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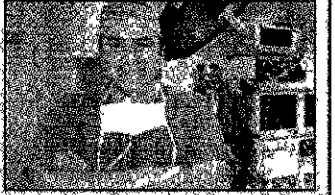
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Canton to be first township to join MML

BY TIFFANY L. PARKS
STAFF WRITER

Canton is poised to become the first township to join the Michigan Municipal League. The Ann Arbor based non-partisan organization for cities and villages recently tweaked its bylaws in order to extend membership to the township. "Canton acts like a city in many cases rather than a typical township," said MML Executive Director Daniel P.

Gilmartin. The township has been informally involved with the organization for nearly two years and is expected to become a member before the end of the month. "Just like a small business will join the chamber of commerce, it's the same thing with the MML," said Canton Township Supervisor Tom Yack. More than 500 cities and villages are members of the

MML, one of the oldest associations of its kind in the country. Canton had been a member of the Michigan Townships Association, but ended its membership about 18 months ago, according to Yack. He said the main reason was the hope that Canton would be accepted into the MML, which he feels is a better fit for Canton. The bulk of their (MTA) membership are rural townships with less than 5,000 resi-

dents. "We don't really have a lot in common with them," Yack said. The MML promotes state and federal legislation targeted at local governments, administers insurance programs, sponsors conferences and training programs, offers consulting, personnel and labor relations services, maintains a resource center and produces various publications. "There was a time when city meant urban and township

meant rural," Gilmartin said. "But (including Canton) made sense to a lot of people. We have to get past our old visions of townships and cities." In its first act as a member, the township recently submitted about \$9,000 in membership dues. Membership is on a voluntary basis. Crediting Gilmartin with opening the way for Canton's inclusion, Yack praised the MML's training programs and legislative efforts.

"I see us making the organization stronger," he said. "They now have 85,000 more voices." The group's board of trustees meets every two months. "I knew it would take some educating, but I was pretty confident (we'd become a member)," Yack said. "In most cases, being the first is pretty good." For more information on the group, log on to www.mml.org. tlparks@hometownlife.com | (734) 459-2700



Tonda third grader Mingi Kim, left, reads about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to kindergartner Kevin Sivic during MLK activities at the school Friday morning.

Striving for equality

District developing expanded diversity agenda

BY TONY BRUSCATO
STAFF WRITER

As the nation prepares to celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King Day - a federal holiday - Monday, Plymouth-Canton Community Schools has moved away from a one-day diversity training for teachers and administrators, and instead is in the process of developing a district-wide diversity plan. "Diversity isn't just a one-day activity," said Barbara Rodenberg, assistant superintendent for instructional services.

"We're drafting a diversity plan, which we think will have a stronger impact. It reflects some of the things we're already doing, and reflecting on some areas we need to work on." Rodenberg said the goals are in the areas of students, community and staff. While the district's student population includes some 20 percent minorities, "one major weakness right now is our staff doesn't reflect our student body in ethnic and racial background," she said. "The percentage of our

staff from diverse backgrounds is much smaller than the percentage of our students," Rodenberg said. "We're putting a lot of effort into that this year." According to Ray Bihun, the district's executive director of human resources, approximately 20 percent of the district's student population is listed as minority. Bihun's figures from February 2006 indicate that of 1,059 teachers in the Plymouth-Canton school district, 24 were



Tonda Elementary School principal George Belvitch, right, joined a few students, including fifth graders Brendan Kelly, left, and Cara Gross, middle, to talk about the meaning of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. day during the school's morning broadcast of "The Bully Help Desk" Friday.

PLEASE SEE DIVERSITY, A4



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Hosam Hassamen already has Lowe's in his back yard and a JCPenney is on the way.

Residents worried about JCPenney development

BY TIFFANY L. PARKS
STAFF WRITER

When Hosam Hassamen first toured his Westminister Way home eight years ago, he was floored by its tranquil, wooded backyard that seemed to go on and on for miles. "It was beautiful," he said, walking out to his deck.

Years later, things have changed and Hassamen, along with many of his neighbors, are hoping that history doesn't repeat itself.

The coming of Lowe's Home Improvement shattered the calm of Hassamen's property and he, along with many of his neighbors, are crossing their fingers that a proposed JCPenney doesn't bring more of the same issues.

"We got the short end of the stick," said Hassamen, a department manager with the engineering design firm, URS Corporation. "And (the construction's) not done yet."

The home improvement store and the planned site of the national department store are directly south of Westminister Way on Ford Road.

The backyards that used to be bathed in darkness at nighttime are now illuminated by a series of lights on the Lowe's store and the trees that blocked the view of the activity near Ford Road have been replaced by a retention pond.

Hassamen, one of a dozen homeowners that met with JCPenney officials last week, said he wouldn't have bought his Carriage Hills subdivision home if he knew big-box development was on the horizon. "Look at that," he said, staring at the brick wall of the Lowe's building. "It just doesn't fit but I think we're in good shape with JCPenney."

Maureen Rich, a Lowe's spokesman, said the 60-year-old, North Carolina-based company has hundreds of stores across the nation and prides itself on being a good neighbor.

"We do our best to come to workable solutions wherever we go," she said, while

PLEASE SEE DEVELOPMENT, A8

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Auto show security adjusts to changing times

BY TONY BRUSCATO
STAFF WRITER

When Carl Berry was hired by the Detroit Auto Dealers Association in August 2001 to develop a security plan for the North American International Auto Show, the former Plymouth Township police chief thought it would be a piece of cake.

"I'd developed a plan that provided the typical security, primarily focused on people stealing tickets and forgeries, said Berry, as well as protecting people against different kinds of minor crimes on the floor, like pickpockets."

Approximately one month later, the entire scope of his job changed.

"Needless to say, when 9/11 happened, I had to change everything, and it's been an ongoing change ever since," Berry said. "Now we prepare for possible terrorist attacks and higher-type crimes."

"We have a K-9 unit here to sniff out any kind of explosive device that may be brought in," he said. "You'll see identifiable guards at the doors with wands to check everyone and all packages. That's the visible part of it."

Behind the scenes, more than a thousand public law enforcement and private security personnel, many in plain clothes, are walking the auto show floor. However, they aren't looking at the various new models and concept vehicles.

"You don't see a lot of the uniforms and things going on,



JOHN STORMZAND | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Working security at the Auto Show is former Plymouth Township police chief Carl Berry (right)

and we have guards in locations you wouldn't normally have," said Berry, careful not to disclose any security secrets. "We do have a lot of technology, with an extensive radio system that a lot of police departments would love to have."

"We have high-tech cameras that record everything," he said. "We can pan and zoom every square inch of Cobo. All of our systems are hooked into the Internet so we have instant communications anywhere in the world with any law enforcement agency we need to be in touch with."

Stuart Rich, of Farmington Hills, has been a deputy for both Wayne and Oakland counties for more than 20 years, and helped initiate the K-9 unit for the Wayne County Sheriff's Department. A dog handler for nearly 30 years, Rich and "my second wife," Nina, a 2-year-old German shepherd, work 12-hour days during the show and walk about 15 miles a day around Cobo Center searching for anything suspicious.

"We check every package that comes into the show," Rich said. "During the day, we walk around and the dogs will indicate if they hit on something we check out."

It seems there's something every auto show, Rich said.

People get fatigued and set something down and forget where they put it, or they go to look at something and leave a package behind. In this day and age, we have to check out

everything.

Berry said his security team is made up of Detroit police officers, law enforcement personnel from around Wayne County, Michigan State Police and federal partners like the FBI, Drug Enforcement Agency, the U.S. Marshal's Office and Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

Inspector Ellis Stafford, assistant division commander for the Michigan State Police Special Investigation Division in Livonia, said he has dozens of staff as part of the security team walking the auto show floor.

"They're especially trained in hostile surveillance detection," Stafford said.

Their job is to spot people who are more interested in security than they are in the show.

Berry said he's done his job if people who attend the show notice a security presence, and they feel safe while walking Cobo and the streets around it.

The show is supposed to be about the cars and the people who come here to have a good time and enjoy it, Berry said.

"We don't want an overwhelming show of security force because that scares people, too. People who come to the auto show need to have some knowledge that things are going on to provide a safe atmosphere."

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Glitz and glamour

Local company helps jazz up auto show exhibits

BY TONY BRUSCATO
STAFF WRITER

Visitors touring the exhibits during the week-long public viewing of the North American International Auto Show at Cobo Center might not be able to tell, but some of the glitz and glamour displayed by manufacturers are the brainchild of creative designers at Exhibit Works.

The Livonia-based, worldwide strategic marketing company is providing support for 11 domestic and foreign automakers.

It's stressful, but an interesting and fun kind of stress, admitted Michael Croke, vice president of West Coast sales, while being interviewed at the Mazda display, one of Exhibit Works clients. "It's a challenge from a creative standpoint, but - in my opinion - we have the best designers in the business."

"We want to do something completely new and different, and find what kinds of materials will match the brands," he said. "We seem to come up with something that is pretty successful for most of our clients."

Exhibit Works, founded by Dominic Silvio in 1979, has grown to become an industry leader in the development of marketing programs, with nearly \$170 million in sales. Exhibit Works has operations in Livonia, Chicago and Los Angeles, employing more than 500 people at peak production. Last summer, the company opened its first Asian operation in Shanghai, China, to work with its U.S., European and Asian clients who are moving into a fast-building Chinese market.

"We've done business throughout the world, on every continent - China, the Middle East, Europe," Croke said.

Exhibit Works teams are many times privy to some of the most well-kept secrets of the automakers they represent.

"We will sit down with their public relations and marketing divisions of the companies and manufacturers and they will let us see vehicles they won't let others view," Croke said. "We need that information to look at different materials and what they are planning on doing, and how we're going to integrate, from a branding standpoint. A lot of our clients expect confidentiality, and that's something we guarantee them."

"It's actually a lot of fun," admitted Croke. "When we sit in on those meetings, a lot of time they'll ask our opinions on what direction they're going in, the advertising or the vehicles they're coming out with. They really do see us as partners to help drive their sales."



JOHN STORMZAND | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The North American International Auto Show in Detroit has more than cars and trucks. Michael Croke, vice president of PR at Exhibit Works of Livonia stands in the midst of a display for Suzuki, which is one of his clients.

Steve Hough, a creative director at the Livonia headquarters for 25 years, has helped create marketing campaigns for Ford Motor Co., Volkswagen and Porsche. Hough, who grew up in Livonia and now lives in Northville, likes planning for the big stage - the Detroit auto show.

"It's where the action is, it's the big show," said Hough. "Our job is to make their marketing campaign and develop the three-dimensional display - create an environment to showcase their products."

Hough said traveling to other auto shows, like those in Paris and Geneva, Switzerland, helps keep the creative juices flowing.

"We try to get out and see what's coming out in the world, see the pulse of the auto industry so we can be current," Hough said.

Croke said auto manufacturers spend from \$2-\$40 million on their exhibits for the Detroit show.

"It's a very large investment because it's an international auto show and in the back yard of the Big Three," Croke said. "It's extremely important from a marketing and sales standpoint for our clients."

"We want to help our partners drive their business and drive their sales," he said. "The quality has to be there. You have to be able to deliver what you promise."

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RACIAL MAKEUP

Here's how the Plymouth-Canton school district student population looks by ethnic group

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
American Indian	47	35	82
Asian	1,218	1,158	2,376
African American	691	666	1,357
Hispanic	161	223	384
White	7,805	7,568	15,373
Native Hawaiian	26	28	54

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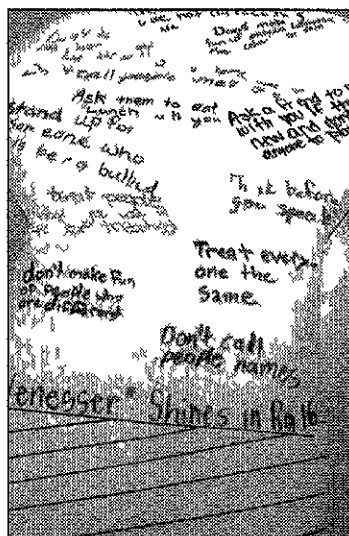
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minorities Of the 86 administrators employed by the district, there were six minorities. "We have a lot of applications for most positions, but not a lot of minorities are going into teaching at the university levels," Bihun said. "Canton has a diverse community, and we need to reflect our community. By having a diversified staff we're complimenting diversity within the district. We need to attract minorities to Plymouth-Canton."

That's what Joyce Johnson believes. Johnson, an African-American principal at Central Middle School for more than seven years, said the district needs to make more efforts to attract a more diversified instructional and administrative staff.

"I agree there aren't a lot of minority people going into the field of education at the teaching level, and I don't know why," Johnson said. "But we have to go find them, and promote our district in terms of diversity so we can get them here because it's a great district."

Johnson said she's in favor of having a diversity plan, but the fact the district is now developing one shows a glaring void.



TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Students at Tonda Elementary School wrote down ways they can carry on the dream of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on paper lightbulbs to shine some light on the subject.

"The mere fact that we've begun working to establish a diversity task force says we're not doing enough," Johnson said.

Sara Ghannam is a member of the Diversity Council at Plymouth-Canton Educational Park, as well as the Middle Eastern-American Association. The 17-year-old Lebanese student from Plymouth Township agrees with the idea of a diversity plan.

"It's good we have one day dedicated to Martin Luther

King, but we shouldn't do it just once a year," said Ghannam, a Canton High School senior. "Here, you meet people from so many ethnicities and cultures, about where they're from and why they do certain things. Many schools don't have the diversity we have."

Canton High School senior Ednan Haroon, a senior who is a member of the Muslim Student Association at the high school park, said living with diversity "is a way of life, and you shouldn't just apply it to one day."

Tonda Elementary Principal George Belvitch used his Bully Help Desk television program, which is beamed by satellite to all classrooms within the school building, for a discussion of celebrating diversity and equality for everyone, as was taught by Dr. Martin Luther King.

"The one thing we all have in common is our differences," Belvitch told students. "You've got to be who you are."

It was a lesson learned for second-grader Marissa Barman, 8, of Canton.

"Everyone is the same, but in a different way," Marissa said. "It's a good thing because if the world looked the same, then the world wouldn't be the same."

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Ford invests nearly a \$1B in local plants

BY ALEX LUNDBERG
STAFF WRITER

Ford Motor Co. executives, United Auto Worker representatives, government officials and several hundred Ford Livonia Transmission Plant employees gathered Tuesday morning to cheer an announcement of the investment of nearly \$1 billion in southeast Michigan Ford facilities.

The company will spend \$866 million to renovate and update auto plants in Livonia, Woodhaven, Wayne, Sterling Heights and two in Dearborn. The Livonia facility will receive \$88 million for expanded production of six-speed, rear-wheel transmissions.

Ford executive Vice President Mark Fields said it was truly a great day.

"Today we make good on our promise to celebrate a substantial investment in six Michigan plants," he said. "We're making a bold statement. Michigan is our home and we're giving our plants and people the opportunity to be the best and build the best vehicles in the country."

He said the investments also show that the company is interested in focused and strategic investments — not just cost containment — by investing in new product lines

(small cars) while protecting its leadership in trucks.

This could not be done without the aid of state and local government officials, who will be providing tax abatements to make the projects happen.

"Ford is a major economic force in Michigan. Ninety-two percent of our research and development is spent here," Fields said. "We purchase \$22 billion from our Michigan partners. We are proud our Michigan roots run deep and we are serious about investing in new products and our collective futures."

Gov. Jennifer Granholm was expected to attend the event, but canceled due to the death of a family friend. James Epolto, president and CEO of the Michigan Economic Development Corp., said the governor appreciates what the investment means to the state and what it says about Ford's presence here.

"When she announced the agreement in August, Gov. Granholm said there was no vision of Michigan's economic future that did not include Ford cars and truck design and production," Epolto said. "This company's investment of almost \$1 billion is a testament to the company's faith in Michigan."

He added that every job at a Ford plant represented three to four jobs in related busi-

nesses. Livonia Mayor Jack Engebretson addressed the crowd, repeating the oft-said statement of what a great day it was for the company, the state and the UAW.

"We're proud that we're hearing this news in this plant that is the economic engine that drives Livonia," he said. "One thing that makes this plant great is that it's a model for cooperation between plant and UAW leadership. We are pleased and proud to be partners with them."

Gary Johnson is a Livonia resident and 20-year tool and die worker at the plant. As a resident as well as an employee, he's happy about the investment.

"We have good production and good innovation," he said. "It's nice to see the corporation feels the same way about us."

He said even with the new investment, the future is going to be different for the industry and Ford is going to have to adapt to survive.

"We need to respond to the market and give people what they want to buy," Johnson said.

"We've always been optimistic, it's nice to see the company is taking concrete measures."

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BUSINESS BRIEFS

Lawyer elected shareholder

Lawrence G. Almeda, a Canton resident and attorney at the intellectual property law firm of Brinks Hofer Gilson & Lyon, has been elected a shareholder of the firm effective Jan. 1. Almeda focuses his practice on patent opinions and prosecution in the medical, chemical, nanotechnology and mechanical arts. His practice has an emphasis on medical devices, nanomaterials, micro- and nano-devices, petroleum and chemical processes, polymers, fuel cells, hybrid engines and polycarbonate glazing systems.

Almeda, who also has significant experience in counseling clients on patent infringement and validity evaluations, is president of the Michigan Asian Pacific American Bar Association and chair of the Business Law Section of the Washtenaw County Bar Association. He is an active member of the State Bar of Michigan, American Intellectual Property Law Association and the American Bar Association.

Architect joins firm

Gary A. Salata of Canton was recently named a project



Salata

architect for the Southfield firm Neumann/Smith Architecture. He brings to the firm more than 20 years of professional experience in educational,

municipal and commercial projects.

He earned a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from Lawrence Technological University.

Salata lives in Canton with his wife, Jeanette, and their children.

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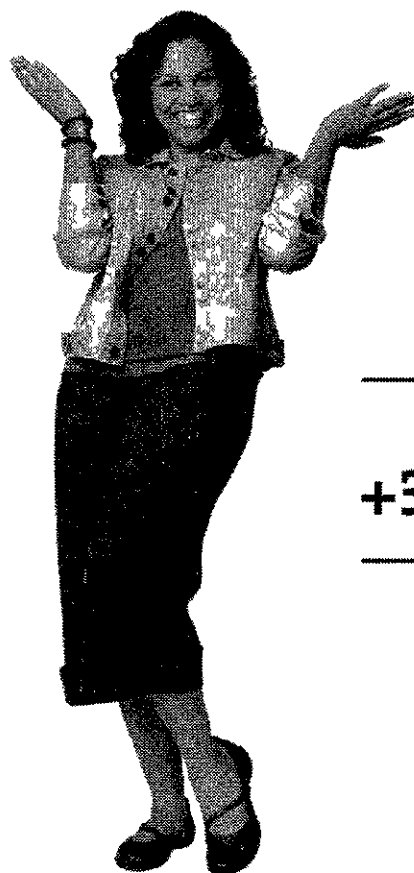
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Baracy: 2007 looks good for district

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

As New Year's resolutions go, the hope is usually for a good one, and that's just what Wayne-Westland School Superintendent Greg Baracy foresees in 2007.

I'm looking forward to a very good and prosperous 2007, he said. I hope it will be good and healthy for our children and that our student achievement keeps improving.

Even a threatened cut in state school aid can't cast a pall on the start of the New Year in the district. On Jan. 30, the addition to Alumni Arena at Wayne Memorial High School will be dedicated, and in February ground will be broken for a similar addition at John Glenn High School.

The additions are being financed through the district's sinking fund, and according to Baracy, it is the students who are reaping the benefits.

School officials also are deeply immersed in the restructuring to the high school curriculum to meet the new state requirements. The requirements affect this year's freshman class, and the district is looking at such things as a trimester system and offering Algebra I with high school credit in the eighth grade.

We're really deep into research and evaluation of trimesters, Baracy said.

Trimesters would provide more opportunity for students to meet the requirements and still take extracurricular classes.

Baracy also is pleased to see more parent participation in

the schools and is hoping to grow that in 2007.

It's not just more parents in the PTA or PTO, it's more volunteers in the classrooms and schools, he said. And it's not just in the elementaries. We're seeing an upswing in the middle school and high school and that's a good sign.

Also on the positive list is the expansion of two media centers at two elementaries — Schweitzer and Edison — and the adoption of new mathe-

matics and English language arts text books for the high schools and new social studies books that would cost between \$600,000 and \$800,000.

But offsetting the good news in 2007 is the gloom and doom out of Lansing. Word has been swirling around for months that the amount the state pays per pupil to districts could be cut because of a shortfall in the School Aid Fund.

Rumored cuts have run

from none to as high as \$200 per student. If it happens, the lost revenue would erase gains made with the district's switch to intraschools of choice and a pilot all-day kindergarten at four schools at the elementary level.

Wayne-Westland has been able to deal with revenue loss by boosting attendance, cutting expenses and tapping its budget surplus, but a possible proration could be the "block of coal in our stocking," Baracy

said. "Education funding has to stay at the rate of inflation, or it's a loss, he said. "If we don't get an increase, it's a loss. If it's status quo, it's a cut." The superintendent also hopes the New Year has brought a new round of getting along in the State Legislature.

I hope Santa brought a renewed sense of cooperation of all parties, so they can put aside their petty bickering and

focus on the economy and jobs and the education of our youth," he said.

But the news out of Lansing isn't enough to dampen his excitement about the start of 2007.

Despite that, we have a lot of good things going on, he said. We have a lot of good people working with our children to help them achieve their potential.

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'Aladdin' to feature dozens of local kids

Ever After Productions youth theater will present Disney's Aladdin Jr -- a production featuring dozen of local children Jan 26-28 at the Village Theater at Cherry Hill. Seventy kids from Canton, Plymouth and other local communities will team up for this stage adaptation of the Disney hit. Josh Kaufmann, 16, of Plymouth and Dee Gross, 14, of Canton, will play the main characters of Aladdin and Jasmine. They will be joined by Ramon Razo, 17, of Garden City, who will play Genie. The show will feature actors performing the Academy



Youth actors from the upcoming show "Aladdin Jr" take a moment during a recent rehearsal.

Award winning score, with songs including "A Whole New World" and "Friend Like Me". Show times are 7 p.m., Jan 26, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., Jan 27, and 2 p.m., Jan 28. Tickets are \$12 for all seats and are avail-

able by phone at (734) 394-5460 or online at www.cantonmi.org/villagetheater. Special school shows will play Jan 29 and Jan 30 at 9:30 a.m. Tickets for school groups are \$6 each, and must be pur-

chased through the Village Theater Box Office at (734) 394-5460. For more information, contact Ever After Productions at (734) 751-4887 or visit them online at www.everafterproductions.org.

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Youth orchestra conducts auditions

The Celebration Youth Orchestra conducts auditions for the second semester of the 2006-2007 school year this month.

Auditions must be scheduled in advance and can be arranged by calling the Plymouth Canton Symphony Society (PCSS) office at 734 451 2112. Auditions are open to string students ages 9 and older with at least one year of instruction and wind, brass, and percussion students ages 12 and older with at least three years of instruction.

Students, who may live anywhere in southeastern Michigan, are asked to prepare one scale in any key and a piece of their choice. Percussionists will be provided with a snare drum, but will need to bring their own sticks.

The CYO is the youth orchestra supported by the Plymouth Canton Symphony Society. CYO has two ensembles, the Celebration Sinfonia for string, wind, brass, and percussion students and the Celebration Strings.

