
Open M-F 8-5:30 pm

**Westland's Irish Pub**  
**Malarkey's**  
WESTLAND'S IRISH PUB

Dining • Drinking • Dancing  
to DJ • Specials all night  
Party Favors • Champagne  
Toast • Open till 4 am

**NEW YEARS EVE PARTY**  
**NO COVER!**

35750 Warren Rd. • Westland  
(Between Newburgh & Wayne) 734-421-0746  
HOURS: OPEN 11am-2am M-Sat., Sun. Noon-2am

**Worry-Free Vacations**  
Special Offers to Cancun at the Hotel NH Krystal Cancun

**THIS WEEK'S GAMES!**

**LAST WEEK'S WINNERS!**  
1st Place Thomas Davis  
2nd Place [Name]

Go online to register and pick this week's games!

**TIE BREAKER GAME-Sunday, Jan. 2nd**  
Dallas at N.Y. Giants

Detroit	at	Tennessee
Cincinnati	at	Philadelphia
Miami	at	Baltimore
Pittsburgh	at	Buffalo
Atlanta	at	Seattle
Indianapolis	at	Denver
Kansas City	at	San Diego
Cleveland	at	Houston
Green Bay	at	Chicago
Minnesota	at	Washington
N.Y. Jets	at	St. Louis
San Francisco	at	New England

\*Due to space and process deadlines, these games are not included in advertiser picks.

**FAIRLANE EAST APARTMENTS & TOWNHOMES**  
Dearborn, Michigan  
An Impressive Place to Live

featuring extremely spacious Apartments and Town Homes. Experience a community that offers a higher standard of beauty, quality and convenience. Enclosed within our 24-hour gated community you will enjoy mature landscaping, swimming pool, clubhouse, fitness center, and more. Living in Fairlane is just a short drive to everything you need for the security of home!

Call to learn about your Move-In Special at  
**877-305-6485**

**of the Week!**

<b>Greg Every</b> Fanatic U Sportsweat 7-5 130-80	<b>Sam Fairlane East</b> Apartments 8-4 129-87	<b>Jeff Fairbanks</b> King Bros. Collision 8-4 137-73	<b>Dave Pohod</b> Livonia Chrysler Jeep 6-6 125-85	<b>Uncle Lou</b> Lou LaRiche Chevrolet 9-3 137-95	<b>Keith M Lang</b> Tennyson Chevrolet 10-2 144-66	<b>Gregg Henson</b> Live 97.1 Motor City Mid-Days 8-4 134-76	<b>Michelle McCormick</b> Live 97.1 Motor City Mid-Days 9-3 128-82
Detroit Philadelphia Baltimore Pittsburgh Atlanta Indianapolis San Diego Houston Green Bay Washington N.Y. Jets New England N.Y. Giants	Tennessee Philadelphia Baltimore Pittsburgh Seattle Denver Kansas City Cleveland Chicago Minnesota St. Louis New England N.Y. Giants	Detroit Philadelphia Baltimore Pittsburgh Atlanta Indianapolis San Diego Houston Green Bay Washington N.Y. Jets New England Dallas	Detroit Philadelphia Baltimore Pittsburgh Seattle Indianapolis San Diego Houston Green Bay Washington N.Y. Jets New England Dallas	Detroit Philadelphia Baltimore Pittsburgh Seattle Indianapolis San Diego Houston Green Bay Washington N.Y. Jets New England N.Y. Giants	Tennessee Philadelphia Baltimore Buffalo Seattle Indianapolis San Diego Houston Green Bay Minnesota St. Louis New England N.Y. Giants	Tennessee Philadelphia Baltimore Pittsburgh Atlanta Indianapolis San Diego Houston Green Bay Minnesota N.Y. Jets New England N.Y. Giants	Detroit Philadelphia Baltimore Pittsburgh Atlanta Indianapolis San Diego Cleveland Green Bay Minnesota St. Louis New England N.Y. Giants

**If You've Never Visited Bill Brown Before... You're Paying Too Much!**

**2005 F150 STX 4X4 SUPERCAD**

**\$125 PER MONTH**  
BUY NOW FOR ONLY \$21,457  
A-PLAN PRE-PAY \$3,045

V8, Automatic, Air, Trailer Tow, Fog Lamps, Bedliner, 17" Chrome Clad Steel Wheels.

**BILL BROWN**  
1-800-611-2990  
32222 PLYMOUTH ROAD • LIVONIA • BROWSE OUR INVENTORY AT [BILLBROWN.FORD.COM](http://BILLBROWN.FORD.COM)

**FOUR MOVIE PASSES**  
Good at any of the local Michigan Star Theatres as well as "stater" theatres, Loews Theatres, Magic Johnson, Cineplex Odeon and Loews Imax Theatres.

**2ND PLACE**

**\$50 GIFT CERTIFICATE**  
To be used at one of the participating breweries. (Not merchandise)

**USED CARS — YEAR END BLOWOUT!**

1998 DODGE DURANGO 4x4 Third row seat... \$5,999	2001 VW NEW BEETLE Power windows & locks, tilt, cruise, CD. \$10,555
2002 DODGE GRAND CARAVAN Power windows & locks, tilt, cruise, CD... \$9,788	2002 GRAND CARAVAN #P6745 Power windows & locks, tilt, cruise, CD \$10,999
2001 PONTIAC GRAND PRIX GT Leather, sun roof, loaded!... \$9,888	2002 DODGE DAKOTA QUAD CAB SLT, power locks, tilt, cruise... \$11,999
2001 GRAND CARAVAN Power windows & locks, tilt, cruise, CD. \$10,222	2003 DODGE RAM Bedliner, only 20,000 miles!... \$12,999
2000 DURANGO SLT PLUS Leather, power seat, rear air... \$10,444	2002 SEBRING CONVERTIBLE Limited, leather, loaded, only 14k... \$13,999
2001 FORD EXPLORER 4x4 XLT Leather, power windows, locks, seat & CD. \$10,444	2002 DODGE RAM QUAD CAB Bedliner, hard Tonneau cover & more! \$15,999

**Dick Scott Dodge**  
684 ANN ARBOR RD. PLYMOUTH, MICHIGAN  
1 1/2 Miles W. of I-275, Exit 28  
www.DickScottOnline.com  
1-800-227-1180

**SALES HOURS:**  
Mon. & Thurs. 9am-9pm;  
Tues, Wed. & Fri. 9am-6pm  
Sat. 10am-3pm

**SERVICE/PARTS**  
Mon. & Thurs. 7am-8pm;  
Tues, Wed. & Fri. 7am-6pm

**Dick Scott NISSAN**

**NISSAN NATIONAL YEARENDEVENT**

**2004 NISSAN MAXIMA**

0% APR up to 60 Months!

**BUY FOR \$23,245\***

TOLL FREE 1-877-228-4669 | 42175 MICHIGAN AVE. CANTON | OPEN EVERY SATURDAY 10-3

\*Plus tax, title and license. Rebates to dealer. Rebate in lieu of 0% APR. Must have Tier 1 credit to qualify. Expires 12/31/04.

**DARE TO COMPARE!**

"If you go anywhere else you're paying too much, Period!"

**2004 Kia Sedona**

10 YEAR 100,000 MILE WARRANTY

**WHY LEASE WHEN YOU CAN OWN!**

Buy For \$14,998\* | Buy For \$223\* per mo.

**Dick KIA Scott**  
41840 MICHIGAN AVE., CANTON 734-397-9900  
2 Blocks West of I-275  
visit our website at [www.dickscottonline.com](http://www.dickscottonline.com)  
HOURS: Mon & Thurs 9-9 • Tues, Weds, & Fri. 9-6 • Sat. 10-3

Payment based on approved credit. 66 mos. term 5.9% APR and \$1,500 down plus deal. See dealer. All rebates to dealer. Must apply for competitive rebate. Expires 12-31-04.



# Loss to Southfield no holiday for Rockets

BY PAT ALLEN  
STAFF WRITER

Team speed is something that can't be taught, only inherited and now in his second year, Southfield boys basketball coach Gary Teasley must feel like he inherited a fortune.

The Blue Jay guards played Road Runner to Westland John Glenn's Wyle E. Coyote on Monday night as Southfield grounded the Rockets 71-53 in the Holiday Classic played at Rouge River High School.

Like Wyle E., the Rockets needed some rocket power to keep up with the likes of Antonio Harrison, Brandon Williams and Ubong Ubokudom, but unfortunately for Glenn, ACME wasn't sponsoring the event.

Harrison led the way for the Blue Jays with 20, Williams added 14 and Ubokudom capped off stellar guard play with nine points off the bench.

"When you have team speed," Glenn coach Joel Lloyd said, "you can do a lot of things. They're difficult to defend, when you've got the team quickness that he has, it's just tough to match up."

The trio penetrated and scored all night scoring almost all of their points in the paint and completing three traditional three-point plays.

"That's something that you can't coach," Teasley said, "we're just fortunate to have those kind of guards. If they can finish we finish, if they can't finish then that play-making ability comes into play."

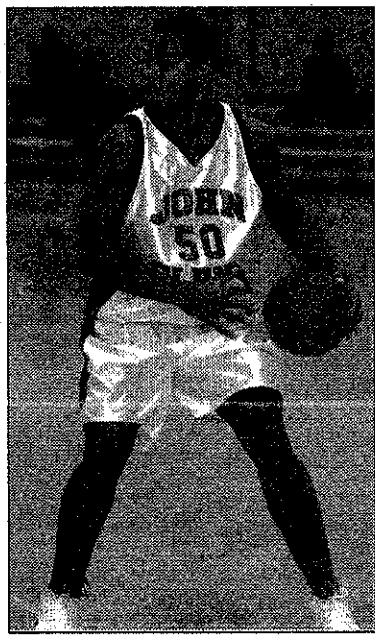
Alex McMillian led the Rockets with 17 points, including five three-pointers, and scored all but three of his points in the second half.

Duncan Jones dropped in 13 for Glenn, which remains winless this season (0-4 overall).

McMillian and Jones got most of their points from outside, as the Blue Jays (1-1) made it difficult for Glenn to get the ball in the post to Barry Eberhardt, the Rockets' leading scorer.

"Even if you don't score inside," Lloyd said, "you have to at least touch the ball inside. We did that a little bit in the third quarter but, for some reason, we abandoned it and boom, they were up and out."

Despite the rough goings, Eberhardt was able to contribute a dozen points and a half-dozen rebounds, but his presence was overshadowed by the Blue Jays' swarming



Westland John Glenn's Barry Eberhardt looks for a teammate to pass to during Monday night's opening-round game in the River Rouge Classic.

defense. Glenn was behind by only two after the opening quarter but faced deficits of 11 and 15 points after the second and third quarters, respec-



PHOTOS BY LAWRENCE MCKEE | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Westland John Glenn's Alex McMillian defends Southfield's Brandon Williams during Monday night's opening-round game of the River Rouge Classic.

tively. Teasley commented that Monday's outing was what he expected out of his team.

"I'm trying to coach them to have

some kind of savvy," Teasley said. "And that attitude is what I'm looking for every time we step on the floor and we've got to have it."

## Biscuits shine

The IHC Black Biscuit 88's recently finished first in the Bronze Adult League at the In-Line Hockey Center in West Bloomfield. The 88's were the only team of 16-year-olds playing in the league. The team consists of Dan Bara and Kevin Etzel (Northville); Scott Ozog (Novi); Ryan Lammers (Rockwood); Mike Hargreaves (Hartland); Tom Pashkot (Livonia); Nick Harris (Westland); and Nick Siekirk, Brett Giacomino, Nick Pesant and Kevin Tollison (Canton). The team is coached by Jay Pesant and Scott Etzel.