The CYO is dedicated to challenging and inspiring students through high level ensemble training and the performance of standard and new repertoire. CYO students have several unique performance opportunities, including side-by-side concerts with both the Plymouth Symphony Orchestra and Orchestra Canton.

The Celebration Youth Orchestra is part of the Plymouth Symphony's Youth Outreach Education Program. Donations to the Symphony's No Kid without a Concert Education Campaign help to fund the CYO as well as many other programs for students throughout Southeastern Michigan.

To schedule an audition or for more information contact the PCSS office, (734) 451-2112 or by e-mail at jane@plymouthsymphony.org.

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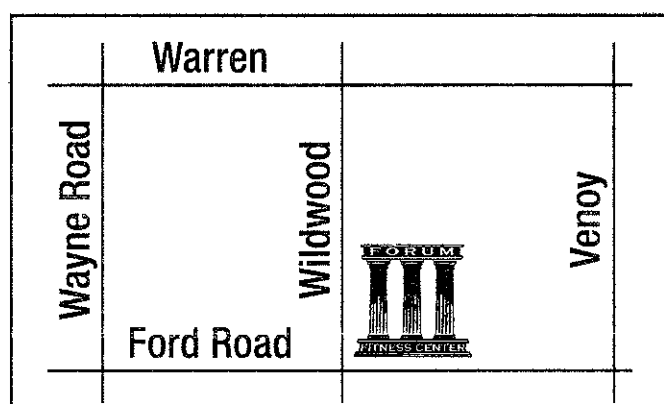
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DEVELOPMENT

FROM PAGE A1

encouraging those with concerns to call corporate offices at 1-800-445-6937. "We work very hard to be a good neighbor."

Ursula Cecile, Hassanien's next-door neighbor, is leery about another large store moving so close to the residential neighborhood.

"I'm probably one of JCPenney's biggest customers, but I don't want them in my backyard," she said. "We've already been burned once."

Cecile, a Realtor, said in addition to the commercial development bringing down property values, the retention pond caused a shift in soil that has exposed buried utility lines and concrete footings for a steel fence.

In a May 2006 letter to the township's deputy building

official, Hassanien wrote about the sinking soil and the lights along the Lowe's building.

As a response, John Weyer of Canton's Building and Inspection Services wrote that a township representative had been out to the property and hadn't observed any soil settlement. He also wrote that the store's light levels were in compliance with the zoning ordinance.

The proposed JCPenney is slated to be more than 100,000 square feet. The township's Development Review Committee viewed preliminary site plans in late December.

Jeff Goulet, Canton's community planner, said the committee had a few concerns about the proposed buffer between the store's parking lot and the backyards of the Westminster Way homes.

"We're taking the opportunity to make sure what hap-

pened with Lowe's doesn't happen here," he said, adding that the JCPenney development is still in the preliminary stages.

Until the store is built, Cecile said she'll remain skeptical.

"They seemed honest, but saying and doing are two different things," she said.

JCPenney representatives did not return calls for this story.

Goulet said there's no timetable for a revised site plan to go before the township's planning commission.

The store's representatives seemed receptive to the homeowner's concerns, said Dave Camp, Carriage Hills Association president.

"We've elicited some guarantees," he said. "Our homeowners have had bad experiences in the past and no one has been held accountable."

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PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Vicki Gamache, manager of the new Office Depot on Michigan Avenue, welcomes guests to the store's ribbon cutting ceremony Thursday.

Office Depot opening keeps Michigan Avenue 'on fire'

BY TIFFANY L. PARKS
STAFF WRITER

A ribbon-cutting ceremony for Canton's first Office Depot offered more than introductions, handshakes and photo opportunities Thursday. The national retailer gave away \$1,500 in donations and 75 children's backpacks to three groups: the Educational Excellence Foundation, the Huron Valley Boys and Girls Club and the Westland DARE program.

"We're here for the people," said Vicki Gamache, store manager. "Office Depot believes in putting money back into the community."

While shoppers continued to stroll through the Michigan Avenue store oblivious of the ribbon-cutting crowd near the entrance, Gamache presented over-sized \$500 checks to the three organizations.

Frank Rigger of the Boys and Girls Club joked that the donation is "already spent."

"We really appreciate this," he said. "Any money helps right now."

The 20,000-square foot store opened in late December and is connected to Kroger in the Premier Center near Canton Center. It's the company's 28th store in the state and features a new, open floor design where similar products are grouped together.

"We couldn't be happier to be a part of the Canton community," Office Depot Regional Manager Tony Standerfer said, adding that Office Depot always gives donations to non-



Sharon Belobraidich, representing the Plymouth-Canton Educational Excellence Foundation, accepts a \$500 donation from Office Depot's Vicki Gamache and Tony Standerfer.

profit organizations when opening a new location. "We really feel the community is an intricate part of our success."

As he welcomed Office Depot to Canton, Township Supervisor Tom Yack said Michigan Avenue is "on fire" with new development and joked that the Ford Road traffic can now move elsewhere.

After cutting a large burgundy ribbon trimmed in gold, Gamache said the store is already a success.

"We're seeing a lot of traffic," she said.

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A poor mountaineer barely kept his family fed
Then one day he was shootin' at some food
And up through the ground came a bubblin' crude
Oil that is black gold Texas tea

- Paul Henning
Beverly Hillsbillies theme song

In the early 1970s, my father bought 10 acres of land near the Pigeon River up north. It was a nice piece of land, with the promise that the surrounding property would eventually be developed into a recreation area.

As with many dreams and promises in the inflation-challenged '70s, the area never was developed. My father's little bit of heaven remained as pristine (and unusable) as the day he bought it.

But just when the vision of relaxing in the great north woods began to fade, news came that oil companies were interested in drilling in the Pigeon River area. Now usually when developers sell a parcel of land, they include a little paragraph that reserves to the seller any "mineral rights." For some reason, the lawyer wasn't on his game the day the contract was drawn with my father, who ended up owning the property and anything underneath it.

Perhaps a vision of becoming an oil tycoon danced briefly in my father's mind. But nothing came of that vision either.

The lure of oil has now gone suburban. Livonia is considering whether to let an energy company drill for oil at a site near I-275 and Haggerty Road. The city hopes to make \$2.8 million in royalties over the next 20 years. Neighboring property owners would make about \$31,000 over the same period.

Apparently this is a trend in our ongoing attempts to become energy independent. The West Bay Exploration Co. out of Traverse City operates 20 oil and gas reservoirs in southeastern Michigan. Livonia will be joining Novi,

Hugh
Gallagher

Northville and other communities as a mini-OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Expectant Communities)?

Environmentalists are expressing some concerns, but the general opinion seems to be that oil can be drilled safely, quietly and efficiently in the middle of a thriving suburban community. Anyone who has been to Oklahoma City would know that many people live comfortably with oil derricks everywhere they go. An oil derrick sits on the lawn in front of the state Capitol. Oil pumps line the road from Oklahoma City to Tulsa. It's not the prettiest sight in the world — or maybe it is to the folks in Oklahoma. (I understand modern drilling procedures are more aesthetically appealing.)

Of course, Livonia isn't likely to create Oklahoma, Texas or OPEC-style gushers. It won't challenge Iraq's oil fields (if this war ever ends). But given the city's strapped economic situation (one it shares with other Michigan cities), a mini-oil fortune would come in handy in providing for police, fire and public works.

Of course, digging in the suburbs is only one of many efforts that this state and the nation need to become energy independent. Oil is expensive, finite, polluting. It has served us well and, as someone who fires up a car every morning to drive 20 miles to work and heats with natural gas, I can't legitimately argue against our need for petroleum. In fact, it's naive to think we can wean ourselves from oil anytime soon or that protecting our access to oil isn't a vital national concern.

But as fine as this deal is for Livonia, we need to invest more in viable alternatives — from solar panels to biodiesel to electric cars to leg power.

The operative word is "viable." Right now, oil is still where we get most of our energy and, apparently, the suburbs can convert their black gold into a much-needed revenue stream.

Hugh Gallagher is the managing editor of the *Observer Newspapers*. He can be reached by e-mail at hgallagher@hometownlife.com or by phone at (734) 953-2149.

Grand or grungy, movie theaters are special places

Michael Hauser, marketing manager with the Michigan Opera Theatre, is working with the newly renovated Detroit Historical Museum to stage an exhibit on area movie houses in February.

It should be fascinating. We tend to take theaters for granted these days. The trend in movie houses now is massive megaplexes of 15, 20 or even more screens. But it wasn't always that way. Once upon a time in a movie galaxy far, far away, movie theaters were structural works of art, like the Fox, the Michigan, Palms and Adams theaters. These were palaces devoted not only to the art of film making but also to the experience of seeing a movie. It would begin when you walked in the door and were overwhelmed by opulent surroundings. The grand theaters truly were movie palaces.

But the big downtown theaters were reserved for special occasions. More than likely you would go to the neighborhood show to see a bill of second-run features that would change twice a week.

When I was a kid, we used to go to the Farnum theater. It was a grand place, aside from the fact that it would flood after a heavy rain so that the front half dozen rows or so resembled a swamp. And the air inside never lost that musty odor we grew to accept.

There were mounds of chewing gum stuck to the bottom of the seats.

The screen was repaired with tape, and every so often the film broke — but, so what. For 35 cents we got to see two movies, cartoons, coming attractions and even a news reel of some event we didn't care about.

Occasionally, the film would be accompanied by a live performance of some sort. This could include monsters who would emerge from behind the screen when a horror film — and the Farnum showed lots and

lots and lots of horror films — was shown. Talking aloud to each other, to the screen and to oneself was perfectly acceptable. Some people brought in baskets of food but we generally were satisfied with buying popcorn.

Those were the days when there was one screen to a theater, before the seats were divided into shoe box spaces with screens hardly bigger than TV sets.

If you think about it, you probably have more good memories of movie theaters than just about any other single place. For two hours you can escape reality into a different world often filled with things you're not likely to see outside. I have wonderful memories of seeing movies with so many friends. I recently lost a longtime friend who loved to go to the movies. Every so often one of these movies will turn up on TV and I invariably think of her and how we saw that movie together in a theater when it first came out.

And I still have the torn ticket stubs. I've been to the Birmingham and Palladium theaters and I think they are terrific. I like them not just because they are excellent places to see movies but also because they are about as close to being a neighborhood theater as you will find anymore. They are light years ahead of what the Farnum was, but they are right in town, not surrounded by acres of parking lot spaces.

They are cozy, comfortable venues, which is what a theater should be. The days of the great movie palaces is pretty much over, except for a few, like the Fox, which have been preserved. There are two movie theaters left in Detroit, and the last area drive-in movie, in Dearborn, is up for sale. At one time there were hundreds of theaters and dozens of drive-ins.

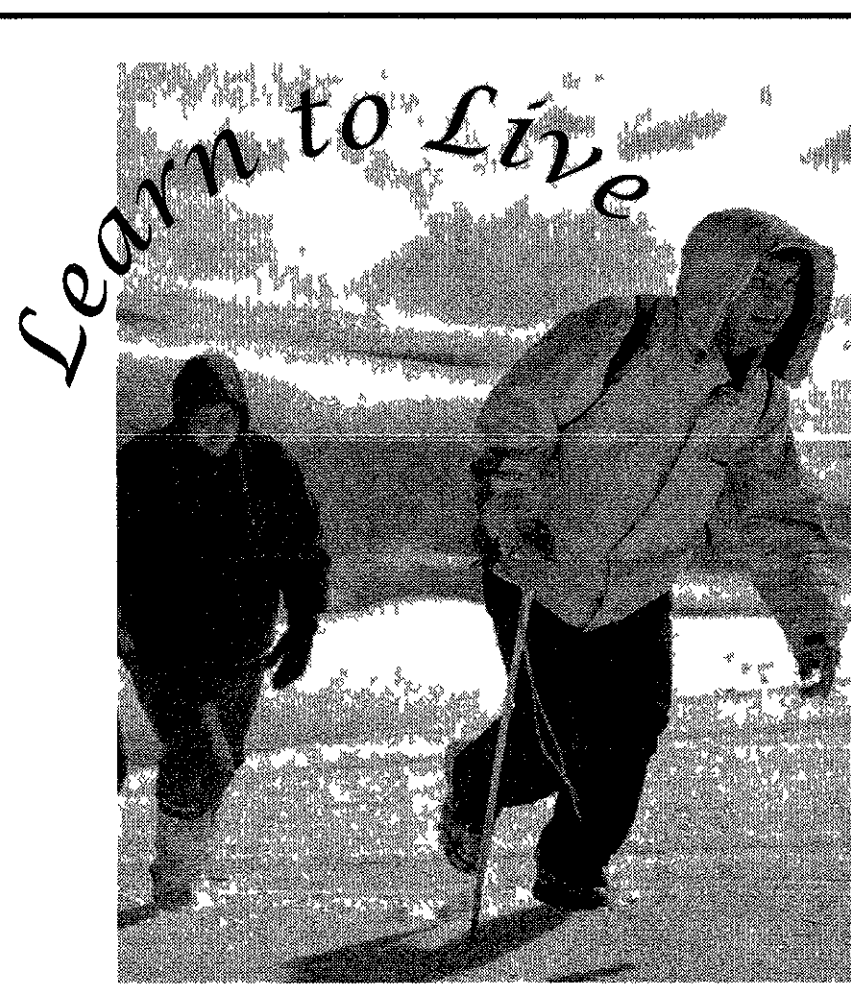
Most are now just memories. But good memories. And I think I'll hold onto my torn tickets.

Greg Kowalski is editor of the *Birmingham Eccentric*. He can be reached at (248) 901-2570 or by e-mail at gkowalski@hometownlife.com.



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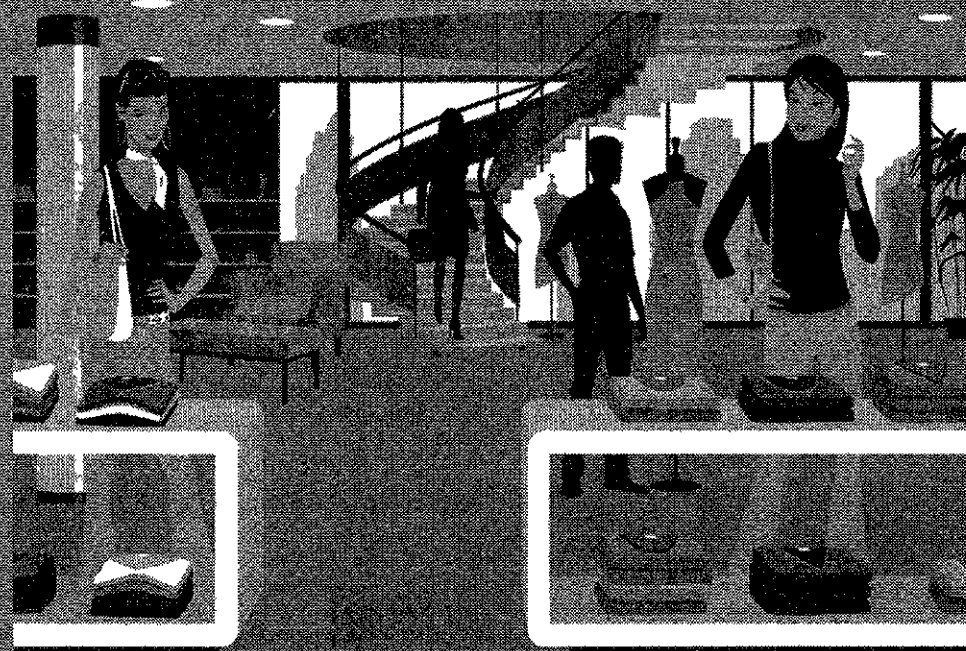
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Finding a good adviser key to successful investing

Q. How can I find a good financial adviser?

A I gave a talk at the Southfield Public Library regarding investing last week and received this question in an e-mail from an individual who had accepted a buyout from one of the automotive companies

Finding a good financial adviser is no different than finding a good doctor or a good lawyer. One of the keys, whenever you deal with a professional, is whether you can communicate with that individual. You want to make sure they deal with you as an individual and that you are not intimidated by them. That being said, in the financial world, not all financial advisers are professional and it is important to distinguish between the different types of advisers.

Unlike doctors and lawyers, who are required to meet a minimum amount of standards in order to get licensed and who have to obey certain ethical rules, financial advisers are not bound by those same rules. Unfortunately, there are very few regulations with regards to financial advisers and virtually anyone and everyone can call themselves a financial adviser. It is important when you do decide to hire a financial adviser you hire a professional, not a mere salesperson.

When you consider hiring a financial adviser, you will notice that many advisers have



Money Matters

Rick Bloom

numerous initials after their name, but you must be careful in order to understand these credentials. Unlike other professional credentials, in the financial world, some of the designations are issued by private organizations that have no educational or ethical standards. These organizations issue designations to confuse investors. In many cases, too many of the so-called financial advisers are nothing but financial salespeople and the designations after their names merely serve as a marketing gimmick rather than having a meaningful impact on your chances of financial success.

When it comes to your money, if you are seeking professional assistance, the key is to get someone who puts your best interest as their No. 1 objective and does not put their own interest ahead of yours.

It is important to understand any conflicts of interest in a professional relationship. In the financial world, one way to determine potential conflicts of interest is to look at how a financial adviser is compensated. Basically, there are

two ways to distinguish between advisers: those who are paid through commissions vs. those who are compensated by fees.

The majority of financial advisers are paid by commissions or a combination of commissions and fees. What this means is that they receive compensation for selling you products. Obviously, whenever you deal with a commissioned salesperson, there is a conflict of interest. After all, they only get paid if they sell you a product.

Another potential conflict of interest with commissioned salespeople is with regards to ongoing fees. Many financial products such as variable annuities pay advisers fees on an ongoing basis. Therefore, you may have purchased a product such as a variable annuity where there are heavy ongoing fees and you find that you're also paying the salesperson year-by-year even though that salesperson is not providing you any ongoing service.

The other way financial advisers can be compensated, and the way I believe is best, is through a fee-only arrangement. A fee-only adviser charges you for their service and is not compensated by the buying or selling of products. For these types of advisers, since their sole compensation comes directly from their clients and not from the prod-

uct, the traditional conflicts that exist with commissioned salespeople do not enter into the equation.

The decision of choosing a financial adviser in today's world is as important as any financial decision you will make.

I believe strongly in the importance of independent advice, free of conflicts of interest, and that is why I recommend you steer clear of commissioned salespeople.

For many people in southeast Michigan, buyouts offered by the auto industry represent a great opportunity to better one's financial future. If you intend on dealing with a commissioned salesperson, which I recommend against, you must do everything you can to protect your future and the nest egg you've accumulated over many years of hard work. Therefore, don't be intimidated, ask questions and always make sure you understand all costs of an investment, including buying, selling and holding.

Good luck!

Rick Bloom is a fee-only financial adviser. For more information, visit his Web site at www.bloomassetmanagement.com. You can hear him live from noon to 3 p.m. Sundays on WDTK AM (1400). If you have a question you would like answered in Sunday's *O&E*, e-mail Rick Bloom at moneymatters@hometownlife.com.

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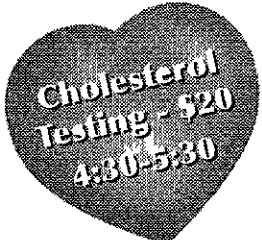
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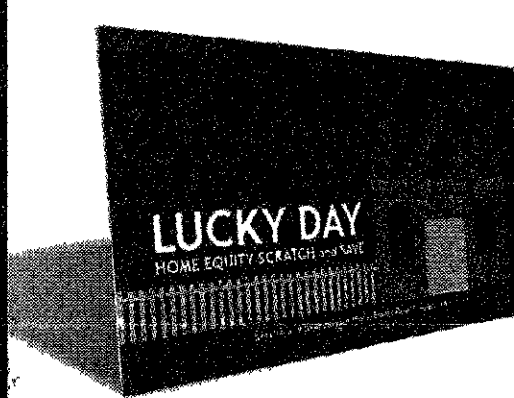
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Sunday January 14 2007

The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers

Ed Wright, editor (734) 953 2108 ewright@hometownlife.com

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Plymouth football coach Blaylock resigns

BY ED WRIGHT
STAFF WRITER

Jay Blaylock, who guided the Plymouth High School football program from the ground floor all the way to the Division 1 state playoffs during his five years at the helm, resigned Monday afternoon.

"I've always felt that if the situation didn't feel right, it would be time for me to move on," said Blaylock, discussing his resignation. "There's not

one thing I can put my finger on that led to my decision. I've coached football for 17 years now, which means I've put it above just about everything else for 17 years. I never want to be in a position where I linger around a year or two longer than I should. As far as possibly coaching again, I'm going to take one year off, then see how I feel after that. "Coaching at the high school level is a year-round commitment now. Being a head coach is a 24/7 year-round commitment. I thoroughly enjoyed the

experience here, but it's time to take some time off from it."

The former Salem gridiron and track standout was hired by Plymouth Athletic Director Terry Sawchuk in May of 2002, approximately three months before the new school opened. In three varsity seasons (2004-06), the Wildcats compiled a 13-16 record under Blaylock, including a 7-3 mark in the team's playoff season of 2005.



ANDY RUBENSTEIN

Plymouth football coach Jay Blaylock resigned Monday after guiding the Wildcats to a 13-16 record in three varsity seasons. The apex of Blaylock's five-year tenure came in 2005 when Plymouth qualified for the Division 1 state playoffs in its first season with seniors.

PLEASE SEE **BLAYLOCK, B2**

Stinglines

Prep figure skating

Several area teams will compete in the Michigan High School Figure Skating Competition from 4-8 p.m. Monday at the Farmington Hills Ice Arena.

Among the teams scheduled to compete include Livonia Ladywood, Farmington Hills Mercy, Plymouth-Canton, Northville, Milford, Lakeland, Walled Lake, Ann Arbor Huron and Novi.

Samarco saluted

Bowling Green State University senior guard Martin Samarco (Belleville/Schoolcraft College) was named Mid-American Conference East Player of the Week after scoring a career-high 43 points in the Falcons' 74-73 home-court win Sunday over the University of Buffalo.

The 6-foot-2 Samarco, who hit the game-winning three-pointer with two seconds remaining, connected on 16-of-24 shots from the floor, including 7-of-12 from three-point range. He is averaging 22.4 points and 4.1 rebounds per game for the Falcons (10-4, 1-0).