## LEARN TO SKATE

The winter session of the Novi Ice Arena's Learn to Skate program will run from Jan. 4 through Feb. 19, 2005. Classes are offered in a variety of times on Tuesdays through Saturdays. Skate rental is available.

In addition, Learn to Skate students who are registered will receive free admission to open skating at the Novi Ice Arena

throughout the seven-week session. The following classes will be offered: beginning tots; Snowplow Sam 1-3; basic 1-8; freestyle 1-2; adult 1-4; and home school. Open registration for Learn to Skate begins Dec. 5. For more information, call the Novi Ice Arena at (248) 347-1010 or visit its Web site at www.noviicearena.com.

## CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF PLYMOUTH WAYNE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

### LEGAL NOTICE

#### 1954 PA 188 PROCEEDINGS NOTICE OF SPECIAL ASSESSMENT HEARING

TO: THE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF PLYMOUTH, WAYNE COUNTY, MICHIGAN, AND ANY OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that as a result of Petitions of property owners within the Township signed by the record owners of land whose front footage constitutes more than 50% of the total front footage of the hereinafter described Special Assessment District and the Township Board of the Charter Township of Plymouth proposes a road paving project in the Beacon Estates Subdivision and to create a Special Assessment for the recovery of the cost thereof by Special Assessment against the properties benefited therein.

Notice is hereby given to all persons interested, that the Board of Trustees of the Charter Township of Plymouth has tentatively declared its intention to make the hereinafter described improvement:

The proposed improvements shall consist of milling, and/or pulverization, and/or removal of the existing bituminous road, and placement of a new bituminous pavement course. In addition, select areas of concrete curb and gutter will be removed and replaced, as necessary, to promote positive drainage. The proposed improvements shall consist of two-lane asphalt pavement constructed over the existing road, as well as miscellaneous driveway and drainage work which may be needed to facilitate the placement of the asphalt road pavement. The project commences at the south right-of-way line of North Territorial Road and proceeds southward along Beacon Hill Drive approximately 1,100 feet where the road turns into Concord Drive and continues in a westward direction for approximately 550 feet. The project continues southward along Beacon Hill Drive for 550 feet to the north right-of-way line of Ann Arbor Trail. The project also includes Beacon Hill Court commencing at the intersection with Beacon Hill Drive extending to the east to its point of terminus. In addition, Lighthouse Court commencing at the intersection with Beacon Hill Drive and proceeding eastward and northward approximately 860 feet to its point of terminus is included in the project. Concord Court from the intersection with Concord Drive to its terminus is also included.

That it has further been tentatively determined that the following described lots and parcels of land will specially benefit from said improvements and will constitute a Special Assessment District against which the cost of said improvement shall be assessed:

The district limit for frontage along Beacon Hill Drive, Beacon Hill Court, Concord Drive, Concord Court and Lighthouse Court consists of the following parcel numbers: R-78-038-01-0001-000 through R-78-038-01-0024-000, R-78-036-01-0025-000 through R-78-036-01-0042-000, R-78-036-02-0043-000 through R-78-036-02-0056-000, R-78-036-05-0163-000, R-78-036-05-0173-000, R-78-036-05-0172-000, R-78-035-0858-0173-000, R-78-033-02-0079-000, R-78-033-02-0080-000, R-78-033-01-0002-802 and R-78-033-01-0007-002.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the Board of Trustees of the Charter Township of Plymouth shall meet on Tuesday, January 11, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. at the Plymouth Township Hall, 42350 Ann Arbor Road, Plymouth, Michigan 48170, for the purpose of reviewing said proposed Special Assessment District, and hearing objections to the improvement, creation of the Special Assessment District, and the assessment thereon. All persons may then and there appear and make any objections they may have to such improvement and assessment. Appearance and protest at the hearing is required in order to appeal the amount, if any, of the special assessment to the state tax tribunal. An owner or party in interest, or agent thereof, may appear in person at the hearing, or may file an appearance or protest by letter. All parties or agents appearing in person at the hearing for purposes of protest should request the appearance be entered into the record of the meeting.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the plans, specifications, estimates of cost and recommendations of the engineer for said proposed Special Assessment District have been filed with the Township and are available for public examination at the office of the Township Clerk. The estimate of costs of such construction is in the approximate amount of \$493,000.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that periodic redetermination of costs for the proposed Special Assessment District may be necessary and may be made without further notice to the record owners or parties in interest in the property.

MARILYN MASSENGILL, Clerk  
Charter Township of Plymouth  
42350 Ann Arbor Road, Bldg. #3  
Plymouth, Michigan 48170  
(734) 354-3224

Publish: December 30, 2004 and January 2, 2005

0608264173

## WAYNE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICES PARKS DIVISION PROPOSED WAYNE COUNTY PARKS 5-YEAR RECREATION MASTER PLAN PRESENTATION OF PRELIMINARY FINDINGS NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

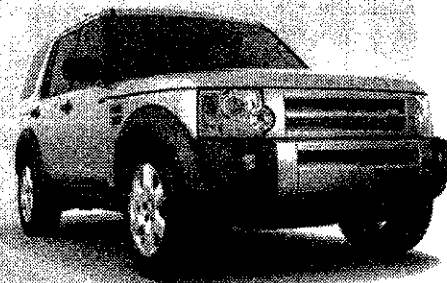
Thursday, January 6, 2005 • 6:00 P.M. TO 8:00 P.M.  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN - DEARBORN SOCIAL SCIENCE BUILDING AUDITORIUM  
(Main Entrance off Evergreen & directly across from Parking Structure)  
4901 EVERGREEN • DEARBORN, MICHIGAN  
For info 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (313) 593-5140, After hours (313) 593-5333  
Or call Wayne County Parks (734) 261-1990  
For Maps and Directions Please visit UM - Dearborn Web Site  
[www.umd.umich.edu](http://www.umd.umich.edu)

Publish: December 30, 2004

0608264397

## ENTER THE WORLD OF ERHARD LAND ROVER FARMINGTON HILLS

### LR3 NOW AVAILABLE!



Starting at  
**\$399 mo.\***

Land Rover Farmington Hills  
38200 Grand River Ave. Farmington Hills, MI 48335  
**(888) 834-8632**  
Visit us online at [www.worldoferhard.com](http://www.worldoferhard.com)

\*Based on \$4000 down and \$399/mo. lease for 36 months with \$1000 purchase option. Excludes taxes, title and license. Finance agreement subject to credit review. Dealer sets actual price. Dealer not responsible for transportation and computer delays.