Free-throw contest

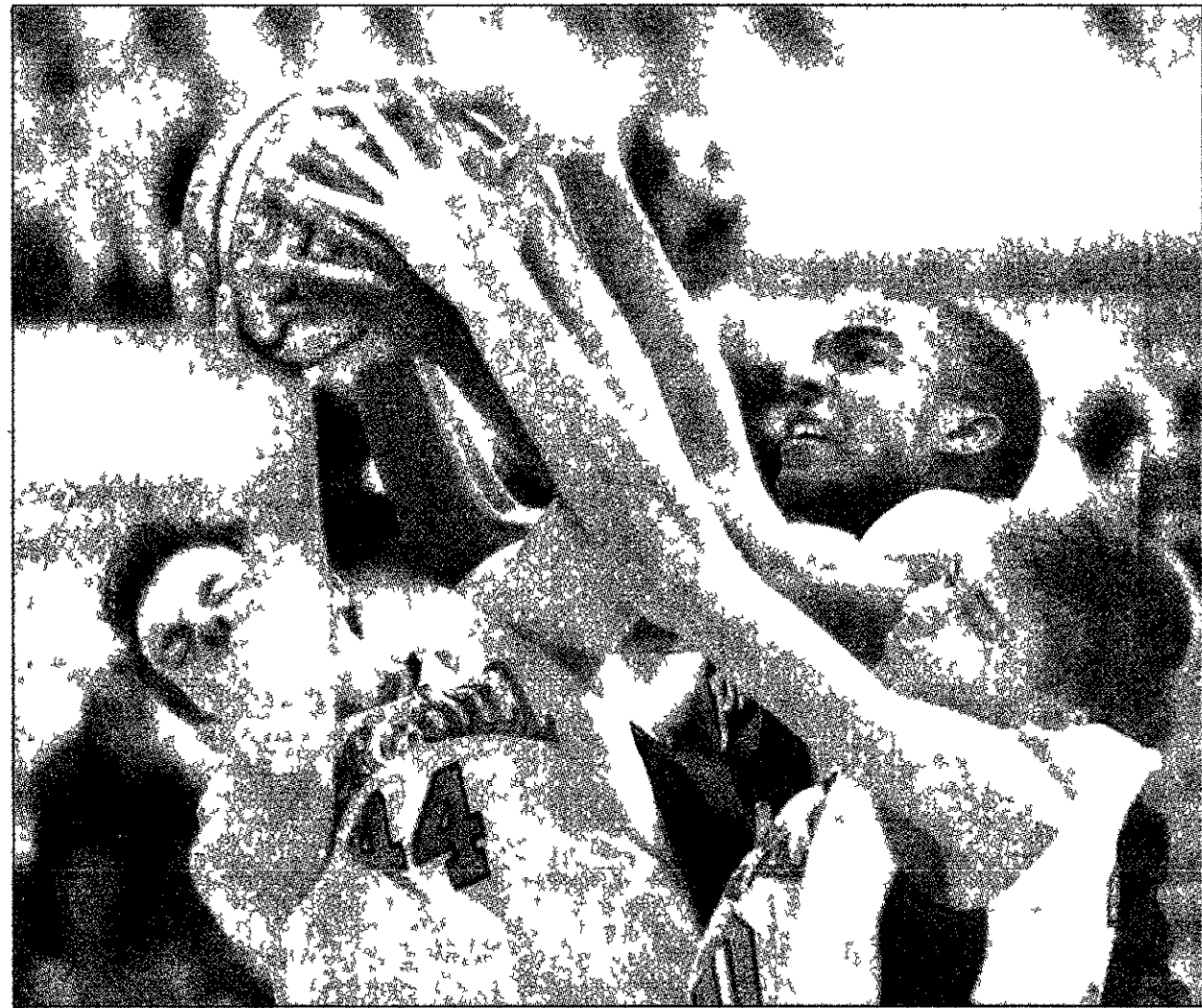
Boys and girls between the ages of 9 and 14 are invited to participate in the local level of competition for the 2007 Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship. The local competition will be held Sunday, Jan. 21, at 1:30 p.m. at St. Thomas a'Becket Church, which is located at 555 S. Lilley Road in Canton.

The championship is sponsored annually with winners progressing through local, district and state competitions. Last year nearly 179,000 youngsters participated in more than 3,000 local competitions.

Participants are required to furnish proof of age and written parental consent.

For entry forms or additional information, contact Lou Brochner at (734) 453-7684.

Pre-registration will be available at St. Thomas a'Becket after all weekend masses up until Jan. 21.



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Plymouth's Austin Barnett battles for a rebound with Churchill's Ryan Rosenick (left) and Nicholas Seger during Friday night's WLA cross-over game at Churchill. Rosenick netted 24 points and 16 rebounds in the Chargers' 48-46 victory.

Salem hands Northville a rare setback

BY ED WRIGHT
STAFF WRITER

Salem's basketball team sent shockwaves — or, better yet, Rockwaves — through the Western Lakes Activities Association Friday night when it handed defending champion Northville a 66-57 setback in the Rocks' gymnasium.

The loss was the Mustangs' first regular-season setback since the 2004-05 season. Northville's only loss last year came in the opening round of the Class A District tournament when it was upended by Novi Catholic Central.

Salem improved to 3-4 overall and, more importantly, seized some much-needed confidence and momentum heading into Tuesday's Lakes Division opener at home against Livonia Stevenson.

"The key tonight was our defensive intensity," said Salem coach Bob Brodie. "We led pretty much wire-to-wire tonight. To do that against a team like Northville you have to play good defense."

It's been a roller coaster ride for us this season, but tonight everybody played well. Anthony Mullins did a great defensive job on (Northville's leading scorer) Alvin Storms. He got his points, but Anthony made him work for them.

The Rocks' potent junior forward combination of Ross Davis and Grant Stone paced the win, as they scored 22 and 16 points, respectively. Davis also yanked down a season-high 12 rebounds. Mullins contributed at the offensive end, too, pouring in 10.

Storms led the 6-1 Mustangs with 22. Dan Kirkpatrick netted 14. Salem led 12-8 after one quarter and 35-22 at the half. The Rocks carried a 44-31 lead into the final eight minutes and didn't let the Mustangs get closer than eight points down the stretch.

"There was a lot of fouling and scoring while the clock was stopped," Brodie said, describing the high-scoring fourth quarter during which the teams combined for 48 points. "We just had to put our finger in the dike and hold on."

Salem hit 19-of-29 free throws. Northville burned 16-of-22 attempts from the charity stripe.

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PREP HOOP

Fight to the finish

Churchill holds off Wildcats with late surge

BY ED WRIGHT
STAFF WRITER

After a thorny start, Livonia Churchill's basketball team came out smelling like a "Rose"nick Friday night in a Western Lakes Activities Association cross-over game against visiting Plymouth.

Led by the blue-collar effort of junior forward Ryan Rosenick, the Chargers outlasted the Wildcats, 48-46, in a tension-packed contest that wasn't decided until the final minute.

Rosenick, who finished with 24 points and 16 rebounds, notched a double-double — 14 points and

10 boards — in the first half alone.

Churchill senior Brad Evans came up big at crunchtime for the winners, converting a driving layup with 1:30 to play to break a 44-all tie. The 6-foot-3 senior

PLEASE SEE **HOOPS, B3**

Sestito is big reason for Whalers' success

Whalers subdue Spirit Page B2

BY ED WRIGHT
STAFF WRITER

Plymouth Whalers forward Tom Sestito has the body of a basketball player, the toughness of a Marine and the right hook of a Golden Gloves boxer.

Most importantly, the 6-foot-5 native of Rome, N.Y., possesses the hockey skills that have lit up the Ontario Hockey League this season and promise to do the same in the National Hockey League in the not-too-distant future.

Heading into Friday night's game at



Sestito

Saginaw, Sestito, who was drafted by Columbus in the third round of the 2006 NHL Draft, had compiled a team-leading 23 goals to go along with 13 assists. While the numbers are impressive, they don't scratch the surface of what he's provided to the West

Division-leading Whalers.

"Tom broke into the league as a tough guy who didn't mind fighting, but now because of the hard work he's put in during the summers, he's still a tough guy, but he's our leading goal scorer too," said Whalers President,

General Manager and Head Coach Mike Vellucci. "He not only scores, but he's our top penalty killer, he blocks shots, he does it all. His physical presence creates room for him and for his teammates."

2 GAMES, 6 GOALS

The unquestionable highlight of Sestito's third season in Plymouth unfolded on Dec. 7 and 8 when he registered a feat that even the Gretzkys and Lemieuxs of the world would be envious of — back-to-back hat tricks in victories over London and Sudbury.

PLEASE SEE **SESTITO, B2**



WALT DMOCH


Plymouth forward Tom Sestito has been an integral reason why the Whalers have surged into first place in the Ontario Hockey League's West Division. The 6-foot-5 Columbus Bluejackets' draftee entered the weekend with a team-high 23 goals.





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Newcomers contribute in Whalers' win

The Plymouth Whalers received two goals each from Jared Boll and Andrew Fournier and single goals from veteran Evan Brophay and newcomers Sean O'Connor and Daniel Ryder in a 7-2 victory over the Saginaw Spirit in an Ontario Hockey League game played Friday night before 4,105 at the Dow Event Center.

The Whalers remained in first place in the OHL West Division with a 27-11-1-2 record (57 points). Plymouth was tied with Sarnia (26-11-2-3), which defeated Guelph, 2-1, in overtime on Friday.

Saginaw dropped to 25-14-0-2, five points behind the Whalers and Sting.

Although Boll and Fournier were the game's first and second stars, respectively, Plymouth received instant dividends from its OHL trade deadline deals earlier in the week. O'Connor — a native of Brownstown Township — scored in the first period to extend the Whalers' lead to 2-0. He later added an assist and a fight to complete the "Gordie Howe hat trick" (goal, assist and fight).

Ryder, who was acquired from Peterborough on

Wednesday, assisted on O'Connor's first-period goal and scored in the second to put Plymouth ahead, 6-1.

Newly acquired Steven Whiteley — who came over from Belleville on Tuesday — added an assist and played a steady game on defense with blue-line partner Ryan McGinnis.

Plymouth led 2-1 after one period and 6-1 after two.

The Whalers will host Saginaw on Monday at 2 p.m. at the Compuware Sports Arena. Tickets are available by calling (734) 453-8400 or by visiting www.ticketmaster.com.

SESTITO

FROM PAGE B1

"I've seen that a few times before, but that was great coming from Tom," said Vellucci, referring to Sestito's six-goal weekend. The best thing about it was that he had short-handed goals, power-play goals and even-strength goals. He's proven that he can excel in all kinds of situations, which is why I think he's going to be a solid NHL player some day.

Once he gets stronger, with his size and as smart as he is, Tom has the skills to play at the next level for a long time. He may start out as a fourth-line player, but by the second or third year in the league, I think he'll be a top-line guy.

Sestito advanced skills were honed on the rinks of Upstate New York, where he followed the path of his older brother, Tim, a former Whaler who now plays professionally on the East Coast.

"We got to play together my first year with the Whalers, so that was nice," said Tom Sestito. "He's three years older than me, so we had never played on the same team before. He gave me a lot of advice and told me what I needed to do to be successful at this level."

Sestito's hockey stock rose dramatically six years ago along with his height.

During one year of Pee-Wees — I think I was 13 or 14 — I grew four inches," said Sestito. "I went from being a short, speedy guy to a tough guy."

Sestito said the tough-guy image he developed during his early days with the Whalers combined with his lanky frame gave him a definite advantage on the ice.

"The first couple of years I was in the league, other players would test me and they'd want to fight me," he said. "But now they don't bother me any more. A lot of them steer clear of me now, which allows me to get some space on the ice."

I don't get a lot of satisfaction out of getting in fights, but I know it's something I have to do."

What does Sestito enjoy more — scoring a big goal or applying a bone-jarring check?

"Actually, I like penalty-killing more than anything," he said. "I take a lot of pride in that and so does everybody else on our team."

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BLAYLOCK

FROM PAGE B1

Plymouth was narrowly defeated by Detroit Codi in the first round of the post-season that year.

Jay did an awesome job during his time as head coach," said Sawchuk. "He put in hours, upon hours, upon hours in order to build a strong program."

This past season, the Wildcats were hampered by injuries to key players, including starting quarterback Matt Barrera who was lost for the remainder of the season in the third game, and disciplinary suspensions that sidelined three defensive starters during the heart of the team's schedule.

The hardest part about this was having to tell my players I was leaving," said Blaylock, who teaches math and science at Plymouth. "It's a great group of kids and I'm going to miss working with them. They really busted their tails to become better football players."

"I had a phenomenal booster club and a great group of parents who supported me, too, over the past five years. I can't thank them enough."

Blaylock and his wife Nancy, are expecting their first child in April. Nancy Blaylock, a former collegiate volleyball player at the University of Dayton, is the freshmen girls basketball coach at Plymouth and a teacher in the Plymouth Canton Community School District.

That played a small part in my decision," Blaylock said of his impending fatherhood. "But it wasn't the main reason. My wife is going to continue to coach basketball."

Blaylock said he takes great pride in leading the first class of Plymouth football players to the playoffs.

What an amazing group of kids that was," Blaylock said, reflecting back on his initial squad of freshmen. Overall, there wasn't a lot of speed, there wasn't a lot of size and, as a group, they weren't real athletic, but through hard work and commitment, they made it to the playoffs four years later.

"We had kids like Josh Le Duc, who came in as a 147-pound freshman and graduated four years later with a Division I scholarship to Eastern."

Prior to taking over the reins at Plymouth, Blaylock served 12 years as a member of Salem's football coaching staff.

"Ideally, I'd like to see one of the members of my staff get the job," said Blaylock.

Patriots subdue Chief icers

Dave Muller tallied a goal and two assists to lead Livonia Franklin to a 4-1 victory over Canton in a Western Lakes Activities Association Western Division showdown played Friday night at the Arctic Edge Ice Arena in Canton.

The triumph propelled the Patriots record to 3-9 overall and 1-1 in the division. The Chiefs slipped to 3-9-1.

"The shots were pretty even, but their goalie (Austin Mesler) played well," said Canton coach Dan Abraham. "They scored twice in the first period and he preserved the lead after that."

Franklin's Jordan Short broke the scoring ice less than five minutes into the first period when he scored a goal off assists from Tyler Barnes and Muller. Muller then took a pass from Barnes and beat Canton goalie Kevan Swanburg late in the first period to extend the visitors' lead to 2-0.

Derrick Cripe put the win on ice early in the third stanza when his shot from Franklin's blue line eluded Swanburg to make it 3-0. A few minutes later Jordan Chisholm tacked on an insurance goal to make it 4-0.

Canton's lone net-finder came with five minutes left when Justin Ward scored off assists from Clark Albers and J.P. LaFontaine.

Mesler made 21 saves, while Swanburg finished with 20 for the Chiefs.

"Austin played a great game," Franklin coach Terry Jobbitt said.

"The first period was the best hockey we've played all season. We had excellent positioning, we back-checked and even scored a power-play goal."

"But in the second period we lost it. We took eight penalties, 12 for the game, which is unacceptable."

STEVENSON 7, SALEM 1: Livonia Stevenson continued sailing along Friday with a lopsided Western Lakes Activities Association-Lakes Division boys hockey victory over visiting Salem at Edgar Arena.

The Spartans, ranked 10th in Division I in the latest statewide coaches poll, improved to 11-1-1 overall and 3-0 in the Lakes.

Salem falls to 5-5-1 and 0-2.

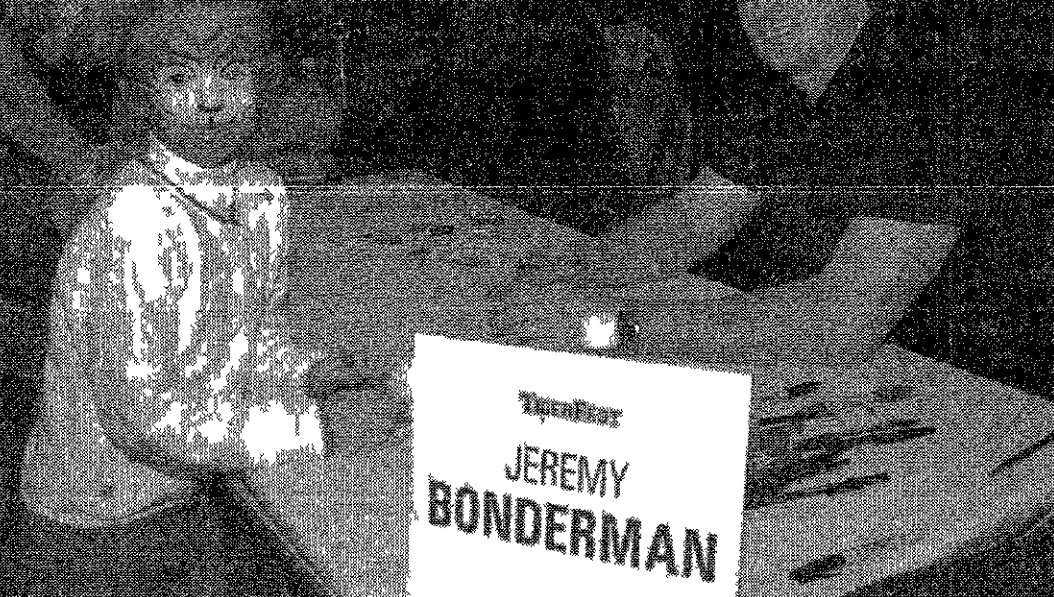
Marcus Voran had a pair of goals and one assist to lead Stevenson, which led 1-0 after one period and 4-1 after two periods. Mike Jahn chipped in with two goals as well, while senior T.J. Gosselme finished with one goal and two assists.

Joe Byrne collected his first career goal with an assist. Mike Gibbons also scored for Stevenson, which outshot Salem, 29-18. Other assists went to Dan Darrow and Mark Bekkala, two each, Steve Soave, Sean Lerg and John Vella.

Salem's Nick Gennety scored at 6:40 of the second period from Adam Hammell to make it 3-1.

Mike Zynda, who made 16 saves, was in goal for the Spartans. Ralph Aspenwall made 22 stops for Salem.

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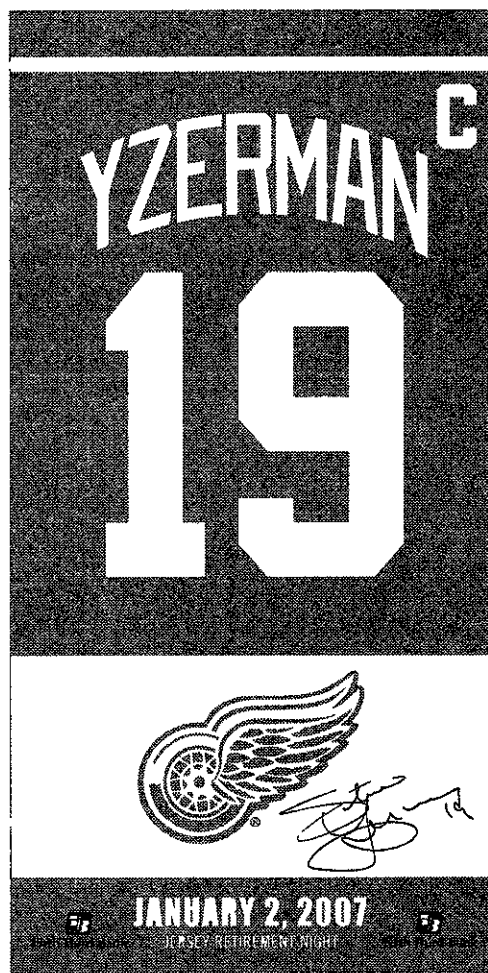
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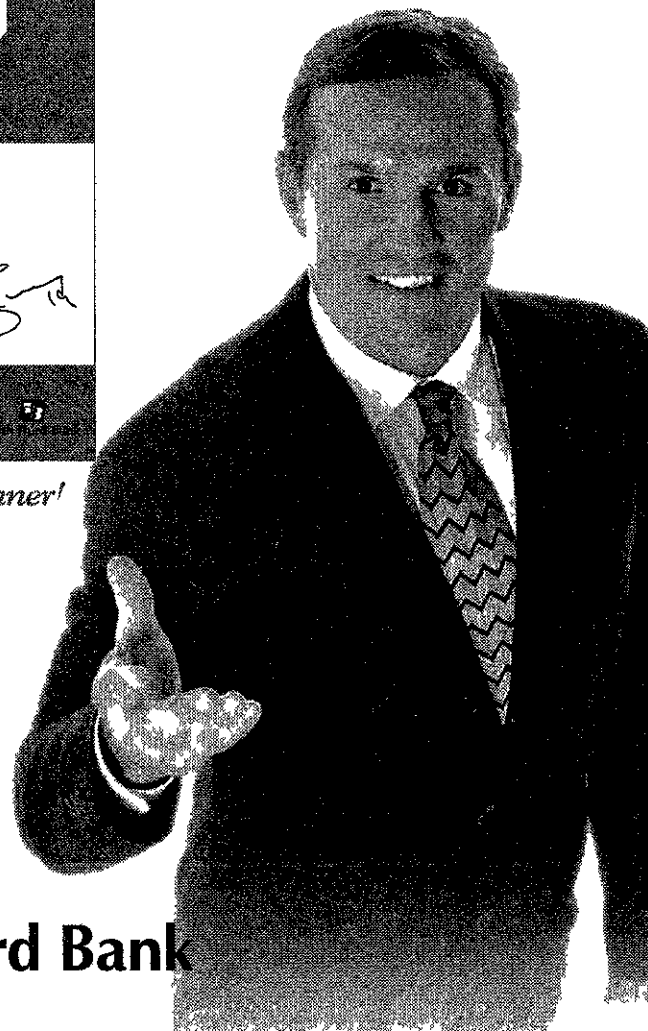


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Canton cagers tame Spartans

In a Western Lakes crossover Friday night at Livonia Stevenson, visiting Canton pulled away in the final quarter to win its third straight, 51-29. The victory improved the Chiefs' record to 3-4. Stevenson stumbled to 1-6. Luke Knochel, their best shooter, got in foul trouble early which helped us,' said Canton coach Charlie Paye. 'Josh Butler played well defensively and Ryan Waidmann was solid at the offensive end. It was a pretty balanced game for us and a lot of kids got to play.'

Waidmann, a 6-foot-7 senior center, led Canton with 11 points. Senior Steve Paye and junior Neil Sharma added 10 apiece. Knochel, was held to seven points. He fouled out with six minutes to go in the game. The Spartans trailed 23-11 at halftime before cutting it to six

PREP HOOPS

in the second half before the Chiefs pulled away with a 20-8 fourth-quarter run. Canton made 20-of-27 free throws on the night compared with Stevenson's 2-of-7. 'We got muscled around a little bit,' Stevenson first-year coach Brad Miller said. 'They (Canton) have two very good post players (Waidmann and Paye) and they know what to do inside. We struggled guarding people in the post.'

CANTON AGAPE 65, DETROIT URBAN LUTHERAN 46. On Friday in Detroit, the Wolverines turned in what coach Keith Anleitner said was "our best game of the season" as they outplayed the much-taller Vikings, whose front-court measures 6-7, 6-3 and 6-4, according to Anleitner. The victory improved

Agape's record to 3-3. Urban Lutheran dropped to 4-6. Everybody played great tonight — it was a great team win, said Anleitner. 'Everybody contributed. I'm very proud of the way we competed tonight.'

Agape led 18-12 after one quarter, 31-27 at the half and 46-36 with eight minutes left. Tyler Majeski led all scorers with 23. Other key contributors were Jack Anleitner (14 points and nine assists), Terrell Pierce (nine points) and Mark Mullett (eight points). Raymond Hudson led the Vikings with 14. Jordan Johnson added 12. The Wolverines connected on 14-of-22 free throws. Urban Lutheran struggled from the line, canning just 7-of-18. Four Agape players ripped down four boards a piece. Pierce, Showla Olojo, Jared Miller and Anleitner

"This was by far our best game this season," Anleitner said. "We're really starting to jell."

B'HAM ROEPER 32, PCA 30. On Friday at Plymouth Christian Academy, the Eagles made just 10-of-47 field goals (21.2 percent) in the disappointing loss to Roeper. 'We got some good looks, we just couldn't get the ball to fall,' said PCA coach Dave Yost. Trevor Zinn led the Eagles with 11 points. Ryan Zinser paced the winners with 16. PCA sank 9-of-10 free throws. Roeper drained 3-of-6 from the stripe. Roeper led 10-4 after one quarter before PCA stormed back to knot the game 12-all at the break. Roeper took a 22-20 lead into the final eight minutes. 'Any time you hold the other team to 32 points, you should win,' Yost lamented.

HOOPS

FROM PAGE B1

then iced the victory with a pair of free throws with 27.2 seconds left to make it 48-44. Plymouth's Mike Hanchett deposited a layup with 11.4 seconds remaining to cut the Wildcats' deficit to 48-46, however, Plymouth was unable to get off a shot after regaining possession of the ball with 1.8 seconds to go. The victory improved the Chargers to 4-3 overall and doubled their win total from a year ago. Plymouth slipped to 3-4. 'I was disappointed in the way we played in the first quarter — their guards were playing well and we just weren't getting it done,' said Churchill coach Jim Solak. But we locked them down in the second half and our perimeter defense was much better. 'The bottom line is we hung around and hung around and took every punch they threw at us. When it came to push and shove in the fourth quarter, we got it done, whether it was knocking down big free throws or getting a guard penetration. I'm proud of how the guys finished it out tonight.'

The Chargers attacked the basket more than the Wildcats, which was reflected in their lopsided victory — 24-4 — in the "free throws attempted" category. 'Churchill going to the line that much made a big difference tonight,' said Plymouth co-coach Tom Van Wagoner. 'But give them credit — they took advantage of what was given to them. We have to play better positional



Plymouth's Myron Puryear fires in two of his team-high 20 points during Friday night's 48-46 setback at Livonia Churchill.

BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

defense.' 'They worked harder than us getting to loose balls, which is why they got so many second and third opportunities to score,' added Plymouth co-coach Jason Maschke. Solak couldn't think of enough positive things to say about the play of Rosenick, whose all-out effort seemed to rub off on his teammates. 'Ryan is a throwback kid who does all the little things it takes to win,' said Solak. 'Everything he does, he does with a purpose — from rebounding to putting his jersey on before the game. He doesn't have any fancy basketball moves, but he does everything hard and with

maximum effort. Evans finished with nine points and five rebounds for the winners, who also received an inspired, 32-minute effort from junior guard Ryan Whittum (four points and three steals). Only five players — all juniors — scored for Plymouth,

which was led by Myron Puryear's 20 and Brandon Roberts' 16. Hanchett and 6-7 center Jake Hager each netted four points. Austin Barnett didn't score for the Cats, but he did chip in with a team-high five rebounds and three blocked shots. Led by the potent back-court duo of Puryear and Roberts, the Wildcats bolted to a 17-13 lead after one quarter and a 29-25 halftime advantage. Plymouth upped its lead to 42-36 on an inside bucket from Hager 10 seconds into the fourth quarter. However, Churchill responded with an 8-0 run that was capped by Rosenick's back-door layup with 3:35 left. A steal and layup from Roberts at the 2-minute mark knotted the score at 44-all, but Evans scored the eventual game-winner when he penetrated through the heart of the Wildcats' defense with 90 seconds to play. Both team shot 75 percent from the free-throw line. Plymouth was 3-for-4, the Chargers 18-for-24. Churchill made 15-of-39 field goals (38.4 percent) while the Wildcats connected on 20-of-48 (41.6).

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THE WEEK AHEAD

- BOYS BASKETBALL**
Tuesday, Jan 16
Canton at Plymouth 7 p.m.
Livonia Stevenson at Salem 7 p.m.
Macomb Christian at Agape at G.C. United Christian 7 p.m.
PCA at Oakland Christian 7 p.m.
Friday, Jan 19
Plymouth at W.L. Western 7 p.m.
Canton at Wayne Memorial 7 p.m.
W.L. Central at Salem 7 p.m.
Franklin Rd. at Agape at G.C. United Christian 7 p.m.
Parkway at PCA at EMU Convocation Center 8 p.m.
PREP VOLLEYBALL
Monday, Jan 15
Salem at Plymouth 7 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan 16
Agape at Macomb 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan 17
Canton at Plymouth 7 p.m.
Livonia Stevenson at Salem 7 p.m.
Thursday, Jan 18
Agape at Baptist Park 6 p.m.
Friday, Jan 19
Roeper at PCA at EMU Convocation Center 6 p.m.
Saturday, Jan 20
Plymouth at Madonna Tourney 8:30 a.m.
Salem at Novi Invitational 9 a.m.
PREP HOCKEY
Tuesday, Jan 16
W.L. Northern at Salem at Plymouth Cultural Center 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan 17
Plymouth at Livonia Franklin at Eddie Edgar Arena 6 p.m.
W.L. Western at Canton at Arctic Edge 6 p.m.
Friday, Jan 19
G.P. North at PCS Penguins at Arctic Edge 9 p.m.
Grosse Ile at Salem at Plymouth Cultural Center 8:30 p.m.
Saturday, Jan 20
Canton at Northville 6 p.m.
PREP WRESTLING
Thursday, Jan 18
Plymouth at Northville 6 p.m.
Livonia Franklin at Canton 6:30 p.m.
Salem at W.L. Northern 6:30 p.m.
Saturday, Jan 20
Canton at Hartland Tournament 8 a.m.
Salem at Williamston Invite 8:30 a.m.
BOYS SWIMMING
- Tuesday, Jan 16
John Glenn at Plymouth at Canton H.S. pool 7 p.m.
Northville at Salem 7 p.m.
Thursday, Jan 18
Wayne Memorial at Plymouth at Canton H.S. pool 7 p.m.
Salem at John Glenn 7 p.m.
Saturday, Jan 20
Plymouth at Tecumseh TBA
GIRLS GYMNASTICS
Monday, Jan 15
Plymouth at Dearborn Edsel Ford 7 p.m.
Brighton Howell at Salem at Plymouth H.S. 7 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan 16
Northville at Canton at Plymouth H.S. 7 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan 17
Livonia Red/Blue at Plymouth 7 p.m.
Saturday, Jan 20
Canton Salem at Farmington Invitational at Maxfield Training Center 9 a.m.
MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL
Wednesday, Jan 17
Cornerstone at Madonna 7:30 p.m.
Oakland CC at Schoolcraft 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, Jan 20
Schoolcraft at St. Clair CC 3 p.m.
Madonna at Siena Heights 7:30 p.m.
WOMEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL
Wednesday, Jan 17
Oakland CC at Schoolcraft 5:30 p.m.
Madonna at Cornerstone 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, Jan 20
Siena Heights at Madonna 1 p.m.
Schoolcraft at St. Clair CC 1 p.m.
ONTARIO HOCKEY LEAGUE
Monday, Jan 15
Whalers vs Saginaw Spirit at Compuware Arena 2 p.m.
Friday, Jan 19
Whalers at Sault Ste. Marie 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, Jan 20
Whalers vs Sarnia Sting at Compuware Arena 7:05 p.m.
MAJOR INDOOR SOCCER LEAGUE
Sunday, Jan 14
Ignition at Milwaukee Wave 7:35 p.m.
Friday, Jan 19
Ignition vs California Cougars at Compuware Arena 7:35 p.m.
Saturday, Jan 20
Ignition at Philadelphia KIXX 7:05 p.m.
TBA — time to be announced

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Rocks serve up 3-game sweep to Chiefs

BY ED WRIGHT
STAFF WRITER

Salem's volleyball team served another dose of dominance at Canton Wednesday night and — following a trend that's been established over the past decade — the Chiefs had a difficult time returning it.

Despite playing most of the match without hard-hitting, all-around star Teresa Coppellie, the Rocks rolled to a three game sweep in their own gym: 25-18, 25-15 and 25-15.

The victory improved coach Amanda Suder's Rocks to 7-0-1 overall and 1-0 in the Western Lakes Activities Association. Canton slipped to 3-7-6 and 0-2, respectively.

"I thought our serving is what kept us in the game," said Suder. "We only had two service errors, which is phenomenal over three games. There weren't a lot of big kills tonight because our serving took Canton out of its game."

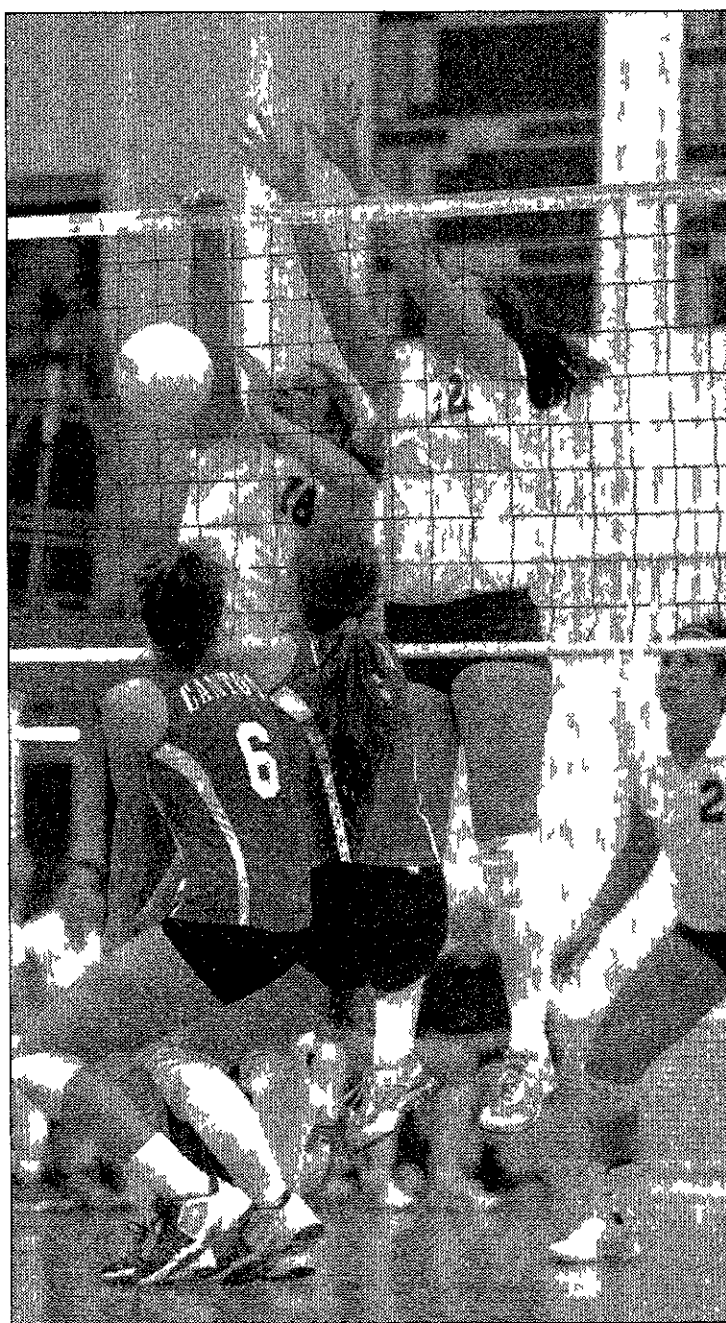
The Rocks' most impressive server was sophomore Alicia Goodes, who overhanded her way to 23 service points, three of which were aces. Her string of nine straight service points all but clinched the Rocks game 3 victoriously.

As far as confidence goes, Canton coach Jen Barnes said her team was behind the eight ball before the first serve was even unleashed Wednesday night thanks in large part to the Rocks decade-long dominance over the Chiefs.

Salem has always had a very good team and a very good program, and the fact that they've always beaten us in the sport of volleyball is in the back of our girls' minds the second they step on the court," said Barnes. "What it comes down to is that we have to forget about whos on the other side of the court and just play our game."

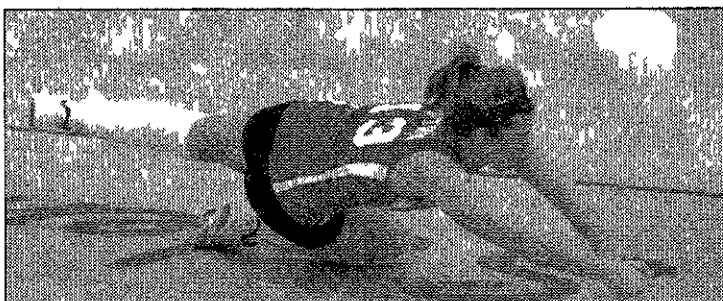
It seems like every time we see those blue-and-white uniforms on the other side of the court, we lose some of our aggressiveness. We finally started playing better in the third game tonight, but we didn't hang onto it. Once we made a few errors we came down and couldn't get back up to the level that we were playing at."

Coppellie, the Rocks' all-conference performer who has been nursing a sore back, sat out all



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Canton's Steve Cox, pictured above in a match earlier this season, registered an 11-4 major decision victory over Walled Lake Western's Nick Zilan Thursday night in a 125 pound match.



ANDY RUBENSTEIN

Canton's Rachel Kain goes horizontal for a dig during Wednesday night's cross-campus match against Salem.

but a portion of the opening game.

"Teresa's ready to go, but I want to work her back in slowly," said Suder. "She pounded the ball a couple times when she was out there, so she's ready to go."

"Without Teresa in there, we were able to mix up our line-up a lot and try some different combinations. The girls adjusted well."

Salem senior Lauren Kurtz had her usual strong outing as she racked up 14 kills and seven blocks. Courtney Seiler, the Rocks' libero, notched 24 digs and two service aces without committing a single serve-receive error.

Setter Jansan Falcuson did it all for the winners, netting 28 assists, three kills, two aces and five blocks.

And Nikka Mersch didn't have a lot of stats, but I thought she played extremely well tonight," Suder noted.

Canton was led by Lauren McParlin (five kills), Jordan Kiely (10 digs) and Kacy Moran (10 digs and 17 assists).

The Chiefs trailed just 18-15 two-thirds of the way through the opening game thanks to a Marie Martin block. However, Salem took charge in the latter stages behind the serving of Goodes and solid front row play from Kurtz and Katrina Cope.

Game two was close, too, midway through until Mersch strung together five straight service points to turn an 11-8 lead into a 16-8 advantage. Falcuson closed out the 25-15 win with a sinking, line-drive serve that gave the Chiefs fits.

The third game was knotted at 13-13 until Goodes reeled off nine straight service points to put the victory on ice.

PLYMOUTH 3, W.L. CENTRAL 0 The Wildcats swept the Vikings in both teams' WLAA opener, 25-20, 25-23 and 25-21.

Chelsey Quinlan (eight kills, eight digs), Rachel Heaton (six kills, 11 digs) and Brittany Hengesh (seven kills, six blocks) led the way.

Deep Canton gymnasts too much for Wildcats

Everybody got into the action during the Canton's gymnastics team's 140-20-115-90 victory over Plymouth Thursday night in a meet held at Plymouth High School.

"We had 26 different girls compete tonight, which was nice," said Canton coach John Cunningham, whose team improved to 5-1. The other night after we lost to Troy Athens by 25 points, one of the judges suggested that we should change our routines up a little bit, so we tried some new tricks and we juggled the line-up around so that more girls could compete in front of the home fans."

Senior captain Alyssa Kelley shined for the Chiefs, taking three firsts (vault, uneven bars and floor) and Jessie Murray, who won the beam and took second in the vault.

Plymouth's top performer was Kasey Zebari, who tied for third

in the vault with an 8.25
CANTON 140.20
PLYMOUTH 115.90

Thursday at Plymouth

Vault: 1. Alyssa Kelley (C) 9.25 2. Jessie Murray (C) 8.95 3. (tie) Chelsea Selden (C) and Kasey Zebari (P) 8.25 5. Olivia Stephens (C), 8.2

UNEVEN BARS: 1. (tie) Alyssa Kelley (C) and Kate Staley (C) 8.7 3. Jessie Murray (C) 8.55 4. Chelsea Selden (C) 7.75 5. Olivia Stephens (C) 7.7

BALANCE BEAM: 1. Jessie Murray (C) 9.35 2. Alyssa Kelley (C) 9.1 3. Andrea Houdak (C) 8.65 4. Chelsea Selden (C) 8.6 5. Kaitlyn Burns (C) 8.55

FLOOR EXERCISE: 1. Alyssa Kelley (C) 7.8 2. Kaitlyn Burns (C) 9.1 3. Kate Staley (C) 8.9, 4. Jessie Murray (C) 8.8 5. Jordan Brodehl (P) 8.35

CANTON 143.00

SALINE 130.150

Tuesday at Saline

(Canton's placers)

Vault: 1. Alyssa Kelley 9.6 2. Jessie Murray, 9.2 3. (tie) Kaitlyn Burns and Kate Staley, 9.0

UNEVEN BARS: 1. Jessie Murray 9.0 2. Alyssa Kelley 8.8 3. Kate Staley 8.65

BALANCE BEAM: 1. Jessie Murray 9.75 2. Alyssa Kelley 9.0 3. Kaitlyn Burns 8.75 4. Kate Staley 8.35

FLOOR EXERCISE: 1. Alyssa Kelley 9.5 2. Jessie Murray 9.275 3. Kaitlyn Burns 9.05 4. Kate Staley 8.975

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The following vehicles have been deemed abandoned and will be sold at public auction January 16 2007 at 10:00 a.m.

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1992	Pontiac	G Am	4 Dr	1G2NE5439NC263168
1991	Buick	LeSabre	4 Dr	1G4HP54COMH479443
2003	Ford	Cutaway	Van	1FDXE45F38HB14998
1996	Ford	Taurus	4 Dr	1FALP52U8TG156004
1996	Ford	Ranger	P/U	1FTCR10A5TUA46714
1989	Ford	Escort	2 Dr	1FAPP9190KW162891
1992	Geo	Metro	2 Dr	2C1MR2468N6808948
1989	Ford	Bronco	S/W	1FAPPU147XKUB02229
1998	Plymouth	Voyager	S/W	2P4GP44R0WR768405
1994	Ford	Tempo	2 Dr	1FAPP31XXRK114635
1992	Ford	Taurus	4 Dr	1FALP53UXNG119480
1994	Pontiac	Firebird	2 Dr	2G2F2S22S1R2242830
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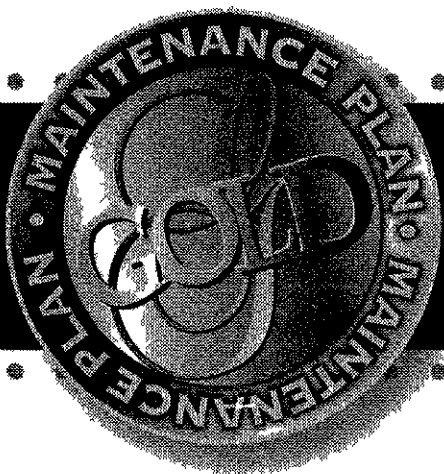
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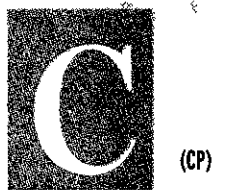
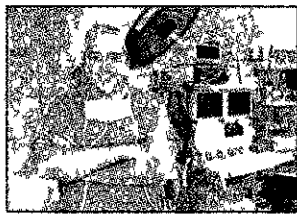


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Tending to business in new year

A new year has arrived and presented us with all the hope and promise associated with a new beginning.

Well, some of us may have a positive outlook about the new year but many Americans only wonder how they will drudge through one more year.

But this year does not have to be a total disappointment on the page of disappointed years past.



Bobbie Jones

There is hope and this year I want to offer up some tips that may provide bosses and business owners with a way to affect their bottom line and even give their employees a bonus when all is said and done.

It's been no great secret that our Michigan economy has left many of us a little bewildered with layoffs and cutbacks in almost every industry from auto to medical.

Also, many jobs have left our great state, leaving many of us workers scrambling hopelessly.

However, even in the midst of this bleak picture, some businesses are doing more than surviving. They are thriving and the people that are working for them are reaping the benefits.

I want to take a page from one new business that graced our area with its presence last year: IKEA. At the top of the page for IKEA is 'People First.' Now, taking care of your workers and putting their needs first may sound old-fashioned and trite, but throughout history businesses that made it their business to do right by their workers have enjoyed great success, and IKEA has a

Things such as unfair practices, office politics, secret keeping and favoritism, just to name a few, can cost business greatly, even though they have been a part of doing business for years.

glowing reputation in that department.

However, according to the Conference Board, a research group responsible for and best known for the Consumer Confidence Index and the Leading Economic Indicators, American workers in many jobs don't feel like they come first or are even cared about.

Throughout my work history, I have noticed many business practices that were quick killers of employee morale and which have sent companies on a downward spiral. Things such as unfair practices, office politics, secret keeping and favoritism, just to name a few, can cost business greatly, even though they have been a part of doing business for years.

This year, however, a new leaf is in order. I have a challenge for the bosses, business owners and managers out there: If your past history has been that of not being totally open with your employees, try turning that around and start sharing needed and necessary information. This will cut down on the gossip mill running rampant throughout your business.

Bosses, if you find yourself in a situation where you have to make a decision about a promotion, instead of feeling indebted to the guy that never makes it to work on time and you find him sleeping in the rest room but he is your best golf buddy, consider the dependable hard worker instead. You'll never know just how much a small change can make a big difference.

Managers, the next time you feel compelled to scold one of your employees for talking within a group — especially when you have just spent the last hour chatting it up about last night's *Survivor* episode — consider the fact that the gathering you have just busted up may have been discussing the next big idea that could save the company millions.

Bottom line, in business there are many factors that affect the bottom line, not just the dollar. Understanding and incorporating all the aspects of business takes time, takes work and takes diligence. I have come across many business owners who have told me that good advice does no one any good if it's not heeded. So in this new year, let's heed some good advice: let's accept some new challenges and let's do our best to do right by all and maybe next year tending to business will be just a little easier.

Bobbie Jones is a resident of Belleville and a regular contributor to the *Observer*. She can be reached at WORKHARD36@aol.com.

Dogs strut their stuff



PHOTO BY SUSAN AND LENNAH

Brienne Cook (right) and her mother Ilene have entered their Golden Retriever Asoro's Little Orphan Annie in the Mid Winter UKC Classic Dog Show. The Livonia residents have bred and shown Golden Retrievers for 15 years.

Midwinter dog show focuses on diversity, fun

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER

Visitors to the UKC Midwinter Classic Dog Show are in for a real treat Jan. 19-21 at Rock Financial Showplace in Novi. From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday Sunday, more than 800 dogs will be strutting their stuff in the ring competing in agility trials, terrier racing and flyball, and dancing with their owners during a benched show presented by the United Kennel Club (UKC).

Unlike the American Kennel Club shows at Cobo Hall which require professionals to handle dogs, UKC encourages owners

to develop a relationship with their furry family member through training then compete in a variety of categories and events. Established in 1898, the UKC is the largest all breed performance dog registry in the world with dogs registered in 50 states and 25 countries.

Tickets are \$25 per family, \$10 adults, \$7 seniors over age 64 and children age 11 and under. For a discount coupon, visit www.ukcdogs.com and click on midwinter show. For more information, call (269) 343-9020.

PLEASE SEE DOG SHOW, C3



Joyce Finney is bringing her eight-month old black and white Shih Tzu to the UKC show. The Plymouth woman has been breeding and showing the dogs 32 years.

Handbag auction raises money for St. Mary Mercy

Can a woman ever have too many handbags? The organizers of Purse Power hope not.

Purse Power Handbags with Heart aims to bring together a collection of more than 75 purses for a creative charity auction event.