## Rock PISTONS financial PRESENTS RING IN THE NEW YEAR WITH THE PISTONS

**vs. BOSTON CELTICS**  
THIS SUNDAY, JANUARY 2 AT 6 PM

**SUBWAY FAMILY NIGHTS**  
SUNDAY-SUBWAY® FAMILY NIGHTS feature 4 \$32 tickets, 4 SUBWAY® 6" sub vouchers and 4 Pistons collectibles for just \$119. Add on additional tickets for only \$30 each!

**Fifth Third Bank PHOTO SUNDAYS**  
SUNDAY-Fifth Third Bank Photo Sundays feature players on the court available to have their photos taken with Pistons fans.

**vs. MEMPHIS GRIZZLIES**  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 6 AT 7:30 PM

**vs. NEW ORLEANS HORNETS**  
WED, JANUARY 12 AT 7:30 PM

Don't forget to

**Upcoming TV & Radio Schedule:**  
Tonight 12/30 vs. Heat on TNT @8 pm  
Sat. 1/1 Prime Time Pistons on WB20 @8 pm  
Sun. 1/2 vs. Celtics on FSN Detroit @6 pm  
Pistons Weekly show Sundays at midnight on WDIV4 and Tuesdays at 6:30 pm on FSN Detroit  
All Pistons games can be heard on WDFN 1130 AM

**GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!**  
GO TO [PISTONS.COM](http://PISTONS.COM), THE PALACE BOX OFFICE AND ALL TICKETMASTER LOCATIONS, OR CALL (248) 377-0100.

## OAKLAND BASKETBALL

MBB vs. Bowling Green  
Thurs., December 30th (7pm)

**3 Good Things Come in Threes!**

WBB vs. Centenary  
Mon., January 3rd (7pm)

WBB vs. Valparaiso  
Wed., January 5th (7pm)

And Carson Goes Up... Shoots... For THREE!

**FOR TICKETS**  
Call 248-370-4000 or  
Visit [ougrizzlies.com](http://ougrizzlies.com)

**SPORTS** Gridiron, Court, Pool, Arena, Greens, Diamond  
**We're there!**







# Gifts for the bowlers who have everything

Did everybody get what they wanted for Christmas? If not, there are some stores that will exchange gifts for you. One such retailer is the famous Nieman Marcus department store. They are offering a personal bowling center. Four lanes, two plasma scoring TV's, a Karaoke machine and shoes you can keep. All this for only \$1.45 million. Bring back that ugly necktie and get credit towards what you really wanted for the recreation room.

If this item is out of your price range, then try this one: the talking bottle opener; the Red Sox model, every time you use it, radio announcer Jerry Trupiano makes a home run call, find it on www.footballfanatics.com, \$8.95. If you haven't yet gotten that one great gift, this one may be just the thing: a Pete

Weber bobblehead and you can get it for free, just by picking up a coupon at the local bowling center and presenting it at a participating Jackson Hewitt office. Limit one free bobblehead per customer. The coupon is also good for \$10 off on tax preparation if you do it with them. Call 1-800 234-2040 for office locations. Another freebie is available from Banquet Frozen Foods in your local supermarket. There are coupons for free bowling on specially marked packages. Take the coupon to a participating bowling center and bowl free on Banquet. The Community Bowling Centers group are among those participating.

These centers also can fulfill that need for a holiday gift for the bowling enthusiast. They are selling a table-top bowling game complete with a little ball and ten pins. The ball is aimed by a shooting device and the ten pins will topple if hit. Looks like fun for kids young and old, priced at \$29.95.

The centers are also selling stuffed holiday bowling bears, a cute little critter by Holy Bears (similar to beanie babies) and priced at \$7.95

each. We have searched for holiday gifts from one extreme to the other. If your personal Santa left you with gift certificates or cash, a trip to the local pro shop should top your agenda. They offer the latest styles and colors in new bowling balls, bags and shoes. Even a pro lesson or two can be a great gift, so check it out.

Now that we have taken care of the Christmas holiday, 2005 is just around the corner. I want to wish everyone a happy, healthy and prosperous new year.

The new year also marks the beginning of a new era in bowling, as the United States Bowling Congress officially takes over as the new governance of the sport. The American Bowling Congress, the Women's International Bowling Congress, Young American Bowling Alliance and USA Bowling now will be the U.S.B.C.

The former organizations will not disappear right away, as there will be a gradual phasing out period, and certain activities will retain their old identity.

The national men's and women's ABC and WIBC tournaments shall retain their

old identity for the time being. The Bowling Proprietors Association of America will be more closely affiliated with the USBC and by working together, a lot more can be gained than in the past. With the unification, the sport of bowling will have a better chance to become an Olympic event.

The leagues at Woodland Lanes in Livonia enjoyed a slew of honor scores in the closing weeks of 2004. Perfect games were bowled by Lee Snow in the Grandale League, Rusty Marwede in the Wednesday Trio, Brian Guzowski of Catholic Central, Larry Bendell of the Thursday Nite Men, Ken "Red" Lynch of St. Edith, Jim Sterbenz in the Ford Parts league and Dan Bollinger in St. Linus. Eight-hundred series were also recorded by Paul Finch in the West Chicago league and Tom Fix of the Saturday Kings & Queens. Let's see those great games keep coming in the new year.