The purses from formal evening bags to handcrafted totes, will be put up for bid 6-10 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 8, at Laurel Manor in Livonia, to benefit St. Mary Mercy Hospital.

Style icon Stacy London, host of "What Not To Wear" and a fashion correspondent for Oprah, Access Hollywood and Today, has donated a bag by Noir, with a metal panther detail and a double chain strap.

It's VERY 70s, the fashion expert said.

Lisa Marie, host and creator of MetroChick radio which airs 8-9 a.m. Wednesdays on 690 AM, has donated a navy alligator Judith Leiber purse with gold accents. She said she was excited to be asked to participate in the auction.

PURSE POWER

When 6-10 p.m. Thursday Feb. 8

Where Laurel Manor Events Center Livonia

What An ultra stylish auction of fabulous handbags donated by local celebrities and retailers.

Why To benefit St. Mary Mercy Cardiovascular and Cancer Services.

Tickets \$50 per person \$450 for a table of 10.

Call (734) 655-2759.

"I'm all about supporting non-profit organizations and raising money for great causes," Lisa Marie said. "It's a very fun, neat concept and I think it's going to be very successful. I've heard about these handbag auctions in other places but never around here."

All Purse Power sponsorships, tickets sales and auction proceeds will benefit cancer and cardiovascular services at St. Mary Mercy.

The Livonia hospital is currently constructing a new Heart and

Vascular Center and a new Cancer Center to serve the community with state-of-the-art technology.

"St. Mary Mercy is pleased to present Purse Power in support of advancements in cardiovascular and cancer services for our community," said Richard DeLoof, vice president, St. Mary Mercy Hospital Foundation. "Thanks to those who are supporting this program."

According to DeLoof, heart disease and stroke are the leading causes of death in Michigan, and St. Mary Mercy's expansion will provide leading edge medical equipment and allow doctors to collaborate for comprehensive patient care.

The new facilities are set to open in phases this year.

Purses are currently being sought from local retailers and dignitaries along with national celebrities. Purse donors receive signage at the charity event, as well as a spot for business cards or brochures. The deadline for purse donations is Jan. 17.

Sponsorship packages including tickets, signage, promotion on Magic 105.1 and advertising in the *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*,

range from \$500-\$2,500.

Tickets to Purse Power are \$50 or \$450 for tables of 10. Admission includes hors d'oeuvres, a coffee and dessert bar, and a goodie bag.

A cash bar will feature special martinis created for the Purse Power auction.

Presented by St. Mary Mercy Hospital, Purse Power's presenting sponsors include the *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*, Street Marketing, Magic 105.1, Laurel Manor and Sara Lee.

To donate a purse, contact Wendy Von Buskirk, (734) 953-2019, or Cathy Young, (734) 953-2155, at the *Observer & Eccentric Newspaper*. For tickets, call the Purse Power Hotline at (734) 655-2759.

For more information on the event, visit www.hometownlife.com and click on "Purse Power," and read more about the event online and in the *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*.

For information about the hospital's new facilities, or to make a direct donation, contact the St. Mary Mercy Hospital Foundation, (734) 655-2980 or visit www.stmarymercy.org.

AROUND TOWN

Olivet scholarship
Olivet College is offering every high school in Michigan the ability to nominate two graduating seniors to receive the new Olivet College High School Guidance Counselor Scholarship. The scholarship is worth \$2,000 a year for four years equaling a total of \$8,000 for each qualified student. Enrollment availability is based on a first come, first served basis. The scholarship program empowers the guidance counselor or staff to choose two responsible seniors who have at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA and 19 or higher on the ACT. One of the selected students must also demonstrate a greater need for financial assistance. For more information on the Olivet College High

School Guidance Counselor Scholarship program, contact the Office of Enrollment Management at (800) 456-7189 or e-mail admissions@olivetcollege.edu.

Princess ball
The Northville Parks and Recreation Department hosts the Princess Ball 3:50 p.m. or 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 24, for girls ages 3 and older and their dads. The event takes place at the Recreation Center at Hillside, 700 W. Baseline in Northville. Register by going to the parks and recreation office, 700 W. Baseline. Cost is \$10, and each little princess gets a gift bag, cookies, and crafts. For more information, call Cheryl Mudd (248) 349-0203, ext. 1411.

Waste to Watts
The Ann Arbor Hands on Museum has

extended the Waste to Watts exhibition through summer of 2007 due to popular demand. Waste to Watts shows how new environmentally friendly technology can turn our trash into electricity. Developed by Landfill Energy Systems of Wixom, Michigan, this one-of-a-kind exhibit demonstrates how methane gas recovery from landfills can be used as an alternative energy source, ultimately reducing our dependency on other fuels. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Saturday, noon to 5 p.m. Sunday. For information, visit www.aahom.org or call (734) 995-5439.

Candyland Extravaganza
The Northville Parks and Recreation Department hosts the Candyland Extravaganza 1-4 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 27, for children 3 to 8 years old. The event takes place at the Northville Senior Community Center, 303 W. Main in Northville. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at the recreation department office, 700 W. Baseline. For more information, call the parks and recreation department (248) 349-0203.



Swedish Christmas
The Jenny Lind Club of Michigan held its annual Christmas smorgasbord at the Swedish Club in Farmington Hills recently. As she has for the past 17 years, Redford resident Edda Slomeana recited the Swedish Christmas poem, "The Tomten." Slomeana wore the Royal Order of The Polar Star medal, bestowed by Carl XVI Gustaf, King of Sweden, for extensive volunteer work. With Slomeana (center) is Jenny Lind publicist Marrie Louise Capote of Plymouth and chapter president Ann Nickoloff.

and resource center located in Northville. Age appropriate groups for widows and widowers are provided in various locations in southeastern Michigan, including groups for young widows and widowers and their children between the ages of 4 through the teen years. Groups for parents who have lost a child, adults who have lost a parent, pet loss, and other specialized groups are offered at various times of the year. All services for adults and children are offered at no cost to the participants. If you are grieving or know someone who is, please call the office at (248) 348-0115 for further information about services provided by New Hope Center for Grief Support or visit www.newhopecenter.net.

CLUBS

Rotary A M
The Plymouth Rotary Club of Plymouth A.M. meets at 7 a.m. every Tuesday at the Plymouth Cultural Center, 525 Farmer. New members are always welcome. Contact Mark Hammar, president, Rotary Club of Plymouth A.M. by calling (734) 455-6620.

Plymouth Newcomers
Plymouth Newcomers & Neighbors playgroups for children ages 0-5 meet several times during the week at member homes and occasional special events. Come meet new parents while your kids meet their own new friends! For details, contact Janet Keller at (734) 451-1840 or robertplujanet@aol.com.

Fibromyalgia/Chronic Fatigue
The Great Lakes Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Association will meet 1:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month at Merriman Road Baptist Church on Merriman south of Ford. There will be a guest speaker at each meeting and a variety of topics will be covered. There is no membership fee, but a small donation will be accepted. For information, call Lucy Rowley (734) 462-1768.

MOPS meet
MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) meets twice monthly from September-May for moms and their children, newborn kindergarten at Lakepointe Bible Church in Plymouth. Call Crystal Johnson (734) 459-1861.

Mosaic
MOSAIC is a group where Moms come together to be refreshed and equipped for the important task of mothering. It presents speakers on child and family issues, has small-group discussion time, crafts and brunch. Child care is provided. It meets at Plymouth Baptist Church, 42021 Ann Arbor Trail on the first and third Tuesday mornings of each month, September to May. Contact Resha at (734) 207-0658 or resha@juno.com.

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VNA seeks volunteers
The Visiting Nurse Association of Southeast Michigan's hospice program needs compassionate volunteers to comfort and support patients at the end of life in Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties. In as little as two to four hours per week, volunteers can provide companionship, write a memoir, provide respite for family members, or provide office support. A free 15-hour comprehensive training program is provided. The next training session is February 10, 17, and 24, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. All training takes place at the Visiting Nurse Association of Southeast Michigan headquarters at 25900 Greenfield Road, Suite 600. For more information or to register, call (800) 882-5720, ext. 8361, or visit www.vna.org.

Career development scholarship
The Wayne Business and Professional Women's Club is now accepting applications for a Career Development Scholarship to recognize and support women entering or re-entering the work force or seeking to advance their careers. Candidates seeking application forms should send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Wayne Business and Professional Women's Club Career Development Scholarship Committee, 34030 Fountain Blvd., Westland, MI 48185. Completed applications are due postmarked by Jan. 31. For more information, call Amy Allen (734) 522-1603.

Genealogical societies
The Northville Genealogical Society hosts Cheryl Strathman, author of Detroit Fire Fighters 1865-2005: A Pictorial History of the People, at their 2:30 p.m. meeting Sunday, Jan. 14, at

the Northville District Library. A computer genealogy class on Family Tree Maker 2006 Trees takes place at 1:15 p.m. prior to the regular meeting. The public is invited to both events; there is no charge. For more information, call Tillie Van Sickle (734) 595-7806 or check the Web site at www.rootsweb.com/~mings.

The Livingston County Genealogical Society meets with a help session at 6 p.m. and the meeting at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 1, at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 1041 W. Grand River in Howell. A panel discussion will be conducted on Self Publishing Your Family History. The public is invited. For more information, call Margaret (810) 227-7745.

The Western Wayne County Genealogical Society meets 6:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 15, at the Livonia Senior Center, 15218 Farmington Road in Livonia. The 6:30 session is a video regarding a software program called Gensmarts. Business meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. with a program to follow featuring guest speaker Bonnie Hilberer whose talk will be titled Remember When. For more information, visit the society's Web site at www.rootsweb.com/~mwwegs/ or call Margie (734) 522-4050.

Card party/luncheon
Victoria Chapter #290 OES Livonia Masonic Temple hosts a card party/luncheon noon-3 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month. Admission is \$6; event features table prizes and door prizes. The temple is located at 27705 W. Seven Mile in Livonia. For more information, call (734) 459-6063.

Hospice training
Heartland Hospice is looking for caring and dedicated people with an interest in serving terminally ill patients and their families in Washtenaw, western Wayne, Monroe, and Livingston counties. Volunteers provide a variety of services including companionship, light housekeeping, errand running, grief support, and clerical services. For more information, contact volunteer coordinator Candice Jones (888) 973-1145.

Literacy Council tutors
The Community Literacy Council (CLC) is looking for volunteer tutors in Western Wayne County to help adults improve their reading, writing, and communication skills. The CLC will provide training to interested volunteers. Previous experience or a bachelor's degree is not required. The council will provide free training and materials and then match you with an adult student in your area. Call (734) 416-4906 for more information.

Toastmasters meet
Do you have a fear of public speaking? Do you need to do presentations at work and don't know where to start? Or are you terrified of the thought of standing in front of a group of people to present that report? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then Toastmasters is for you! Canton Communicators Club meets every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. at the Canton Coney Island on Lilley, just south of Joy in the Golden Gate Plaza. Contact Bonnie at (734) 646-2237.

Grief support
New Hope Center for Grief Support is a Christian-based bereavement outreach

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DOG SHOW

FROM PAGE C1

LOTS TO SEE

'UKC registers close to 400 breeds. You're going to see breeds you won't see at the AKC - Alaskan Klee Kai, Irish red and white setters, Thai Ridgeback, white shepherd, said Michelle Morgan, director of performance events. There will be dancing with dogs where the owner and dog perform to music, the Michigan-based Rock-N-Roll K-9's with owners and dogs doing juggling and their high energy relay and obstacle competitions (www.rocknrollk9s.com) - and mixed breed. The UKC has always recognized that all dogs should be trained and the more owners can do with their dogs the stronger the bond they'll develop. Since 1994, we've included mixed breed who are neutered or spayed to compete in agility, obedience, weight pull, dog sports, and in some cases terrier racing.

This is the first time Lord Parker of Parkman is competing so Philpa Sahner is unsure of how he'll perform in the Family Obedience category. Generally, Parker is a little nervous about everything but then his Farmington Hills owner found the boxer-mix frozen to the ground under a bush at Parkman Elementary in Detroit where she teaches. Parker was only nine weeks old. Until finding the puppy, Sahner had always owned purebred dogs and used to train Dobermans. "The dog has to lie down and be still while another dog passes by, then they switch over," said Sahner. He has to be able to walk on a leash, make about turns, go fast, go slow, left turns, and halt.

He's 4 years old and this is his first foray into competition. I think it's wonderful they include mixed breeds. Dogs are dogs. I think it's fabulous that people have shows that they can enter and compete. It encourages people to rescue dogs and also get them spayed or neutered."

TIME TO TEACH

Joyce Finney is trying to teach Jofins Takut U, her 8-month-old black and white Shih Tzu, to walk on a leash for the puppy confirmation event. The Plymouth woman has been showing dogs 32 years. "We've been practicing. He's also going to the AKC show in March," said Finney, president of the Southeastern Michigan Shih Tzu Club. I'm trying to keep his coat as beautiful as possible. It takes passion not to put him in a puppy cut, to have long flowing hair. It takes about one and one-half hours to wash, blow dry. As he matures, it's two to three hours.

Finney says an UKC show is a great starting place for those serious about showing dogs.

UKC is kind of laid back, said Finney. "The whole point system is different, not as formal. A lot of times an AKC show can be a little bit political if the handler is aware of the judges. With the UKC there's not the favoritism for the people. It's just the dog. Politics aside, Brienne Cook says the UKC benched show is a good place to learn about different breeds of dogs if someone is thinking about purchasing a four-footed friend. Cook is more than happy to talk about the qualities of her golden retriever or the bull terrier she co-owns with breeder Cleo Parker.

Cook, a Livonia resident, and her mother Ilene, have bred and shown golden retrievers for 15 years. Asoro's Little Orphan Annie, a golden, will be 2 years old July 24. Nuance Nonchalance, the bull terrier (think Target dog) turns 1 year old on Jan. 18. Both will also compete at Cobo Hall in March.

MANY BREEDS

If you're thinking about buying a puppy and want to talk the breeders, this is a great place to come as well as Cobo Hall, said Cook, a 24-year-old student at Schoolcraft College. "We have a lot of breeds that AKC doesn't have, some weird breeds you don't even know exist until you go to this show. The UKC show we get to educate the public."

Diana Updike doesn't understand why the AKC fails to recognize her white shepherds. The Livonia woman has been showing the dogs since 1981. She's preparing to bring Royal Von Tazs Pi Swirl (Kyla), age 2, and Royal Spasz Von Tazs (Pebbles), a 3-year-old Grand Champion to the midwinter show.

"I've always loved the look of shepherd," said Updike. "They're always so regal-looking and have that glistening white coat and dark eyes. They're so stunning and versatile from obedience to agility and sheep herding."

Updike begins training her puppies at about four weeks of age.

Training is critical for any dog, said Updike. It gives a dog a chance to enjoy a bond with you and the focus alleviates some of the energy. White German shepherds are highly intelligent with a medium to high drive.

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Lord Parker of Parkman (left) competes in the Family Obedience category. Owner Philpa Sahner of Farmington Hills found the boxer-mix frozen to the ground under a bush at an elementary school in Detroit.

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Restaurant to host Angela Hospice benefit

College Park's newest fine dining establishment, Fleming's Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar, is hosting a dinner to benefit Angela Hospice of Livonia on Friday, Jan. 26.

Fleming's will present an evening of tastes to entice the senses with a reception beginning at 6 p.m., followed by a seated dinner and wine pairing at 6:30 p.m. Reservations for the event are available for a minimum donation of \$50 per person, with 100-percent of the proceeds benefiting Angela Hospice, a local non-profit healthcare organization.

"We're thrilled that Fleming's Prime Steakhouse has chosen Angela Hospice as one of its first community partners," said Alice Barringer, development manager at Angela Hospice. "We're very grateful for their commitment to support local organizations and are happy to welcome them to the area."

The new 200-seat Livonia restaurant, located at 17400 Haggerty,

between Six and Seven mile roads, is the first Fleming's to open in Michigan. The nationally acclaimed restaurant offers the best in steakhouse dining including prime meats and chops, fresh fish and poultry, and generous salads and side orders with a sophisticated and unique wine list that features 100 wines served by the glass.

Tickets are limited for the benefit. Reservations may be made by calling (734) 464-7810, ext. 2218 or sending e-mail to abarringer@angelahospice.net.

Established in 1985, Angela Hospice serves terminally ill patients and their families in Southeast Michigan through its home and inpatient hospice programs for children and adults, and bereavement services provided free-of-charge to the community.

More information about Angela Hospice is available at www.angelahospice.org or by calling (734) 953-6018.

Livonia Civic Chorus seeks singers

Bring together an assortment of friendly people who like to sing, toss in a talented choral director and accompanist, blend thoroughly for about two hours every week, and sprinkle generously with fun. That's the recipe for the Livonia Civic Chorus.

The chorus began rehearsals on Jan. 9 to prepare for the group's spring show and is hoping to add a few fresh voices to spice up their sound. Men and women singers of all levels are invited to join.

Anyone who might be interested in singing with the chorus is encouraged to attend a rehearsal and get a taste of the chorus' harmonic fare. Practices are held each Tuesday from 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Frost Middle School, 14040 Stark, Livonia. Membership is not restricted to Livonia residents.

The group was founded in 1965 by a group of men and women from a local church choir who started gathering at each other's homes to sing for enjoyment. Then someone had the idea to ask for financial support. The City of Livonia's Department of Parks and Recreation had been looking to sponsor a mixed community cho-

rus and agreed to provide a small grant for music and other costs. The group was formally chartered as the Livonia Civic Chorus and began presenting musical programs to the residents of the community on a regular schedule.

The chorus prepares for two main performances a year. Every September, they rehearse for a winter holiday show to be performed in December. In mid-January practices begin anew for the annual spring musical show in May.

Repertoire covers a wide variety of musical selections and styles, blending both new and traditional music.

From its very beginning, the members of the Livonia Civic Chorus decided they wanted to do more than just stand on risers and sing. Over the years they have built a reputation of delighting audiences with entertaining, full-scale musical productions that often feature choreography, novelty numbers, costumes, and skits.

For additional information visit www.livoniacivicchorus.org or call chorus president Kim Alderman at (734) 525-6414.

LIBRARY PICKS

Every week the Plymouth District Library staff provides the library's list of best-sellers based on the number of requests for titles by library patrons. The books are available by placing a request with the library at (734) 453-0750 or on-line at plymouthlibrary.org.

FICTION

- 1 "For One More Day," Mitch Albom
- 2 "Cross," James Patterson
- 3 "Next," Michael Crichton
- 4 "Dear John," Nicholas Sparks
- 5 "Hannibal Rising," Thomas Harris

NON-FICTION

- 1 "The Audacity of Hope," Barack Obama
- 2 "The Innocent Man," John Grisham
- 3 "Marley & Me," John Grogan
- 4 "Culture Warrior," Bill O'Reilly
- 5 "Palestine Peace Not Apartheid," Jimmy Carter

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- 5 "If It Weren't for You," Charlotte Zolotow

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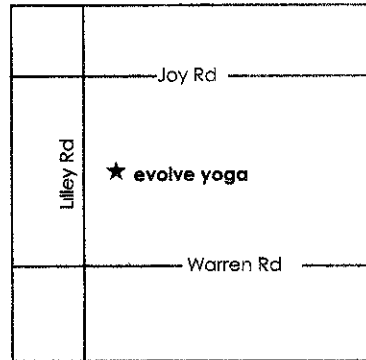
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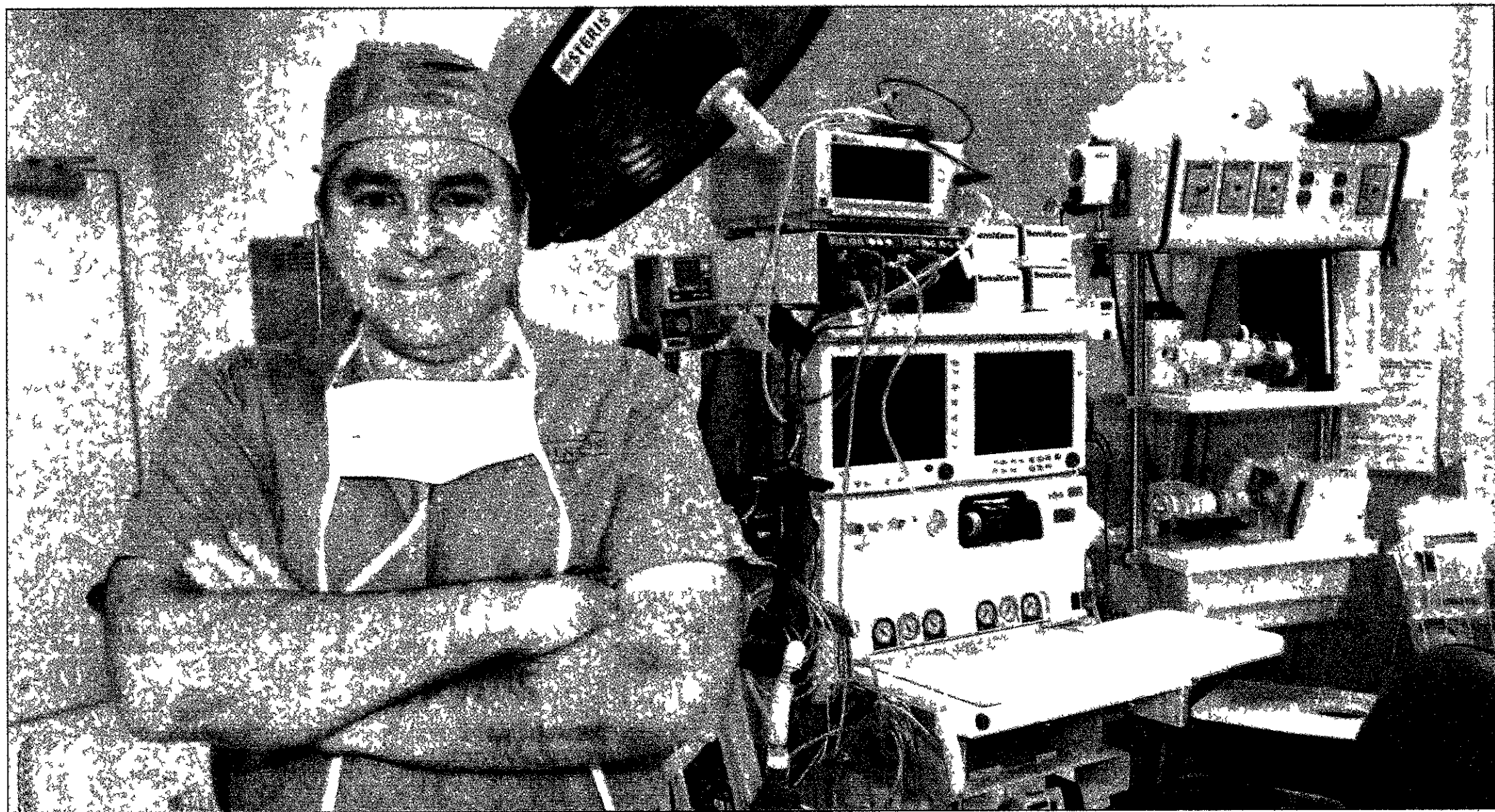
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Dr. Frank Fazzalari, a U-M heart surgeon, is proud of the Blood Conservation and Bloodless Medicine and Surgery Program at Crittenton Hospital in Rochester. Here, he stands in one of two heart surgical suites at Crittenton.