Al Harrison is a resident of Livonia and a director and life member of the Greater Detroit Bowling Association. He can be contacted at (248) 477-1839. If you have any league high scores, call them in.

**BURTON'S**  
**Plumbing & Heating**  
**BATH and KITCHEN REMODELING**

- Licensed Master Plumber
- Ceramic Tile Installed
- Quality Materials and Workmanship

FREE ESTIMATES  
Visit Our Full Kitchen and Bath Showroom

(Same location since 1975)  
**34224 Michigan Avenue**  
**Wayne, Michigan 48184**  
**(734) 722-4170**

**Piller** PURE ENTERTAINMENT!  
Every Thursday!

## WISH LIST YEAR-END EVENT

### NO-CHARGE DVD ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM\*

on Mercury Mountaineer, Lincoln Aviator and Lincoln Navigator.



#### 2005 MERCURY MOUNTAINEER V-6 LUXURY AWD

- Up to 7-passenger seating • "Best Pick" safety rating\*\*
- 4-wheel independent suspension • "Disappearing" third-row seat

RED CARPET LEASE FOR RETURNING A/D/Z FORD EMPLOYEES, RETIREES AND ELIGIBLE FAMILY MEMBERS.

**\$248** A MONTH/24 MONTHS **\$0** DOWN PAYMENT

**\$1,118** CASH DUE AT SIGNING\*\*\*  
AFTER \$4,250 CASH BACK INCLUDING \$500 FORD CREDIT CASH, \$500 RENEWAL CASH AND \$1,250 FMCC A/D/X/Z BONUS CASH

INCLUDES REFUNDABLE SECURITY DEPOSIT AND ACQUISITION FEE. EXCLUDES TAX, TITLE AND LICENSE FEES.



#### 2005 LINCOLN AVIATOR AWD

RED CARPET LEASE FOR RETURNING A/D/Z FORD EMPLOYEES, RETIREES AND ELIGIBLE FAMILY MEMBERS.

**389** A MONTH/36 MONTHS

**\$1,468** CASH DUE AT SIGNING\*\*\*  
AFTER \$4,500 CASH BACK INCLUDING \$1,000 RENEWAL CASH, \$1,000 FORD CREDIT CASH AND \$500 FMCC A/D/X/Z BONUS CASH

INCLUDES REFUNDABLE SECURITY DEPOSIT AND ACQUISITION FEE. EXCLUDES TAX, TITLE AND LICENSE FEES.



#### 2005 LINCOLN NAVIGATOR LUXURY 4x4

RED CARPET LEASE FOR RETURNING A/D/Z FORD EMPLOYEES, RETIREES AND ELIGIBLE FAMILY MEMBERS.

**489** A MONTH/36 MONTHS

**\$1,784** CASH DUE AT SIGNING\*\*\*  
AFTER \$4,500 CASH BACK INCLUDING \$1,000 RENEWAL CASH, \$1,000 FORD CREDIT CASH AND \$500 FMCC A/D/X/Z BONUS CASH

INCLUDES REFUNDABLE SECURITY DEPOSIT AND ACQUISITION FEE. EXCLUDES TAX, TITLE AND LICENSE FEES.

TIME IS RUNNING OUT FOR YEAR-END SAVINGS! SEE YOUR METRO DETROIT LINCOLN MERCURY DEALER TODAY.

<p><b>ANN ARBOR Sesi</b> 2100 W. Stadium Blvd. at Liberty (734) 668-6100 sesilm.com</p>	<p><b>CLINTON TOWNSHIP Stu Evans Lakeside</b> 17500 Hall Rd. at Romeo Plank (586) 840-2000 stuevanslakeside.com</p>	<p><b>DEARBORN Jack Demmer</b> 21531 Michigan Ave. Between Southfield &amp; Telegraph (313) 274-8800 demmerlm.com</p>	<p><b>DETROIT Bob Maxey</b> 16901 Mack Ave. at Cadieux (313) 885-4000 bobmaxeylm.com</p>	<p><b>DETROIT Park Motor</b> 18100 Woodward Ave. Opposite Palmer Park (800) 585-4564 parkmotorslm.com</p>	<p><b>GARDEN CITY Stu Evans Garden City</b> 32000 Ford Rd. Just West of Merriman (734) 425-4300 stuevansgardencity.com</p>	<p><b>NOVI Varsity</b> 49251 Grand River I-96 at Wixom Rd. (Exit 159) Two Exits W. of 12 Oaks Mall (248) 305-5300 varsitylm.com</p>	
<p>For latest A/D/Z offers, visit LMAPlan.com</p>	<p><b>PLYMOUTH Hines Park</b> 40601 Ann Arbor Rd. at I-275 (734) 453-2424 hinesparklm.com</p>	<p><b>ROCHESTER HILLS Crissman</b> 1185 South Rochester Rd. Between Hamlin &amp; Avon Rd. (248) 652-4200 crissmanlm.com</p>	<p><b>SOUTHFIELD Star</b> 24350 W. 12 Mile Rd. at Telegraph (248) 354-4900 starlm.com</p>	<p><b>SOUTHGATE Southgate</b> 16800 Fort Street at Pennsylvania (734) 285-8800 southgateincolinmercury.com</p>	<p><b>STERLING HEIGHTS Crest</b> 36200 Van Dyke at 1 1/2 Mile Rd. (586) 939-6000 crestinmerc.com</p>	<p><b>TROY Bob Borst</b> 1950 West Maple Troy Motor Mall (248) 643-6600 borstlm.com</p>	<p><b>YPSILANTI Sesi</b> 950 East Michigan 7 Miles West of I-275 (734) 482-7133 sesilm.com</p>

\*No-charge Rear-Seat DVD Entertainment System (\$1,500 value) available on 2005 Lincoln Aviator, Lincoln Navigator or Mercury Mountaineer. \*\*40-mph frontal offset crash test - Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. \*\*\*Call 1-888-56-LEASE for details. Payments may vary. Residency restrictions apply. Take delivery from dealer stock by 1/3/2005. See dealer for details.



www.hometownlife.com



**Real Estate Inquires**

Robert M. Meisner

## Cell tower construction can be stopped

Our subdivision is fighting with an owner of a lot who wishes to provide for the construction of a cellular tower within our single family subdivision. Do you think we have any recourse to stop it?

To the extent that the single family home restriction has not been waived, you should be able to enforce it against the construction of a cellular tower. In a similar case out of Arizona, the construction of a cellular tower on church property within a single family subdivision was deemed to violate the restrictive covenants that prohibited construction of anything other than detached single family dwellings. There also may be a provision in your documents that prohibits commercial and/or business activities which might also be supportive of the association's position. You are best advised to consult with an attorney to seek the appropriate remedies against the cellular tower company and owner of the subdivision lot before construction begins.

I understand that there is a new statute in Michigan regarding judgment liens which I obtained against a homeowner in a condo. I did check the title and found that the association of homeowners filed a lien against the unit. Do I have a priority to that lien?

While a judgment lien has priority over a lien recorded with the register of deeds after a notice of the judgment lien is recorded, there are a number of exceptions including a lien for unpaid assessments or charges due to a condo association, homeowners' association, or property owners' association that arises from or pursuant to recorded restrictions that run with the land. Therefore, your judgment lien would not take priority against the association's lien. You should consult with an attorney to determine what remedies you have with respect to your judgment lien.

Robert M. Meisner is a lawyer and the author of *Condominium Operation: Getting Started & Staying on the Right Track*, second edition. It is available for \$9.95 plus \$2 shipping and handling. For more information, call (248) 644-4433 or visit [bmeisner@meisner-associates.com](mailto:bmeisner@meisner-associates.com). This column shouldn't be construed as legal advice.



Marge Whetstone, (seated) newly elected president of the Western Wayne Oakland County Association of Realtors, and Alissa Nead, the group's Realtor of the Year, review the schedule of upcoming programs.

## Buyers ruled in '04: They could be picky

BY KEELY SCHRAMM  
STAFF WRITER

With so many houses on the market, buyers could afford to be choosy, and they were in 2004, according to Alissa Nead of Coldwell Banker Preferred in Plymouth.

"You could look for a home that matched your furniture, and some people did," said Nead, who was recently named the Western Wayne Oakland County Association's Realtor of the Year. "Buyers were looking for homes they didn't have to do anything to."

"This was a great year," said Chris Courtney, WWOCA's 2004 president. "But it was definitely a buyer's market. Some houses are sitting on the market. In the past, houses would sell within hours or days of being listed. It's been a problem for people who buy a new house before selling the old one. They face having to pay two mortgages."

**CAUTION URGED**

His advice? If you're thinking about moving, sell your house before you buy a new one. He believes some of those houses on the market will begin to move in 2005. "Rates staying low is a good thing," he said. "If rates stay low, below 9 percent, and I don't see them hitting there, that's a good sign for real estate."

Nead said it gives her an ulcer when buyers have two houses - the one they just bought - and the one they're trying to sell. "With low interest rates a lot of people refinanced and rolled their credit into their mortgage," she said. "Your home is your biggest asset."

Her fear is that some people will use the equity to pay creditors and be left with little or nothing when they decide to sell their house.

There were a lot of foreclosures in southeast Michigan this year. Lois Maljak, foreclosure specialist at Home Savers Inc., a Warren-based agency specializing in providing counseling services to individuals facing home foreclosures, estimates that 10-15 percent of homeowners in the country are barely able to make their monthly payments. "What we find our families struggling to make ends meet through credit cards and loans, and in turn, set themselves up as a prime candidate for foreclosure," she said.

Buyers were cautious. "People were uncertain about their jobs," said Nead. "With interest rates so low we should have had buyers coming out of the woodwork"

Sellers, anxious to move on, invested in landscaping, paint, and other quick fixes to give their homes more curb appeal. "Your house is such a personal part of you," said Nead. "It hurts sellers' feelings when they hear negative comments about their home. But there were so many homes on the market. By the end of the year, sellers understood they had to do updates and make repairs."

Schools were the No. 1 thing buyers considered in making a home purchase. "They mention it even if they don't have children," said Nead. "Good schools are too important for resale."

Consumers are a lot more informed and do their homework.

"They are more demanding. They know what they want," said Marge Whetstone, newly elected president of the Western Wayne Oakland County Association of Realtors. "More and more Realtors are advertising on the Internet."

Realtors are also taking on more of a consultant role. "We coordinate the sale and guide them right up to closing," said Whetstone. "A lot of things need to be explained - title work, city ordinances, pricing. Pure numbers don't help you sell a house unless you know what's going on in the neighborhood."

People move a lot more than they used to. "People's jobs change, they don't stay in a job forever," said Whetstone. "You used to see someone stay in a house for 10 years, not anymore."

"There were a lot of first-time buyers because of low interest rates and that's a plus," said Whetstone. Some of those first-time buyers were couples.

**DEFINITION CHANGING**

Duo family income is changing the definition of "starter house."

"Couples used to look at what they could afford," said Whetstone. "Now they're looking at new construction. They're marrying later, and are already through school and have a career."

Homebuyer needs are changing too. "I noticed more buyers didn't care about a formal dining room," said Nead. "A first

floor laundry room, and library/office was important. Master suites that offer a little privacy and a three-car garage are important."

Whetstone has also noticed that more retirees are moving back to Michigan to be with family. Homes with two master suites, one for the homeowner, and one for aging parents, are becoming more popular.

Stronger than expected home sales and higher median prices have caused the National Association of Realtors to revise upward its year-end forecast. Existing-home sales are expected to jump 7.9 percent to 6.58 million in 2004, well above last year's record. For 2005, NAR projects 6.38 million sales, which would be the second highest level on record.

The national median existing-home price is projected to rise 7.9 percent to \$182,500 for the year. The median new-home price should increase 8.9 percent to \$214,600.