Blood conservation

Measures help prevent infections caused by transfusion

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER

Long before the University of Michigan Health System and the University of Rochester (N.Y.) released the latest study to link transfusions and an increased risk for infections, area hospitals instituted conservation measures to counter blood loss before, during and after open heart surgery.

While transfusions do save lives, women especially need to take note of the study which may explain why female bypass patients are more likely to die after surgery than men. Published in December's *American Heart Journal*, the research looked at the entire population of Medicare coronary artery bypass patients (9,218) in Michigan during a period of one year. After taking into account factors such as urgency of surgery, patients who received donor blood transfusions were five times more likely to die within 100 days of surgery. Of those, 9 percent were women, 6 percent men.

"Women were more likely to get a transfusion because of (naturally) lower hemoglobin levels," said Mary Rogers, Ph.D., research director of the Patient Safety Enhancement Program of the U-M Health System. "If you just look at people who used their own blood, they had about the same risk as those who didn't have transfusions."

Research has shown for years that transfusions suppress the immune system. The knowledge has led heart sur-

geons to initiate a search for alternatives to donor blood transfusions in particular. Pre-donating is just one of the measures a bypass patient can take to avoid donor transfusions. Even though a brief survey of hospitals revealed 70 percent of bypass patients do not require transfusions during surgery, some experts recommend asking questions about the heart surgeon's blood conservation policies beforehand.

Crittenton Hospital Medical Center in Rochester is one of only two Michigan hospitals offering an adult Blood Conservation and Bloodless Medicine and Surgery Program, but many area hospitals have implemented the same strategies. Even though



Mary Rogers, Ph.D.

Jehovah's Witness patients (who refuse all types of transfusions), other patients have benefited as well. From the time of registration to post-surgery, blood conservation procedures involve staff throughout the hospital.

Cindy Kinker, a registered nurse and coordinator for the program, evaluates patients, reviewing their history including medications, aspirin or herbs which could cause bleeding. She can suggest options like utilizing a Cell Saver to salvage blood shed during surgery. Prior to surgery, it is possible to draw smaller

amounts of blood for lab tests and for physicians to prescribe medications that encourage red blood cell production. During surgery, chief perfusionist Jeralyn Baker uses the latest technology to decrease blood loss during the period when the heart-lung machine takes over a patient's circulation.

"Every patient needs to be viewed as a blood conservation patient," said Sharon Matkosky, a critical care nurse practitioner for cardiovascular patients at Crittenton. "Blood donations are at a minimum and there's always an increased chance for complications."

Dr. Frank Fazzalari says blood conservation is just good practice in most cases. He stresses, however, that "some patients wouldn't survive without blood transfusion. In fact, sometimes blood transfusions help patients recover quicker."

As chief of cardio-thoracic surgery, Crittenton Hospital, and assistant professor of surgery at the University of Michigan Medical School, Fazzalari regularly attends Michigan Society of Thoracic Surgeons meetings to share knowledge about patient outcomes. Fazzalari has never had a patient acquire an infection from a blood transfusion.

The program at Crittenton is a U-M heart surgery program.

"In heart surgery, we try to not waste blood," Fazzalari said. "The thinking on blood conservation has changed. We're doing a lot more things to decrease the need for transfusion. Equipment has changed to improve blood conservation

efforts. It's a whole new era, the last 10 years in heart surgery."

Dr. Wei Lau isn't worried about receiving a blood transfusion if he ever needed one.

"We have point of care machines to help us make decisions for transfusion," said Lau, an anesthesiologist and director of adult cardiac anesthesia for the U-M Health System. "In cardiac surgery, there are lots of ways of recycling or re-circulating blood."

Dr. Joseph Bassett has observed many advances in technology and surgical techniques over the last 30 years. Chairman of cardiovascular surgery at Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, Bassett has taken steps such as using the Cell Saver on every case and stopping anti-coagulants that may cause bleeding such as Plavix, aspirin or heparin.

"We have miniaturized pumps that minimize blood loss. On the heart lung machines, tubing is a lot smaller and doesn't break down blood elements," Bassett said. "It's one of the biggest improvements we made. We're doing a study right now that may be published by the end of year."

Dr. Marwan Abouljoud performs liver transplants at Henry Ford Hospital, but has taken an interest in the latest study involving heart bypass patients. A blood conservation protocol is presently being put together for the hospital's surgeons to follow, according to Abouljoud, director of the Henry Ford Transplant Institute in Detroit.

"If we think a patient is healthy enough to donate blood, we have them donate blood before surgery," Abouljoud said. "Before surgery, we put them on iron pills and during surgery use the Cell Saver."

At Oakwood Hospital, a Transfusion Committee used guidelines from the Society of Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists and Society of Thoracic Surgeons to establish a program to decrease transfusions and conserve blood.

"To prevent blood counts from dropping during surgery, we try to prevent hemodilution or giving too much saline or non-blood products that dilute blood and we use a smaller circuit on the bypass machine to decrease hemodilution," said Hoffberger, a D.O. who specializes in cardiovascular-thoracic surgery at Oakwood Hospital. "There are medications to prevent blood loss after surgery. The last step is collecting data. I'm very happy studies keep coming out. Blood conservation is very important. People should know when they go to hospitals their doctors and surgeons are on par with the latest studies. They should inquire about blood transfusion and why they're getting them. Blood conservation is not just for Jehovah's Witnesses anymore. You don't have to be a Jehovah's Witness to benefit from what we've learned from not transfusing. You just can't treat by numbers. Everybody is different."

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The children and a donkey at St. Timothy Presbyterian Church in Livonia played a very important role in raising money for the Heifer Project

Church raises enough money to buy ark

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER

Pastor Janet Noble Richardson probably would have liked the fact that her life-size donkey stood in the entrance of St. Timothy Presbyterian Church the entire time the congregation was trying to raise money for the Heifer Project. Richardson crafted the beast of burden for the Livonia church's Vacation Bible School before she was killed in an automobile accident on July 11. The Heifer Project was one of her favorite charities because the organization helps poor families around the world care for themselves. The money collected by the nonprofit is used to purchase live animals such as a hive of honey-producing bees or a

goat to milk and feed their children. Before her death Richardson had started collecting money to buy an ark - no easy feat since the two cows, camels, oxen, water buffalo, sheep, llamas, goats, donkeys, guinea pigs, pigs, two hives of bees, two trios each of ducks and rabbits, and two flocks each of chicks and geese cost \$5,000. "We raised the money through Sunday School, let it be known through the congregation we were doing this to honor the memory of Pastor Janet," said Linda Houghtby, chairperson of the church's Christian Education Committee for the last six years. "People started donating. On the donkey we hung a sign that read, give me your loose change so I can get on the ark. We had a soup/salad

fund-raiser luncheon in early December that was very highly successful too." "It was a combined effort by kids and adults, added Elizabeth Kordt of Plymouth. "The kids helped set tables on the day of the luncheon to raise money." The fund raising was so successful, the 240-member congregation is half way to purchasing a second ark. The donkey's nose may first have to be repainted. Houghtby said the sniffer is almost white from the children petting him. And it's not like he's going to get a rest any time soon. In addition to lighting up the eyes of children at Vacation Bible School in 2006, the donkey visited four other local churches during their summer programs. In December, the creature was part of the

Christmas pageant at St. Timothy and will participate in Palm Sunday services in April as well as this year's Vacation Bible School - Avalanche Ranch, the third week in June. The pastor of 17 years definitely made an impact on the church, but not just because of her creative talent. Houghtby said Richardson especially related to the smaller members of the church. And they loved her. One little girl said she had \$7 and was going to give to Heifer instead of buying something for herself," said Houghtby. For more information about the Heifer Project, call (800) 422-0474, or visit www.heifer.org.
lchomin@hometownlife.com | (734) 953 2145

Charity dance to benefit First Step

Brian Duggan presents the 17th annual charity dance and casino night to benefit First Step 7:30 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. Friday, Feb. 9, at Burton Manor, 27777 Schoolcraft, west of Inkster road, Livonia. The nonprofit organization provides services for victims of domestic violence including a shelter that offers a safe haven to women and their children. The evening begins with hot and cold hors d'oeuvres followed by dessert then pizza later in the evening. The casino portion of the dance runs from 7:30 p.m. to midnight. Steve King & The Dittales play music for dancing. Tickets are \$40 and sold only in advance. For more information, call (734) 422-4333.

Unpublished scripts wanted

The Henry Ford Community College New Playwright's Workshop is seeking original, non-musical, unpublished scripts. Deadline for entry is Jan. 30. Actor-driven pieces with medium size casts and simple technical requirements are the

colleges focus. Short pieces from 30- to 60-minutes are preferred, but longer scripts will be considered. Selected submissions will be given eight fully-staged performances in June. For more information, call (313) 845-9817.

Our Italian Story DVD released

John and Lina Del Signore of Livonia are featured in a new CD on Italian immigrants. It is an expanded version of the Our Italian Story documentary that aired on WXYZ-TV Channel 7 in December. The additional footage includes more in-depth interviews with the Italian Americans whose contributions have made a significant impact on the Southeast Michigan area. The documentary is the first in the Our Story Of series produced by Keith Fame of Visionalist Entertainment Productions. Our Italian Story recognizes and celebrates more than two dozen interesting and influential Italian Americans. The Del Signores owned Fonte D'Amore in Livonia for 38 years and still own Laurel Manor Banquet Center in the city. In October, Fame and

cinematographer Kevin Hewitt of Livonia followed the couple to the town of Fonte D'Amore in Italy where they were married 49 years ago. Internationally-known sculptor Sergio De Guisti of Redford is among the other local immigrants who were spotlighted along with Tony Filippis of Rochester Hills, founder of Wright & Filippis, a leader in rehabilitative health care since 1944. All came as immigrants to this country and went on to become successful. The Our Italian Story DVD costs \$19.50 and is available at the Italian American Club of Livonia, Nino Salvaggio Market places, Andiamo's restaurants, Bommarito's Bakery of St. Clair Shores, and by visiting the Web site at www.ourstoryof.com.

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Open Letter to all DFCU Financial Member-Owners

Restore Member Trust - It's time for a change in Leadership!

Dear Member-Owners,

DFCU Owners United is pleased to endorse three highly competent DFCU Financial members who are running for the credit union's volunteer board of directors. After fulfilling all the requirements mandated by the credit union's bylaws, **Jesse D.L. Brunais, Linda M. Malec and Salvatore Mazzola** have been notified by the DFCU Financial Board of Directors Nominating Committee that their names will be included on the ballot for the 2007 Board of Directors election.

Bruce D. Gears, Ryan M. Hershberger and Ronald K. Seiler, endorsed by DFCU Owners United, also qualified to run for the board election. However, they have since notified DFCU Financial that they wish to have their names withdrawn from the ballot, and will lend their support to **BRUNAIS, MALEC and MAZZOLA** for the three announced open board positions.

Brunais, Malec & Mazzola pledge that putting members first is their #1 commitment. Each of these candidates has a passion for DFCU Financial Federal Credit Union, and they have expressed their displeasure at the recent attempt to change their credit union to a bank.

"It is no secret that DFCU's recent initiative to become a bank provoked very strong opposition from member-owners of the credit union. Early in 2006, I took the time to learn more about this ill-fated proposal by talking with others, attending informational meetings sponsored by DFCU Owners United, and reading industry related periodicals. The more I learned, the more my personal opposition grew. I now ask the members of DFCU for their vote as a candidate for DFCU's Board of Directors in order to help guide this great institution in an open and transparent manner as governed by the credit union's bylaws and policies."

--- **Jesse D.L. Brunais**, automotive product design engineer in Powertrain Operations at Ford Motor Company. A member of DFCU Financial since 1981, Brunais is a graduate of Michigan State University with a Master's degree in electronics and computer science from Wayne State University.

"I became re-involved in DFCU during the attempt to convert it into a for-profit bank. During that time, I also listened to members unhappy with other changes that seemed to be trending toward 'just another bank.' I was stunned because, as a cooperative, DFCU operates for the benefit of member-owners and should strive to be 'better than the competition' by returning earnings back to members with better rates on savings, lower rates on loans, and providing exemplary services so that over time, all members benefit. With your vote, I pledge to 'put members first' and to support continuing the great traditions of DFCU, its employees and members." --- **Linda M. Malec**, human resources associate on the corporate staff at Ford Motor Company's World Headquarters. A member of DFCU Financial for 36 years, Malec served on DFCU's board of directors from 1980 to 2000, including chairperson from 1988 to 1998. Malec holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan.

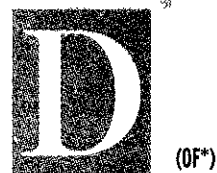
"In the nine years I have been a member of DFCU, I have come to value the credit union for what it is—an efficient organization of exceptionally competent professionals, committed to serving all its members as owners and not as customers. I first became involved with DFCU Owners United when my confidence in the present Board of Directors was shaken by last year's proposed bank conversion, which was strongly opposed by the membership. In seeking the members' vote for the Board of Directors, I ask DFCU member-owners to support continuing the credit union's traditions of professional service and growth driven by members' needs." --- **Salvatore Mazzola**, funding analyst in the Treasurer's Office of Ford Motor Company. Mazzola earned his Bachelor of Science degree from Michigan Technological University and a Master of Science degree from the University of Illinois, as well as a Master of Business Administration degree from Wayne State University.

Ballots are expected to be mailed to members in January 2007, in advance of DFCU Financial's Annual Membership Meeting scheduled for February 15, 2007.

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Sunday January 14 2007

The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers

Joe Bauman editor (248) 901 2563 jbauman@hometownlife.com

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Best career advice ever heard runs the gamut

BY JULIE BROWN
STAFF WRITER

Jim Ryan still remembers his first day teaching high school in Taylor. The assistant principal came to the classroom of Ryan, now superintendent for the Plymouth-Canton schools.

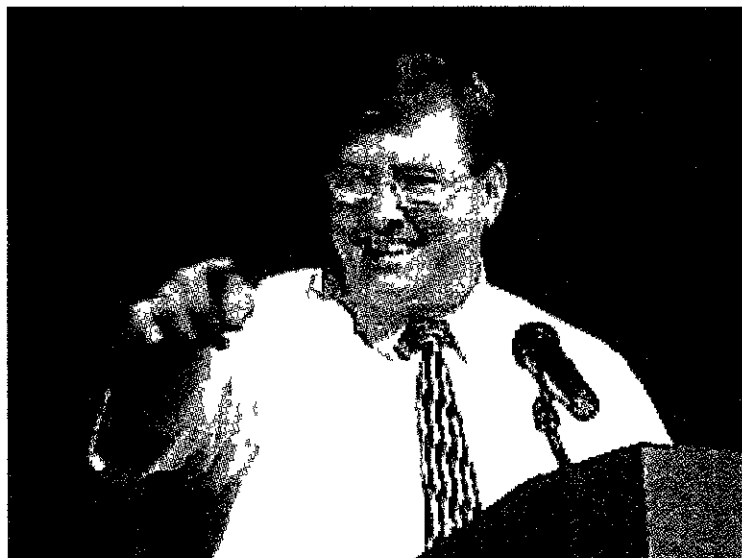
He recalled being nervous about what he'd done wrong. Instead, the assistant principal told him in her Southern accent that his extensive duties meant he'd have to be paid 20 percent more.

"I was making \$8,640 my first year," Ryan said, and at that point upon getting the 20 percent news was doing the math in his head. His career advice is straight-forward.

"The best career advice I ever got was find something you love and do it," said Ryan, now in his 36th year in education. He's worked for four school districts and there have been challenges, but he's never doubted his career choice.

The Canton resident's glad to be in his field and loving every minute of it. "I really love what I do."

Other area residents put their thoughts together on the best career advice they've received.



Plymouth-Canton School Supt. Jim Ryan is glad he chose education as his life's work.

Northville Township resident Jeff Juenemann, owner of Juenemann Insurance Agency in Westland, has good ideas.

"Treat people the way you want to be treated," Juenemann said. "Be honest in every transaction and return every phone call promptly."

It's the Golden Rule, he added. "Treat people the way you want to be treated."

He hears a lot from other people who have difficulty getting their calls returned. Juenemann

knows you don't have to have the exact answer just yet when you call someone back. Let them know you're trying.

Lake Ryan, Juenemann has been pleased with his 25 years in the business. "I've been very happy. It's been a good, steady, consistent business."

Margaret Harlow of Wayne is co-owner with her husband of Harlow Tire of Westland, another longtime business. Her son tells her her career advice was the best he received.

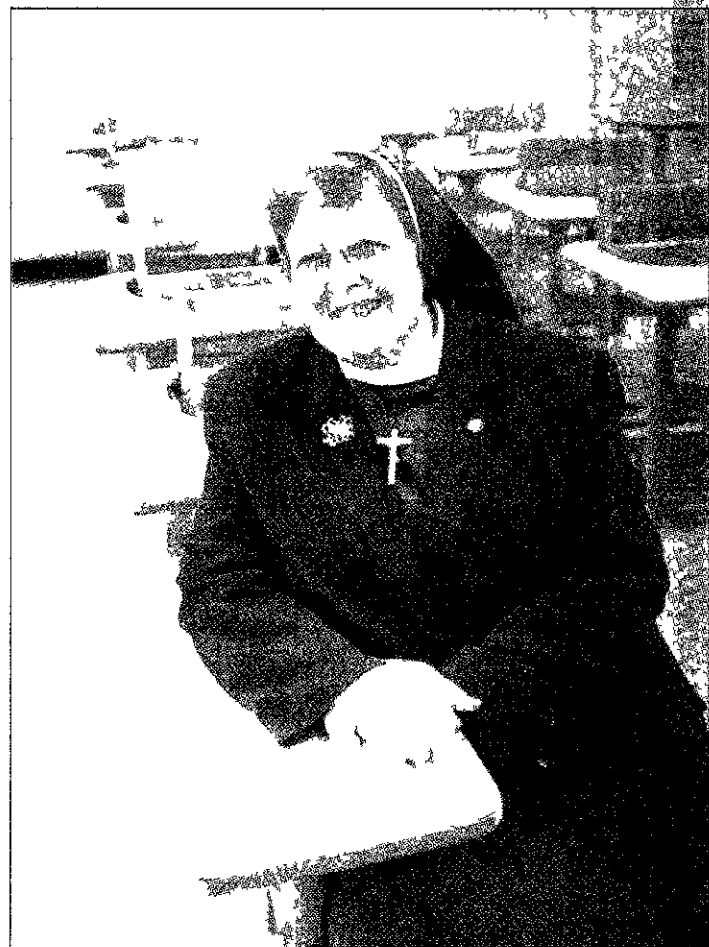
"When he went to college, I advised him to get a business degree," she said. "That was because business training is good for all organizations."

Harlow recalled when she was in high school and Michigan Bell came to recruit staff. "My dad was never a very competitive person." He thought the company would be dog-eat-dog and discouraged her. She likes her work, but joked about being retired now with a comfortable pension if she'd gone with Bell.

Don Douglass of Canton was pre-med while at Albion College and was urged to attend medical school. "But I did not want to go to medical school," said Douglass, who didn't want 12 to 15 hour workdays. "I taught biology and chemistry."

Douglass retired as an assistant principal at Westland John Glenn High School and enjoyed his years in education.

Sister Rose Marie Kujawa, president of Madonna University in Livonia, has career advice that has stood the test of time. "A good education is the best preparation for a good career," she said. "Careers may change many times, but a solid education will support any career."



B. L. BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Sister Rose Marie Kujawa, president of Madonna University in Livonia, advocates getting a good education as the basis for a lifelong career.



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New Homes



Sunday January 14 2007

The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers

Joe Bauman editor (248) 901 2563 jbauman@hometownlife.com

www.hometownlife.com

What does it mean to build green?

(NAPSI) — While most of us know that green building is good for the environment creates healthier living and work spaces and lowers operating costs, not everyone knows exactly what it means to build green.

According to the Green Building Initiative (GBI), a nonprofit organization formed to help educate builders and consumers there's no one size fits all approach. But a green structure will adhere to certain fundamental principles whether it's a home, school, industrial park or office tower. For example:

- Green buildings are energy efficient. In addition to saving money this helps to minimize pollution (including carbon dioxide emissions which are a major cause of global warming).

- They're water efficient which is becoming increasingly important as the population — and demand — grows. Last year a group of U.S. mayors conducted a survey and found that 40 percent of their cities won't have an adequate supply of water in 20 years.

- They're resource efficient. Among other things, this means using fewer materials, choosing recycled content materials, using wood that's certified as having come from a sustainably managed forest and reducing waste.

The financial benefits



This green home is being constructed using energy efficient and environmentally friendly building techniques.

of building green include utility companies offering cash incentives to encourage energy and water efficiency, while different levels of government offer tax deductions and other incentives such as fast tracking the building approval process.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

For information on what to look for in a

green-built home, the National Association of Home Builders Model Green Home Building Guidelines (www.nahb.org) are an excellent resource. For commercial structures, the Green Globes system is a user-friendly online tool for designing green buildings and assessing their performance over time. In fact, a recent University of Minnesota

green building study concluded Green Globes "better integrates lifestyle thinking into its rating system" — meaning that it measures the impact of a building throughout its existence. Modules for New Construction and the Continual Improvement of Existing Buildings are available on the GBI Web site at www.thegbi.com.

Green buildings are energy-efficient. In addition to saving money, this helps to minimize pollution (including carbon dioxide emissions, which are a major cause of global warming).

Royal Oak's MarketSquare lofts completed

Developers at SkyLofts MarketSquare in Royal Oak have finished the remaining residences in the building and are offering builder's close-out pricing for lofts that can be occupied immediately at closing.

"We have a timing advantage in what has become a very competitive lofts market in Royal Oak," Development Manager Nico Schultz said. "Buyers can see just what they're going to get and negotiate accordingly."

Schultz used data from existing buyers to select the most popular features and colors chosen by owners who had customized an empty space. Most of the completed lofts therefore have bamboo floors, furniture-grade hardwood cabinets, granite countertops and a fireplace — and there's a television niche above the fireplace for flat-screen TVs. Schultz said 80 percent of the building's residents have a plasma or LCD TV.

He then worked with a designer to vary the central theme. Some lofts mix hardwood and carpeting, others have a whirlpool bathtub or special edging on the countertops. Material colors are based on the residence's orientation to the sun.

The fact that all the lofts are completed means that buyers can obtain a mortgage that covers the complete cost of the loft. Those who are customizing an unfinished space often must pay in advance for premium features, as developers protect themselves from the cost of retrofitting following a cancellation.

"These are one-of-a-kind lofts, so people have to act quickly," Schultz said.

Schultz said the pricing also invites fast action. The developer, Morningside Group of Chicago, is using a "no reasonable offer refused" theme in its advertising. When a Royal Oak newspaper printed a picture of the Morningside billboard bearing that message, a prospective buyer used the photo to call the MarketSquare sales office.

"We're in a strong niche in an otherwise soft real estate market," Schultz said. "There are customers who can buy now and who want new construction and a lofts lifestyle. It may have been the holidays, but we had strong traffic last month, and no reasonable offer is a big reason."