New-home sales will rise 8.9 percent to 1.18 million this year and 1.13 million are forecast for 2005, just shy of the record expected this year. Housing starts are seen at 1.95 million this year, the highest level since 1978; housing construction is projected at 1.87 million units in 2005.

David Lereah, NAR's chief economist, said that some of the backup in housing demand is being met. "We're setting our fourth consecutive record year for existing-home sales, and even with strong fundamentals such as household growth, low interest rates and an improving economy, we simply can't set records every year," Lereah said. "Given the sharp rise over last year's record, a lot of buyers have found the home they've been looking for and we can expect a bit of a breather in 2005, which will remain a historically strong year."

Lereah predicts the 30-year fixed-rate mortgage should rise slowly but average only 6.4 percent next year. In 2005, he expects the median existing-home price to rise 5.0 percent and the typical new home price to grow by 5.8 percent.

Whetstone is hoping the economy strengthens in 2005. Nead believes housing prices will stay stable, and there won't be huge increases. "That will be good in the long run," she said. "You get the big jump, then the big fall. Slow and steady will win for consumers."

**Mortgage Bits**



Timothy Phillips

## A loan for every season

As I have seasoned as a mortgage loan officer, I have learned to treat my clients in much the same way as professional asset managers treat theirs. In fact, I now view myself as more of a debt manager than a mere mortgage broker. As a result of this professional evolution, I take more time at the beginning of the mortgage application process to truly comprehend my clients' long- and short-term goals.

The mortgage selection process is certainly not a "one size fits all" proposition. Choosing the correct fit for a borrower's situation is as critical on the debt side of the house as is choosing the correct investment vehicle for money managers on the asset management side.

Because different borrowers require different strategies to manage their debts - the most sizable of which is usually their mortgage - I will be spending the next several weeks providing specific insights and strategies that borrowers can use during the different stages of their lives.

To metaphorically explain these phases, I will break down my four different categories according to the seasons: Spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Phase one, spring, represents the first-time homebuyer purchasing a property and setting up a home. Summer, the second phase, includes those homeowners who actively building a family and facing all the cash-flow issues related therein. Next, autumn involves borrowers who are rapidly accumulating assets and equity. And the final, winter, is characterized by equity and asset conversion to cash flow.

"Spring" homebuyers, or first-timers, almost never have an abundance of cash with which to make a down payment. Additionally, they often have very little to show by the way of work experience and credit history. The sum of these risk factors, combined with the need to properly educate the young borrowers along the way, often makes for a good amount of work for the conscientious mortgage loan officer.

This is the first part of a five-part series. After the fifth weekly column publishes, readers may download the entire merged series online at [www.PhillipsHQ.com](http://www.PhillipsHQ.com). Timothy Phillips is a mortgage banker and newspaper columnist. You may access his Wealth Academy archives at [www.PhillipsHQ.com](http://www.PhillipsHQ.com) or phone him toll-free at (866) 369-4516. Home buyers should always consult a professional for guidance specific to their situation. Look for part two on Jan. 6.

# Adjustable mortgages down, 15-year rates show rising trend

BY JEANNINE AVERSA  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

The mortgage rate picture was mixed. Rates on 30-year and 15-year mortgages went up, while rates on one-year adjustable mortgages went down.

Freddie Mac's weekly survey released Wednesday, Dec. 22, showed rates on 30-year, fixed-rate mortgages increased to 5.75 percent, compared with 5.68 percent the previous week.

Rates on 30-year mortgages hit a high this year of 6.34 percent the week of May 13. They slowly drifted

downward as the economy hit a late spring-early summer soft spot. Recent economic data suggest the economy is expanding at a solid pace.

Rates on 15-year, fixed-rate mortgages - a popular option for refinancing - rose to 5.18 percent, up from 5.11 percent.

Thirty-year and 15-year rates were the highest since the beginning of December. Long-term mortgage rates have remained well behaved even as the Fed boosted short-term interest rates five times this year. That's because inflation, while creeping higher, is not currently viewed as a

danger to the economy, analysts say.

One-year adjustable rate mortgages, meanwhile, dipped slightly to 4.17 percent, compared with 4.18 percent the previous week.

The nationwide averages for mortgage rates do not include add-on fees known as points. Each loan type carried a 0.6 point fee.

A year ago, rates on 30-year mortgages averaged 5.82 percent with 15-year mortgages at 5.14 percent and one-year ARMs at 3.77 percent.

Low mortgage rates have supported home sales, which are expected to

hit record highs for all of 2004. Sales next year should also do well, according to the National Association of Realtors.

The association's chief economist, David Lereah, predicts rates on 30-year mortgages will slowly rise next year to around 6.4 percent, still fairly low by historical standards.

The Mortgage Bankers Association, meanwhile, reported that refinancings accounted for 48.9 percent of all mortgage loan applications filed last week, up from 46 percent.

**One-year adjustable rate mortgages, meanwhile, dipped slightly to 4.17 percent, compared with 4.18 percent the previous week. The nationwide averages for mortgage rates do not include add-on fees known as points.**



HOMES SOLD IN WAYNE COUNTY

These are the Observer & Eccentric-area residential real-estate closings recorded the weeks of Aug. 16 - 20, at the Wayne County Register of Deeds office. Listed below are cities, addresses, and sales prices.

Table listing real estate sales by city (Canton, Redford, Westland, Plymouth, Garden City) with columns for address, price, and other details.

Real estate advertisement for WEIR, MANUEL, SNYDER & RANKE REALTORS. Includes photos of various homes and descriptive text for each listing.

Please recycle this newspaper

Real estate office contact information for WEIR, MANUEL, SNYDER & RANKE REALTORS, including office locations and website URL.

Large real estate advertisement for COLDWELL BANKER PREFERRED REALTORS. Features a grid of property photos and descriptions, along with contact information for various office locations.

All ads run online FREE! A value of up to \$87.00

Observer & Eccentric

Classified

Ask about our NEW HOT LINK SERVICE www.hometownlife.com

0001-2450 Home & Service Guide

3000-3890 Real Estate For Sale

3890-3980 Commercial Industrial

4000-4980 Real Estate Rent/Lease

5000-5980 Employment Instruction Services

6000-6980 Announcements

7000-7780 Merchandise

7110-7130 Garage and Moving Sale

7800-7980 Animals Pets/Livestock

8000-8780 Automotive Recreational Vehicles

Place your ad toll free at 1-800-579-SELL



Walk-In Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

Publication Day

Deadline

SUNDAY PAPER.....5:00PM Friday

THURSDAY PAPER.....5:30PM Tuesday

Fax your ad: 734-953-2232

THURSDAY PAPER.....5:30PM Tuesday

On-line at www.hometownlife.com • E-Mail Us: oeads@oe.homecomm.net



Too Late To Classifieds...

If you missed our regular Tuesday deadline for Thursday's publication, you can now call us 'til Wednesday at 11am and place your ad in our 'Too Late To Classified' Section. Look for this to appear in Section C of the paper! Let us work for you!

3000's Real Estate. List of 3000-3890 real estate listings with addresses and prices.

3000-3890 Real Estate For Sale. Real Estate For Sale section with various listings.

Birmingham 3050 Brighton 3060 Canton 3080 Garden City 3170 Livonia 3250. Real estate listings for Birmingham, Brighton, Canton, Garden City, and Livonia.

Birmingham 3050 Brighton 3060 Canton 3080 Garden City 3170 Livonia 3250. Real estate listings for Birmingham, Brighton, Canton, Garden City, and Livonia.

Birmingham 3050 Brighton 3060 Canton 3080 Garden City 3170 Livonia 3250. Real estate listings for Birmingham, Brighton, Canton, Garden City, and Livonia.

Birmingham 3050 Brighton 3060 Canton 3080 Garden City 3170 Livonia 3250. Real estate listings for Birmingham, Brighton, Canton, Garden City, and Livonia.

3900-3980 Commercial/Industrial. Commercial and industrial real estate listings.

CANTON SUNFLOWER SUB COLONIAL. Real estate listing for a Sunflower Sub Colonial in Canton.

CANTON CAVALIER VILLAGE SOUTH SUB. Real estate listing for a Cavalier Village South Sub in Canton.

CANTON SHOKLER TRUESDALE SUB. Real estate listing for a Shokler Truesdale Sub in Canton.

NORTHVILLE NORTHVILLE ESTATES HALF-ACRE SITE. Real estate listing for Northville Estates Half-Acre Site.

NORTHVILLE NORTHVILLE ESTATES HALF-ACRE SITE. Real estate listing for Northville Estates Half-Acre Site.

The Observer & Eccentric Classifieds 1-800-579-SELL. Ad for the newspaper's classifieds.

CANTON LAKEPOINTE SUBDIVISION. Real estate listing for Lakepoinsite Subdivision in Canton.

PLYMOUTH BREATHTAKING PLYMOUTH RANCH CONDO. Real estate listing for a Plymouth Ranch Condo.

ROMULUS FAIRWAYS AT GATEWAY SUB. Real estate listing for Fairways at Gateway Sub in Romulus.

PLYMOUTH GREENBROOK VILLAGE SUB. Real estate listing for Greenbrook Village Sub in Plymouth.

PLYMOUTH BREATHTAKING PLYMOUTH RANCH CONDO. Real estate listing for a Plymouth Ranch Condo.

CHEAPER THAN RENT! Gentry Real Estate, Inc. (248) 887-7500. Advertisement for Gentry Real Estate.

CANTON GREENBROOK VILLAGE SUB. Real estate listing for Greenbrook Village Sub in Canton.

WESTLAND HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS. Real estate listing for a home in Westland.

PLYMOUTH WALK-TO-SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD. Real estate listing for a walk-to-school neighborhood in Plymouth.

PLYMOUTH WALK-TO-SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD. Real estate listing for a walk-to-school neighborhood in Plymouth.

PLYMOUTH WALK-TO-SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD. Real estate listing for a walk-to-school neighborhood in Plymouth.

GMAC Real Estate 94% SATISFACTION. Advertisement for GMAC Real Estate.

Quality Properties Inc. GMAC Real Estate Premier Service. Advertisement for Quality Properties Inc.

PLYMOUTH BUNGALOW. Real estate listing for a Plymouth Bungalow.

PLYMOUTH BUNGALOW. Real estate listing for a Plymouth Bungalow.

PLYMOUTH BUNGALOW. Real estate listing for a Plymouth Bungalow.













# HAPPY HOLIDAYS —and— THANK YOU

★ For your business ★ For your readership  
 ★ For your continued support ★ For turning  
 to us to help you ★ For appreciating the  
 value in what we do and what we can do for  
 you ★ For giving us the opportunity to  
 serve you ★ For making our jobs  
 meaningful and worthwhile.

from all of us in  
 The Classified Advertising Department

- ★ Melissa Brown ★ Jennifer Bell ★ Stacey Courtney
- ★ Robert Dodd ★ Alana Duma ★ Tara Eddington
- ★ Margo Horzelski ★ Liz Keiser ★ Carole Layne
- ★ Linda Magar ★ Sandra Martin ★ Sue Masters
- ★ Roy Meadows ★ Anna McCaslin ★ Cindy O'Neill ★
- Donna Orozco ★ Jack Padley ★ Terry Randall ★ Mary
- Kay Raymor ★ Cindy Reed ★ Kathleen Reilly
- ★ Joan Schott ★ Jacqueline Sullivan ★ Marvin Tinsley
- ★ Cathy Vogt ★ Charolette Wilson

THE  
**Observer & Eccentric**  
 NEWSPAPERS

WHERE HOMETOWN STORIES UNFOLD

HOME DELIVERY: 1-866-887-2737 . CLASSIFIEDS: 1-800-579-7355  
 HOMETOWNLIFE.COM