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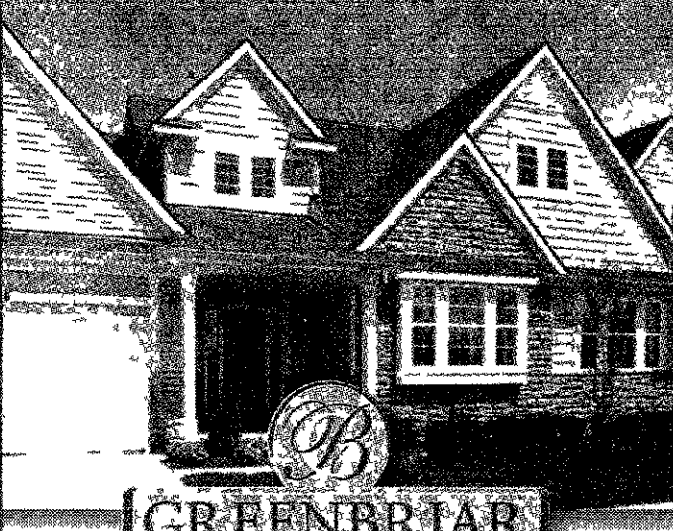
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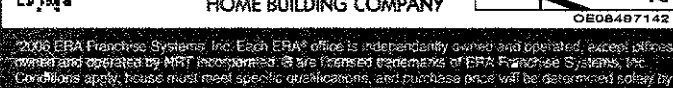
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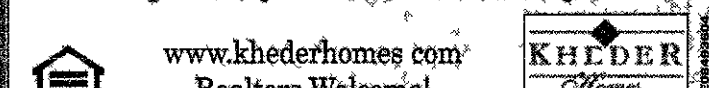
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Do homework when shopping for mortgage

BY MARK SAVITSKIE

GUEST COLUMN

Most of us, at one time or other, have purchased an electronic appliance such as a television. Chances are, we went to several stores and, after comparing the specifications, performance and quality of several models, we made our final selection based on price.

Interestingly a lot of people approach acquiring a mortgage in the same manner. They hear companies advertising, "We will beat anyone's interest rate!" or "Our closing costs are the lowest around!" So, often, the first question they'll ask is, "What's this mortgage going to cost me?"

But mortgages aren't TVs and the answer to that question isn't as simple as quoting rates and fees which give you a limited and not very meaningful picture. If two TVs are similarly designed and priced, but one gets only five channels while the other gets an unlimited number, you would immediately choose the one with unlimited channels. So why wouldn't you approach obtaining a mortgage the same way?

Mortgages are fairly complex financial instruments designed to finance real estate. They

vary greatly around three components - interest rate, costs and terms. These three components, when balanced properly and in consideration of the borrower's total financial situation, will produce the best mortgage for the consumer's needs.

It's critically important that consumers understand the three components of a mortgage, but most of us don't have the time, knowledge or inclination to thoroughly investigate these basics, and this is where it gets difficult.

Whether you are working with a local mortgage broker or lender, or with an internet mortgage lender, you'd be well-served to know the person you're dealing with. Even if your loan officer is a faceless name at the other end of a toll-free phone line, the integrity of that mortgage professional, not his or her sales technique, should be your number one concern.

The sad truth is that for centuries, the profession of money lending has been associated with some pretty shady business practices, labeled usury at its worst. Money

lenders were often secretive, dissembling types who were widely reviled for "less than full disclosure" and for getting rich off the desperation of people who never would be rich.

I'd like to be able to say that, in the ensuing millennia, all that's changed but, too often I see that it hasn't.

The federal and state governments have enacted any number of laws and regulations designed to protect borrowers from predatory lending, but there's a fine line between predatory lending and loan officers maximizing their commissions at the expense of borrowers.

Not long ago, I met with a couple in the process of purchasing a home who had received a Good Faith Estimate (GFE) of the loan costs from their mortgage broker but felt that the GFE had not been explained well to them. They wanted a second opinion (not a bad idea, by the way).

The GFE showed a fair interest rate based on what the more competitive banks were charging, however, listed in the costs was a loan origination fee totaling \$4,350, or 2 percent of the loan amount. The loan officer indicated that

this was a typical fee in the mortgage business, needed in order to grant the low interest rate. The reality was that this couple could have received the same interest rate with no loan origination fee at any number of mortgage banks or brokerages, saving themselves over \$4,000!

In another case, I was refinancing a loan that was based on the \$120,000 property value determined by the appraiser I had hired. The borrowers believed that the house was worth \$160,000, which would significantly increase the amount that they could borrow. They found a lender who, in turn, found an appraiser who would value the house at \$160,000. I lost the client but, even worse, they now owe more on the house than it is worth. I know this because I know my appraiser and know the quality and integrity of his work.

In both of these examples, there probably wasn't any fraud perpetuated by the loan officer, but in each instance, there is a question of integrity, of ethics. Sure, borrowers are responsible for the decisions they make. And in a market-driven world, the loan officer has a right to earn whatever he

can get. The question is, is it right?

The mortgage industry and the government are grappling with just such issues as these. At present, there is no professional certification such as CPA or MD in the mortgage business and, lacking a structure of accountability, lenders and brokers, though licensed, have great latitude in conducting their business according to their own version of the "honor system."

So how are borrowers to protect themselves from unethical lenders?

Here are some suggestions:

■ Do some homework on mortgages in order to understand the basics. Read magazine or newspaper articles, especially in trade publications, or go online.

■ Meet with a loan officer or two and have them walk you through all the steps of the mortgage process. Do not let them gloss over your questions with quick answers. If a face-to-face meeting isn't possible, then at least establish a line of communication via telephone or e-mail as a means to getting clear answers to your questions.

■ Always ask for a Good Faith Estimate. The GFE will

cover two of the components - interest rate and costs - as well as some of the terms. Be wary if the lender is reluctant to provide you with a GFE, this is a huge red flag.

■ Review all of the loan documents before you close. Most of them are standardized forms with language that cannot be changed, but these documents are where you will find the terms of the loan outlined. Signing your name 25 times to legal documents at a closing can be overwhelming and intimidating, this is not the time to be asking basic questions.

■ Loan officers should attend the closing with you. If they have done their job well, then their participation is usually limited to congratulating you on closing. But, if something does go wrong, they'll be there to help.

So, the next time you find yourself in the market for a mortgage, remember. Educate yourself. Ask questions. Then trust your gut and relax. You'll have done everything you can to tell the good lenders from the bad.

Mark Savitskie, CPA, is a mortgage broker and president of Allegro Home Loans in Plymouth.

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Dodge's Sprinter van is bland, yet colorful

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CAReport



By Wendy Clem
Avanti NewsFeatures

Warning Show up with one of these in your neighborhood and you are bound to get prevailed upon to cart the shoppers, school kids and relatives E-V-E-R-Y-where

The 2007 Dodge Sprinter sounds like a fun, surf-bunny sedan, but one glance will tell you this is clearly a vehicle that means serious transportation. It is a truck, van and mini-bus. No, it's not a Transformer toy, but it is shaped like something you'd find under the Christmas tree for the kid shrieking of testosterone.

But, you may really want one — any day now. Especially when you find out it comes in 18 possible colors. Yes. EIGHTEEN!

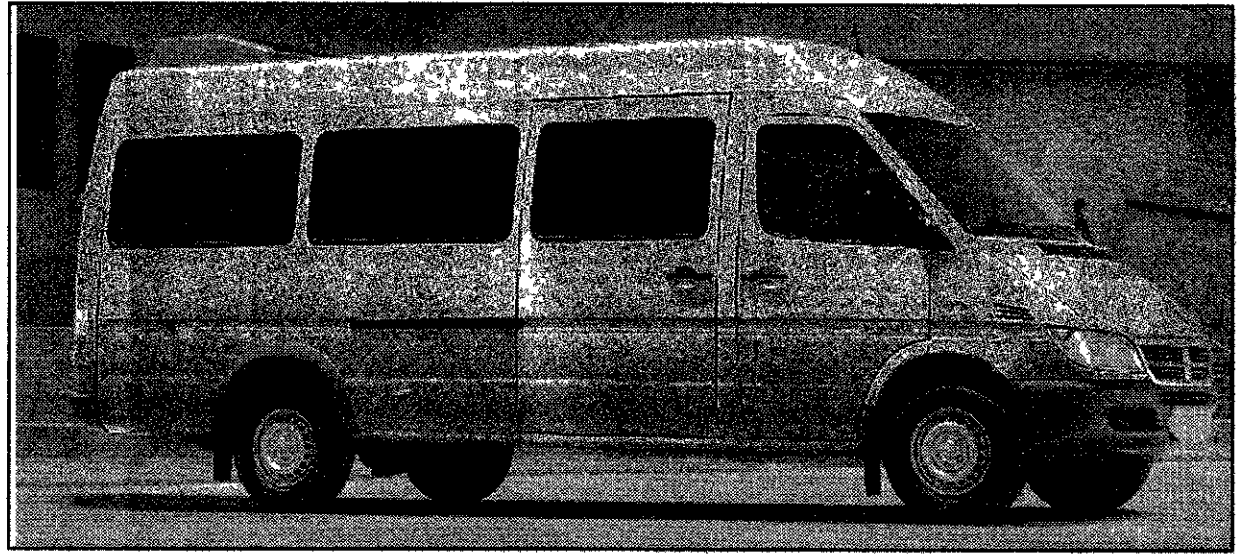
OK, the first thing you need to know is that DaimlerChrysler builds Sprinter, and it is sold under the brands of Dodge, Freightliner and Mercedes-Benz. Yes, you read that correctly. Mercedes, as in bling-bling.

It was created to replace Europe's Mercedes-Benz T1 van, then later the Dodge Ram Van, and targeted mostly for businesses rather than private users. You have probably most often seen them in use as ambulances, but their demand in van conversions and mini-motor homes is growing.

Second, the Sprinter is available in three body styles: Chassis Cab (read Tonka-truck-under-the-tree mode), Cargo Van and Passenger Van.

The Chassis Cab has a flat frame (girls, this means the back of the truck) and a perfectly serviceable cab, with reclining bucket seats and attached headrests. The sum of that equals easy up-fitting, or the painless addition of things like a tool box. Four-wheel anti-lock disc brakes and a premium 2.7-liter CDI (read world-premier) turbo-diesel engine join standard 16-inch wheels and tires, although there are two available wheelbases.

Sprinter's Cargo Van offers three wheelbases and two roof heights (maxing out at 73 inches), with up to 473 cubic feet and 4,824 pounds capacity of load area. Doors swing to 270 degrees in the rear, the widest open doors in its class, and remain open with exterior panel magnets.



The 2007 Dodge Sprinter van offers 18 colors and two heights for maximum choice.

Translation: You can wear your big hair, mama. It's the Passenger Van you're going to want, though, with its let-s-haul-the-fam-to-the-mall space. It seats 10 passengers in 112 cubic feet of cargo room, and comes with standard air-conditioning, automatic temperature control, cassette stereo and 12 cupholders. You will definitely be the hit with your kids, but may want to put a change collector on the dash. Hey — gas is expensive these days!

This van also sports a premium 2.7-liter 5-cylinder CDI turbo-diesel engine and 4-wheel disc anti-lock brakes. The average miles per gallon is 25 overall.

The turbo-charged engine directs powerful acceleration near 4,000 revolutions per minute, providing on-demand movement along with impressive fuel savings. At 154 horsepower, the truck conveys 243 foot pounds of torque.

The prices of the three are \$30,000 for each the Chassis Cab and Cargo Van, and \$32,000 for the Passenger Van.

Remember that CDI engine? It stands for common rail direct injection. In human-speak, that means it's really efficient in saving money. Oil changes aren't needed for less than 10,000 miles — within normal driving conditions.

A valuable option is Sprinter's ASSYST maintenance system, a finely tuned addition that stretches that 10,000-mile oil change to double that.

The CDI also bundles longer life, lower maintenance and improved fuel efficiency with performance that banks on smoothness along with a quiet and clean execution not usually associated with diesels. This is achieved through ignition sequence precision, ongoing injection pressure, and fuel meter

control.

Another facet of the powertrain is the ability to turn in tight areas — a particular delight in business or industry, or when trying to park in too-small lots. Even though it is the largest full-size van, the Sprinter gives up the best wall-to-wall turning diameter in its class.

The power-assisted front rack-and-pinion steering delivers easy handling, including a 36 7-foot turning radius on the short (118-inch) wheelbase version.

You say you have a lot of goods on board? Sprinter can tow up to 2 1/2 tons, when properly equipped.

A sliding door for the driver's side can be ordered, as can an especially tall walk-through and low load height for ease in loading and unloading. The Dodge Sprinter has the highest payload capacity, lowest side step-in height and more cargo room than any other full-sized van. It has the market's best-in-class interior compartment accessibility and is the most technically advanced commercial van. That makes Sprinter a serious contender for all walks of life, and the most adaptable.

Wendy Clem covers the automotive beat for Avanti NewsFeatures. Write her at wendyclem@gmail.com or <mailto:wendyclem@gmail.com> @2007, Fracassa Communications

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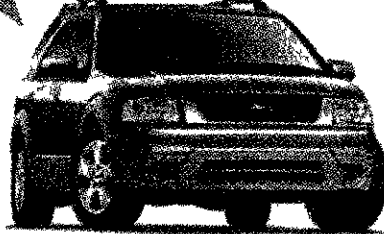
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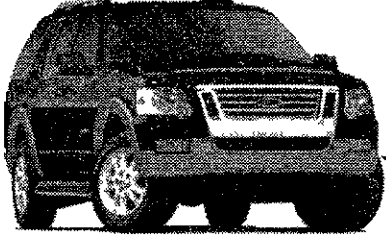
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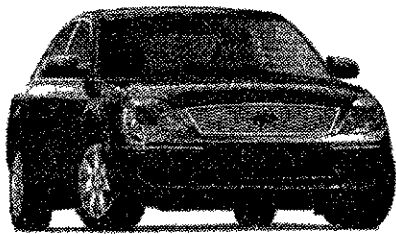
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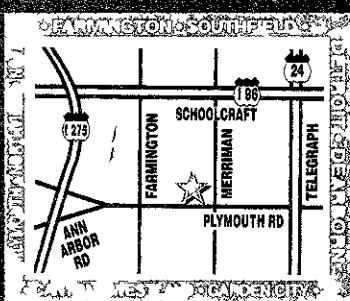
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Sunday January 14 2007

The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers

Joe Bauman editor (248) 901 2563 jbauman@hometownlife.com

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What does it mean to build green?

(NAPSI) — While most of us know that green building is good for the environment creates healthier living and work spaces and lowers operating costs, not everyone knows exactly what it means to build green.

According to the Green Building Initiative (GBI) a nonprofit organization formed to help educate builders and consumers, there's no one size fits all approach. But a green structure will adhere to certain fundamental principles whether it's a home, school, industrial park or office tower. For example:

- Green buildings are energy-efficient. In addition to saving money, this helps to minimize pollution (including carbon dioxide emissions which are a major cause of global warming).

- They're water-efficient, which is becoming increasingly important as the population — and demand — grows. Last year a group of U.S. mayors conducted a survey and found that 40 percent of their cities won't have an adequate supply of water in 20 years.

- They're resource-efficient. Among other things, this means using fewer materials, choosing recycled content materials, using wood that's certified as having come from a sustainably managed forest and reducing waste.

The financial benefits



This green home is being constructed using energy efficient and environmentally friendly building techniques.

of building green include utility companies offering cash incentives to encourage energy and water efficiency, while different levels of government offer tax deductions and other incentives such as fast-tracking the building approval process.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

For information on what to look for in a

green-built home, the National Association of Home Builders' Model Green Home Building Guidelines (www.nahb.org) are an excellent resource. For commercial structures, the Green Globes system is a user-friendly online tool for designing green buildings and assessing their performance over time. In fact, a recent University of Minnesota

green building study concluded Green Globes 'better integrates lifestyle thinking into its rating system' — meaning that it measures the impact of a building throughout its existence. Modules for New Construction and the Continual Improvement of Existing Buildings are available on the GBI Web site at www.thegbi.com.

Green buildings are energy-efficient. In addition to saving money, this helps to minimize pollution (including carbon dioxide emissions, which are a major cause of global warming).

Royal Oak's MarketSquare lofts completed

Developers at SkyLofts MarketSquare in Royal Oak have finished the remaining residences in the building and are offering builders' close-out pricing for lofts that can be occupied immediately at closing.

"We have a timing advantage in what has become a very competitive lofts market in Royal Oak," Development Manager Nico Schultz said. "Buyers can see just what they're going to get and negotiate accordingly."

Schultz used data from existing buyers to select the most popular features and colors chosen by owners who had customized an empty space. Most of the completed lofts therefore have bamboo floors, furniture-grade hardwood cabinets, granite countertops and a fireplace — and there's a television niche above the fireplace for flat-screen TVs. Schultz said 80 percent of the building's residents have a plasma or LCD TV.

He then worked with a designer to vary the central theme. Some lofts mix hardwood and carpeting, others have a whirlpool bathtub or special edging on the countertops. Material colors are based on the residences' orientation to the sun.

The fact that all the lofts are completed means that buyers can obtain a mortgage that covers the complete cost of the loft. Those who are customizing an unfinished space often must pay in advance for premium features, as developers protect themselves from the cost of retrofitting following a cancellation.

"These are one-of-a-kind lofts, so people have to act quickly," Schultz said.

Schultz said the pricing also invites fast action. The developer, Morningside Group of Chicago, is using a "no reasonable offer refused" theme in its advertising. When a Royal Oak newspaper printed a picture of the Morningside billboard bearing that message, a prospective buyer used the photo to call the MarketSquare sales office.

"We're in a strong niche in an otherwise soft real estate market," Schultz said. "There are customers who can buy now and who want new construction and a lofts lifestyle. It may have been the holidays, but we had strong traffic last month, and no reasonable offer is a big reason."

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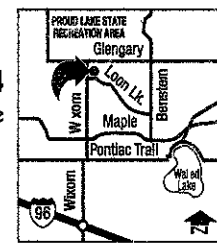
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Do homework when shopping for mortgage

BY MARK SAVITSKIE

GUEST COLUMN

Most of us, at one time or other, have purchased an electronic appliance such as a television. Chances are we went to several stores and, after comparing the specifications, performance and quality of several models, we made our final selection based on price.

Interestingly, a lot of people approach acquiring a mortgage in the same manner. They hear companies advertising, "We will beat anyone's interest rate!" or "Our closing costs are the lowest around!" So, often, the first question they'll ask is, "What's this mortgage going to cost me?"

But mortgages aren't TVs, and the answer to that question isn't as simple as quoting rates and fees which give you a limited and not very meaningful picture. If two TVs are similarly designed and priced but one gets only five channels while the other gets an unlimited number, you would immediately choose the one with unlimited channels. So why wouldn't you approach obtaining a mortgage the same way?

Mortgages are fairly complex financial instruments designed to finance real estate. They

vary greatly around three components - interest rate, costs and terms. These three components, when balanced properly and in consideration of the borrower's total financial situation, will produce the best mortgage for the consumer's needs.

It's critically important that consumers understand the three components of a mortgage, but most of us don't have the time, knowledge or inclination to thoroughly investigate these basics, and this is where it gets difficult.

Whether you are working with a local mortgage broker or lender, or with an Internet mortgage lender, you'd be well-served to know the person you're dealing with. Even if your loan officer is a faceless name at the other end of a toll-free phone line, the integrity of that mortgage professional, not his or her sales technique, should be your number one concern.

The sad truth is that for centuries, the profession of money lending has been associated with some pretty shady business practices, labeled usury at its worst. Money

lenders were often secretive, dissembling types who were widely reviled for less than full disclosure and for getting rich off the desperation of people who never would be rich.

I'd like to be able to say that, in the ensuing millennia, all that's changed but too often I see that it hasn't.

The federal and state governments have enacted any number of laws and regulations designed to protect borrowers from predatory lending, but there's a fine line between predatory lending and loan officers maximizing their commissions at the expense of borrowers.

Not long ago, I met with a couple in the process of purchasing a home who had received a Good Faith Estimate (GFE) of the loan costs from their mortgage broker but felt that the GFE had not been explained well to them. They wanted a second opinion (not a bad idea, by the way).

The GFE showed a fair interest rate based on what the more competitive banks were charging, however, listed in the costs was a "loan origination fee" totaling \$4,350, or 2 percent of the loan amount. The loan officer indicated that

this was a "typical fee in the mortgage business, needed in order to grant the low interest rate." The reality was that this couple could have received the same interest rate with no loan origination fee at any number of mortgage banks or brokerages, saving themselves over \$4,000!

In another case, I was refinancing a loan that was based on the \$120,000 property value determined by the appraiser I had hired. The borrowers believed that the house was worth \$160,000, which would significantly increase the amount that they could borrow. They found a lender who, in turn, found an appraiser who would value the house at \$160,000. I lost the client but, even worse, they now owe more on the house than it is worth. I know this because I know my appraiser and know the quality and integrity of his work.

In both of these examples, there probably wasn't any fraud perpetuated by the loan officer, but in each instance, there is a question of integrity, of ethics. Sure, borrowers are responsible for the decisions they make. And in a market-driven world, the loan officer has a right to earn whatever he

can get. The question is, is it right?

The mortgage industry and the government are grappling with just such issues as these. At present, there is no professional certification such as CPA or MD in the mortgage business and, lacking a structure of accountability, lenders and brokers, though licensed, have great latitude in conducting their business according to their own version of the "honor" system.

So how are borrowers to protect themselves from unethical lenders?

Here are some suggestions:
 ■ Do some homework on mortgages in order to understand the basics. Read magazine or newspaper articles, especially in trade publications, or go online.

■ Meet with a loan officer or two and have them walk you through all the steps of the mortgage process. Do not let them gloss over your questions with quick answers. If a face-to-face meeting isn't possible, then at least establish a line of communication via telephone or e-mail as a means to getting clear answers to your questions.

■ Always ask for a Good Faith Estimate. The GFE will

cover two of the components - interest rate and costs - as well as some of the terms. Be wary if the lender is reluctant to provide you with a GFE. This is a huge red flag.

■ Review all of the loan documents before you close. Most of them are standardized forms with language that cannot be changed, but these documents are where you will find the terms of the loan outlined. Signing your name 25 times to legal documents at a closing can be overwhelming and intimidating, this is not the time to be asking basic questions.

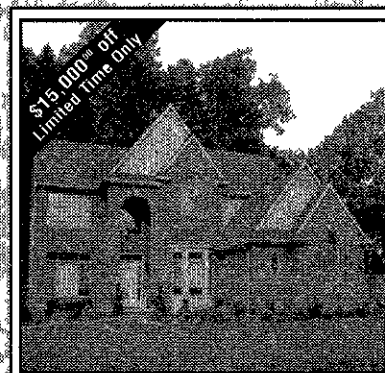
■ Loan officers should attend the closing with you. If they have done their job well, then their participation is usually limited to congratulating you on closing. But if something does go wrong, they'll be there to help.

So, the next time you find yourself in the market for a mortgage, remember: Educate yourself. Ask questions. Then trust your gut and relax. You'll have done everything you can to tell the good lenders from the bad.

Mark Savitskie, CPA, is a mortgage broker and president of Allegro Home Loans in Plymouth.

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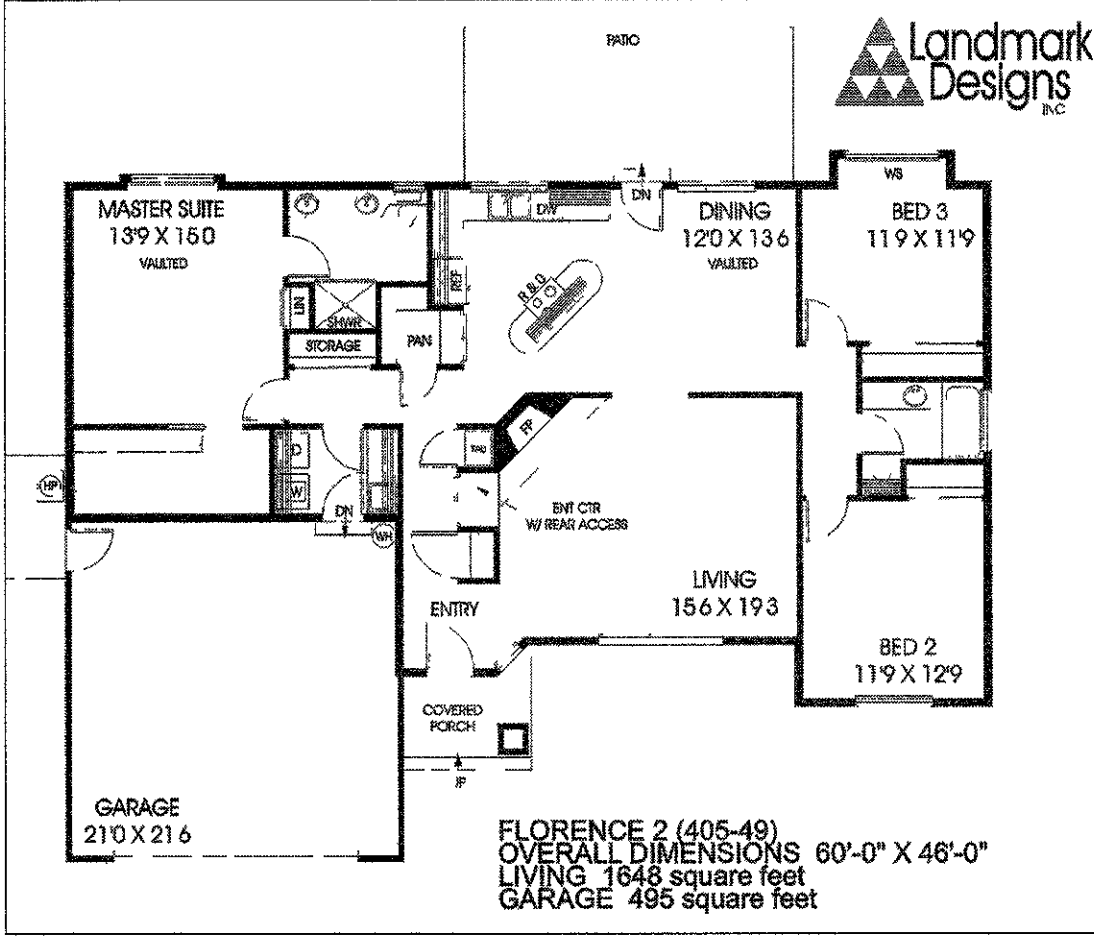
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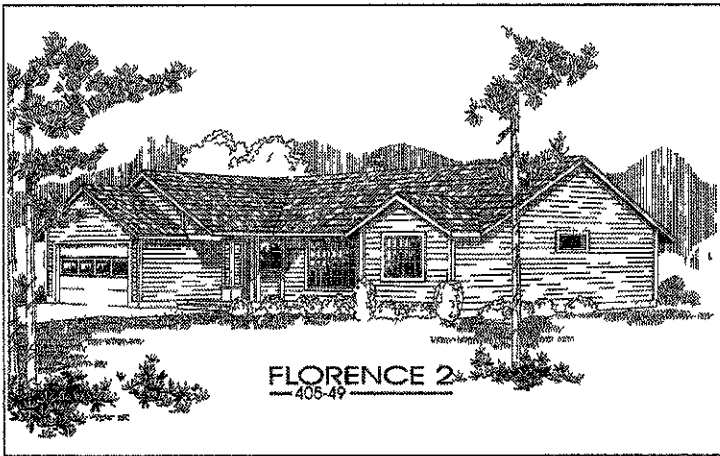


Florence 2 ideal for empty-nesters or families with growing children

The medium sized Florence 2 (405-49) utilizes its space well. The lap siding and wood shake roof gives the exterior a look anyone would be proud to show off to friends. Ideally suited to a family with growing children or empty nesters that need room for the visiting grandchildren and out of town guests.

This practical floor plan has two diminutive bedrooms positioned at one end of the house. This arrangement allows teenagers or guests to retain a great deal of privacy while still maintaining an overall feeling of togetherness. A full bathroom and hallway are placed in between the two for added privacy.

The focal point of this home however, is the living room, dining room area. With vaulted ceilings, this great room concept permits traffic to flow smoothly throughout the central portion of the home. A large open fireplace with an adjoining entertainment center gives the family a cozy location to talk over the days events, watch a favorite television program or just sit and revel in each other's company while a warm fire takes away the winter chill.



The efficient, walk through kitchen lets the cook participate in the goings on while preparing meals. A walk-in pantry has lots of space for canned goods while an adjacent storage closet is available for those odds and ends you cannot do without. Step down to the back patio and a barbecue for the whole gang is no trouble at all. Weather permitting.

The sizable master suite with vaulted ceiling features a huge walk in closet where clothes can be hung and accessed without worry. The private bath has an oversized shower and twin basins that eliminate competition for mirror space on those hectic

mornings. Across the hall, a utility room has an entrance to the garage, making it easy to bring in bags of groceries or other supplies while staying dry.

For a study plan of the FLORENCE 2 (405-49), send \$15 to Landmark Designs, 33127 Saginaw Road E, Cottage Grove, OR 97424 or call 1-800-562-1151. Be sure to specify plan name and number. Compact disks, with search functions are free of charge, to help you search our portfolio for your dream home (\$5.00 shipping and handling will apply). Or you may order or search online at www.lidplans.com

REAL ESTATE BRIEFS

Michelle Walder join Paragon

Michelle Walder has joined Paragon Property Management Services as director of operations, a new position for the growing commercial real estate firm.

Walder had been controller at Etken Equities in Southfield. A Walled Lake resident, Walder earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from Walsh College, and has more than 12 years of experience in commercial and residential property management.

Paragon Corporate Realty Services (www.paragoners.com), founded in 1998, is a Farmington Hills-based commercial real estate firm that specializes in property leasing, management and development of office and industrial properties.

Free workshop

A workshop for first-time homebuyers will be held 6:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 22, at 28544 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills (just north of 12 Mile on the east side of the road). It is sponsored by Century 21 Today Inc.

This free workshop will cover topics such as how to effectively use the Internet for home searches, why to get preapproved, what paperwork will be required to buy a home, benefits of using a Realtor and more.

On hand will be licensed Realtors and a mortgage broker to answer your questions.

RSVP by calling (248) 855-2000, ext. 219, or e-mailing Mpopp@Century21Today.com

Career seminar

Keller Williams Realty will be hosting a career seminar at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 31, at the Plymouth Office, located at 40600 Ann Arbor Road Suite 100, in Plymouth.

The seminar will explore a career in real estate. Find out all you need to know about costs, compensation, training and prelicense requirements. RSVP by calling (734) 459-4700.

Mortgage credit coaching seminar

Approved Mortgages is hosting a seminar on how to improve your credit score from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Feb. 3, at the Public Library of Westland located at 6123 Central City Parkway, Westland. Call Diane Adamick at (734) 516-8043 to register.

Builders Institute

The Oakland Builders Institute will offer a 16-hour seminar to help students pass the Michigan state builder's license exam. It will be from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 20-21, at the Best Western ConCorde Inn of Rochester Hills, 1919 Star-Batt Drive. The course is for those who want to subcontract construction of their own homes as well as real estate investors, developers and building trades people. Cost is \$205 including manual, sample questions and text application. A \$25 deposit is needed by Jan. 18 to Oakland Builders Institute, 1277 Dutton Road, Rochester Hills, MI 48306. To register, call (800) 940-2014 or (248) 651-2771 or online at www.buildersinstitute.com.

A seminar to help you pass the Michigan state builder's license exam will be offered by the institute in cooperation with Lake Orion Community Education. It will be 6-10 p.m. Monday/Wednesday, Jan. 22, 24, 29 and 31, at the Community Education Resource Center, 455 E. Scripps Road, Lake Orion. The course is for those who want to subcontract construction of their own homes as well as real estate investors, developers and building trades people. Cost is \$199 plus \$20 for textbook and sample questions. Preregistration with payment is needed by Jan. 18 to Lake Orion Community Education Call (248) 693-5436 to register.

A seminar to help you pass the Michigan state builder's license exam will be offered by the institute in cooperation with Walled Lake Community Education. It will be 6-10 p.m. Monday/Wednesday, Jan. 22, 24, 29 and 31, at Walled Lake Middle School, 46720 W. Pontiac.

Trail, Walled Lake. The course is for those who want to subcontract construction of their own homes as well as real estate investors, developers and building trades people. Cost is \$199 plus \$20 for textbook and sample questions. Preregistration with payment is needed by Jan. 18 to Walled Lake Community Education. Call (248) 956-5000 to register.

Building association courses

Building Industry Association of Southeastern Michigan (BIA) will sponsor the following:

A comprehensive builder's license preparation course, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, Jan. 19, at BIA headquarters, 30375 Northwestern Highway, Suite 100, in Farmington Hills. Presented by NCI Associates, Madison Heights, the course is designed to prepare students for the Michigan Residential Builders License Examination. Material covered will include topics on the exam, laws and rules, building practices and procedures, sample test questions and test-taking strategies.

The registration fee is \$200 per person. For registration information, call (248) 862-1033.

A "customer service seminar," from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 23, at BIA headquarters, 30375 Northwestern Highway, Suite 100, in Farmington Hills. The seminar is part of the Certified Graduate Remodeler series.

Chuck Breidenstein of Builders Professional Services Group Inc. will instruct attendees on ways to manage every phase of customer interaction from the initial contact through construction, the warranty period and beyond.

Registration fees are \$155 for Remodelers Council members, \$175 for BIA members and \$200 for guests. For registration information, call (248) 862-1033.

An Advanced Residential Construction Superintendent (ARCS) course — Reaching Common Ground: Managing Differences Through Effective Conflict Resolution (Building Leaders Track) — from 8 a.m. to noon Thursday, Jan. 25, at BIA headquarters, 30375 Northwestern Highway, Suite 100, in Farmington Hills.

Brindley R. W. Byrd, CAPS, CGR Qx2 Inc., Lansing, will instruct attendees on improving conflict resolution by exploring the roots of potential conflict, defining the stages and identifying solutions so participants can prevent and/or manage conflict when it occurs.

Registration fees are \$155 for BIA members and \$185 for guests. For registration information, call (248) 862-1033.

A "How to Persuade Effectively" course as part of its Sales & Marketing Council (SMC), Wednesday, Jan. 31, at the Somerset Inn, 2601 W. Big Beaver Road in Troy.

Jerry V. Teplitz, J.D., Ph.D. of Jerry Teplitz Enterprises Inc. in Virginia Beach, Va., will instruct attendees on the art of persuasion, offering proven ways of reading clients' behavioral style and teaching participants how to become a powerful and successful persuader.

Registration fees are \$45 for SMC members, \$65 for BIA members or \$85 for guests. For registration information, call (248) 862-1033.

Marty Burnstein of the Law Offices of Marty Burnstein will instruct the course.

Registration fees are \$75 for BIA members and \$125 for guests. For registration information, call (248) 862-1033.

A "How to Persuade Effectively" course as part of its Sales & Marketing Council (SMC), Wednesday, Jan. 31, at the Somerset Inn, 2601 W. Big Beaver Road in Troy.

Jerry V. Teplitz, J.D., Ph.D. of Jerry Teplitz Enterprises Inc. in Virginia Beach, Va., will instruct attendees on the art of persuasion, offering proven ways of reading clients' behavioral style and teaching participants how to become a powerful and successful persuader.

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Career seminar

Keller Williams Realty will be hosting a career seminar at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 24, at the Plymouth office, 40600 Ann Arbor Road, Suite 100. The seminar is a way to explore a career in real estate, including information about costs, compensation, training and prelicense requirements. Call (734) 459-4700.

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CAReport



By Wendy Clem
Avanti NewsFeatures

Warning Show up with one of these in your neighborhood and you are bound to get prevailed upon to cart the shoppers, school kids and relatives E-V-E-R-Y-where

The 2007 Dodge Sprinter sounds like a fun, surf-bunny sedan, but one glance will tell you this is clearly a vehicle that means serious transportation. It is a truck, van and mini-bus. No, it's not a Transformer toy, but it is shaped like something you'd find under the Christmas tree for the kid shrieking of testosterone.

But, you may really want one — any day now. Especially when you find out it comes in 18 possible colors. Yes. EIGHTEEN!

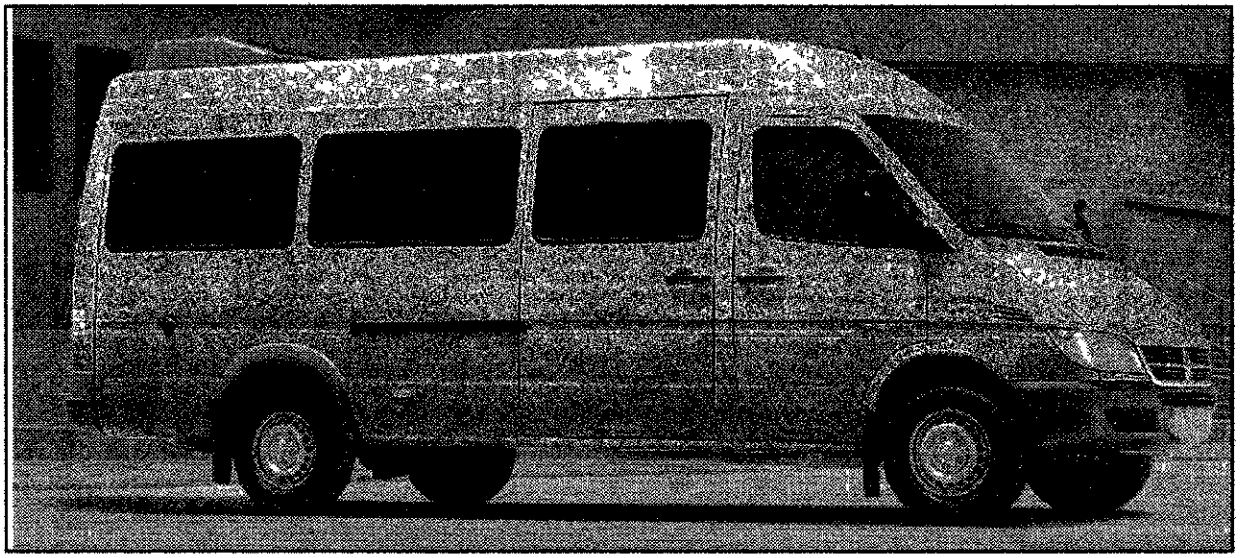
OK, the first thing you need to know is that DaumlerChrysler builds Sprinter, and it is sold under the brands of Dodge, Freightliner and Mercedes-Benz. Yes, you read that correctly. Mercedes, as in bling-bling.

It was created to replace Europe's Mercedes-Benz T1 van, then later the Dodge Ram Van, and targeted mostly for businesses rather than private users. You have probably most often seen them in use as ambulances, but their demand in van conversions and mini-motor homes is growing.

Second, the Sprinter is available in three body styles: Chassis Cab (read 'Tonka-truck-under-the-tree mode'), Cargo Van and Passenger Van.

The Chassis Cab has a flat frame (girls, this means the back of the truck) and a perfectly serviceable cab, with reclining bucket seats and attached headrests. The sum of that equals easy up-fitting, or the painless addition of things like a tool box. Four-wheel anti-lock disc brakes and a premium 2.7-liter CDI (read 'world-premier') turbo-diesel engine join standard 16-inch wheels and tires, although there are two available wheelbases.

Sprinter's Cargo Van offers three wheelbases and two roof heights (maxing out at 73 inches), with up to 473 cubic feet and 4,824 pounds capacity of load area. Doors swing to 270 degrees in the rear, the widest open doors in its class, and remain open with exterior panel magnets.



The 2007 Dodge Sprinter van offers 18 colors and two heights for maximum choice.

Translation: You can wear your big hair, mama. It's the Passenger Van you're going to want, though, with its let's-haul-the-fam-to-the-mall space. It seats 10 passengers in 112 cubic feet of cargo room, and comes with standard air-conditioning, automatic temperature control, cassette stereo and 12 cupholders. You will definitely be the hit with your kids, but may want to put a change collector on the dash. Hey — gas is expensive these days!

This van also sports a premium 2.7-liter 5-cylinder CDI turbo-diesel engine and 4-wheel disc anti-lock brakes. The average miles per gallon is 25 overall. The turbo-charged engine directs powerful acceleration near 4,000 revolutions per minute, providing on-demand movement along with impressive fuel savings. At 154-horsepower, the truck conveys 243 foot pounds of torque.

The prices of the three are \$30,000 for each the Chassis Cab and Cargo Van, and \$32,000 for the Passenger Van.

Remember that CDI engine? It stands for common rail direct injection. In human-speak, that means it's really efficient in saving money. Oil changes aren't needed for less than 10,000 miles — within normal driving conditions.

A valuable option is Sprinter's ASSYST maintenance system, a finely tuned addition that stretches that 10,000-mile oil change to double that.

The CDI also bundles longer life, lower maintenance and improved fuel efficiency with performance that banks on smoothness along with a quiet and clean execution not usually associated with diesels. This is achieved through ignition sequence precision, ongoing injection pressure, and fuel meter

control.

Another facet of the powertrain is the ability to turn in tight areas — a particular delight in business or industry, or when trying to park in too-small lots. Even though it is the largest full-size van, the Sprinter gives up the best wall-to-wall turning diameter in its class.

The power-assisted front rack-and-pinion steering delivers easy handling, including a 36.7-foot turning radius on the short (118-inch) wheelbase version.

You say you have a lot of goods on board? Sprinter can tow up to 2½ tons, when properly equipped.

A sliding door for the driver's side can be ordered, as can an especially tall walk-through and low load height for ease in loading and unloading.

The Dodge Sprinter has the highest payload capacity, lowest side step-in height and more cargo room than any other full-sized van. It has the market's best-in-class interior compartment accessibility and is the most technically advanced commercial van. That makes Sprinter a serious contender for all walks of life, and the most adaptable.

Wendy Clem covers the automotive beat for Avanti NewsFeatures. Write her at wendyclem@gmail.com <<mailto:wendyclem@gmail.com>> @2007, Fracassa Communications

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<p>\$1500 REBATE OR 3.9%</p> <p>2007 IMPALA LT</p> <p>Flip & fold rear seat, air, stereo CD, split front seat, auto, power windows & locks, tilt, cruise. #1260 Was \$22,550</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>EVERYONE</td> <td>GM FAMILY</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$19,646*</td> <td>\$18,717*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EVERYONE</td> <td>GM FAMILY</td> </tr> <tr> <td>39 MO. LEASE</td> <td>39 MO. LEASE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$229*^{per mo}</td> <td>\$199*^{per mo}</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$1424 TOTAL DUE</td> <td>\$1394 TOTAL DUE</td> </tr> </table>	EVERYONE	GM FAMILY	\$19,646*	\$18,717*	EVERYONE	GM FAMILY	39 MO. LEASE	39 MO. LEASE	\$229* ^{per mo}	\$199* ^{per mo}	\$1424 TOTAL DUE	\$1394 TOTAL DUE	<p>\$2000 REBATE OR 1.9%</p> <p>2007 4x4 SILVERADO</p> <p>Air conditioning, locking differential, cruise control, trailer hitch, automatic transmission, 4800 V8. Was \$24,385</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>EVERYONE</td> <td>GM FAMILY</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$21,111*</td> <td>\$20,122*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EVERYONE</td> <td>GM FAMILY</td> </tr> <tr> <td>39 MONTH LEASE</td> <td>39 MONTH LEASE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$347*^{per mo}</td> <td>\$317*^{per mo}</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$1792 TOTAL DUE</td> <td>\$1737 TOTAL DUE</td> </tr> </table>	EVERYONE	GM FAMILY	\$21,111*	\$20,122*	EVERYONE	GM FAMILY	39 MONTH LEASE	39 MONTH LEASE	\$347* ^{per mo}	\$317* ^{per mo}	\$1792 TOTAL DUE	\$1737 TOTAL DUE	<p>\$3000 REBATE OR 1.9%</p> <p>2007 SILVERADO EXT. CAB LT</p> <p>Locking differential, 4800 V-8, automatic transmission. Was \$27,185</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>EVERYONE</td> <td>GM FAMILY</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$21,545*</td> <td>\$20,459*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EVERYONE</td> <td>GM FAMILY</td> </tr> <tr> <td>39 MONTH LEASE</td> <td>39 MONTH LEASE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$289*^{per mo}</td> <td>\$259*^{per mo}</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$1032 TOTAL DUE</td> <td>\$975 TOTAL DUE</td> </tr> </table>	EVERYONE	GM FAMILY	\$21,545*	\$20,459*	EVERYONE	GM FAMILY	39 MONTH LEASE	39 MONTH LEASE	\$289* ^{per mo}	\$259* ^{per mo}	\$1032 TOTAL DUE	\$975 TOTAL DUE	<p>\$2500 REBATE OR 3.9%</p> <p>2007 TAHOE LT 4X4</p> <p>5.3 V8 flex fuel, 3rd row seat, locking diff, stereo CD, power windows & locks, tilt, cruise LOADED! #7T5321 Was \$39,690</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>EVERYONE</td> <td>GM FAMILY</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$34,397*</td> <td>\$32,814*</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EVERYONE</td> <td>GM FAMILY</td> </tr> <tr> <td>39 MONTH LEASE</td> <td>39 MONTH LEASE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$459*^{per mo}</td> <td>\$419*^{per mo}</td> </tr> <tr> <td>\$1154 TOTAL DUE</td> <td>\$1014 TOTAL DUE</td> </tr> </table>	EVERYONE	GM FAMILY	\$34,397*	\$32,814*	EVERYONE	GM FAMILY	39 MONTH LEASE	39 MONTH LEASE	\$459* ^{per mo}	\$419* ^{per mo}	\$1154 TOTAL DUE	\$1014 TOTAL DUE
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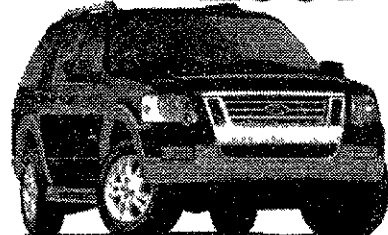
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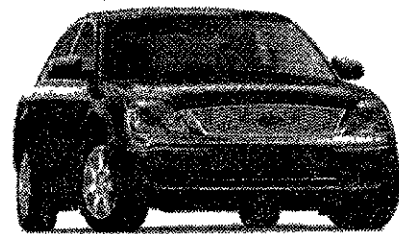
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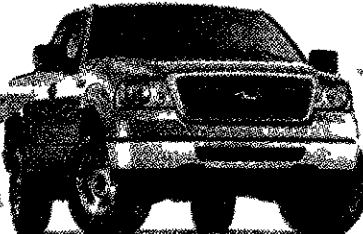
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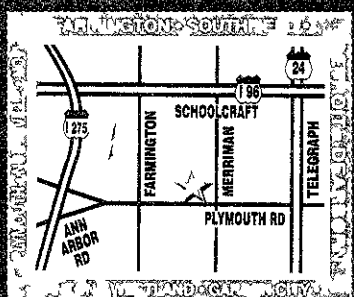
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